

# SIGNAL - GK<sup>6</sup>

REBELLION SPECIAL - NO 'K' !



Adventure in Dagudashaag Sector!!

**Acknowledgements**

Although Signal-Gk is acknowledged by HIWG and GDW the data shown is not "official" - Players wishing to know the official status of any item or article should contact GDW or the Dagudashaag Sector Analyst, Duncan Law-Green, directly.

Traveller, MegaTraveller (MT) and The New Era (TNE) are trademarks owned by Games Design Workshop (GDW). Any references to products, rules or data of either GDW or its licensees is not intended to infringe in any way upon their rights.

The name Signal-GK is not intended to infringe upon the earlier GDW adventure of the same name. For review purposes, please refer to this fanzine as either 'GK', 'S-GK' or 'Signal-GK the fanzine'...

HIWG (History of the Imperium Working Group) is a fan organisation that was attempting to detail the official MegaTraveller universe. A UK branch exists and hopefully we will bring you details of how to renew/join next issue.

Signal-GK is produced and distributed by:  
**A. Jae Campbell,**  
 The Sanctuary, 45 Fairfield,  
 Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire,  
 HX7 6JD, UK

Please send all subscriptions to the above address

From Issue 8, Signal-GK will be edited by:  
**Leighton Piper,**  
 11 Skeffington Road,  
 Preston, Lancs,  
 PR1 5UP, UK

Please send all contributions to the above address

All Articles and Artwork are copyright of the specified authors and artists and may not be copied without their consent.

**ARTISTS IN ISSUE 6**

Cover:  
 "Raeghzoetz Freedom Fighter" . . . By Nik Piper

Interior Art:  
 Stuart Machin [SDM], Nik Piper [NP], John Tatman [JT], Jae Campbell [JC], Duncan Law-Green [DLG], Dee Smith [DS]

Subsector Maps - Andrew Pickford

**SIGNAL-GK**

**A Distress Signal..  
 A Cry for Help..  
 A Call - to Adventure! !**

**CONTENTS**

**REBELLION SPECIAL!**

2 **Contents Page** . . . . . You're reading it!

3 Editorial<sup>s</sup> . . . . . By Stuart Machin

4 Blockade! . . . . . By David Burden

**Mercenaries of Dagudashaag**

5 Leonidas Spartans . . . . . By Stuart Machin

5 CyberTech Corp . . . . . By Leighton Piper

7 FoxCubs . . . . . By J. Duncan Law-Green

**Port of Call**

10 Depot . . . . . By Stuart Machin

**Weapons**

13 New Tech of the Rebellion . . . By Stuart Machin

17 A.K.A. Salina . . . . . By David Burden

17 INDISS News . . . . . By Nick Walker

**Adventure**

18 Hamanok Conspiracy Pt V . . . By Leighton Piper

24 Trillion Credit Squadron Revisited . . . . .  
 . . . . . By Stuart Machin & Leighton Piper

30 Salvage! . . . . . By David Burden

**Adventure**

31 Rebel Well? . . . . . By Leighton Piper

35 GK-Q&A . . . . . By 'Guru' J. Duncan Law-Green

36 Combat Encounters . . . . . By Adie Stewart

37 StarPort FreeFax . . . . . By John Tatman

**Theta Borealis Sector Special**

38 Contact: Burugdi . . . . . By Leighton Piper

40 Transponder Alert . . . . . Answered by Jae

**SUPPLEMENTS**

Library Data . . . . . By The Dagudashaag  
 Development Team : Duncan, Stuart, Nick,  
 Leighton, Adie and Jae.

WarZone . . . . . By Stuart Machin

Starship Designs . . . . . By John Tatman

## GUEST EDITORIAL<sup>3</sup>

Greetings to Signal GK 6. This edition is a bit different from those that have preceded. This issue is dedicated to the Rebellion. Most of the normal regular articles, such as Port of Call, Legends and Lore are in this issue, with the feature subsector Gadde. The special articles are dedicated to the rebellion, with articles on new weapons, mercenaries, Port of Call dedicated to the largest naval base in Dagudashaag and ideas on how to run a Trillion Credit Squadron campaign in the Rebellion.

Your guest Editor for this issue is myself (no!), Stuart Machin. I am 23 and have played Traveller since 1980. I joined HIWG in March 1991 and was soon co-opted into working on Signal GK.

To pay the bills and so on in this live role play campaign called "REALITY (tm)", I am a Constructor Lieutenant (pronounced Leftenant for the uninitiated, and rank 2 for the obsessed) in the Royal Corps Of Naval Constructors (RCNC). This merits some explanation. This is semi-naval civil service branch within the Ministry of Defence that is responsible for the design and procurement of ships and submarines (boats to the insider) for the Royal Navy. I have done and B.Eng and just completed an M.Sc, both in Naval Architecture. By the time you read this, I will be at sea serving with the fleet, defending these hallowed shores from all that may threaten them (foreign subscribers please note!).

Like my predecessors as guest editor, my background has coloured what I have written for Signal GK.

Those with good memories will remember that these articles include the regular "Warzone", articles on technology and terrorists. I have sought to continue with this in this issue of Signal GK.

Those of you who have read previous editorials have seen as one reason for the reduction of interest in Traveller has been the rebellion. I believe it was not the rebellion that caused this drop in popularity but its EXECUTION.

In the days of the "black books" there were two main adventure areas, the Spinward Marches and Solomani Rim. The Spinward Marches was a border area with room for expansion and exploration, high tech areas and an implacable foe. The Solomani Rim is a high tech area with a "Cold War" feeling between the bordering states with espionage smuggling with the bonus of Terra. Both of these regions expressed all the qualities that are essential for "space opera".

Such "space opera" could not exist in the core. As someone at GDW said recently, "how many striker tickets could you run in Core Sector?" With the rebellion, the entire of the Imperium was effectively turned into a border warzone. Plenty of room for PC's to conduct their nefarious activities or to get involved in the fighting, either willingly or unwillingly. Such a background has formed the basis for many an adventure story, indeed a rather famous film (and the two sequels) and its roleplaying game seem to have done well out of it (as did Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford and one or two others!).

However, the support from GDW and DGP for the rebellion was lacking and we have arrived where we are. In the five years that the rebellion was part of Mega Traveller we have had only two adventures published by the two companies. Whilst the support in magazines was better, this was from gamers at large trying to give their players an adventure. Even worse, much of what has been written by "outsiders", such as Signal GK and HIWG, has been ignored or altered at the two companies' whims.

The advent of "Hard Times" has changed this, with more adventures published by GDW already than for the Rebellion. This change of heart is to be commended. I am unhappy about the time scale of Hard Times, like many of you, but the violence is believable. One only needs to watch the News to witness man's inhumanity towards man. In this respect, Traveller is becoming more lifelike, more realistic in its portrayal of people.

Already I have heard people slugging the New Era. Whilst I have doubts about the realism of the Twilight 2000 combat system, I feel it is too soon to make any judgements. However, apart from the way the rebellion was presented and supported, MegaTraveller had many things going for it. It is unwise to change things that work. I am an engineer and my profession's quote is "if it ain't broke, don't fix it". FASA have understood this with both BattleTech and Shadowrun, why can't GDW?

**Disclaimer:** The opinions expressed within are purely those of the guest editor and are not necessarily those of Signal-GK or the rest of the Dagudashaag Development Team.

# BLOCKADE!

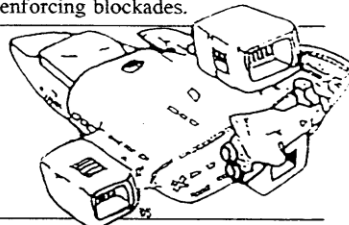
The blockade of Strephon's Worlds was an important feature of early Rebellion history in Dagudashaag and Gushemege Sectors. Lucan and Dulinor first established the blockade in late 1117 and the blockade remained in place until the major offensives against Strephon's Worlds in mid 1118. In Dagudashaag the blockade affected worlds in Mimu, Old Suns, Ushra, Shallows and Zeda subsectors. A similar blockade was also established by Lucan in the rimward subsectors to restrict the flow of people, material, and information to and from Dulinor's realm, and also to prevent infiltration. During the turbulent years of 1118-1120 front lines moved too fast to make any organised blockade feasible, but as the fighting switched to limited Black War actions in the early 1120s the factions tried to muster forces to re-impose blockades, this time to mark the new frontiers.

## Military Operations

The military part of a blockade is typically formed by picket squadrons drawn from system and colonial forces. These squadrons are placed on all the old Xboat routes crossing the frontier, and at all Class A and B starports within 5 parsecs of the frontier. The pickets are however often undermanned and poorly armed. The squadrons also mount patrols out to neighbouring worlds in case any adventurous trader attempts to slip through the net. The picket is, where possible, augmented by a regular squadron or flotilla acting as a Combat Space Patrol (CSP).

Pickets will usually approach any craft that jumps in-system. They use Navy over-ride codes to extract flightplans from the ship's transponder, and almost always supplement this with a person-to-person link-up with the ship's captain. If the picket is satisfied that the ship originates from within faction territory it is allowed to proceed. Otherwise it will be ordered onto a rendezvous course with the picket and then boarded. The boarding team questions the ship's crew and carries out a deep scan of the ship's computers. All cargo is thoroughly searched. If there is any hint that the ship or crew are carrying subversive information they will not be allowed to proceed. Instead they will be escorted to a quarantined refuelling point, usually with a security team still on board who will "supervise" all radio traffic. After refuelling the ship will be jump programmed by the security team, a computer lockout initiated, and the ship sent back across the frontier.

In some systems, especially those on major trade routes, the picket squadron may operate a brokerage facility. This enables traders to sell their cargoes at a "reasonable" rate, if they so wish, to a military broker. The picket will then transport the goods in system and sell them, the profit being shared between the picket and the treasury. Hardly surprisingly the facility is widely abused. In the worst systems the trader gets a choice between selling or being used for laser target practice. The "reasonable" rate is a token payment, and all the profits from the eventual sale can end up in the pockets of the picket commanders. Needless to say this has caused much anger and resentment amongst traders and has come to be known as "picket-pocketing". The practice has, however, probably been more effective than any military action in enforcing blockades.



## Information Censorship

Supplementing the military blockade is the extensive censorship introduced on all XBoat routes within 5 parsecs of a frontier. Loyal officials are placed in every IISS office and all XBoat traffic is computer scanned for subversive information, eg mention of the "real" Strephon or Dulinor's successes. The carriage of privately encrypted material has also been banned, a measure ostensibly introduced for counter-intelligence reasons. Similar measures have been adopted at major traffic nodes throughout a faction's territory, and have become a part of the routine censorship whilst the Rebellion lasts.

No information blockade can hope to be totally effective. To counter the effects of any leakage both Lucan and Dulinor have invested in civilian monitoring and disinformation campaigns. Networks of informers alert the authorities to any disloyal rumours. The source of any such rumours is then rapidly traced and the culprits "disappeared". Carefully sown rumours are then used to discredit the original gossip. Strephon's opponents have realised that as long as people can be kept confused or in doubt about his existence they would be unlikely to risk exposure and possible death by supporting his cause.

Although "Blockade" has been written for the period 1117 - 1125 the nuggets will also prove valuable to Hard Times adventurers. The blockade practices described are similar to those adopted by the factions to protect their safe and frontier regions, although the quality and quantity of ships available would be lower.



# MERCENARIES OF DAGUDASHAAG

by Stuart Machin, Duncan Law-Green and Leighton Piper

## LEONIDAS' SPARTANS

by Stuart Machin

This is light infantry regiment that originated on Ushra/Ushra, from an Imperial Marine unit that was being disbanded following the Fourth Frontier War on that world. The regiment is equipped to tech level 15. In most nations, this would mean a unit equipped with battle dress, FGMP's, grav tanks and so on. Needless to say, these units are very difficult to maintain, and few mercenaries have access to these resources.

However, at tech level 15, there are many areas of technology that are desirable for mercenaries, such as sensors and fire control. The Spartans take advantage of improved materials science and so on, and use advanced firearms. This unit uses many of new systems and equipments listed in this issue of Signal GK. Also, extensive use of grav powered tac missiles, ultra light mortars and so on. This gives the unit extensive firepower at an affordable price.

Thus the unit has seen extensive use in the corp wars and minor conflicts that represented the "letting off of steam" that characterised the pre-Rebellion Imperium. However, during the Rebellion, the Spartans frequently encountered heavily equipped high tech units, and came off worse. The unit did however organise a contract with the Duke of Ushra to act as a bodyguard, freeing better equipped troops to the front lines. During this time the unit rebuilt itself to full strength. In the Black War that followed, the lower intensity conflict saw a resurgence in the activities of the regiment and saw extensive service.

The regiment has four battalions of light infantry and a support battalion. This battalion consists of an artillery battery, a reconnaissance troop, a tank destroyer troop and an air cavalry troop, equipped with fusion rocket powered VTOL 's. Artillery at battalion and company level consists of medium mortars and grav powered anti-tank missiles. The battalion level artillery is grav equipped with howitzer autocannons. The tank destroyer troop has seventeen light grav tanks. Attached to the headquarters battalion is a company of battle dress equipped drop assault troops. The total strength of the regiment is six thousand troops, including medics, mechanics and so on.

The commanding officer is Colonel Mikeal Leonidas. He is the son of founder, Marine General Alicia Leonidas, commander of the 42nd Marine Division, and like her and nearly all members of the regiment, an ex-Imperial Marine. He is 45 years old. One battalion of the regiment consists almost entirely of Aslan, some 20% of whom are ex-members of the Imperial Aslan Guard.



Colonel Mikeal Leonidas

## CYBERTECH CORP

by Leighton Piper

The CyberTech Corp (CTC or 'The Corp' for short) are an elite mercenary unit originating out of the Dagudashaag-Gushemege border region on the eve of the Rebellion. All the members are veterans of the Imperial military from a wide variety of backgrounds. But all share one similarity: they have all received some prosthetic device or other to replace a damaged part of the body following combat.

The Corp was founded in 1115 by ex-marine captain Vaclav Hirsch, who had been invalidated out of the service following a piracy suppression raid in Corridor sector (at the time of the Fifth Frontier War where there were a number of vargr incursions). During the raid Hirsch led a party of marines to board a crippled pirate vessel, always a risky undertaking even for seasoned professionals, a booby-trap left by the ship's crew killed two marines and ripped off Hirsch's right arm. Although the Marine Corp oversaw his medical treatment which included the replacement of the missing limb with a bionic model, he was deemed unfit to continue active service.

Somewhat bitter at his treatment his whole world crashed as he descended into drink and depression. Yet he managed to pull himself out of the pit into which he had fallen after a chance reading of a newspaper article on the new cybertech developments. He realised that his disability could become the basis of an unique force and decided to put his military experience and his pension to good use.

Hirsch began making contacts with his old marine friends and acquaintances to find ex-military types in a similar situation to himself within a reasonable distance of his home world. He then began to visit these individuals (he could always managed to swing himself a free ride with any Marine carrying ship) who had been discharged with fairly major body injuries. These men like himself had been discarded despite possessing an enormous amount of knowledge and experience. They represented a large pool of skilled, resourceful men whose potential had not been fully tapped. Most of the men were only to grateful to be offered work in an area where they had spent most of their adult lives (many were discriminated against because of their disabilities or because of their acceptance of artificial body parts), although somewhat sceptical at the initial idea.

Hirsch managed to find financial houses and individuals willing to invest in his idea; this formed a large operating fund when combined with many of the mens' pensions when cashed-in. Hirsch quickly set about buying ex-military equipment (here his military contacts were very useful enabling him to get preferential deals) and most importantly access to cybertech knowledge. The recruits to the Corp with only the crudest of prosthetics were given the first cybertech devices, enhanced bionic limbs and the new, experimental neuroprocessor implants. Later the more sophisticated and advanced synaptic neuroprocessors were 'installed' in those who had lost parts of their brain.

By the time of the announcement of Strehon's assassination had reached the region, Hirsch had already established a small band of cyberware-enhanced mercenaries who were rapidly becoming an elite fighting force. Hard to believe if one could see the original crippled ex-servicemen.

As civil war loomed Hirsch forsook the market for his unique band of men and the huge rewards for his enterprise.

Soon system and subsector governments, as well as wealthy individuals began to call upon the Corps services, as regular Imperial units were sucked into the conflict forced to take sides and thus leaving a security vacuum in the region.

CTC operates a number of starships including an ex-colonial reserve 'Fer-de-Lance'-class destroyer, a 'Fiery'-class escort, a 'Lurushaar-Killaalum'-class patrol cruiser and two modified 'Suleiman'-class (type S) scouts. The destroyer (renamed the 'Reaction Force') was semi-derelict, bought for next to nothing, repaired and refitted. The Fiery (renamed the 'Rapid Action') was a pirate vessel, captured and put up for auction. Hirsch was tipped-off about the impending sale by one of his contacts and put in a pre-emptive bid. Strings were pulled and his offer was accepted before the vessel went to auction.

The patrol cruiser (the 'Quick Strike') was used by an anti-government faction on xxx. The vessel was taken in lieu of payment following the success of the mission - the Corp managed to free a group of hostages out of the clutches of the 'mutineers'. The scouts were IISS surplus detached duty vessels bought cheap. The two ships have since been modified to accept a turret carrying a pulse laser/missile rack. One of the staterooms and the cargo bay has been converted to take a 'booster' power plant and its extra fuel. Two staterooms has had bunks installed to accommodate a small task force of eight troops.

In 1118 the Corp moved out of their home Gushemege-Dagudashaag border regions to coreward to take up a base on Shurkig (Gadde 2928). It has given them a greater number of opportunities and a wider range of work. Their last major operation was in the Basikiil'r system (Laraa

2737) nullifying a pirate group raiding the rich harvest collection centres. The pirates were believed to be operating for a major agrocombine which has been known to conduct ruthless trade wars using any means at their disposal.

Most of their work to date has been concerned, as above, with protection-orientated missions which has supplied a steady if unexciting income. Yet there have been there fair share of strike, raid and counter-insurgency operations which have all been completed to near perfection. Thus the CTC have acquired a formidable reputation as a mercenary unit you can count on achieving success. With their professionalism and their numerous glowing testimonials from their missions, the 'Corp' is able to demand a high price for its services.



**Vaclav Hirsch**

(ex-marine captain)

A8A994

Age: 40

Terms: 4 in marine, 1.5 as mercenary.

Cr: 150k

Leader-3 Tactics-2 3 combat ribbons, with 2 command clusters Energy Weapons-2 Meritous Conduct under Fire, twice Combat Rifleman-3 Medal for Conspicuous Gallantry Zero-G-Env-2 Vacc Suit-1 Battle Dress-2 Demolition-1 Ship Tactics-1 Recon-1

Possessions include personal armour and weapons, a small villa on the world of Shurkig.

## "FOXCUBS"

by J. Duncan Law-Green

A description of some of the mercenary units in the service of the Free Medurman Faction. Details are given of each unit's strength, equipment, training and morale, along with a short history of each unit, and suggestions for adventures in war-torn Dagudashaag.

### Introduction:

"...I doubt that so many of us would have managed to survive those darkest days, if it had not been for those who called themselves Foxcubs. So many of those who were in a position to do something about the devastation merely pursued selfish goals of short-term gain. The Foxcubs were never selfish..."

Jev Viisarikaa, *A History of The Second Civil War* (pub. Makla-Selwyn-Tobermory, Medurma, 1143)

No sector of the Third Imperium could be described as completely "civilised". Even those in the Imperial Core had their troublespots -- and where there is trouble, and someone with money who wants it sorted out, mercenaries will congregate. Dagudashaag was no exception. In fact, a fair number of mercenary groups operating in Gushemege and Corridor were organised and funded from prosperous Dagudashaag.

The onset of the Rebellion may have brought hardship for the average Imperial citizen, but it brought unbounded opportunities for mercenary units. Over much of Dagudashaag, their ranks were swelled by regular Imperial Army units, corporate security detachments, individual adventurers and soldiers of fortune -- in short, anyone who could use a weapon, and was willing to sell his skill in order to survive.

With the formulation of emergency action plans by the sector government, it became clear to Medurman authorities that they would be hard-pressed to maintain any kind of defensive line with the Imperial Army and Federation Self-Defence Forces units they had at their disposal.

Project Foresight was initiated in 341-1116, with the intention of assembling mercenary units under a common command structure. The Medurmans were fortunate in that they had much to offer mercenaries -- particularly in the area of tech 16 military equipment.

As the situation in Dagudashaag deteriorated, scouts were sent out with the express purpose of contacting mercenary units, and offering them such inducements. At the same time, Medurma set about activating its reserve forces, as the prospect of an invasion by Lucan's forces loomed nearer. The name "Foxcubs" first referred to one of the more "individual" of these reserve units, but now seems to be more or less indiscriminately applied to all non-regular Medurman military units.

In the face of Lucan's invasion of Medurma, this rag-tag collection of forces fought together, and fought well. The following is merely a representative selection of those heroic groups, the Medurman irregular forces.

#### DUNBAR'S DRAGONS

##### "THE BLACK DRAGONS"

Maarten Murdoch-Dunbar is a Medurman industrialist, and a distant descendant of Axel Murdoch, the founder of the megacorporation Instellarms LIC. Although Dunbar has only a relatively small share in Instellarms (his holding is considerably less than one percent), he is still an immensely wealthy man. It has been said that "the desire for battle is in the Murdoch blood", and Dunbar was no different. He served with distinction with the Imperial Marines in both Gushemege, and the turbulent Vargr border regions of Corridor Sector.

Following his father's death, Dunbar retired from the Imperial Marines with the rank of Colonel, and took control of his father's stock holdings. However, he was determined to do more than just sit behind a desk.

His experiences had made him aware of the opportunities open to mercenary units (and the pitfalls) in the troubled regions of the Imperium. His time with Special Forces had given him a taste for covert operations, and he determined to form the best-equipped and best-trained mercenary special forces unit in the coreward Imperium.

In short, he has succeeded. Since its formation in 1113, Dunbar's Dragons has distinguished itself in at least three actions in Gushemege Sector. It has earned the (sometimes grudging respect) of other mercenary groups, though some merc leaders mutter darkly about "overeducated kids with high-tech toys". His relations with other members of the Murdoch family have sometimes been less than cordial -- they seem to regard him as an egotistical publicity-seeker.

Some sections of the media have hinted at romantic links between Dunbar and Karyn Viisarikaa -- he has been careful to remain silent on such matters. Even less scrupulous mass-media publications have commented on the fact that he is often seen in public with Lihassau, his Aslan female chief staff officer.

**Insignia:** Silhouette of dragon with wings outspread on brilliant star background. Dress uniforms are predominantly black.

**Composition:** 87 humans, 16 Aslan

**Equipment:** Superior. Dunbar has the resources of a megacorporation to draw upon. He also maintains links with the most innovative Medurman aerospace and military contractors. The unit is equipped to TL16 standards.

**Morale:** Excellent.

##### **Adventure seeds:**

125-1118: The midst of the chaos resulting from Lucan's invasion of Medurma, and the Black Dragons have been assigned as the personal guard to Sector Duchess Karyn Viisarikaa. Dunbar is arrested on the orders of Federation Secretary of State James Flynn, on charges of treason.

Investigating, you uncover chilling information. Flynn is the traitor, and has arrested Dunbar with the intention of immobilising the Black Dragons, who are all that stand in the way of Flynn's intended betrayal of the Sector Duchess. Can you free your commanding officer, and make the Federation believe your story? Can you stop Flynn, and save her Grace from capture by the invading forces?

1126th WestMetropolitan  
Civilian Militia Battalion  
"The Real Foxcubs"

The right to bear arms is enshrined in the Medurman constitution, and the fact that many Medurman citizens regularly carry light assault weapons, and are trained in their use, would seem to make the formation of militia units to oppose any planetary invasion relatively straightforward. However, it is also true that the typical Medurman is self-opinionated, and an individualist, which makes imposing any kind of military discipline somewhat difficult.

As the Federation authorities found out, pre-existing, informal structures often exist which can be exploited, particularly among the lower social classes. Militia units were organised noticeably more rapidly in the low-income areas of HighPeak, Korovall, and other cities, than in the middle-income areas. This created its own problems, though...

A Federation Department of Defence memo of 037-1117 noted in somewhat concerned fashion, that the newly-formed 1126th Militia Battalion had not reported as ordered to the regional Self-Defence Force base for basic instruction. An SDF lieutenant-colonel and a DoD administrator were despatched to the lower levels of the WestMetro suburb to restate the order. They turned up two hours later at the casualty department of the WestMetro SantaAna Hospital suffering from multiple contusions.

It transpired that the self-styled "commander-in-chief" of the 1126th Militia was one Deva "Red Claw" Wroclaw, former SDF sergeant, dishonourably discharged for insubordination, and now an "entrepreneur" (read: gangster). He had a low opinion of both the SDF "brass hats" and the Department of Defence "pen-pushers", and set out his intentions in no uncertain terms. The 1126th Militia would not observe the SDF chain of command. Instead, they would take their orders directly from the Ducal Household. After hurried consultations, the DoD agreed.

Wroclaw rapidly became somewhat of a media personality. It is believed that the name "Foxcubs" arose from a sexist reference to the Sector Duchess during an interview -- the remark was deleted from subsequent broadcasts, but the name stuck.

To put it mildly, the DoD was unhappy with a unit composed of "survivalists and gun fanatics, petty gangsters and crooks, and alikash streetfighters" gaining such media attention, but there was little they could do. Besides, with their local knowledge, the Foxcubs would prove to be truly fearsome opponents when the invasion finally did occur...

**Insignia:** Multiple. Most common is a cartoon of a fox holding a fusion gun. Also more or less tasteful depictions of the Sector Duchess.

**Motto:** "Fry Luke's (expletive deleted)!"

**Composition:** 256 humans, 207 Aslan

**Equipment:** Variable. Federation Department of Defence describes it as "Heterogeneous: Non-conventional blade weapons and rapid-fire slug throwers". Reportedly some cyberotechnology. Some re-equipment with SDF standard issue.

**Morale:** Superior. 1126th Militia units were described by Lucan-Imperial units they opposed as "berserkers".

**Adventure seeds:**

Have you ever wanted to run combats in the twisting warrens of a mountain city, between Imperial Marines and cyberpunk streetfighters? This is your chance! Life in the Foxcubs has plenty of action, even pre-invasion, with all the rough-and-tumble of a mixed-race militia unit. Remember that the Foxcubs do not get along with regular SDF units, so brawls would be quite common.

KesauralYawu'iYastei'ahAohalai  
"Aohalai Warriors of the  
Windtorn Peaks"

The KesauralYawu'iYastei'ahAohalai was formed in 1070, originally as a security division for the Aohalai trading corporation AoSpace. Their success in quelling civil disturbances which threatened corporate facilities at the starport on Anpanaar/Gadde in 1081, brought them to the attention of a number of planetary authorities. Several particularly lucrative tickets, together with financial backing from the Aohalai clan itself, allowed them to expand their operations greatly.

As of 1116, the unit is equivalent to a battalion in strength. Aiau Aohalai, chief executive of AoSpace, and self-styled "merchant princess", has placed her cousin YaleluOwoukhyar in overall command of the unit. The Kesaural volunteered for service alongside the Medurman SDF almost immediately after the news of Strephon's assassination broke, long before Project Foresight's inception. Their ready access to AoSpace transport has given them an excellent rapid deployment capability, and they have become a valued part of the Medurman forces.

One of their most renowned engagements in the Rebellion was the Battle of Synnot Ridge in 252-1118, on New Titan/Pact, where the Kesaural successfully held off a numerically superior force of Lucan-Imperial Marines, while the Medurmans stripped down and evacuated a makeshift naval base and missile production facility.

**Insignia:** The Trokh characters *llor Astau* ("Assured Victory over an enemy without honour") in gold on a royal blue background.

**Composition:** 544 Aslan

**Equipment:** Good to Excellent. Medurman military contractors specialise in producing "multirace" equipment, able to be used by both Aslan and humans without loss of efficiency. The unit has suffered some attrition, however.

**Morale:** Excellent

**Adventure seeds:**

The Battle of Synnot Ridge is suitable for Referee's Companion simulation. For close-combat action, the defence of one of the Aohalai grav cities may be suitable.

The story of their commandeering of civilian transports, and their escape through Lucan's strengthening blockade became one of the sector's legends of the Rebellion.

The '73rd travelled first to Khusgular, and finally arrived at Medurma. They had only a slight respite, however, being caught up in the invasion of Medurma, beginning 100-1118. The Federation Department of Defence has become increasingly worried that the '73rd's command structure is beginning to crack under the strain. They suffered heavy casualties in their evacuation of Collette, but they are anxious to get back, to free their homeworld from oppression.

Some re-equipment with SDF tech level 16 vehicles and weaponry, but retraining is taking time.

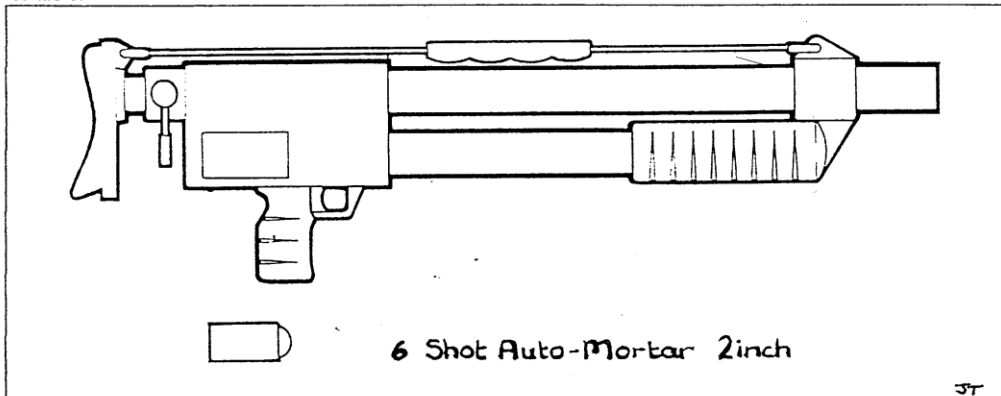
**Morale:** Variable

**Adventure seeds:**

i) Early 1119

(invasion force has been defeated):

You're running through routine maintenance checks on the exterior of your trader in one of the subterranean bays of Jaqueline J. Martin Starport on Medurma, when you feel something cold and metallic pressing against the back of your neck. You turn round slowly, to face four dishevelled individuals in dirty Imperial Army jumpsuits, carrying a variety of unpleasant weapons.



2573rd Imperial Lift Cavalry  
Battalion, Salome City

**"The Lethal '73rd"**

The 2573rd Lift Cavalry Battalion was originally a regular Imperial Army unit, stationed near Collette Down Starport on Collette/Gadde. Most of the unit was composed of Collettian natives, and they fought bravely against Lucan's invasion of their world. The First Battle of Collette began on 083-1117, pushing most Medurman naval forces out of the system. Collette SysDef put up a fair struggle for some time, but Lucan assembled sufficient ground forces to begin a planetary invasion by 260-1117.

At this point, it was clear that the '73rd faced defeat, so the commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Jaclynn Pierce, ordered their evacuation.

Discipline is slipping -- Pierce has come under open criticism from those who would rather have dispersed into the Collettian wilderness, and fought Lucan's troops as guerillas. DoD psychologists have recorded an increasing incidence of post-traumatic stress disorders among the '73rd's troops -- the '73rd is literally going "cavern crazy" in the city warrens of Medurma.

**Insignia:** Two crossed swords against a black shield, with a golden starburst design in the centre.

**Composition:** 341 humans

**Equipment:** Variable. Originally Imperial Army standard, but much subsequent attrition, particularly of vehicles.

Apparently, they require unpaid passage to Collette, which, as everybody knows, is in enemy territory. But then, they don't seem to be entirely sane. What are you going to do...?

ii) One of the installations on Collette of strategic importance is the TNS regional data processing centre. The Medurman government needs someone with native knowledge of Collette to lead a covert mission to destroy the computer facilities, which are being used in the production of pro-Lucan propaganda. You seemed as good as any...

# PORT OF CALL : DEPOT

Depot 3121 A310244-D D Lo Ni 310lm M1V

Primary: Minowara. Spectral class: M1 V Mass: 0.325 sol. Luminosity: 0.418 sol. Minowara is a stable main sequence star.

Main world: Kasigi. Mean Orbital Radius 0.2 AU. Period 57.3 std days. Diameter 4741 km. Mass 0.039 terra. Rocky body. Density 0.74. Mean Surface Gravity 0.278g Rotational period 22h 37m 30s. Axial Tilt 12 degrees. Energy Absorption 0.829. Surface Atmospheric pressure 0.07 standard. Composition none. Hydrographic percentage 0%. Mean Surface Temperature 16.8 degrees C.

No native life.

Planetoid Belt. Mean Orbital Distance 0.4 AU. Body Diameter: 1/100 km. Belt zones: nickel/iron-50 mixed-30 carbon/ice-20. Belt Width 0.1 AU.

Total system population : 313.

Primary Cities : Yokohama orbital, 220, starport A.

World Government : civilian. Representative Democracy. All functions are carried out by a 21 strong body that is elected every year.

Population Breakdown: civilian. 96.2% humaniti, mixed, imperial, 3.8% other races.

Social Outlook: progressive, advancing, competitive, neutral, harmonious, friendly.

Law Profile: 4-43503

Technology Profile: DD-EFFFF-EEEF-EF-G

## System Details:

☆ Minowara M1V

○0 Kasigi A310244-D D Lo Ni

○1 Belt F000167-D N

○2 Kure F813000-D N

## Imperial:

The system's isolation made it very suitable as a base for the pirates that plagued the area in the years after the Pacification Campaigns that lasted from 130 to 155. Indeed, the system served as the headquarters for the largest of the pirate bands and included the remnants of several of the petty state navies that were destroyed during the campaigns. As such, extensive bases were established in the system for repairing even the largest of combatants. The system itself was the last of the pirate bases to fall. The commanding imperial admiral was quick to recognise the importance of the base, as it was one of the largest anywhere in the Imperium of the 150's. Hence, whilst battleships traded fire, a huge marine drop was organised. Horrific casualties were taken by the marines during the drop, but once on the ground, their superior skill quickly ended the pirates' resistance. With their home and dependents captured, the pirate fleet surrendered. As typical of the early Imperial era, many of these ships and crew were directly incorporated into the Imperial Navy for service on the frontier to return to their dependents only when "rehabilitated". Indeed, the modern 209th Fleet is a direct descendant of the pirate fleet defeated in 155.

With its impressive facilities, the system was taken over by the Imperial Navy to become the Dagudashaag Depot. It became one of the largest bases in the Imperium, utilised by the Navy as the primary testing, training and evaluation facility in the Vilani Archdukedom. Being situated in the core of the Imperium, the system saw no fighting, but witnessed many fleets going through work-up for wars against the Julian Protectorate, the Aslan and the Vargr. The system was raided once during the Illeish Revolt of 418 to 435, but otherwise continued to work in peace. Naturally enough, when the latest border threat posed by the Zhodani caused the fleets to be mobilised again, no one knew what the ramifications of that war would be.

The base's size and importance meant that it became a key staging post during the Civil War. Indeed, the base was used by Arbellatra during the final conclusive battles of the War. Arbellatra recognised the use made of the Dagudashaag Depot by many of the claimants to the Imperial throne (including, of course, herself) and, in an effort to repeat the events of that conflict, when depots were emptied for the fighting, she began a reorganisation of the depot system.

## History:

### Pre-Imperial:

This system was never colonised during the Ziru Sirka because surveys conducted in -7985 found no useful resources. During the Rule of Man era, the advanced densitometers of the Solomani discovered deposits of Lanthanum that the less sophisticated Vilani systems missed. The system's name was changed from Duurishaam to Minowara by the Japanese Solomani prospectors. These deposits became important for the region. During the Long Night, due to a lack of life support, the miners left, leaving some deposits behind.

The system was acquired by Kuriishe Eraki as Dagudashaag climbed out of the Long Night. By dawn, the deposits had been played out, and the Kuriishe left the system. The rise of the Imperium left the system behind, and the system missed the horrors of the pacification campaigns.

Among the changes carried out was a downgrading of the depots of the sectors that neighbored the Core and the facilities and ships redistributed among the depot systems of the Core and border areas.

Depot's facilities since that war until the current day have three main roles. The system serves as a base for mothball fleets. These ships are of tech level 13 or earlier, and thus, while more effective than many of the Imperium's foes, it poses little threat to the Imperial Navy. The system provides the main training facility for the Imperial, colonial and planetary navies in the sector. Also, the system sees the majority of the sector's naval technological research and development. Hence, despite the systems nominal tech level of 13, the system sees, in certain areas, a tech level of 16. This tech level has a visible presence in the sector's Advanced Technology Demonstrator Squadrons, the 8161st and 9770th. Whilst these units are based at Ushra and Medurma, for maintenance purposes, they spend most of their time at Depot.

## Referee's Eyes Only...

### Depot and the Rebellion:

The closeness of the system to Core, meant that once the plans of the sector naval staff were known, as much of the research gear, the advanced technological systems and the newer mothball vessels were removed from Depot to locations deeper within the sector. The system itself fell to Admiral Wainfrost's 3rd fleet on 027-1116. Wainfrost was furious that the advanced systems that made Depot so important had been removed, killed over fifty Depot staff, including the base's commander, Admiral Bartozewicz. The base was then taken over for use by the Vengeance Fleet.

## Starport Procedure: System Overview:

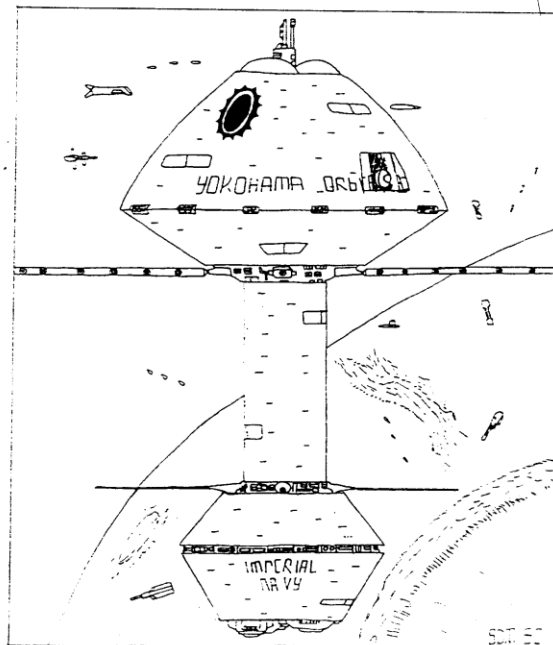
Depot is an Imperial Navy Depot system. Due to a lack of ready fuel resources at any location except Yokohama Orbital, there is no normal reason for starships to enter this system. Hence under normal circumstances, entry to the system is PROHIBITED. If a ship enters the system, it will be boarded and loaded into a tender, where it will be taken to Yokohama orbital. If intent to enter the system is established, Imperial Naval Law is enacted. The punishment may range from a Cr 1,000 fine to a TEN YEAR sentence and CONFISCATION of starship. You have been warned!

Even authorised civilian transports must follow the same procedure. This secrecy is due to the amount of research and development being carried out in the system and also in response to the Dynam incident. Some readers may remember this event involved the hijacking of a number of mothballed ships by Vilani terrorists in 1105 from the Lishun sector Depot.

### Kasigi:

Kasigi is the main world of Minowara system. The population figure refers to the permanent civilian population of the world. The number of transient civilian contractors and military personnel number several tens of thousands. Many of these people live on Yokohama orbital. The planet is almost deserted. Vast tracts of it have been dug-up long ago in the search for minerals. Some of these tracts are up to 1 km deep, and are referred to as "trench canyons". These channels are actually quite narrow in places as the mineral veins had been followed. These deep and narrow channels are now used for planetary defence bases for fighters and SDB's.

The mineral poor areas are pockmarked by meteorite craters, the largest of which is 100 km across. Geological research has indicated that the world always has been dead, and some of the craters have been dated as being over a billion years old.



YOKOHAMA ORBITAL

The low gravity and trace atmosphere make the world very suitable for mothballed ships. Ships' armour makes micro-meteorites of no concern, and the very extensive planetary defences can eliminate larger meteors. Some of the ships on the surface date back to Illeish Revolt. Over a million tons of vessels are on the world, with over 4,000 ships of 1,000 tons or less.

#### Yokohama Orbital:

Yokohama Orbital is the main inhabited structure in the Depot system. There are several other large structures in orbit around Kasigi, some of which are larger than Yokohama, but these are mostly repair and construction yards. Yokohama houses most of the research facilities that exist in the system as well as housing the Viisarika Naval Academy. The total population of the station is 600,000, almost entirely consisting of naval and marine staff or temporary civilian contractors.

In addition to research and training facilities, Yokohama Orbital also is the home for the Depot Security Fleet. As such, it has facilities to support ships of up to a million tons displacement, and can contain up to four numbered fleets within its cavernous bays simultaneously. Such an event occurs once every two years, when the fleets of Dagudashaag take part in wargames and manoeuvres, which are centred around this region of space. No aggressor fleet is maintained, and thus opposition to the Dagudashaag fleets comes from among themselves, or from fleets from Core sector.

Yokohama Orbital also has extensive repair and refit facilities. Anything up to severe damage to the main ship structure can be repaired here. For more serious damage, construction and so on, recourse must be made to one of the dozen or so construction yards that orbit Kasigi. The advanced technology prototypes are repaired and refitted here. The last prototype to go through was the "Enterprise" a tech level 16 heavy cruiser.

It is rumoured that this ship is one of the first in the Imperium to receive a highly experimental anti-matter power plant. Regardless of the truth, the ship is always escorted by a battle squadron of "Tigress" dreadnoughts who have been known to shoot first, ask questions later.

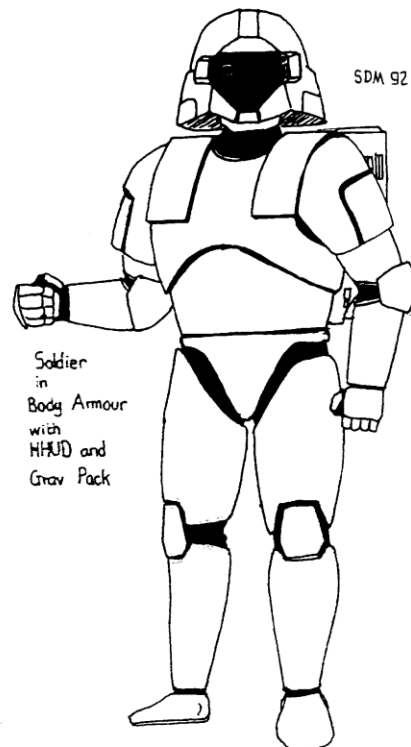
Also in orbit around Kasigi is the mothball fleet. Some forty million tons of starships displacing over 1,000 tons are kept in orbit. Many of the ships are extremely old and of dubious combat worth. Among the vessels is the last "Leviathan" class super-heavy dreadnought. This class was the product of Cleon the Mad, displaced two million tons, and carried two spinal mounts and thousands of fighters. Also among the mothball fleet are many of the failed prototypes from contractors who bid for, and failed, to get naval contracts. The entire area is a hive of activity, as ships are periodically run up to full power to test their systems. Some five per cent of the fleet is temporarily active in this manner. Many of the older vessels are also powered up, however for the last time, and they are modified to serve as target drones on the gunnery ranges. Needless to say, visiting starships are advised to arrive in-system some distance from Kasigi to prevent an untimely demise!

#### Planetoid Belt:

Minowara's planetoid belt is the centre of many areas of research, especially in those areas of high energy physics and gravitic physics. The entire belt is patrolled regularly by unusually modified vessels. Whilst these vessels do carry out security patrols, it has led to reports of an anti-matter containment facility within the belt. Credence is lent to these reports by a huge and unusual explosion in the belt in 1112 that was said to have "fed" on the planetoids in the belt.

#### Kure:

This is the outermost planet in the planetary system. This world's heavier gravity have led to suffering even more than Kasigi from meteorite damage. The planet it self is, despite its size, consists almost entirely of rock. There are strata of ice crystals trapped within the world, and these are mined by the Imperial Navy for fuel and oxygen. The world is also the system's primary training ground for Marines. The lack of inhabitation and atmosphere permits long range firing practice available at few other places within the Imperium. The world's unusual characteristics also make it a prime location for the training of drop troops. These two traits mean that this world is also used by many sections of the Imperial Army. It is also used by the Imperial Guard for marksmanship refresher courses.





# Alternate High Tech Personal Weapon Systems and Other High Tech Military Equipments

## Summary:

At the higher tech levels, under the weapon systems available to the infantryman are at the extremes of technology, with the cost to prove it. To counteract this trend, some high tech worlds have revamped 'ancient' slugthrowers and armour designs to give surprising results. Resemblance of some of these weapons and armours to those from "Aliens", "2300" and "Robocop" is completely intentional. Other items are taken from other role playing games or take a different approach to MegaTraveller technology.

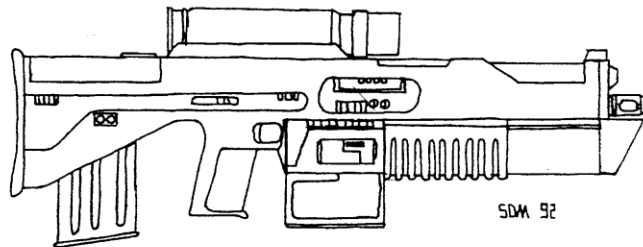


MEDURMAN "DRACO"  
SYMBOL OF FREE MEDURMAN FEDERATION

## Contents:

- Bolt Rifle-15
- Bolt Pistol-15
- Assault Bolt Gun-15
- Rail Rifle-15
- Body Armour
- High Tech Blades
- Grav Packs
- Helmet HUD

## BOLT RIFLE - 15



SDM 92

9.5mm BOLT RIFLE -15

## Description

This weapon utilises all the advances possible in slug thrower design, ignored since the ACR. It fires a 1.3 g, 9.5 x 29 mm HEAP binary propellant round at 1100 metres per second. The 60 round clip is inserted into the weapon's underside behind the pistol grip. The propellant bottle, holding 600 rounds worth of propellant weighs 60 g and costs Cr 30. Reloading the clip or bottle takes 1 round, during which the loader is assumed to be evading. The weapon may be adjusted to fire one, four or ten rounds with each pull of the trigger.

The weapon comes with an electronic battlefield sight similar to that found on the ACR and gauss rifle, an X-ray laser rangefinder, a sling, a flash suppressor and an under-barrel 40 mm RAM grenade launcher, which has a 3 round clip. The weapon is gyro-scopically stabilised. The ammunition clips are interchangeable with the rail rifle. The ammunition is interchangeable with all the firearms described here.

Weapon				Ammo			Ammo				
Vol	Len	Wt	Price	Clip	Round	Sig	Recoil	Degr	Sp	Weight	Price
2.16	0.51	2.16	950	60	HEAP	med	med/R	-	0.1	120	
RAM GL	-			3		med	med		0.38	120	

## Task Library

Round Rifle	Max Range	Auto	Tyts	C	S	H	L	VL	D	Hit	Dmg
HEAP	Dist		3	R/10	R/10	R/10	D/10	D/10	F/10	4	
RAM GL											
HEAP	Dist		-	(as indirect)			pen 38,	dmg 1.5	6		
HE							pen 14,	dmg 30	8		
Flech							pen 3,	dmg 150	2		

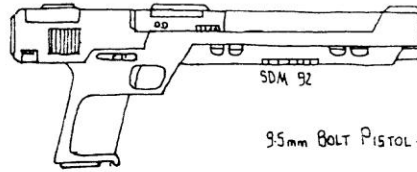
### BOLT PISTOL - 15

**Description**

This is possibly the best hand weapon ever made. In a pistol configuration it combines rifle range, incredible penetration and light weight. As such it is a favoured weapon for vehicle and weapon crews.

It fires a 9.5 x 29 mm 1.8 gram binary propellant HEAP round at 550 metres per second. The 20 round clip is inserted into the pistol grip. The propellant bottle holds 200 rounds worth weigh 5 g and costs Cr 2. Reloading the clip or bottle takes 1 round, during which the loader is assumed to be evading.

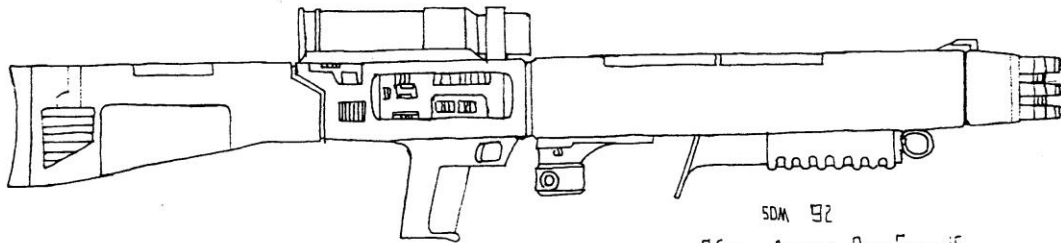
The weapon is gyroscopically stabilised and has an X-ray laser range-finder. The weapon may be adjusted to fire one or four rounds with each pull of the trigger. The weapon may be fitted with a silencer. The ammunition is identical to the firearms described here.



Weapon				Ammo				Ammo	Ammo		
Vol	Len	Wt	Price	Clip	Round	Sig	Recoil	Dagr	Sp	Wt	Price
0.36	0.31	0.31	350	20	HEAP	Med	Med/R			0.03	40

**Task Library**

Round	Max Range	Auto	Tgts	C	S	H	L	VL	Hit	Dag
HEAP	Vlong		2	S/18	R/18	R/18	D/18	F/18	4	



### ASSAULT BOLT GUN - 15

**Description**

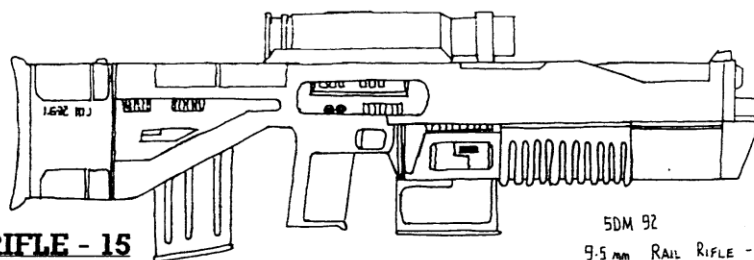
The Bolt Rifle has a high rate of fire, meaning that at squad level there is no need for a specialized rapid fire weapon. However, for very high rates of fire the assault bolt gun was developed. This is a belt fed gatling gun. It has four barrels. It uses the same ammunition as the bolt rifle. It has the same electronic battlefield sight as the bolt rifle, a sling and flash suppressors. A bipod is provided but a tripod or vehicle mounting may be used. It is gyro-stabilised.

The 200 round belt is inserted in the weapon's side, in front of the pistol grip. The weapon may fire bursts of 20 or 80 rounds with every pull of the trigger. The 0.2 kg, Cr 80 binary propellant bottle holds a massive 2000 rounds. Reloading the belt or bottle takes 1 round, or 2 rounds if evading. Several belts may be connected. This takes the same time as reloading. The ammunition is identical to that used by all the firearms described here, and the weapon may use the 60 round rifle clip in extremis.

Weapon				Ammo				Ammo	Ammo		
Vol	Len	Wt	Price	Clip	Round	Sig	Recoil	Dagr	Sp	Wt	Price
3.4	0.81	3.4	1,700	200	HEAP	Med	Med/R			0.35	400

**Task Library**

Round	Max Range	Auto	Tgts	C	S	H	L	VL	D	Hit	Dag
HEAP	Dist		5	R/18	R/18	R/18	D/18	D/18	F/18	4	



### RAIL RIFLE - 15

#### Description

Whilst the bolt rifle is undoubtedly an excellent weapon, in some situations it does have a number of drawbacks. Its powerful propellant tends to give the location of the firer away. Hence, any sniper using this weapon will have a short career. The powerful propellant with its considerable recoil also makes the weapon less useful for marines. Most low signature low recoil weapons are either very expensive, heavy and/or have low penetration.

The rail rifle is a development of the gauss rifle. It fires a 9.5 x 29 mm HEAP round (the same as the bolt rifle) at 1,100 m/s. To power the weapon a separate battery is necessary. This weighs 0.3 kg and costs Cr 100, and provides sufficient power for 600 rounds. Reloading the battery or clip takes one round, during which the loader is assumed to be evading. The 60 round clip is inserted behind the pistol grip. The battery is attached behind the clip. The weapon may fire either one, four or ten rounds with each pull of the trigger.

The weapon comes with an electronic battlefield sight similar to that found on the ACR and gauss rifle, an X-ray laser rangefinder, a sling, a flash suppressor and an under-barrel 40 mm RAM grenade launcher, which has a 3 round clip weighing 0.95 kg. The weapon is gyro-scopically stabilised. The ammunition clips are interchangeable with the bolt rifle. For the performance of the grenade launcher, see the bolt rifle above.

These weapons were produced using the "3G" rules, at an extrapolated TL of 17.

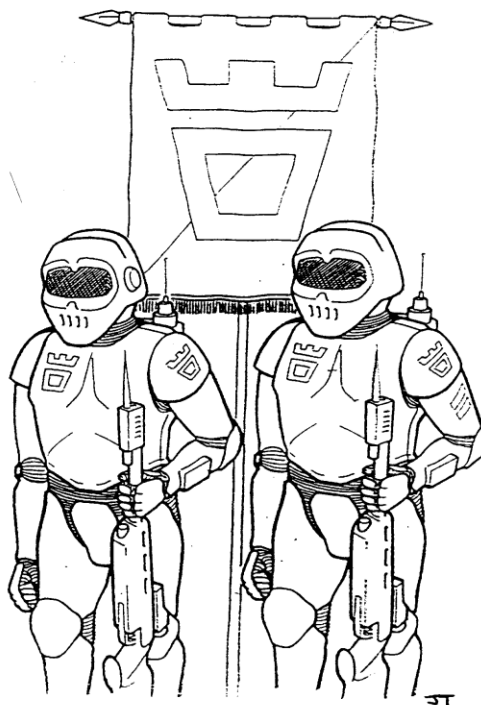
### BODY ARMOUR

Only a small proportion of battledress and combat armour is actual armour. Much of the remainder is life support systems and exo-skeletons. Often all these systems are not required. In these circumstances body armour is used. This is an amalgam of high-tech metallic armours and combat environmental suit. Body armour combines the nuclear, biological & chemical (NBC) protection offered by combat environment suit with the protection of combat armour. It may be given a chameleon surface. It is strictly military equipment.

Weapon		Ammo									
Vol	Len	Wt	Price	Clip	Round	Sig	Recoil	Dngr	Sp	Wt	Price
2.2	0.51	2.2	1,500	HEAP	60	Low	Low/R			0.1	120

#### Task Library

Round	Max Range	Auto	Tyts	C	S	H	I	VL	D	Hit	Dmg
HEAP	Dist		3	R/20	R/20	R/20	D/20	D/20	F/20		6



#### BODY ARMOUR

TL	Vol	Wt	Cost	AV
11	6 litres	5.1 kg	Cr 2,300	8
12	6 litres	5.25 kg	Cr 2,500	10
14	6 litres	5.5 kg	Cr 4,000	18

**HIGH TECH BLADES**

In several "Cyberpunk" games, melee weapons have been enhanced in effectiveness with the use of advanced materials technology. As melee weapons are also quite common in Mega Traveller, especially as even at tech level 15, Imperial Marines are still trained in blade combat.

**MONO FILAMENT WEAPONS**

At TL 10, the technology is developed when metal whiskers may be extruded and wound into a fibre-like filament and attached to normal metal edge. The effect of this filament on a blade is to enhance its penetration and strength. Only a small range of edged weapons are suitable to be so enhanced.

Enhanced weapons weigh the same as normal blades. In combat, if parried by conventional melee weapons, they have a 50% chance of shattering the weapon.

**MONO MOLECULAR WEAPONS**

At TL 12, the technology is developed when single molecule chains of considerable length (over 2 metres) may be produced and attached to a blade. Mono-molecular blades will tear through almost any material except other mono-molecular chains and superdense armour. If a target is hit by such a blade, in addition to normal damage, the limb, equipment etc. hit is chopped off. The exact nature of the damage is at the Referee's discretion. Additionally, if the weapon is parried, if it is parried by anything except a mono molecular weapon, that weapon is broken. Mono molecular weapons weigh the same as normal weapons.

**GRAV PACKS**

A grav belt, for its capability and endurance, seems extremely expensive compared to the technology involved. The following personel grav devices use a 400 kg LP H-Grav module in a back mounted system, with either an 8 kW battery (type A) or an 8 kW fuel cell with 14 litres of fuel (type B).

**HELMET HEAD UP DISPLAY**

An infantryman on the the high tech battlefield needs to keep track of what is going on around him, regardless of the conditions. The helmet HUD fills in the gap between battledress and the Mark 1 eyeball. The helmet HUD combines a number of systems. These are as follows:

- Passive Infra Red with 16x magnification
- Passive Light Intensification with 128x magnification
- Normal Binocular vision with 256x magnification
- Passive Ultra Vision with 16x magnification
- Cold Light system (UV/visual with no IR signature)
- Laser Rangefinder (10 km range, X-ray at TL 13+)

**MONO FILAMENT WEAPONS**

Weapon	Pen	Block	Dan	Cost
Dagger	4	1	3	40
Blade	5	2	3	200
Sword	6	3	4	600
Cutlass	5	3	4	400
Broadsword	9	3	4	1200
Foil	5	2	3	400
Bayonet	5	1	4	40

**MONO MOLECULAR WEAPONS**

Weapon	Pen	Block	Dan	Cost
Dagger	7	2	4	160
Blade	8	3	4	800
Sword	12	4	5	2400
Cutlass	10	4	5	1600
Broadsword	15	4	5	4800
Foil	8	3	4	1600
Bayonet	8	2	5	160

**GRAV PACKS**

Type A					Type B				
TL	Vol(l)	Wt(kg)	Cost	Duration	TL	Vol(l)	Wt(kg)	Cost	Duration
10	28	20	15250	48 mins	10	46	33	10600	140 hrs
11	28	20	16750	54 mins	11	46	33	10600	140 hrs
12	28	20	18500	1 hour	12	46	33	10600	140 hrs
13	28	20	34000	3 hour	13	41	28	10600	140 hrs
14	28	20	50000	4 hour	14	41	28	10600	140 hrs
15	28	20	90000	7 hour	15	36	23	10600	140 hrs

**HELMET HEAD UP DISPLAY**

TL	Vol(l)	Wt(kg)	Power	Noise	Charge	Cost
12	0.5	0.1	0.1 kW	none	8 hours	6,000
13	0.5	0.1	0.1 kW	none	7 days	6,000
15	0.5	0.1	0.1 kW	none	15 days	6,000

Computerised tagging tracking of targets

Data link with other HUD (provides data and hence passive ranging)

2D data/display headset (as World Builder's Handbook)

Computer aided targetting (reduce firing task by one level)\*

The helmet HUD may be added to any weapon system apart from Imperial issue battle dress (which already incorporates these systems)

\* For this to work weapon requires special targetting interface system. This doubles the cost of any weapon that is intended to use the bonus

## A.K.A. Salina

Salina Gerba is a freelance Tri-D journalist and a native of Gushemege. Having graduated from a journalism course at Trici University she served her apprenticeship as operator and then journalist for KCV, the local news channel. As she gained in experience she became increasingly frustrated by the channels staid and cautious approach to news reporting. Her big brake came in 1114 when she managed to accompany and film members of the LOXI terrorist group on an assassination. KCV were horrified and refused to show the footage. Word of the banned film travelled fast. Univent, a sector entertainment channel wasted no time in buying the rights. The fee was such that Salina was able to set herself up as a freelance.

Salina has an eye for the sensational, but also a keen feeling for justice. The more sensational assignments paid the rent, and allowed her to devote a large amount of time to covering moral, ethical, and environmental issues. With the outbreak of the Rebellion Salina was presented with more opportunities than she could cope with. After covering a few inter-faction feuds Salina now concentrates on "policing" the conflict. She is keen to follow up any reports of unjustified and excessive violence. Recent stories have involved the chemical attack on Tawer, the biowar waged by terrorist sleeper agents on Meste, and torture by the invading forces on Foridden.

**Refere:** PCs are likely to encounter Salina in any starport bar or hotel of the Rebellion. She travels light and alone and hires help as she needs it. Her sphere of operations encompasses most of Gushemege and Dagudashaag sectors, and she has been known to travel as far as Illeish and Core. Any PCs with local knowledge, or the ability to look after themselves in dangerous situations will be of use to her. Some assignments often call for special skills, usually linked to intrusion or insertion ( i.e. breaking and entering ), and Salina would then be particularly grateful to find a PC who can help. Typical assignments include protection, guiding, transport, corporate or military break-ins, and computer hacking.

### **Resume:**

General Born 015-1084. Starport A, Medium, Dense, Wet World, Hi Pop. Mod Law, High Stellar

**Journalist, 5 terms, Freelance UPP 87AC88**

Skills Gun-1, Computer-1, Whd Vehicle-0, Grav Vehicle-1. JOTs-2. Carousing-2 Streetwise-1, Interviewing-2. Trader-1. Intrusion-1

Effects 42 KCr. Travellers'. High Passage. Tri-Dcorder

Personal Thin, average height, black, short black hair  
Status Single

## INDISS

### Dummur

Doctor Lin P'ot, lecturer in Political Science at the University of Wyst, Dummur was arrested yesterday by agents of the Imperial Ministry of Justice. He was charged with bringing the name of the Empiror into disrepute after his lecture on "Minor Dictators throughout the History of the Third Imperium".

Whilst being transferred to INS Gorvas for transportation to his trial at Core, a freak accident depressurised the pinnace killing Dr. P'ot and his escort of Imperial Marines. The IMJ are said to be investigating.

### Frey

Six months after a team of Archaeologists disappeared whilst investigating a First Imperium base on the surface of Frey, the Committee on Interracial Affairs today released an interim translation on the 6 by 2 metre metal slab discovered inside the ruined camp.

Translation follows: **The An(cients?) Who were these enigmatic beings who .. (trod?) the star lanes before man? Whay happened all that time ago in the (epoch?) we foolishly call the Final war? (untranslated) which left naught buy silent empty ruins and dead worlds which once (teemed?) with life. What can our science tell us, but that it all happened (300,000?) years ago.**

**Yet, even now, some poor fools are (becoming?) aware that those who we call the An(cients?) came forth in time long past, (untranslated) and where they shall come forth again when the cycle returneth. They know where they trod, where they still tread and why none can (behold?) them when they tread. By their (smell?) can you (sometimes?) know them near, but of their semblance can on (man?) know, saving only in the features of those they have begotten on mankind and of (those) are there many sorts differing in likeness from (Man's?) truest Eidolon to that shape without sight and substance which is them!**

**They walk (serene?) and (foul?) in lonely places where the (words?) have been spoken and the (rites?) howled through their seasons.. (untranslated) The (wind gibbers?) with their voices and worlds (mutter?) with their consciousness. They bend the forests and crush the city, yet may not (untranslated) forest or city behold the (paw?) that smites..**

**As a (foulness?) shall ye know them, their (paw?) is at your throat, yet them you may not see; and their habitation is even one with your (guarded?) threshold. (Man?) rules now where they ruled once. They shall again rule where (man?) rules now. They wait patient, potent not in the spaces but between, undimensioned, serene, primal.. They shall reign.**

Translated by Prof. Theodorus Philetas

# HAMANOK CONSPIRACY PART V: "The Hamanok Conspiracy"

## Introduction

This is the fifth and final part of the "Hamanok Conspiracy" multi-part adventure set in Dagudashaag, and finally Gushemege. This scenario has been set as a continuation from Part VI: "Breathless", but can be used as a single one-off scenario (See Optional Start). Any PC's can be used for stand-alone scenario but those with a military background would be the most suitable.

## Background

The PC's have been chasing shadows throughout Dagudashaag: a band of Illeish commandos with a mission to destroy the most important worlds in the sector. The commandos hope to achieve this with by the widespread release of a highly contagious and invariably fatal genetically engineered virus - codename: The Hamanok Agent.

The PC's last encounter with the handiwork of the Illeish came on the plague-ravaged world of Bastion (1507 Old Suns), where they finally came face to face with a small squad of the commandos. Bastion had been used as a testing ground for the Hamanok Agent. The four-man Illeish group were on the world following up on the effects of the release of the virus. Data from this study would help to refine the planned widespread release of the virus. The PC's managed (hopefully) to capture a scientist involved in the project, Dr. Kensor. The Doctor admits that his participation in the project was forced upon him for his family are being held hostage by the Illeish unit on the barren, inhospitable world of Yta Akat (3103 Tansa/Gushemege). Yta Akat serves as the Illeish base of operations.



The PC's have been assigned the dual mission of eliminating the Illeish commandos and their work in its entirety, as well as the rescue of Dr. Kensor's family. The players have at their disposal a FMF Navy Courier (a modified type Y yacht) complete with 20 elite FMF marines.

For fuller details see the following sections: **SET UP** and **NUGGET**

## 1: THE BRIEF.

### SET UP

The PC's have four days to prepare themselves, get the equipment they require together and look over the ship that they will be using. The PC's will have to wait four days for the arrival of the emergency medical unit and relief supplies/crew.

The modified yacht the PC's will be using will, in layout and appearance, be almost identical to the standard vessel. The major differences are set out below:

(a) Both hardpoints are utilised. There is one triple missile turret and one dual beam laser turret:

Missile x03 Beam Laser xx3

Batt 1 1

Bear 1 1

(b) Electromagnetic masking (EMM) system has been added.

(c) A military-style reconfigurable transponder has been installed.

(d) A low-penetration densitometer (250m depth) and a neutrino sensor (10kw) installed.

(e) Upgrade of computer to model 3.

(f) Auxillary powerplant to power the weapons and EMM plus additional energy for agility: Volume = 30kl (540kw output), fuel = 6.5kl (24 hours at max output).

(g) Instead of the ATV and air-raft there is one Astrin grav APC.

The PC's will need hostile environment vacc suits to survive in the hot, dense, corrosive atmosphere of Yta Akat.

### The FMF Marines:

the breakdown of the marine cadre is as follows:

### UCP Relevant Skills

#### Command Team

1 Captain Shilane A7ACB9 Leader 3, Tactics 3, CR 2, LW 2

2 Lieut. Hask 887998 Leader 2, tactics 2, CR 1, LW3

3 Corporal AA-A668 Demolitions 2, EW 3, CR 1

4 Private 77A994 Commo 3, EW 3, CR 1

#### Alpha Team

5 Lieut. Velure 774987 Leader 2, Tactics 2, CR 1, LW 2

6 Corporal A77AC7 Demolitions 2, EW 3, CR 2

7 Private AAA474 Electronics 3, computer 3, EW 2, CR 2

8 Private 79A766 Commo 2, EW 3, CR 1

#### beta Team

9 Sargeant 78B888 Tactics 1, Stealth 2, CR 3

10 Private 966766 Demolitions 3, Stealth 1, CR 2

11 Private 889966 Commo 2, Stealth 1, CR 2

12 Private A7A565 Stealth 1, Recon 2, CR 4

**Gamma Team**

13 Sargeant 988888 Leader 1, Tactics 1, EW 2, CR 3

14 Private 76A748 Grav 3, EW 2, CR 1

15 Private 977A7A Mech 3, EW 2, CR 1

16 Private BAA774 Commo 2, EW 3, CR 1

**Delta Team - Heavy Weapons**

17 Corporal 99784A Leader 1, HW 3, CR 1

18 Corporal 97A786 Commo 1, HW 3, CR 1

19 Private 567864 Mech 2, HW 2, CR 2

20 Private 768685 Comp 2, HW 2, CR 2

All individuals have Battle Dress 2. CR = Combat Rifleman; LW = Laser Weapons; EW = Energy Weapons; HW = Heavy Weapons.

Officers (1,2 and 5) carry laser pistol (TL 13) sidearms in addition to their gauss rifles with RAM grenade launcher attachment.

Marines 3,4,6,7,8 and Gamma Team carry FGMP-14's as their major armament. The remaining marines carry gauss rifles with RAM grenade launchers (4cm RAM TL 11) the same as the officers. Each marine with a RAM grenade launcher carries 3 additional HEAP rounds, as well as the 3 HEAP rounds in the launcher.

The heavy weapons (Delta) team is composed of 2 units: 17 and 19 operate a tripod-mounted VRF gauss gun, 18 and 20 operate a 10cm mortar with HE rounds (Pen = 20; Dgr = 50; Dam = 14). Every unit is equipped with enough ammunition for 30 combat rounds at maximum fire rate (FGMP's are the exception).

Each marine is equipped with TL 14 Battle Dress and an in-built short-range radio system built into the helmet. In addition to armour and weapons, each marine with a listed skill has the necessary tools and equipment to use the ability; e.g. Marine 3 has demolitions 2 skill - he carries 2 kg of shaped explosives, detonators, control devices (2), tools, etc.. Marine 7 has computer 3 and electronics 3 so carries a hand computer as well as an electronic tool kit. The Gamma Team operate the Astrin Grav APC between them.

**OPTIONAL START**

If this adventure is to be used as a one-off adventure then little needs to be changed. One could still assume that the basic outline remains the same; that the PC's have discovered a plot to devastate Dagudashaag by use of a genetically engineered virus. Dr. Kensor was apprehended during "field trials" of the virus and broke down under interrogation revealing the nature of the project. He will only reveal the Ilelish base if you rescue his family who are being held hostage. The players have agreed to do this.

Alternatively, the players have gotten wind of the plot and now have the task of infiltrating the Ilelish base and retrieving as much information about the project as possible for delivery to the leaders of the PC's faction.

**SUMMARY OF NUGGETS**

**1. The Brief** - The PC's review their mission and begin, with the marine officers, to make their plans for the approach and assault of the Ilelish commando base.

**2. The Journey** - This nugget is optional and describes a couple of possible incidents enroute to Yta Akat, through desputed space into Gushemege.

**3. Arrival** - The PC's organise the approach and landing on Yta Akat without alerting the patrol vessels in system or the Ilelish on the planet.

**4. Attack** - The marines and the PC's undertake the final and most dangerous part of the operation: the destruction of the Ilelish base and the rescue of Dr. Jensor's family.

**5. The End?** - The PC's now have the job of tidying things up, return to Dagudashaag or discover new adventure?

**System overview of Yta Akat (3103 Tansa/Gushemege)****☆ Taukya G0 V**

0. Empty

○ 1. Vilaashk YS00000-0

○ 2. Yta Akat X8B0564-4 Ni De

● 4. Giuse YS00000-0

● 15. Kortat YS00000-0

○ 3. Payseu Y85A000-0

○ 4. Large GG (11 satellites)

○ 5. Small GG (8 satellites)

○ 6. Small GG (4 satellites)

7-11 Empty

○ 12. Tah Yat M9 D - No orbits

**LIBRARY DATA**

With a dense, highly corrosive atmosphere, rich in sulphur and nitrogen, and a base temperature of 343k, Yta Akat is an extremely hostile world. Volcanoes abound and the only surface liquid is semi-solid sulphur found as small seas and lakes.

Despite the conditions, extreme to human life, sophonts have evolved on the world in the shape of the Lumu. They are one of the few races to have evolved in a corrosive atmosphere. The Lumu are a silicon-sulphur based lifeform, absorbing sulphur compounds (for energy production and metabolites) through sponge-like surfaces on their three legs.

The red travel zone was instigated by the IISS prior to the onset of the rebellion to protect their development. Due to increasing friction in this disputed region of space, the IISS have withdrawn observation teams and now the world is under interdiction by Strophon's Navy. The Naval presence is officially there to safeguard the Lumu but owes more to the need to keep tabs on shipping in the area.

**Acknowledgements**

Thanks to David Burden for the information on Tansa subsector and outlines of Yta Akat and the Lumu.

## 1. THE BRIEF

The PC's and the FMF marines discuss their mission as they prepare to depart.

**Location:** In orbit around Bastion (1507 Old Suns/Dagudashaag).

**Scene:** You have been asked to head a mission into Strephon's stronghold in Gushemege to eliminate an Ilish commando team and rescue the family of your prisoner, captured on Bastion, Dr. Kensor. Dr. Kensor has given you exact details as to the location of the Ilish base on Yta Akat (3103 Tansa/Gushemege), as well as the communication frequencies, transponder signals and known codes. In addition he has supplied descriptions of his wife, daughter and son.

Now that an emergency relief ship has arrived ( a modified slow tug, type TW - page 84 'Referee's Manual') with medical teams, equipment and supplies you can get all the equipment you need.

You must begin to formulate your plans and thus make provisions. The Ilish team encountered on Bastion have at least a five day head start, but the mercenary cruiser has only a jump-3 capability and will thus take an extra week to make the journey to Yta Akat. It is possible that you may arrive before the cruiser returns to its base.

**Action:** Make the players write a list of gear they need, anything reasonable will be made available (at no cost but they would like the equipment returned).

Once they have what they think they will need, get them outlining plans but don't let them get too involved at this stage as more detailed planning can be done on the journey.

The referee should act out the role of Marine Captain Shilane, who is the interface between the PC's and the military operation.

**Angmar Shilane**

A7ACB9 Age 33

Serving Marine Captain. Terms: 4.5

Leader - 3. Combat Rifleman - 2. Tactics - 3.  
Laser Weapons - 2. BattleDress - 2

## 2. THE JOURNEY

The PC's (and the marines) set out on their mission.

**Location:** Between Bastion and Yta Akat.

**Scene:** Now you are on your way with an idea as to your final plan. You can at least have a bit of a rest while you travel.

You are two jumps out from Bastion, within the overlapping S'mrii and Lancian Cultural regions and the overlapping political zones on Vland, Strephon, Lucan and the Free Medurman Federation. You should have almost been expecting trouble.

You have just emerged from the non-descript dullness of jumpspace and all the PC's are at their positions.

Suddenly, as you prepare to head for the nearest gas giant, your sensor panel begins to blink and flash wildly.

**Action:** This nugget can take place anywhere enroute to Yta Akat and can be used more than once with a little variation.

Running under EMM and relying on passive scans (at least initially) the PC's should have a considerable advantage in the following encounter.

Passive scans will indicate (if the standard scan tasks are successful) three vessels, the most significant a Nishemani-class corsair (Type P, page 85 'Imperial Encyclopaedia'). This ship is one of many preying on unprotected systems and vessels in this disputed region. Do not give the PC's the complete picture straight away, but reveal the results of the sensor tasks bit by bit.

The corsair is standing off from a Vland-registered subsidised merchant, displaying the colours of the Vilani travel company, Haaman Anani Bilaan (HAB). The corsair is fully powered up, the merchant showing some sign of battle damage. Between the two, moving from the corsair to the merchant, is an armed ship's boat with a missile turret aimed squarely at the traders power plant.

The PC's could probably make it to the nearest gas giant and refuel without the corsair noticing or being in any position to stop them departing. The referee is urged to make a role to simulate the chance that a member of the corsair's crew will have their eyes on the sensors rather than on their prey. The task can be described as either an offensive task by the corsair crew, or as a defensive task by the PC's and their vessel. The referee should devise a task based upon the sensor abilities.

**To detect the PC's vessel**

**Routine, Off=comp. model number, Def=range (Confrontation, uncertain)**

**Referee:** roll 1d6 for range, 1-2 = near, 3-4 = far, 5-6 = extreme; If the corsair achieves success then they will break away to pursue the PC's. The PC's should be able to easily outrun the pirate yet may be involved in a few rounds of combat before they can put enough distance between them and the corsair.

The PC's may elect to intercept the corsair in order to save the merchant ship. Use the following task to see if the PC's can achieve surprise.

**To determine if the PC's have surprise**

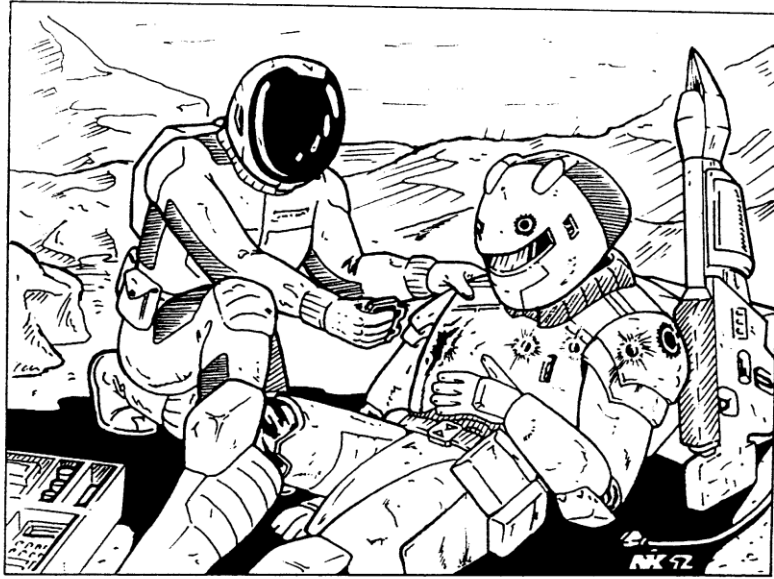
**Difficult, Leader, Sensor Ops (Confrontation)**

**Referee:** Success gives the PC's the element of surprise. Use the best leader and sensor ops skills from amongst the PC's (and marines).

If the PC's achieve success, they can initiate combat and can continue unopposed until surprise is lost.

The PC's should be victorious but their may be some cost, i.e. damage to drives, power plant or fuel tank etc., which may delay them for a few days. The merchant may have been boarded by the time the PC's have disabled/destroyed the corsair so they may need to retake the merchant with the aid of the marines. The pirates (if they have reached the merchant, it's up to each individual referee to decide) will give up fairly easily. The merchants crew and passengers will be extremely grateful for their rescue. The Captain will insist on rewarding each PC and marine a High Passage travel voucher and will pass the PC's names onto other HAB ship's and bases.





Thus the company and its employees could be a valuable source of aid and information in the future.

In addition to the above nugget outline, there could be encounters with S'mrii or Vilani patrol vessels who will try and board any armed or suspicious vessels.

### 3. Arrival

The PC's enter the Yta Akat system and set up a hiding place on the planet's surface.

Location: Yta Akat (3103 Gushemege)

Scene: You, your comrades and your ship have managed to arrive at the outer system of Yta Akat, yet this is only the start. You know from your library data that the system carries a Red travel zone status due to the non-human sophonts, the Lumu, who inhabit the world. There is therefore a high likelihood that the system will have a Naval or Scout guard to prevent access. As this region is claimed by the re-emergent Strephon, the forces are unlikely to be friendly.

In addition, you will have to organise a landing on the world close enough to the Illeish base to enable easy access while avoiding their sensors.

Once that has been accomplished you will need to initiate the assault and rescue plan.

Action: The system will be guarded by a Lurushar Kilaaleem-class patrol cruiser (Type P, page 82, 'Imperial Encyclopaedia') of the Lancian Navy (who now form elements of Strephon's Imperial Navy). The ship generally makes sweeps around the innermost gas giant, Yta Akat and the major jump points. The cruiser spends a lot of its time coasting at one or two gee, powered down and running under EMM. This both reduces signature (and hence its chance of detection) and secondly reduces fuel consumption extending endurance by between 40 - 80%. The ship will be keeping a watchful eye on all ship's that enter the system but will only intercept vessels that try to move in-system.

If the PC's try and pilot their yacht in-system openly they will be hailed, approached and boarded by the patrol cruiser. The PC's and marines would be arrested once it became clear that there were armed troops onboard. Vessels that refuse to allow a boarding party will be disabled by a few choice shots. Any ship's that retaliate will be destroyed.

On arrival the PC's should make their way to the inner gas giant (the nearest) to ostensibly refuel. The PC's should be able to refuel without hinderance but any open approach will be noted by the patrol cruiser. The PC's can use the shadow of the gas giant to hide from the detectors/sensors on the cruiser. There is an unusual and fortuitous alignment of the gas giant and the next world in (Puyseu) which means the yacht could cover about half the distance without being detected. The cruiser will become suspicious if the yacht doesn't reappear after fueling and will head towards the gas giant to investigate. By timing their departure for Yta Akat so that they stay within the shadow of Puyseu as the patrol cruiser heads in the opposite direction, the PC's can avoid detection all the way.

To note the alignment of Puyseu and the gas giant

Routine, Navigation, Int, (uncertain, Unskilled OK)

Referee: any degree of success will reveal the alignment.

To use the shadow to approach Yta Akat undetected

Routine, Pilot & Dex or Navigation & Computer, 2.5 hours, (Uncertain)

Referee: On 'total truth' the yacht has avoided detection completely. On 'some truth' the yacht has been detected but has some 3d6 + 12 hours head start. On 'no truth' as 'some truth' but the head start is only 1d6 + 3 hours.

Obviously the PC's can avoid direct contact with the patrol cruiser if they are completely successful with the above task. Even if the PC's are detected they may still be able to get to Yta Akat, complete the mission and be off-planet before the cruiser can intercept.

If the PC's are faced with the patrol cruiser they can try and slug it out but this is not advisable as the cruiser has greater firepower and better computer.

Deception is the second method of bypassing the cruiser. One idea would be to lure a boarding party onto the yacht and surprise them with the marines. By holding the party hostage they might be able to bluff the cruiser into surrendering. This is a very risky ploy, the boarders may decide to fight and/or the cruiser's Captain may call the PC's bluff and fire on their ship.

Any suspicious action will attract the cruiser's attention and initiate a boarding action. On contact the cruiser will send its pinnace to dock with the yacht. The cruiser will hover nearby with weapons locked on. Half a dozen Naval personnel with the Naval second-in-command and a young midshipman will troop across the portable extending airlock to search the yacht. The troops should be able to be surprised very easily. The difficult action will be persuading the Captain that the lives of the boarding party are at risk if he doesn't surrender his vessel.

To persuade the cruiser Captain to surrender

Difficult, Persuasion, Int, 1 min (Uncertain, Hazardous)

Referee: On 'total truth' the Captain will yield, on 'no truth' the Captain will indicate his intention to attack. On 'some truth' the Captain will be undecided until a 'total' or 'no' answer is achieved.

Once the PC's get passed the cruiser they will need to land their yacht on Yta Akat, reasonably close to the Illeish base yet avoiding the commando's sensors.

This will probably be best achieved by an unpowered glide to the surface under EMM mask using natural meteorological features as additional cover.

To pilot a glide course to the planet's surface

Routine, Navigation, Computer, 1 min, (Uncertain, Hazardous)

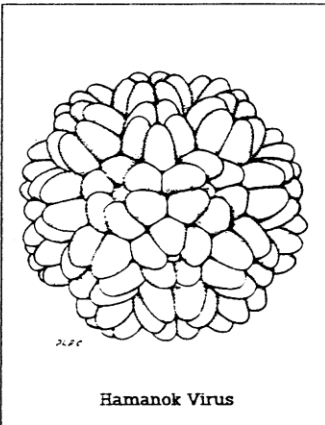
Referee: A perfect course has been plotted on 'total truth'. On 'some truth' the course does not use natural meteorological features and therefore increases the difficulty level of the next task. With 'no truth' the course will be well outside the optimum flight plan thereby increasing the next task by two levels.

To pilot the yacht to the surface

Routine, Pilot, Dex, 10 min, (Uncertain)

Referee: Increase the difficulty level according to the result of the previous task. Failure at this task will result in the approach be noticed and tracked, exceptional failure means not only that they approach was noticed but the ship took damage on landing. The detection of the PC's will affect the assault on the Illeish base in the following suggest.

The PC's will now have to prepare themselves for the final stage of the attack.



#### 4. ATTACK

The PC's and FMF marines attack the Illeish base and rescue Dr. Kensor's family.

Location: Yta Akat (3103 Gushemege) near the Illeish base.

Scene: You have made the difficult journey to Yta Akat, bypassing the patrol cruiser and completing a difficult landing on the planet's surface, hopefully without being detected.

You are now faced with the final stage - the assault on the Illeish base.

You have checked all your equipment and are setting yourself up for the approach. You have one last briefing and then settle your thoughts for the hazardous mission ahead.

Action: The party can try two basic means of approach to the Illeish base: by open assault or by stealth. Open assault is probably the most dangerous with a high likelihood of casualties. If the party decide to make a direct assault then the referee should determine when and where they will be spotted. The Illeish will repulse an approach with deadly force therefore the party will need to fight for every metre once they are noticed.

The Illeish base is amongst a large rock outcrop with the mercenary cruiser partially hidden by rock protrusions and overhangs. A direct lift-off is impossible - it needs to be carefully manoeuvred out of its hiding place. The area around the base is predominantly flat but broken in places with quite a few large rocks and pot-holes (some filled with semi-liquid sulphuric compounds). There are Illeish marines on sentry duty at all times, eight during the daytime hours and four during the night. There are eighteen marines in total with armour and weapons roughly similar to the FMF men. They have no crew heavy weapons except a VRF Gauss mounted on a Kuum class Grav APC (page 11, '101 Vehicles'). In a fight, the Illeish marines will try to hold off the attacking forces while their base is dismantled (or destroyed if in a hurry) and the mercenary cruiser is moved out into its launching position (and where its weapons can be brought to bear).

The stealth option can be achieved in one of two ways, by bluff or by covert approach using the terrain and planetary conditions.

Gaining the confidence of the Illeish team Commander will be almost impossible. They (he) are not expecting and reinforcements/relief and the unit's mission was only known to a small cadre of high ranking military officers.

Thus the Illelish team will be highly suspicious of any unsolicited approach and if they know that their operation on Bastion was compromised will make the chances of success doubly difficult.

To convince the Illelish team that the PC's are 'friendly'

Formidable, Persuasion, Int, 5 min, Uncertain, Unskilled OK)

Referee: If the PC's try to use the appropriate transponder codes and radio frequencies then the task is reduced to 'impossible'. The only people who knew this information were members of the team themselves, the Illelish team will know that the Bastion mission had been compromised. Only on 'total truth' will the team gain access to the base, any other result will result in an ambush.

The other alternative is:

To approach the base undetected by using natural cover

Difficult, Stealth, Dex, 5 min (Uncertain, Unskilled OK)

Referee: Only one roll is required for the whole group if they are approaching as one co-ordinated unit. Make a separate roll for each independent unit approaching the base. Use the PC/NPC in each group with the best skills or attributes to make the task. The task becomes routine if the approach is made at night. If the Illelish forces are aware of forces on the planet (i.e. they were detected on their landing - see previous nugget) then the task level increases by one level.

If the PC's group get to the base without being detected then they will have a good chance of surprising the Illelish team and achieving their mission with few casualties. Once at the base, use the standard surprise task to gain advantage over the occupants but with a special DM of -2.

Whether or not the PC's/marines reach the base undetected and

surprise the Illelish, combat will probably ensue to some degree. The marines will engage their Illelish counterparts and attempt to destroy all the equipment. The PC's will be charged with the rescue of Dr. Kensor's family.

Dr. Kensor's family can be found in a small cave at the back of the base, amongst the rocks. There is a portable airlock fitted over the entrance to prevent the hostages escaping and the corrosive atmosphere entering. There will be no guards set to look over the woman and her two children, especially in the midst of an attack. The referee is urged to design a small cave complex, in which there are numerous supplies stacked in other caves alongside makeshift labs, crew bunks/dorms. Several non-military personnel will be running around in the confusion. In total there should be between 8 and 12 rooms, all sealed from the corrosive atmosphere. Entrance/exit from the cave complex is via more portable airlocks (there are three in total). Treat these airlocks as identical in function to starship varieties.

Apart from the Illelish marines, the mercenary cruiser's crew etc., there are half a dozen medical technicians; these are non-combatants and will not hinder the PC's in their rescue attempt. The Illelish marines will be situated in and around the mercenary cruiser. The exact dispositions are left up to the individual referee.

Ultimately the PC's and marines should prevail, destroy the Illelish base and rescue Dr. Kensor's family.

The mercenary cruiser, if assaulted using the right amount of brain and brawn, could be taken intact as a war trophy.

## 5. THE END?

The PC's finish their mission and return to Dagudashaag - or do they?

Location: On Yta Akat (3103 Gushemege)

Scene: You have successfully eradicated a fiendish plot by an Illelish unit to decimate Dagudashaag with a genetically engineered virus. You have managed to rescue the family of the man coerced into developing the project to its ugly conclusion.

You now need to organise yourself for the return journey: avoid the patrol cruiser, tend to the injured, take what salvage you can carry and plan for the potentially hazardous voyage home. This could be the start of more adventure.

Action: This nugget is just a clearing up piece designed to tidy the ending up. The PC's will need to sort out the details of their return and what they plan to take with them. The home leg of their journey will be just as fraught with danger as the outward trip - for a start they may have to tend with the patrol cruiser once again.



If the mercenary cruiser is still intact and operational, the PC's may decide to split their manpower between the two ships to get both vehicles back to Dagudashaag. The mercenary cruiser could well be a valuable prize for the group - not only financially as the vessel may contain important information on other Ilesh activity (other possible adventure hooks). If the cruiser was damaged in the attack on the base, the PC's may want to organise their own salvage operation to retrieve the ship.

As referee you may wish to award the ownership of the mercenary cruiser to the PC's for services rendered. The PC's could then be enrolled in the Free Medurman Federation as a detached reserve element charged with protecting the state wherever they see danger. This could include a covert mission into Ilesh space to gather intelligence.

The FMF military as a whole and the family of Dr. Kensor will be grateful for the PC's triumph in saving millions of lives. If the PC's do not get a chance to salvage the Ilesh ship then you, the referee, should give them some financial reward commensurate with the degree of success they achieved.



# TRILLION CREDIT SQUADRON REVISITED

## OR HOW TO RUN A TRILLION CREDIT SQUADRON CAMPAIGN IN DAGUDASHAAG

### INTRODUCTION:

This article is designed to allow anyone to conduct large-scale space combat campaigns in a MegaTraveller background with a minimum of fuss. One of the best ways of getting players involved in the Rebellion is for them to run the war fleets that are taking part in it. The baseline for running such a campaign in Traveller has always been available in the form of the "Black Book" adventure, "Trillion Credit Squadron" (TCS), Adventure Book 6. It will call upon and to a certain extent repeat the information in TCS, but will be made consistent with MT and edited to allow a quick and easy method of play. It will try to illustrate the process with a few examples and outlines of a small- and a large-scale campaign set in Dagudashaag.

It will be handy to have a copy of TCS available but hopefully the bare-bones presented here will be sufficient to run a naval campaign without too much difficulty. These notes are intended for dealing with campaigns in the period 1115-1121, i.e. before the "Black War" era and "Hard Times". With everybody's consent, it may of course continue beyond these dates.

Some of the calculations, comments and so on have come from the article by Charles Kimball in Tiffany Star 9. If you're reading this Charles, remember Signal GK is a non-profit making organisation, and we're all in this for the fun of it, right?

### REVENUE:

The budget allowance given in TCS will result in fleets that are to, put it mildly, slightly excessive in size, and a lot larger than the 1000 ship sector fleets quoted in Rebellion Sourcebook. Although the 1000 ships quoted probably only refers to capital warships of 20,000 tons or greater. This section will deal with both the budgets calculated in TCS and that in "Striker" rules. This is to allow a small-scale campaign to be started up with minimal preparation by using the TCS rules set in Gadde subsector, and a wider conflict potentially involving the entire sector. Feel free to use either method for generating monies.

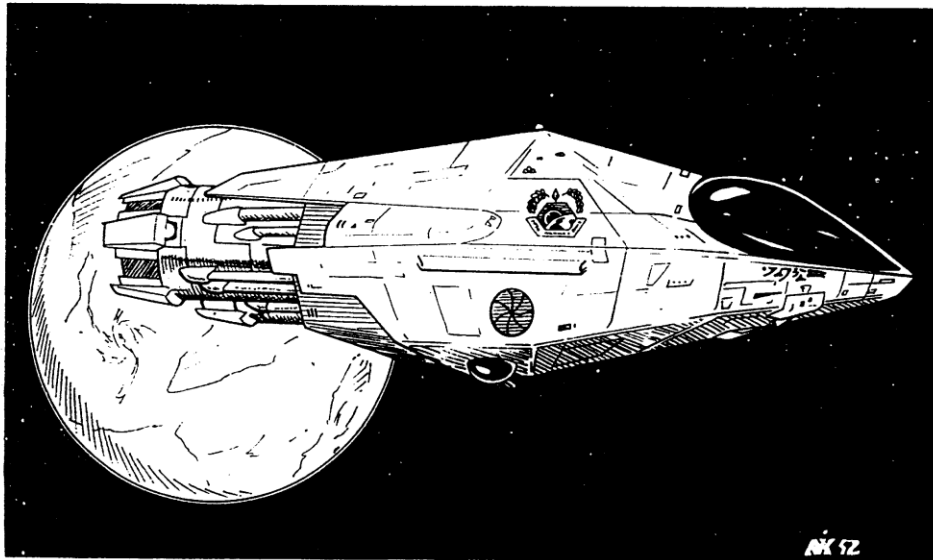
#### 1) The Gadde Campaign

The first step in any TCS campaign is the setting up of 'sides'; this may mean the initialisation of political boundaries, allied systems, identifying friends and enemies, etc. There can be more than two active sides. The population of each system on each given side defines the faction's naval revenue. Each citizen (at least in the Imperium, or what's left of it) contributes by way of taxes towards his or her (or its) defense, a proportion of which goes towards the construction, development and maintenance of a (space) naval power. The exact amount is determined by the following formula:

$$\text{BUDGET} = P \times \text{GM} \times \text{Cr}500$$

where P is the system population (UPP digit X multiplier from data listing), and GM is the government modifier (found on page 31 of TCS). Those without the book or not wishing to be too exact can use the following rough method: in peacetime GM is equal to 1 and during time of conflict 1.25.

The budget is available on the first day of each year. The initial budget at the start of the campaign is equal to 10x the peacetime budget.



### Example

In the suggested scenario the opposing forces are the Free Medurman Federation (FMF) and Lucan's Imperium. The budget for the FMF is based upon the population of Gadde subsector, the site of our mini-campaign. The budget for Lucan's forces will be assigned arbitrarily in this scenario. The budgets shown below do not take into account the various political sympathies that may exist and just represent a flat calculation of revenue available to both sides. As in the long-term campaigns, true faction loyalties may change with time and yearly budgets may need to be recalculated when sympathies change or forced upon a world.

Gadde subsector has a total population in the region of 20 billion souls. Using the rough method outlined above the annual budget for the FMF navy during peacetime is  $20 \times 10^9 \times 1 \times \text{Cr}500 = \text{MCr } 10,000,000$ . The initial budget is  $\text{MCr } 100,000,000$ , the wartime budget is  $\text{MCr } 12,500,000$ .

Lucan's forces have an initial budget of  $\text{MCr } 85,000,000$  and a wartime budget of  $\text{MCr } 10,625,000$ .

#### 2) The sector-wide conflict

Each world has a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) equal to the following equation:

1.		
	Pop x (TL-4) x 2,000	TL r 5
	x 1,750	TL = 4
	x 1,500	TL = 3
	x 1,250	TL = 2
	x 1,000	TL = 1
	x 500	TL = 0

This is the GDP in local credits, and should be converted into Imperial credits for contributions to faction budgets (not planetary defences). 3% of the GDP is available for military expenditure, of which 60% is available for the naval and system defence budget.

Of this budget, whichever is used, 35% is for maintenance and 25% is for procurement. Thus 0.63% of the GDP is available for maintenance and 0.45% for procurement.

This total may be effected by the governmental modifiers in TCS. Worlds move to wartime procurement at the end of 1117.

Whilst these rules apply to campaigns where all the participants are resident in the area being fought over. This does not apply to a campaign set in Dagudashaag, where most of the major players (Strephon, Dulinor and Lucan) have their main power bases outside the sector. To allow for this, these major factions will have what will be termed "Theatre budgets". Theatre budgets represent the funds that these factions are contributing to the fight in Dagudashaag. These factions will also get contributions from world budgets in addition to this budget.

The size of the theatre budgets for each of the main factions is as follows:

**Lucan - MCr 475,000,000**

**Strephon - MCr 275,000,000**

**Dulinor - MCr 415,000,000**

One force that has yet been considered is the Vilani. Whilst the faction proper does not take part in the fighting in Dagudashaag. Dagudashaag is one of the major routes for the Vilani megacorporations exodus from rimward.

This force will be a one off set of fleets going through Dagudashaag from Laraa subsector to Old Suns subsector. The total size of the fleets has a value of MCr 95,000,000. The composition is detailed below as they will consist of mostly merchant vessels.

Capital warships, TL 12-14	5%
Warships, 400 - 10,000 tons	12%
Freighters, 10,000 tons +	12%
Freighters, 2,000 - 10,000 tons	15%
Small merchantmen, to 2,000 tons	32%
Couriers / survey vessels	10%
Support vessels	14%

Again this is an arbitrary breakdown. Referees should feel free to impose restrictions on the percentage of merchant vessels that are armed.

### BUILDING SHIPS:

The next step is to determine the tech level of the available forces, or more exactly what proportion of the ships are at the range of tech levels. Usually this is determined by the system with the highest technological level available to each side. But not necessarily all vessels will be at this high tech level. An important point to re-emphasise is that jump-capable starships can only be built within systems with a class-A starport. Non-starships can be procured from worlds with B and C starports.

Needless to say, it is impossible to form a fleet that consists just of dreadnoughts, or even just combatants. To keep a fleet in action it requires a long train of support ships, such as couriers, tankers, troop transports and hospital ships. However, designing supply vessels and keeping track of munition expenditure is less interesting than watching paint dry. Thus, certain rules are laid down. A typical faction's fleet will be made up of the following ship types.

- Support Vessels
- Warships, TL 16
- Warships, TL 15
- Warships, TL 12-14
- Planetary Navies

This following stage is only necessary for mid- to long-term campaigns where new shipbuilding becomes an important factor and involves the shipbuilding and repair capacities of starports. The capacity of each starport is again based upon the systems' population;

$$\text{CAPACITY} = P * GM / 1000$$

This obviously doesn't take into account the benefits of high tech levels (i.e. the benefits of robot/computer technology in automating and speeding up ship repair/construction) and I propose a modification to this formula:

$$\text{CAPACITY MODIFIER} = TL - 9$$

Use this modifier to add to the population modifier, thus increasing the effective population of the system.

### Example

In Gadde there are no significant shipyard capacities. Lucan's forces have no reserves to rely upon.

The number of each ship type will vary from faction to faction. But for each faction it will be broken down by cost as follows:

2.

Vessel	Lucan	Dulinor	Strephon	FMF	S'mrii	Vilani
a	33	33	33	15	15	65
b	11	11	6	8	1	5
c	28	28	18	7	16	15
d	28	28	33	18	16	15
e				52	52	

For Lucan, Dulinor & Strephon, this represents the theatre budget & out of sector initial budgets. For forces contributed from in-sector revenue sources, use the FMF scale.

Naturally enough, trying to keep track of each and every SDB will be difficult. Thus the following table may be used to determine the size of the SDB force defending the system.

3.

Population Level	No Defending SDB's
6-	none
	defenders are small craft & faction placed forces
7	1
8	7-12 (d6+6)
9	50-200 (3d6*10+20)
10	500-1500 (2d6*100+400)

In addition to these vessels will be craft operated by the worlds COACC, and other defence forces that may influence a planet's defence, such as planetary defence submarines. These are beyond the scope of this article, and if lengthy investigations into siege warfare are desired, the guidelines given later on may be used or the rules on page 38 of TCS may be used.

### INITIAL FORCES:

These initial forces are for 1116, immediately after the assassination (or for when Strephon enters the fray).

Lucan -

Dulinor -

Strephon - + special

FMF -

The Free Medurman Federation and S'mrii Consentiency have initial forces based on their total world budgets.

This is equal to 4 times the maintenance budget and 2 times the procurement budget. The FMF also has the Depot fleets, which are those listed above. Use the normal FMF ship type ratios, but all type e) vessels will in fact be type d) vessels. This is to represent the mothball fleet that exists at Depot.

Because Strephon was late entering the rebellion, his initial forces are mainly drawn from other peoples forces. When he enters the fray at the beginning of 1118, he takes 10% of Lucan's & Dulinor's forces. This is 10% of each ship type (i.e. to avoid unscrupulous players giving him a fleet of tankers!). In addition to these he has the initial force budget, which is drawn from the Gushemege fleets. Dulinor's initial budget represents contributions from his archducal fleets, and Lucan's contributions from fleets from all across the Imperium. The time delay in fleets arriving from Corridor has been ignored for simplicity. However, referees should feel free to make make their own lives (and Lucan's player!) more complicated if they wish to.

The composition of the initial forces will match that laid down above. Organise your ships into fleets and deploy them in their initial positions

Each faction also possesses a number of worlds to begin with:

#### For the Gadde Campaign

The Medurman forces are to deployed at all the naval bases in the spinward half of the subsector (at Rraeghzoetz, Niishulam, Inshaam, Collette, Pukh, Laeris and/or Quinarim) plus Depot (3121). The Lucan forces are to deployed on any worlds from Dinzur, Kedden, Kan, Kestona, Namkigem and Ishmurish.

#### For the Sector-wide Campaign

Lucan - Kuriishe

Dulinor - Bolivar

Strephon - Mimu

Note that in 1116, Mimu is owned by the S'mrii Consentiency and is regarded as a faction.

### **STARSHIP COMBAT:**

**Hitting the Target:** Starship combat in MegaTraveller splits the process into two distinct phases, with 'to hit' and 'to penetrate' tasks. If an attack is successful, that is a hit is scored, a successful roll needs to be made against each specific defense before any damage is inflicted. This section intends to give a brief overview and a means to speed up combat.

For each weapon-class (this is a label which intends to make a distinction between weapons of the same type but in different mountings, i.e. particle accelerators can form three different classes one for spinal mounts, bays and turrets) determine the total DMs for the various 'to hit' and 'to penetrate' tasks. With the overall DM subtract this number from the number required by the tasks, in most cases this will

be 11, the score required to be successful with a 'difficult' task. Treat values lower than 2 as 2, and those above 12 as 12.

4.

	roll expressed as percentage	percentage chance of achieving roll or greater
2	3%	100%
3	6%	97%
4	8%	92%
5	11%	83%
6	14%	74%
7	17%	58%
8	14%	42%
9	11%	28%
10	8%	17%
11	6%	8%
12	3%	3%
13 +	---	1%

Included is a '13 or greater' to hit option which allows a very small chance of success in even the most unfavourable of conditions. The values computed have been rounded to the nearest whole percentage point.

Once the 'to hit' value for each weapon-class has been found use the table above to determine the percentage of batteries that have 'hit'. Repeat for the various 'to penetrate' tasks. Round results to the nearest whole battery/bay. Spinal mounts hits and penetration should be resolved on an individual basis unless the spinal mounts are of the same type and are being fired by vessels at the same range from their targets and with the same type of computer.

#### **Example**

A lone BL-15 light battleship (page 22 of GDW's 'Fighting Ships of The Shattered Imperium') of Lucan's forces runs into a squadron (8 vessels in this case) of Medurman 'SEH'-class light cruisers/heavy destroyers (page 81 of the 'Rebellion Sourcebook', GDW). The battleship mounts a factor-T Particle Accelerator as its primary weapon, whereas each of the Medurman ships mounts a factor-J Meson Gun. The outline of combat will concentrate on the spinal mounts as well as the missile/laser turrets and bays.

The battleship carries 30 factor-9 missile bays and 300 triple missile turrets (organised into 50 factor-6 batteries) of which 20 and 33 can come to bear at any one time respectively. The ship also carries 300 triple beam laser turrets organised into 30 factor-9 batteries of which 20 come to bear at any one time. There are 23 bearing factor-7 sandcaster turrets. There is a factor-9 meson screen and a factor-1 optimised nuclear damper.

The defDM = +7. Armour = 110G.

The 'SEH'-class vessels each carry 20 factor-6 missile turrets of which 18 bear, and 15 factor-6 beam laser turrets of which 14 come to bear. As for defenses the ships carry 8 bearing factor-4 sandcaster turrets, a single factor-9 repulsor bay and a factor-1 optimised nuclear damper.

The defDm = +9. Armour = 50G.

To simplify matters the ships are at planetary range, the Medurman ships coming across the battleship on a scouting mission. No fleet or ships tactics skills have been taken into account, or any of the sensor or weapon-lock tasks that can be employed. All attacks are carried out simultaneously, without interrupts.

The battleship attempts to break-off being out-gunned, but will try to delay its pursuers by firing its spinal mount and using its auxillary weapons for defensive purposes only.

Taking the spinal mounts first the Medurman 'SEH'-class ships open up with their meson guns: the 'to hit' procedure gives a value of 0 (computer DM = 9, weapon DM = 9, defDM = 7, task requirement = 11; thus +9+9-7=11). 11 - total DM (11) = 0. As 0 is less than 2 it is treated as a score of 2. From the table we can see that this is equivalent to a 100% hit rate. All 8 spinal mounts are on target. Now to the 'to penetrate' procedure. There needs to be two procedures here, one to penetrate the meson screen then one to penetrate the battleship configuration:

1) value =  $11-(9+6-7) = 3$ ; percentage penetrated = 97%, which is equivalent to  $.97 * 8 = 7.76$ ; rounded up to 8.

2) value =  $11-(9+11-7) = -2$ , treat as 2; penetration = 100%. which is obviously gives us the figure of 8 meson strikes on the hapless battleship.

For the missile batteries the procedure is much the same. In total the ships have 144 factor-6 batteries which can be brought to bear on their target. Therefore 'to hit' value =  $11-(9+6-7) = 3 \rightarrow 97\%$ .

$0.97 * 144 = 140$  batteries hit.

The battleship uses its beam lasers and fusion guns to attempt to destroy the incoming missiles; there are 20 batteries of each which can be used, both weapon-classes at factor-9.

Thus for 140 of the missile batteries that hit, 40 must go through a 'to penetrate' procedure before we can even begin to contemplate damage.

1) vs the lasers: value =  $11-(9+3-7) = 6$ ;  $\rightarrow 72\%$ ;  $0.72 * 20 = 14$ .

2) vs the fusion guns; as above, the number of batteries of the 20 that penetrated this defence was 14.

Therefore for the total number of batteries inflicting damage =  $(140 - 40) + (0.72 * 20) + (0.72 * 20) = 100 + 14 + 14 = 128$  hits.

3) all these batteries must penetrate the optimised nuclear damper if we assume that these ships carry nuclear warheads on their missiles:

value =  $11-(9+6-7) = 3$ ;  $\rightarrow 97\%$  penetrate:  $0.97 * 128 = 124$  hits.

Battleship has only a single spinal mount to use, its factor-T particle accelerator. The 'to hit' and 'to penetrate' tasks can be resolved as normal in this case, and a quick resolution tells us that the weapon struck home on one of the cruisers.

**Damaging the Target:** The next stage involves the determination of damage from successful weapon hits:

1) the meson gun spinal mounts scored 8 hits, and for spinal mounts they score an additional damage roll for each factor above 9 which is reduced by one for every three levels of armour above 40, except for meson guns (page 93 of the 'Referee's Manual'). This means that each factor-J meson gun that strikes home, 9 hits are scored making a total of 72 damage rolls on each of the radiation and internal explosion tables - that's a lot of potential damage! There are no automatic critical hits due to weapon factor - size differences. The DMs for the tables give us a +6 on the 2D6 damage rolls, which covers the range from 8 to 18, where the serious damage lies! A breakdown by using percentages rather than using individual rolls gives us:

on average 14 critical hits (which can be rolled on an individual basis) which should be enough to finish off any ship taking that kind of hammering; the remaining damage rolls will virtually eliminated anything that has not been rendered inoperative by the critical hits - computer(s) reduced by 90 factors  
sensors - 46 destroyed  
weapons - 16 batteries lost  
crew - 44 crew segments lost/killed/injured  
jump drive - reduced by 20 factors  
power plant- reduced by 20% eight times  
screens - 6 factors lost  
fuel tanks shattered.

Thus the battleship has lost all its fuel as so cannot produce any power, if it had a power plant that was still operable, its jump drives and computers have been destroyed, as have all the sensors. The screens have been damaged, and one quarter of the crew have been killed or injured. The critical hits will inflict even more serious damage. The 128 missile hits are affected by the armour of the battleship by a staggering DM of -23! This is reduced to -17 by the +6 bonus for nuclear missiles on the surface explosion table, but this is still way too high to have any damage effect on the battleship (some consolation for the vessel's crew). This shows up the value of armour, if you can afford it, against all but meson guns: even small meson guns can cause large amounts of damage.

To bypass the effect of armour, try going for a pin-point strike. Select a specific region on the target. the task is formidable so the total DM is subtracted from 15.



Treat the result as you would normally and resolve any 'to penetrate' tasks as appropriate. When it comes to determining damage, reduce the armour (over 40) by half. All damage is then concentrated upon the designated target, for each strike that manages to bypass the armour (i.e. that would give a minimum adjusted result of 0 or better) inflict damage equivalent to one factor loss or a percentage point loss.

#### The use of fighters (and other small craft):

The above example highlights the relative ineffectualness of even moderately powerful batteries against armoured targets. Fighters at first would seem next to useless in the heart of a major battle. Their role is more aimed at protecting transports, landing boats, attacking smaller fleet vessels such as gunboats, escorts: clearing a landing zone for troop displacements. But this needn't be their only role - they can be involved in the heart of a major battle.

Fighters tend to be grouped in squadrons of eight to ten craft of the same type, identical sensors, computers, armaments, etc. This allows us to do two things:

a) group the weapons of each squadron (maximum of 10 ships) into a single battery of the highest possible factor e.g. ten fighter factor-3 laser batteries (each fighter holds the equivalent of a triple turret) could be arranged into a single factor-9 battery.

b) like a grouping of major ships with identical spinal mounts make one group attack to determine the number of fighters/batteries that hit and subsequently penetrate.

### PLANETARY DEFENCES:

Because of the open/closed planet rule, defences of planetary surfaces will be a rare sight, but some local governments will be security conscious/paranoid enough to have them. Usually this means deep meson guns, laser and missile batteries. In addition to shooting orbiting targets, they act as point defences against incoming missiles. If they are present, use the planet's TL to determine what is available, and provide sufficient computers and control panels to operate everything. Power is diverted from non-essential civilian services.

Up to 10% of the planet's revenue may be spent on planetary defences instead of SDB's. When resolving attacks between ships and planetary defences, treat the planet as a high configuration-5 target (8 or 9 for asteroids) with no agility and as size DM of -3. 45% of the planetary defence batteries may bear on a target at far orbit range, and 25% if the targets altitude is less than 50,000 km - targets beyond 500,000 km are out of range. To hit a target on the ground, the attacking player must state he is aiming for one before rolling; otherwise his shots will hit oceans, mountains etc, and generally have no effect on the defender. Treat surface defences as having armour equivalent of local TL x 5. In any case the only thing that can put a deep meson gun out of action, short of blowing up the planet, is to hit with another meson gun. See pg 72-3 of "COACC" for more rules on ground-to-orbit combat.

It is also possible to protect planetary targets with passive defences like nuclear dampers or meson screens (use the volume of the area covered to determine energy costs, if necessary). Protecting a planet with a black globe is silly.

### ORBITAL BOMBARDMENT:

So far, most of the factions in the Rebellion have observed the open/closed planet rule, making this section unnecessary. However, some circumstances may arise when it may arise. The following table from "Fifth Frontier War" simulates the effect of bombardment on planetside troops.

See Table 5. listed below:

For example, a 30 point attack on a TL 13 world with a tainted atmosphere will eliminate 20% of the local troops on a die roll of 5; four more attacks like that will leave the world defenceless. Approximately 4,000 HE missiles, 200 nuclear missiles or 200 spinal mounts (or a combination thereof) make up one bombardment factor. Particle accelerators cannot be used if the planet has an atmosphere.

Civilians may be hit by bombardment of military targets. When using HE missiles there are rarely enough civilian casualties to bother counting them, but it is another story with the other weapons mentioned above.

Table 5.

Die	-----Total Bombardment Factor-----											Die Modifiers	
Roll	1	3	6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	World TL	Mod	
											15+	+2	
-2	20	30	30	40	40	50	50	50	50	50	13-14	0	
-1	20	20	30	30	40	40	50	50	50	50	11-12	-1	
0	10	20	20	30	30	40	40	50	50	50	9-10	-2	
1	10	10	20	20	30	30	40	40	50	50	8-	-3	
2	-	10	10	20	20	30	30	40	40	50			
3	-	-	10	10	20	20	30	30	40	40	Atmosphere		
4	-	-	-	10	10	20	20	30	30	40	3,5,6,8	0	
5	-	-	-	-	10	10	20	20	30	30	0,1	-2	
6	-	-	-	-	-	10	10	20	20	30	all others	-1	
7	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	10	20	20			
8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	10	20			

If the attacking player does not specifically say he is aiming for a planet's cities, roll the planet's population level or less on 2d for them to be hit anyway. Each hit by nuclear/antimatter missiles or by spinal mount weapons causes 100,000 civilian casualties, with double or triple if the atmosphere is not breathable. Really heavy bombardment will cause fallout, 1-6 years of nuclear winters, and temporary or permanent changes in the planet's albedo.

If a planet's population level is 5 or less, any bombardment will automatically eliminate the starport. On more crowded planets there will be many starports of different grades of quality, so every time population is reduced one level by bombardment, reduced the quality of the main starport by one. Reducing a type A, B or C starport will also lower the tech level by 2 per type. Finally such a calamity may cause a change in government and law level.

If there is a planetoid belt in the system, planetoids may be used as a cheap substitute for nukes. For an example of the devastation possible read "Footfall" by Jerry Pournelle & Larry Niven. The amount of effort required to move planetoids and the damage that they will cause is left for the referee to interpret.

An alternative to bombardment is blockading the world. This will not effect worlds with D or worse starports as these are judged to be self-sufficient. On more advanced worlds, every year after the siege has started roll less than the population level or less on two dice or lose a tech level. If the tech level drops to below that required to sustain life (7 on vacuum worlds, 5 in hostile atmosphere and 3 in tainted atmosphere), they entire population may die. Also, needless to say, such a besieged world, if it can not break the siege, will not be able to contribute to its factions budget, and may only produce vessels for its planetary forces (if at all). Like bombardment, the fall in tech level may provoke a revolt.

It is up to the referee to decide when a revolt will occur, and this will depend on the loyalty of the population to its government and faction. Needless to say, such a new government will soon seek terms with the attacker to prevent further attacks on it.

### **AFTERMATH:**

After a planetary battle, tech levels lost will be recovered at the rate of 1-6 years per TL up to its original level, assuming that there are no permanent changes, such as destroyed starports. New starports may be built at the price of (quality \* pop. level \* 60) MCr. Quality is 1 for E starports up to 5 for A starports. On high population worlds there should be one starport per 5 billion people. Starports on barren worlds cost the same as those on population level 1 worlds. These prices include orbital complexes where relevant. Starports must be built from scratch and may not be upgraded. Usually the smaller port is used for local traffic.

As all the sides in the rebellion in Dagudashaag are former members of the Imperium, the 548 weeks required by TCS is excessive, and only 24 weeks will be required to retool before it may be used for building and repairing.

## **Salvage!**

**Scene:** The PCs have just completed jump and are now dropping into the gas giant's atmosphere for refuelling. The system is off the busy spacelanes but has seen its share of the Rebellion. The sensors show only a commercial freighter refuelling, and a local navy frigate in high guard on picket duty. As the tanks fill the sensors scan ahead and the crew relax in their cabins. Suddenly the shrill sound of the proximity klaxon fills the ship. You reach for the nearest terminal and punch up the forward sensor display. There, mere megametres ahead, lies the cold and silent hulk of a fat trader.

**Action:** The PCs first course is to avoid colliding with the hulk. With that over they can begin to scan it, getting as close as they want. The trader is battle scarred and punctured in several places. The power plant is dead. The PCs can visually identify it as 400 ton Type R Fat Trader, also known as a subsidised merchant. The transponder is non-functioning but tail code, DA/R-92647, checks out on the computer.

The ship, the Adharan Flame, belonged to Shandle Jehoth, a local free trader. It was reported missing about a month ago. Having got this positive ID the PCs may want to see what is left inside. Remember that the high radiation conditions this close to the gas giant will make normal EVA activities very hazardous. The safest move is probably to send an umbilicalised servicebot to take a look, or try to lift the Adharan Flame to a safer orbit if the players have salvage in mind. Even as it stands the ship offers a sizeable salvage prize, but what if the servicebot finds more?

**Referee:** Deckplans for the Type R can be found in Supplement 7, Traders and Gunboats. If this is not available then make up your own. Basic stats for the class are given in the Imperial Encyclopedia.

**Suggested options for this nugget are:**

- The ship was carrying an expensive cargo of luxuries that would fetch a high price if it could be recovered, smuggled past the picket and sold on a nearby rich world. The log reports that the trader chanced upon an enemy naval squadron which was lying in deep ambush.
- The crew are found floating in the ship, and have undoubtedly been murdered. There are also signs of fighting. A check of the log shows that they were boarded by pirates and their cargo taken. Just as this is ascertained the PCs' sensors alarm again.....

- The crew are all dead and show signs of unspeakable mutilation. The log reports the ship as having been boarded as it began to refuel before heading in system. The video monitor then shows marines thoroughly searching the ship and the computer and then torturing the crew, before killing them, leaving in disgust and blasting the ship for good measure. From the audio track it transpires that the trader was also acting as a courier for rebels on the system's mainworld. The marines were searching for a "package" but didn't find it.

**Referee:** The "package" is a software one that will enable the rebels to crack the government and security forces' encrypted communications and computers on the planet. When the SDB approached the trader scrambled the code, but with a program that would reassemble it in 15 days time. If the players restore power to the ship's computer the program will reassemble and "announce" itself to the players with instructions to any "loyal" citizen of the Imperium to deliver it Johanne Jelinek at 144 Highway 99 in Goyeau City on the mainworld. The address is a tourist shop and the owner is a member of the rebel forces. Initially he will be very suspicious about who the PCs are, and the best way to win him over will be to show him something from the Adharan Flame. Once they can persuade him that they are genuine and not PSF agents he will pay Cr10,000 for the program. Needless to say the PSF have their own suspicions about Johanne Jelinek....

#### Suitable Worlds:

Suitable worlds in Gadde Subsector for this adventure are: Dummur, Shershe, Dashgurus, Appanaar

# REBEL WELL?

## Introduction

The following adventure concerns the players attempts to rescue an anti-Lucan geurilla leader from a hospital room. He is undergoing treatment following an ambush on the geurillas during a rebel operation. The players need to get into the hospital, find their man and get him out to safety avoiding conflict with the gaurds.

## Set-Up

This scenario can be set on any world where there is inter-factional tension. Ideally a world where there is a pro-Lucan government ruling over a predominantly anti-Lucan populace. The tech-level should be between 8 and 12 and with a population code of at least 7.

## Synopsis of Nuggets

1. **An Arresting Situation!** - The PCs are arrested on a charge of smuggling.
2. **Cell Mates** - The characters are left to stew in a small police cell.
3. **Job Interview** - The PCs are offered a mission in exchange for their freedom.
4. **Planning Ahead** - The PCs meet their rebel contacts and plan the operation.
5. **Operation Rescue** - The characters initiate their rescue plan.
6. **Away in the Night** - The PCs flee with their target off-world.

## Nuggets.

### 1. AN ARRESTING SITUATION!

The PCs are arrested on suspicion of smuggling drugs.

Location: A bar on the edge of StarTown of ?

Scene: You have not long arrived on this world, and after completing the immediate business you decide to relax by making your way to the nearest (un)reputable bar!! You are all easing into comfortable chairs so handsomely provided in this established when you suddenly notice that all has gone quiet: no talking, shouting, cheering, bragging or singing.

Turning around towards the centre of the bar-room you see a posse of police officers making their way towards the bar. There is a quick exchange with the proprietor in a dialect you can't understand before the officers move in your direction.

The obvious leader of the officers stands before you ominously and barks in a thickly accented voice: "Show your ID - all of you".

Action: Assuming that the players comply with the request, the police officer will inspect the ID's, then place them in the breast pocket of his jacket. Refusal, should the players be foolhardy enough, will be met with half a dozen cocked autopistols.

The police officer will inform the PCs that they are under arrest for suspicion of smuggling various illegal materials. He will not be specific about the items or charges saying that they are acting on information received. He will then order the players to accompany him to the local police station for a formal charge and interviews. Again refusal will be met with the threat of armed force. The players should be encouraged to cooperate. The PCs will be searched for arms\weapons then led into a police grav wagon, where they will be whisked away to the said station.

### 2. CELL MATES

The PCs are held awaiting interviews by the police.

Location: A small, local police station.

Scene: Having just been arrested for smuggling - which you earnestly refute-you are now all waiting in a holding cell trying to work out a coherent story to use in your upcoming interviews. You have all been formally charged individually with smuggling proscribed substances (under some "Act" or other) - a euphemism for drugs.

Waiting for what seems like hours in a rather bare, uninspiring cell you begin to feel nervous and tense. You wonder whether the authorities have forgotten you. Just when you begin to start accusing each other of actually performing some illicit trading on the side, your cell door opens and you are led into a larger more comfortable interview room. All of you. Waiting for you in the room is the arresting officer (with side arm) and another older man out of uniform.

The arresting officer introduces himself and his colleague, his immediate superior, as Lieutenant Janko Uhroczyk and Detective-Captain Kerris Somar. Uhroczyk ushers you towards comfortable chairs around a large table, on which are numerous plates of snacks and urns of hot drinks (coffee and tea-like substitutes). This is not quite what you expected from the interview - it seems very friendly and hospitable. Something's up.

Action: This section is really just a preamble to the interview/job-offer that follows. It's immaterial whether the PCs have been engaging in illegal activities. If they have been then it will make the police's bargaining position even stronger. The wait in the police cell should be a time to get the players nervous and bickering amongst themselves. Frequent angry glances by police officers peering through the hatch in the door should reinforce the feeling of impending trouble. Of course in reality they will not be in quite as much trouble. Nearly. But not quite.

### 3. JOB INTERVIEW.

The PCs are given an offer of some work in exchange for their freedom.

Location: An interview room in a local police station.

Scene: Having experienced a long, fraught wait in a police cell and expecting a rough interrogation about a crime you didn't (did) commit, you are partially relieved at the hospitality now on offer:

food, drink, and a (apparently) benign atmosphere. Having helped yourself to something to eat you are informed that your talk in the cell was recorded while you were left to stew in your guilt.

Action: The police have indeed been listening to the PCs discussions, not in an attempt to get them to incriminate themselves (although this will be interesting) but to assess their suitability for the proposed contract. The police will get some ideas on the abilities of the players and in the course of the following interview should become further enlightened.

The referee should act out the part of the captain, casually questioning the PCs. After a while the captain will give the lieutenant a nod at which point he will take over the proceedings. Depending on whether the players are guilty of some crime or not there may be a need for a slight change in the lieutenants words.

Lieutenant Uhroczyk: 'You have been charged with a serious offence, which at the very least will result in a prison term of not less than five years, at the worst twenty-five. Now you may be saying to yourself "I'm innocent!"; but we can take care of that little technicality if need be. A few weapons here, a few clumsily stashed drugs there and the poor old judge will be forced to send you down!

'But I think we can overcome this minor problem. If we scratch your back we expect you to scratch ours. You see we need a small group of off-worlders to perform a little task for us. Anonymous, untraceable faces who wouldn't be around for very long and wouldn't stand out amongst the many visitors to our world. And we think you may be the right people to help us...'

At this point the captain rejoins the conversation and outlines the "problem" in detail:

The government of the world is pro-Lucan much to the disgust of large sections of the planet's population.

Many have protested and demonstrated. The government has tried to suppress the dissent by using, at first, the police and lately the army. This has led to more vociferous denunciations of the government and Lucan, which in turn has led to a greater repression of civil liberties. Many ordinary people have been imprisoned, injured or killed following these protests and subsequent crackdowns. As a result a guerilla movement has sprung up focussing its actions on the destabilisation of the government and the military. The police have resented being used as a 'instrument of state politics' to subjugate the public and their legal right to dissent. They also resent the superior attitude of the army to have tried, successfully, to usurp their role and influence. Many police officers are sympathetic to the anti-Lucan cause. Yet the hierarchy keen to keep the lid on ill-feeling in an attempt to succor favour, and maintain their positions of power, have begun investigating their own ranks for dissent. Hence the roundabout method of performing certain operations, like touting possible aides.

Now the problem in hand: two weeks ago, detectives, through some underground contacts learnt of a planned rebel raid on a Defence Ministry data collection centre. The raid was designed to wreck the Ministry's database of criminals, suspects, detainees, possible informants financial transactions and other sensitive information. Unfortunately for the rebels the plan was leaked to Army Intelligence through an informer. The rebels were ambushed, most killed, with the leader Thierry Hansrad captured. Badly injured in the firefight of the ambush he was taken under heavy guard to the Gilansh Regional Hospital to receive treatment. Once recovered Hansrad will be made to stand in full glare of the media: the verdict and sentence have been decided in advance.

He will be found guilty and sentenced to death for treason, murder, robbery and countless other crimes. The government has planted a jury to ensure the result - the authorities do not trust the populace. This trial and the resulting sentence will send a chilling message to the people: the rebels and other discordant.

The police, reticence until now, have decided to act. They believe that with Hansrad gone, the opposition will crumble and oppression will finally cover all levels of society.

The lieutenant and the captain invite the PCs to join the struggle: they want them to rescue Hansrad. The two police officers will outline the plan of action, supply detailed plans of the hospital (indicate where exactly Hansrad is held), supply most materials for the operation. The lieutenant suggests that the PCs masquerade as hospital staff to get into the hospital - he can get white coats, forged IDs, etc. Also a 'getaway' vehicle will be supplied. The exact details of entry to the room and exit with Hansrad will be left up to the players.

The players are then asked if they agree to the proposal. A refusal will get the PCs thrown back into the cell to await the full course of the systems justice. If they agree then they will be released 'on bail'. Then they will be contacted by underground representatives a couple of days later with maps, IDs and other gear. Any specific requests for material will take two days to obtain (see box for details).

4. PLANNING AHEAD.

The PCs meet their underground contacts and organise the beginnings of their operation.

Location: Within the capital of Gilansh.

Scene: Having agreed to help the police and the rebel movement in exchange for exemption from some trumped-up smuggling charges, you are mentally preparing for the task ahead.

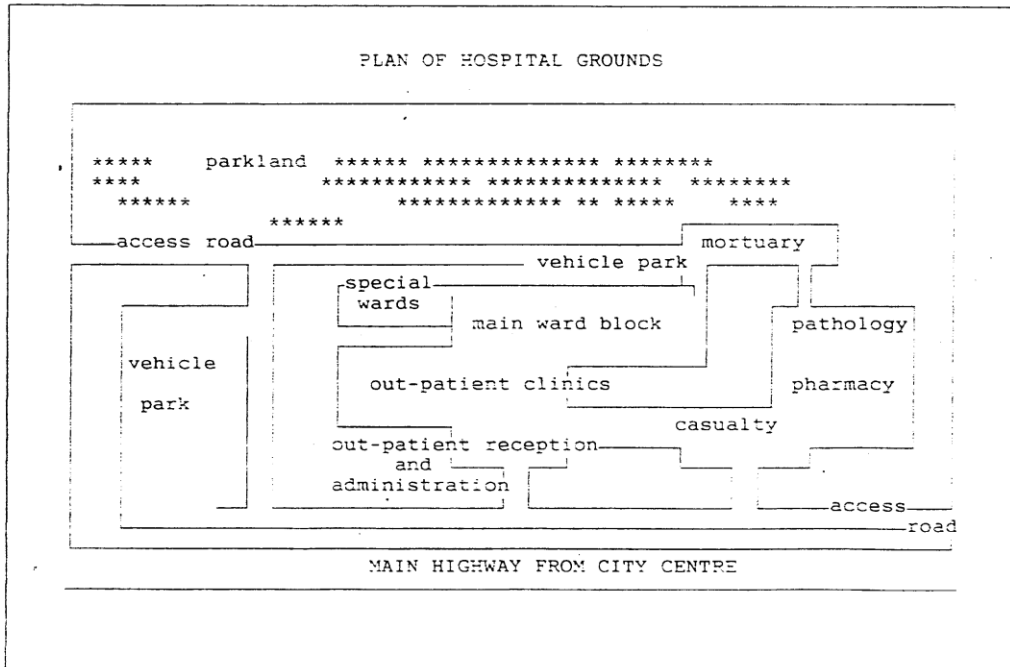
The morning of the following day you have been whisked off to the local magistrate for a preliminary hearing on your case to maintain the aura of authenticity. The police declined to give detailed evidence at this stage and do not oppose bail.

Your ship, if you have one, will be confiscated and kept at a special police pound, until the operation/ proceedings are completed. You are also required to report to the police station each day as part of the bail conditions. You have been warned against attempting to leave the planet.

Following the court appearance you were picked up your lawyer and deposited at a cheap hotel where you then approached by a couple of representatives of the rebel movement. You were again moved to a safe house in another part of the city.

Once at the safe house you are introduced to a small group of rebels, six in all, including the two who met you at the hotel. Once greetings are over maps and details of the guards are displayed for you to examine, question and take in. It is now up to you to fine tune a plan and carry it out within 96 hours.

Action: This section gives the PCs the chance to detail their plan of operation. The exact type of rescue-raid will be left up to them. The rebels will offer suggestions if asked but will not volunteer.



The rebels will not be involved in the rescue itself but will be available for pickups and transfer of the PCs and Hansrad. Any equipment the PCs ordered will arrive three hours before the operation is due to take place.

Once the operation is over the PCs will be taken to where their ship has been stored and sent on their way. PCs without their own transport will be found passage with a sympathetic merchant who will take them to the next system on his route.

#### 5. OPERATION RESCUE.

The PCs undertake the rescue mission.

Location: Within and around the Gilansh Regional Hospital.

Scene: You now stand poised to initiate the rescue plan. You have all prepared yourselves and your equipment.

Action: Whatever the PCs have planned should now be activated. Any transport that the players have organised will appear dutifully at the appointed time. If the players have taken the advice to try the rescue at night then all the following tasks are performed at one level lower. If the players do not make an attempt to blend into the background i.e. pose as medical staff, nurses, technicians, etc., then the tasks are one level higher.

Due to the presence of Hansrad the hospital is inundated with government security forces, principally from the army. These forces are mainly raw recruits backed up by a hard core group of veterans. The details of the numbers, dispositions and their arms are found in the side bar.

To negotiate a way pass a security post/patrol:

Difficult, Liason, Soc, 1 min, (fateful).

Referee: See above for modifications to the basic task. On failure the players will be held until the guards get clearance from a higher authority: roll the task again. If this second task fails or the original task results in exceptional failure then the PCs will be held and then taken to an army jail. The PCs will be sprung from jail in two to twelve weeks by rebels.

To negotiate a way pass hospital staff:

Routine, Liason or Medical, Soc, 1 min, (fateful).

Referee: See above for modifications to the basic task. On failure the hospital staff will notify the army personnel.

To evade security patrols/ hospital staff:

Difficult, Stealth or Recon, Int or Dex, 1 min, (fateful).

Referee: See above tasks for basic modifications to roll, and see below for hospital staff reactions to strangers.

The two entrances to the hospital grounds are guarded by an armoured personnel carrier mounting a heavy machine gun. In addition to the vehicle crew (2) there are 8 troops led by a senior NCO (sargeant). The hospital perimeter fence (some 3 km) is patrolled by two groups of three troopers who set off from the main entrance in opposite directions and take approximately 30 minutes to complete a circuit, crossing half-way round. On meeting anyone in the grounds (including each other) they will issue a challenge hoping for the password 'Rebel Killer'. Failure to respond with the correct password will lead to the immediate arrest of the suspects. The troopers are careless however in their use of the procedure and thus when the two groups meet they will bellow out the password for all to hear.

At the main entrance to the hospital building there are four troops led by a junior NCO (corporal), each secondary route into the hospital building has two guards. The entrance to the level on which Hansrad is being held there are four guards led this time by a junior officer. The door to the room in which Hansrad lies is blocked by two guards.

Each trooper is armed with a 7mm assault rifle; every fourth trooper in a group of four or more men will be armed with the rifle to which a 6cm TL7 rifle grenade. NCOs are armed with a laser carbine. The officers armed with a 9mm autopistol. All wear flak jackets. One in every two men and all NCOs and officers have hand-held personnel radios.

Most doors to offices and store cupboards will be locked (4 out of 6) and those unlocked will be occupied by one to four hospital staff half the time. Doors to wards and private rooms will be unlocked. Windows will be locked from inside. Pharmacy and pathology services (including drug stores) will be locked off by means of push-button combination locks (4 digits, any sequence to open) although there will be on-call staff in these departments.

To open locked doors:

Routine, Intrusion, Dex, 1 min.

Referee: Without a basic mechanical kit, even if improvised, the task becomes difficult.

To by-pass push-button combination locks:

Difficult, Intrusion, Dex, 90 sec.

Referee: As above.

Of course any door can be broken down by brute force but this runs the risk of attracting unwanted attention:

To break open a door:

Routine, Str, 15 sec (absolute), (fateful).

Referee: Up to three individuals may combine their attributes for this task. Any result less than exceptional success will result in a mishap roll. A mishap of major or worse will alert the nearest security/staff patrol which will arrive in 1d6 rounds (randomly determine nature of patrol).

#### 6. AWAY IN THE NIGHT.

The PCs whisk their prize away.

Location: Between the hospital and the means of escape.

Scene: You have grabbed Hansrad and you now have to get out of the hospital and to your 'getaway' vehicle/vessel.

Action: Once the PCs have picked-up Hansrad they must make good their escape, firstly out of the building then to their rendezvous point before transit to their escape vessel. Use the tasks outlined in the previous nugget.

Depending on how easy or rough time the PCs have had in their mission up to this point the referee should grade the ending accordingly. Passage out of the hospital and their journey to their 'getaway' vessel can be smooth or incident packed.

Use the details of patrols, etc. above to guide your response. Obviously rash parties may attract unwanted attention left, right and centre: if the PCs have had a hard time of it then the referee could ease up on the chase. On the other hand if they have been thinking and used their skills to maximum effect then they may have sprung Hansrad without the guards noticing for a while. If the later case is true then a random security patrol or checkpoint could be brought into play to add a bit of tension or possible gunplay. Alternatively there could be a security patrol awaiting their arrival at their ship. Adapt to suit the players' record and abilities.

The end of the scenario should see the PCs escape with Hansrad ideally off-planet, either through their own vessel or as suggested earlier through a willing merchant captain. Reward will be freedom from prosecution and the knowledge that they have helped to thwart Lucan (or whichever faction they have been striving against). They may receive some financial benefit but real rewards include valuable contacts on the world (the world will fall to anti-Lucan forces following a popular uprising 6 months later). This could manifest itself in numerous job offers, special trading dispensations and that undefinable commodity, information.

## GK Q & A:

(Un)official Answers to Your MegaTraveller Gaming Questions!

With the release schedule of *MegaTraveller Journal* best described as "sporadic", we have recognised the need for a forum to answer gamers' enquiries about the **MegaTraveller** background and rules system. While we don't claim to provide "official" answers to your questions, we will endeavour to provide solutions which are compatible with the best of the professional Traveller material.

We're not omniscient (OK, so I'm a little hazy about how starship combat works...!), but we'll do our best! Send your queries to the **Signal GK** editorial address.

**Q. What does a prismatic aerosol do?**  
(K.R.)

**A.** The combat effects of anti-laser/prismatic aerosols are described on pages 42-3 of *Striker Book 1*. Aerosol bottles function like small versions of sandcasters -- they release clouds of small particles which scatter incoming laser beams and dissipate their energy. Prismatic aerosol bottles, as their name suggests, release clouds of tiny prisms, and are a TL10 innovation for defeating multiwavelength lasers. **All aerosols are completely transparent to X-ray lasers of Tech level 13+.**

One aerosol bottle, when released, protects a vehicle or infantry squad for four combat rounds if stationary, or one if moving. A military vehicle with Laser Sensors or PassiveEMS will automatically release one aerosol bottle each time the sensor successfully detects a laser.

**Effects on Non-Weapons Lasers:** Units protected by aerosols may not be target-designated by fire control systems of TL7-12, as these rely on optical lasers.

**Effects on Weapon Lasers:** The unit must discharge its aerosol **before** the attack to be protected -- laser sensors react too slowly. An anti-laser aerosol protecting a unit has an armour value of 50 against tech level 7-8 lasers, and 45 against tech level 9-12 lasers.

A prismatic aerosol has an armour value of 80 against tech level 7-12 lasers.

**Q. Is an insystem jump possible, and if so, how much fuel is consumed in the process?**  
(K.R.)

**A.** Insystem "microjumps" are not only possible, but commonplace in situations where travel in normal space would take longer than the 6-8 days of a Jump transition. An example would be in a widely-separated binary star system, where both stars have inhabited planets. The computer power required for calculating microjump vectors is much less than that for interstellar Jumps, and the Major Races all performed insystem microjumps before venturing into interstellar space.

I'm a member of the "old school" when it comes to Jump fuel consumption -- I prefer the rule that a fully-fuelled Jump-4 ship can make one Jump-4, four Jump-1's, or any combination adding up to four parsecs. On that basis, I would say that a "standing Jump" (i.e. you arrive back where you set off from) would consume 50% of the Jump-1 requirement, increasing rapidly with distance, to reach 100% of the Jump-1 requirement at 0.5 parsec. Assume  $(1d6+4) \times 10\%$  of the J-1 fuel requirement for a given insystem Jump.



# COMBAT ENCOUNTERS

In the war torn core of the Imperium are thousands of worlds being fought over by the opposing factions. Moving about on them can be a hazardous experience...

## REFEREE

What follows is a range of encounters tailored for worlds that are in the grip of fighting, although precisely who are the good guys and the bad guys are has been left vague. The encounters are assumed to occur in a populated area, either within a city or in an area with buildings of some kind. It is also assumed that the characters are on foot or in a ground vehicle. Skills refers to the most common level (the precise nature of any skills is up to the referee). Equipment defines the MINIMUM quality of stuff that occurs in the encounter.

Note that military units will often be armed to a higher tech level.

### 1. Refugees

**No:** 2d6 x 20 civilians

**Skills:** Lvl -1

**Equipment :** knives, clubs, improvised items

A long column of refugees winds down the road towards safer areas. All are tired, dirty and hungry, and some have minor injuries. What few possessions they were able to grab are loaded into handcarts or carried on their backs. All are silent and just shuffle blankly past. A young couple, sheltering in the shadow of a blackened and gutted grav tank, attend to a crying infant. The child's cries and the noises of the passing refugees are muffled by the distant heavy thuds of firing guns and the dull crashes of explosions.

**Referee:** the refugees are fleeing from the combat in the city. They have very little food or water and no medical supplies. Many have injuries and a few are quite ill. They can provide accurate information about what is happening in the city but won't provide any help unless someone helps them first.

### 2. Looters

**No:** 3d6 youths

**Skills :** Lvl -1

**Equipment :** firearms

Most of the buildings in this area have been damaged in the fighting and bear bullet holes: all have been abandoned. Two or three are little more than gutted shells whilst a few others are burning. Water leaks up through the sewer covers and collects in the craters that mark the street. Shouts can be heard from ahead and figures can be made out through the smoke: a gang of youths wearing pistols and knives are looting electronic equipment from a store. Smashed components and broken crates litter the road, and a few metres off a vehicle with a crumpled front lies on its side. Some of the youths are loading crates into the back of a brand new and rather sporty ground car, while others manhandle smaller boxes down the street.

**Referee:** the looters are armed and hostile, and react badly to anyone discovering what they are up to. They have absolutely no qualms at all about attacking the characters.

If the situation becomes really bad, military police turn up: this creates an additional problem for the PC's in that they will have to explain what were doing in the area.

### 3. Military Police

**No:** 3d6 military police, 3d6 x 10 prisoners

**Skills:** Lvl-2

**Equipment:** vehicles, military equipment to tech level.

Prisoners of war trail back from the maglev station to a nearby air/raft park, where more captured soldiers sit in untidy rows. Most wear combat uniforms bearing the insignia of the enemy, although there are some wearing "friendly" insignia and some prisoners are in civilian clothing. All of the soldiers are tired and dirty and many have bandaged wounds. Despite this they are fairly cheerful; some are eating, others are resting and a few are gambling. Watching over them is a detachment of security troops wearing combat armour and carrying fusion guns. They have a grav APC mounting a VRF gauss gun, as well as four "Eye in the Sky" surveillance robots. The security troops look none too keen on having visitors.

**Referee:** the prisoners are downhearted but not broken and (probably) heavily outnumber the military police. If the characters unwittingly create enough of a disturbance the prisoners will mount an escape, but of course it will look as if the PC's orchestrated the entire thing.

### 4. MedEvac Centre

**No:** 2d6 x 10, includes security, medics and injured

**Skills:** Lvl-2

**Equipment:** Vehicles, military equipment to tech level.

Grav APCs bearing the red and blue star of the medical services wait outside a bombed-out hotel that has been converted into a temporary medevac station. Doctors and other medical personnel hurry to assess the injured presently being unloaded from the vehicles, whilst the walking wounded are treated within the blackened hotel foyer. The APCs depart and arrive with depressing regularity.



Most of the casualties are soldiers but a few civilians are receiving attention from an orderly. Security troops wearing combat armour with gauss rifles provide some element of protection for the medics as well as being available to break up any trouble.

**Referee:** the medical personnel are extremely short of staff and have the authority to force civilians to assist them. The security troops will follow orders issued by the medics. While the PC's will not actually perform surgery they will get all of the menial tasks.

#### 5. Command Post

**No:** 2d6 x 5 troops, engineers and command personnel

**Skills:** Lvl -2

**Equipment:** Vehicles, military equipment to tech level.

From ahead there are the unmistakable sounds of the military - the soft whine of engines, the tramp of feet and shouted orders. The road turns and opens onto a wide plaza surrounded by functional buildings, most of which bear scars from the fighting in the area. Three dented grav APCs marked with a distinctive shield emblem and manned by security troops are parked outside the largest building, whilst a number of rather more specialised engineer vehicles are undergoing routine maintenance in what used to be the air/raft park. There are armed soldiers at all the entrances to the buildings, and they have taken the precaution of setting up heavy weapon emplacements.

**Referee:** A battalion command post is located in one of the buildings. It has a unit of engineers attached and is guarded by a detachment of security troops. The characters are not too welcome in the area (which was supposed to be closed off). Unless they can shoot or talk their way out the security troops will want to 'interview' them to make sure they are not spies.

#### 6. Tanks Firing

**Skills:** Lvl -1

**Equipment:** Vehicles, military equipment to tech level.

Seven scarred and dirty grav tanks stand side by side on the plasticrete and occasionally fire a shot up a wide street. Crouched behind them, using a low wall for cover, are troops clad in filthy combat armour and festooned with equipment. There is a media team with them filming the entire thing. Despite the ground-shaking thuds from the tanks the soldiers seem relaxed and cheerful, although occasionally one peers over the wall and looses off a few shots at the unseen opponents. There is no sign of any return fire.

**Referee:** the media crew are busy filming a propaganda story for the local newsnet. One of their primary objectives is to show their side's troops protecting and interacting with the locals, and the PC's are the first "locals" to have shown up. This may bring a range of problems when the story is broadcast, with the characters appearing to be collaborators.

#### 7. Street Fighting

**Skills:** Lvl -2

**Equipment:** Vehicles, military equipment to tech level.

A squad of soldiers break from the hard cover of a ruined building and sprint across the litter-strewn street towards another cratered structure. From further down the same street there come the dull thuds of energy weapons - a series of blue flashes some distance being the running troops marks the impacts of the rounds. The soldiers make it into the building and begin firing into a burning tower block. A truly huge explosion shatters a row of stores a few hundred metres to the left, leaving a column of smoke and a pile of burning rubble. A few seconds later there is a series of thuds as another fusion gun opens up, but this time it is from behind.

**Referee:** the PC's have managed to wander right into the middle of a war zone. All around them are fighting infantry soldiers with the most advanced equipment available on the world. Any troops the characters encounter will shoot first and ask questions later. A decent plan might be to get out of the area before becoming either a casualty or a prisoner.

#### STARPORT FREEFAX

**Owners of General Products LIC, Space Strider G.P. Vacc Suit - series 415 to 567 - Please visit your nearest service agent for a FREE suit inspection. Some models have recently been discovered to have a defect in Safety seal A-Alpha 342-1. Should your suit have a defective seal this will be replaced free of charge.**

**Please report any unattended parcels** to Starport Security immediately.

**For Sale** The Hagu'Asai. Garr Aedz Scout ship, incredible low price - excellent condition. Needs slight work on engine and total galley refit before next Annual Maintenance.

Contact Berth 35 for further details.

**For a Great Time,** Visit the Rebellion Rave, Hottest new club on Level 8. First drink on the house.

**WANTED:** information on the whereabouts of a Sub Officer Emil Jhan Phillips, last known on the Close escort "Reaper".

Please contact V-Phone 987-2735-9876 if you have any news.

**Missing;** The Faraday family, last seen prior to the recent riots at 212-18 Level G. Reward available to anyone giving information leading to their current whereabouts.

FreePhone 987-1433-6544

## A Theta Borealis Sector Special

# CONTACT: BURUGDI

## INTRODUCTION

The Burugdi originate on the world of Bur'vr'di'kr, the fourth planet out from the primary Br'dm'av (Theta Borealis 2112 A675999-D). The primary is a class F8V main sequence star slightly more massive and luminous than Sol (1.144 and 1.178 standard respectively). The world is 10,470 km in diameter, has a hydrographic percentage of 56 with a standard atmosphere tainted by high levels of carbon monoxide and nitrogen. Overall the world is smaller, drier and slightly cooler than Terra.

Bur'vr'di'kr has a surface gravity 1.013 standard, an orbital period of 691.125 standard days (763.85 local days) and a rotational period of 21.715 hours. The average temperature is +9 degrees centigrade.

There are four major continents, four minor continents and numerous island chains in the cool shallow seas. There is minor geological activity although there is plenty of evidence that this was much more substantial in the past. The planet is rich in native life with virtually every region inhabited.

## PHYSIOLOGY

### 'Parent' Burugdi

The full 'adult' Burugdi are two metre long, amorphous blobs weighing in at about 175 kg. They have eight limb-like appendages - the forward pair are manipulatory, the rear trio of pairs have regressed to no more than club-like legs which can barely move the Burugdi body. The adults resemble large, bloated, prostrate fowl. For the most part the adult Burugdi use grav harnesses on the underside of their body to propel their great masses. Burugdi without an artificial means of movement are very much like 'a fish out of water'.

The central nervous system is focused in the exact centre of the body, the 'brain' itself is housed in a tough cartilage case which is lined with spongy tissue. Major nerve branches run to the anterior ('head') end of the body leading to the primary sensory organs. This primary cluster is composed of compound eyes, highly developed olfactory and taste system, and various pheromone secretory glands. Burugdi are essentially deaf, although pressure sensors around the head region can pick up vibrations caused by displacement of air; either through movement of objects or 'loud' noises.

The respiratory system relies upon eight pairs of small lungs located just forward and below the brain case, fed by two openings in the upper, dorsal surface. These are controlled by both the autonomic and conscious nervous system. Each tube feeds four of the lungs, although adults can operate adequately with only one set working. The atmosphere on Bur'vr'di'kr is tainted by dangerous (to oxygen-based respiring lifeforms) levels of carbon monoxide. The inhaled gases are first scrubbed of toxic substances throughout the length of the tubes via special receptors on the tube lining.

There is a dual closed circulatory system. The noxious gases from the atmosphere taking out of the inspired air passes into one system. Cleaned air is passed into another via the lungs and is fed to a pair of three-chambered hearts (one on each side for each lung group) then redistributed around the body. Waste gases and metabolites from cellular processes pass into the first circulatory system which are collected in a special lung-kidney hybrid organ for excretion. The 'blood' circulatory system returns back to the heart before refeeding the lungs.

Food is composed of a various mix of animal and vegetable matter, partially decomposed, and is entered into the body through a dorsal opening just behind the head sensory cluster. The gut is primitive but huge in extent with six stomachs. Each stomach has a differing role in the breakdown and absorption of different molecule classes. Associated with each stomach is a proto-kidney which detoxifies the absorbed food passing the waste to the excretory circulatory system, and the nutrients to the other circulatory system.

The molecular biology of the Burugdi follows along similar lines to most other life forms, with a four-stranded nucleic acid analogue acting as the information carrying molecule.

The four sexes are virtually identical and differ only in the genetics of the sexual cells. All the sexes are required to produce a functional 'parent-type' creature. The four-cell embryo however is carried in the ll'Burugdi clone/drone.

The Burugdi reproduce both sexually and asexually. Sexual reproduction involves a physical union of the four sexual sub-types before the implantation in the ll'Burugdi. The ll'Burugdi carry the embryo for forty days before 'giving birth'. The neonate is a miniature replica of the adult, coming into the 'world' at about one-thirtieth of the full parent size. The offspring are underdeveloped internally, but this is corrected as they rapidly grow, doubling in size every sixty days. The young go through a series of moults that occur at the end of each sixty-day period. The soft outer skin crystallizes, shatters to reveal a more plastic skin underneath more able to stretch for the next growth spurt. After about a standard year the young Burugdi makes the final moult and quickly reaches the full adult proportions (although full sexual, emotional and mental development take some years to complete).

Asexual reproduction is a parthenogenic process found in many lower lifeforms. This means of procreation gives rise to a series of genetically identical clones (and genetically identical to the parent although phenotypically distinct). These clones are the ll'Burugdi.

### ll'Burugdi

Asexual reproduction commences at the same time as full sexual maturity is reached, approximately five years after birth. The ll'Burugdi embryos mature in a special organ (a modification of a pair of proto-stomachs) and are produced live after 12 weeks incubation going through a development sequence quite different from that of the parent. Up to four ll'Burugdi can be born each year.

The ll'Burugdi are smaller, leaner, physically very active and very dextrous in comparison with the parent and have an upright bipedal stance. Yet mentally the ll'Burugdi are only semi-intelligent. Virtually all their action is controlled psionically by their blood parent. This psionic activity is a natural development of the pheromone-emphatic responses in the pre-Burugdi, the means to coordinate the activity of the drones.

The ll'Burugdi are the eyes, ears, hands and feet of the Burugdi species (or the Rudeygi'Burugdi - the Burugdi Collective). They are used as in every role where a physical presence is required. As an example the standard Burugdi scout vessel has a crew complement of one single parental Burugdi and between three and six of its clones. The parental acts like a central file server on a computer network, giving out instructions psionically for the running of the ship. The psionic link allows the Burugdi to see and feel the responses of the 'drone crew', with almost instantaneous feedback from many parts of the ship at once. There is a dynamic response and the Burugdi vessels act almost as a single living entity.

The ll'Burugdi are sterile and cannot reproduce in any manner, and have lifespans of only about ten to fifteen years. As an extension of the Burugdi they perform all tasks as their parents ability dictates. Direct communication between the drones is non-existent, relying on links initiated by the parental and its clones. Thus for the most part the ll'Burugdi are dumb, organic automata with virtually no free-will. If a parent Burugdi dies thus severing the psionic links to its clones these ll'Burugdi begin to wander around aimlessly, without much purpose, confused, not eating and eventually they begin to waste and die. Elderly Burugdi often make provisions that on their death some individual will dispose of the remaining clones. A disturbing phenomenon that occurs and has become more frequent with the increasing longevity of the parents is that of mental illness. As the Burugdi age and approach their final years the psionic links with the clones are relaxed. Thus clones can temporarily, suddenly stop whatever they were doing and wander around waiting for a 'connection' to be reestablished. Sometimes this repeating breaking of contact can have a traumatic effect on the individual ll'Burugdi where they suddenly become violent or run terrified from that point they were under control. Also the parents can become senile, their mood and behavioural swings are reflected by the actions of the clones.

### Psionic Abilities

The innate psionic talents of the Burugdi are somewhat limited to emphatic-telepathic abilities. These are well developed and complex in nature but available only to the parental Burugdi. The parentals can communicate freely amongst themselves up to ranges of several tens of thousands of kilometers. Clones do not have any active psionic abilities; their emotions and surface feelings/thoughts can be read by the parentals through a passive, empathic process. Only the biological parent of a clone can pick up the surface thoughts - although other parentals can communicate telepathically to non-sibling clones.

Natural pheromones produced by all Burugdi, parental and ll'Burugdi reinforce the psionic communication process. This is the primary means by which ll'Burugdi communicate with each other.

## SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECTS

The clones form the majority of the Burugdi Collective, outnumbering parental by approximately eight-to-one, yet they are regarded as non-citizens; almost dispensible. Only their basic needs are catered for.

The Il'Burugdi are very cheap labour; they are the farmers, feeders, fighters, miners, factory workers, the builders and nursery workers. They are the deckhands, the grunts, always without exception in the subservient role; the parents are almost in command positions.

It is interesting to note that the Burugdi do not discriminate between the four sexes, all have equal status and can be found in walks of Burugdi life from naval officers to accountants. It is hard to differentiate between the sexes, there are few externally visible clues e.g. the Burugdi by-and-large do not wear clothes, only loose wrap-around cloaks during the cooler seasons which have no special social significance. These items are purely functional.

The whole structure of the Burugdi Collective is one of rigid conformity; there is a place for every individual and every individual has its place.

## HISTORY

Descended from a race of pseudo-avian omnivores who inhabited the boundary between the dry plains of the major continent Ill'rd and the rich organic seas. Full sentience was achieved, around 75,000 years ago, coinciding with a number of major geophysical changes taking place throughout the planet.

The antecedents of the Burugdi were a social species with well defined strata of function and importance. This social organisation can still be seen today, although virtually all the groupings have disappeared. There is still a major division between the Burugdi and Il'Burugdi, the semi-sentient drones, as well as the four adult sexes.

The history of the Burugdi has been marked by large explosions in the growth of the population followed by equally rapid and catastrophic collapses. The population expansion is partly due the ability of the parentals to produce large numbers of the clones (only now have the Burugdi developed drugs which can suppress the generation of the clones). During the early stages of the primitive societies the technological capabilities were outstripped by the demand for food, despite the parentals resorting to cannibalism feeding off the clones and the population crashed.

Later domestication of native flora and fauna enabled to ease the fall of the population during the later half of the cycle. Further development in technology stretched-out the expansion-collapse cycle. Improved agricultural methods initially exacerbated the problems as extra food produced in the new emerging agrarian societies only meant an increase in the speed of recover from the trough. Numerous small wars erupted between extended family structures as the groups made attempts to acquire fresh productive land and new technologies. After 500 years of fighting the Rudeygi'Bur clan came to dominate the other groups.

The population pressure was alleviated when sub-light space travel fostered colonisation of the inner world of Yulauo which was able to support limited agriculture. Then the first interstellar mission in 742 (imperial dating) to Sengu'vr (Theta Borealis 2211) set up a colony on arrival on the second planet out from the system primary. The significance of this first exploration was the discovery of the wreckage of a jump-capable starship. Within ten years of arrival in the Sengu'vr system the colonist-explorers had sent a group back to Bur'vr'di'kir within the reconstructed vessel.

Virtually overnight the Burugdi jumped from tech level 8 to 11. This discovery sparked a rush of building ships to move some of the population to Sengu'vr and the other neighbouring system of Gula'br (1912). By 844 large productive colonies were established in the systems. The new technological base was able to adequately support both the physical and psychological needs of the Rudeygi'Burugdi.

At first the Burugdi were by-and-large content with their new possessions. Soon thoughts turned to further exploration of the surrounding space for the development of resources for the expanding population. The next phase took the Burugdi scouts coreward towards the the GOV star at 2309 in the adjacent subsector. This world promised rich pickings, an ideal candidate for possessing a suitable, habitable world. The system did contain an ideal planet but unfortunately it was claimed by a small-client state - a state which didn't take kindly to the Burugdi intrusion. The system was only sparsely settled and the Burugdi decided to return to the world with a few more armed ships to force the issue. When the Burugdi returned they were suprised by a small zhodani patrol-fleet, from the Zhodani colonies in Theron sector, on a goodwill mission in orbit around the main world. A small battle ensued with the intruders being repulsed.

It was at this point that Burugdi recognised the zhodani origin of their jump-capable vessels. The crashed starship on Sengu'vr was indeed a zhodani vessel of early design of about tech level 11.

Realising that they were obviously inferior in technology (and probably in numbers as well!) the Burugdi abandoned immediate attempts to expand coreward. The attention was switched to the small cluster of worlds in the heart of their own subsector and focussed their efforts towards acquiring these systems.

## The Burugdi-Telura Wars:

Following the minor clash with the Zhodani at Vietshiel (Theta Borealis 2309) the Burugdi turned their eyes rimward to the small group of systems deeper in the subsector.

This route was blocked too, by more humans although of a different ethnic background to the Zhodani. The humans originated on the world of Telura (2116), a world not unlike Bur'vr'di'kir. The Telurans laid claim to all the systems within three parsecs of their homeworld, yet only half of them had colonies on them. Initial attempts at trying to acquire the unoccupied system at 2014 (Guama) by peaceful negotiation was politely but sternly rebuffed. The Burugdi frustrated in their attempts to find a unclaimed system within immediate range of their jump-2 ships decided to return to Guama and annex the world. They argued that where diplomacy had failed, force would if necessary win.

The Burugdi had by this time (978 Imperial) achieved a tech level close to 12, and their military infrastructure developed for possible future conflict (following the Vietshiel debacle). The technological gap between the Burugdi and the Telurans was a major factor in deciding to go to war if necessary.

The initial small-scale landings on Guama were unopposed and the Burugdi managed to set up a small colony supporting a forward naval base. The Burugdi had planned to leave their acquisitions at that; Guama would be a base to explore the adjacent subsectors to spinward and trailing. The Telurans retaliated by launching a number of raids on the Burugdi from a deep space depot within hex 2015. Within four months the Burugdi were forced to withdraw.

The following 150 years has seen a number of small clashes between the two states over Guama, where the Burugdi gain a toe-hold before being ousted. Most of the conflicts are definitely small-scale, often no more than hit-and-run raids by the Telurans following larger-scale assaults by the Burugdi. From time to time there are conflicts, the most recent in 1105 in the Telura system itself. Two Burugdi fleets were confronted by the major portion of the Teluran fleets and system defence units. Victory went to the Telurans but at great cost to both sides.

The Burugdi still maintain a healthy technological gap above the Telurans, but what the Telurans lack in base technology they more than make up in tenacity and tactical ingenuity.

For the most part the conflict has been at a stalemate since its start but things have been looking ominous for the Telurans just of late. The Burugdi have subjugated the systems at 1714 and 2314 in an attempt to surround the Telurans. The Burugdi also seem to have better natural resources and recover better from the draining affects of the flare-ups in the conflict. More worrying is that the Burugdi have reached tech level 13 and are now within direct striking distance of Telura.

## The arrival of the Aslan

The only respite for Telurans in their war against Burugdi has the arrival of aslan ihatel in the subsector. The Teluran government have exchanged land grants on some of the less populous worlds for the promise of military assistance. Half of the available land on Guama and portions on Telura and Riaz (2417) have thus been exchanged for aslan protection. Military and technological cooperation will in all probability reestablish a stalemate between the two states.

## THE BURUGDI

### MILITARY MACHINE

The Burugdi military consists of just a navy and an army - staffed by parentals in all the officer positions and Il'Burugdi in all others. The military hierarchy is by and large monolithic, with a well entrenched chain of command that reflects social position rather than ability. Promotion through the ranks is a formal process through screening of an individuals of appropriate background. There is little advancement of competent officers unless they are of proven exceptional ability.

The rigid command structure is apparent in the strategies employed, which tend to be simplistic and rely on strength of a force rather than subtlety. Against a weak or near-equal opposition, the tactics are good enough to usually ensure victory. This tactical rigidity is prevalent despite the ability to communicate rapidly and security by psionic means which can give the Burugdi fleets a dynamic, fluid nature.

Tactics on the battlefield or in space are often little more than a simple rush at the enemy, trying to overcome the opposition by weight of numbers. Burugdi forces have often been surprised when taking this approach although they have learnt from their first military forays. The poor state of their tactical abilities hasn't helped by the Burugdi not routinely promoting talented or innovative individuals. There are signs that this may be changing.

# TRANSPONDER ALERT

## ☛ Ben Bell

I agree that 'Hard Times' is not right for Rebellion-Era Traveller. I personally gave my players a choice and will run Mega-Traveller and Hard Times as parallel universes and not as a follow-on. From what I have heard of New Era it sounds crap. New Tech Level restrictions etc. may be incorporated into my game but a D20 system, the most hated die of them all (And I thought it was the D30?!? Ed.) returns. If the system ends up like Twilight or Dark Conspiracy (crap!!) then no thanks. These combat systems need multiple shots before you do serious damage whereas the Mega-Traveller system keeps my players on their feet and means they buy fast vehicles in preference to big guns.

● Personally I think we'll adapt it to suit. I use a Hit Location System (the original was found in White Dwarf 30 I believe but it has been altered by myself a great deal since then) which does slow down combat but succeeds in making any attacks highly dangerous as well as fun... Look out, here comes another x4 groin shot!!

New systems mean incompatibility with old material which is annoying. I also game Call of Cthulhu and its now on its fifth edition with very few changes to the system.

Now for the questions:

Does anyone have a decent starship combat system as the one included is shit?

Anyone got an extra map of the Spinward Marches for sale?

Are there any other subber's in Northern Ireland - as I'd like to get to know them..

● If you are one of our Irish Subscribers why not drop Ben a line at: 19 Andrew Avenue, Comber, Co. Down, N. Ireland, BT23 5AN

## ☛ Grant Sinclair

For what it is worth, I am also feeling a bit concerned about this computer virus in TNE. I am a computer programmer of over 10 years experience, so I feel I am entitled to have an opinion on this one.

..I think the idea of transponders being infected by the virus and therefore all those weird things happen is crazy. Transponders have just enough processing power to sift through ship's computer activity to tell whether the ship is being deliberately sent into an interdicted system etc..

● Just exactly how the virus will affect the Transponder has been further detailed in Challenge 64 which came out after I received Grant's letter. It is, however, now official so we might as well live with it - but for the record Grant I much preferred your suggestions as to how the virus might have worked with the original transponder!

GDW seem to like the idea of Lucan being responsible for the virus, but if they must have one, the Brothers of Varian seem a better culprit to me. At least it gives them something to do - they have been totally ignored otherwise.

Please find enclosed some material concerning Yiklerdanzh Sector - this is the sector that HIWG Australia is working on slowly but surely.

● I'd like to see HIWG Down Under do some articles on Yiklerdanzh Sector for a future issue if anyone would like to sort that out. I'd be particularly interested in data, ports of call or legends and lore in either TNE or Classic (pre rebellion not pre-MT) Traveller format. Anyone willing to take up the challenge?

## ☛ Andrew Roberts

Keep up the good work!

● Ta!

## ☛ Allan Prewett

Dear Duncan. I have been enjoying Traveller since the start, although with other games I have been involved with I have not done as much as I would have liked. Personally I have a bad feeling about New Era. I joined HIWG about a year ago, thinking that I would finally do some work in the Imperium. Then all hell broke out. GDW stuffing up like normal, other companies abandoning Traveller, etc. HIWG Down Under gets some unknown, untravelled, barely on the map. Sector to develop.

So my loyalty has finally snapped after 15 years. I may still run Classic Traveller but it will become a dead system. You have my support. Finally I read the words that I have not been able to find. Wishing you all the best in the struggle and may some good will happen. We are all rebels now.

## ☛ John Tatman

Please find enclosed the plans for three Traveller space ships, OK I realise these are probably the most feared submissions an editor can get, especially Tech 15 but what the hell, see what you think.

● Despite my personal dislike of too many ships and the fact that TNE will have a different ship design system I've reprinted a couple of John's designs as supplements. Write in and tell me what you think..

Destructive comment time for issue 5, well you did ask.

1. General standard of Layout/Artwork/Writing:- I was going to say it could be better, but its not important. What really matters is getting the issue out (ie. I'd rather have an unpolished fanzine regularly than one high quality

presentation which folds soon after). However, overall, its quite good. There are no real bad points in the production. A professional layout designer could make a few minor changes and make a positive improvement to the style (See Tales of the Reaching Moon). However Signal is not a professional magazine and this would not change the content, so I see no reason to worry.

● I don't. Signal GK is not subsidised nor does it have a massive circulation such as Unspeakable Oath or Interface. Our main problem in my mind is final production - a photocopier is not the best reproduction method available but, given S-GK's size, circulation and cost its truly the best we can afford.. As for layout much of that comes down to personal taste and, occasionally, the production software. Example being the Leading and kerning is crap so its nearly impossible for me to line up columns without leaving what's known as widows and orphans on every column...

2. Guest editorial:- I agree with every single word. Traveller is dead as far as a commercial product goes. See the Mega Traveller Journal, issue 3 ( a magazine now so expensive I will have to think real hard before I buy the next issue). Page 2 gives details of a new rules set (TNE) but players don't want rules, they want scenario's and campaign material! Any idiot can rewrite a games system, it takes class to write a classic adventure or supplement. Back inside cover, rare and out of print sale. Flaming Eye and Vilani and Vargr! While I understand print runs and also trying to keep new stuff on the shelf rather than swamping it with old, it is now impossible for any new player to get into MegaTraveller - Traveller is not the rules, its the background and if you're not around to buy it first time its gone for good. As old players drop out they are not replaced, which means a smaller

market to buy the product which makes less profit, which means less reason to continue with it. GDW can't support the existing Mega Traveller, what makes them think they can support a new system instead?

3. A Children's Story:- Loved it! See above for reason, also it was short, thought provoking and logical.

4. Contact The S'mrii, PoC: Mimu, a Gathering of Strangers. All are okay in their way, and as part of Signal's intended statement to cover Dagudashaag Sector, vital. I like well thought out aliens and I like the Port of Call feature especially. However, in my opinion, 31 pages solid in a 40 page mag' is too heavy. A supplement dealing with S'mrii similar to the Medurma Special may have helped or a totally unconnected article of reasonable length would have helped balance the issue.

5. INDISS:- Very good, short, informative. An instant scenario in each for every good referee. They also help create the idea that the Traveller universe is a big place going about its own business and won't go away if the players stop playing. I feel it deserves its own page and a little bit of flash layout to make it into a full blown regular feature, like TNS in Challenge.

6. A.K.A.:- Character profiles can be a gamble, if they work well they are worth their weight in gold. I like Silmerch but I admit to having a soft spot for Alikasch. I don't like the idea of xenorasty destroying the home atmosphere. I did some study of the Alikasch and from the population figures of Medurma I figure that 1 in 8 of the population is Alikasch. A minority true, but enough to effect public opinion. After reading the write up about "they are humans and Aslan who have learned, through centuries of bloodshed, to understand each other and live together in peace." I would assume its a society more tolerant than most in such matters. Most likely the parents just didn't like that particular choice of partner.

On a more important note, with a character profile for someone other than a leading public figure like Strephon or Lucan, I would think a full page scenario outline should be included, rather than one line plot ideas. It helps give reason for including the profile.

7. Legends & Lore:- Once again I love it. Lots of little adventure hooks, flapping about for the would-be adventurer, written in a style which gives enough detail to interest but stops before turning into a tenser work for masochists.

8. Library Data/War Zone:- Building up nicely in a green A5 folder. war Zone is great for placing the local events around the party. If its Tuesday Lucan comes to visit. The Library Data is necessary but dull, it could do with a few more characters, events, mysteries. The earlier issues were more along these lines, but recently seemed to have slid somewhat.

9. Personal comments, the BIG one. The first comment concerns the Rebellion, despite being the sector in which an awful lot of big time fighting occurs, very little is reflected in the Fanzine. There is the odd scenario with a rebellion related plot, the War Zone in the supplements telling who's in control today and the odd paragraph at the end of one or two Port of Call (PoC), but where's the feel of a real war going on out there? You know what I mean, things that might make Hard Times feel like a reasonable first step... Come on give us some input on the home front.

● I'm afraid you failed to catch on to S-GK's timeline John. All library data and PoC's are supposedly recorded in or before 1115 and are supposed to be the last main entries before the Rebellion. Very little would have been compiled during the Rebellion years. In a sense Library Data and PoC's are classic traveller. Unlike Challenge who seem to like jumping years in a single bound S-GK is moving along extremely slowly -

keeping campaign time. Most adventures are written for the period 1110 - 1120. Personally I think there would be nothing more likely to kill S-GK than to dwell constantly on the suffering and heartache of a Sector torn apart by war. My father was one of the soldiers that helped liberate the concentration camps during WW2, his tales have lost for me all 'romance' or 'enjoyment' in widespread suffering. As for adventures, I personally do not write for the Rebellion period though most others do. Admittedly most want the players to feel as though they can make an impact on the adventure rather than have a Gauss pistol Vs. a spinal mount type of conflict where all the players can realistically hope to do is survive. However I appreciate that not everyone shares my viewpoint so hence the guest editors and specials such as this which cover the Rebellion in detail. For the most part though, we leave the horror of the rebellion to each individual referee to embellish. After all how useful would the Library Data be if all it recorded was cities destroyed, works of art destroyed etc.

P.S. If anyone has MegaTraveller 2 (the computer game) for the Commodore Amiga I can show them how to edit the PC's something rotten..

### ☛Mike Mikesh

Regarding the first three questions (Standard of layout, artwork & writing) its hard to give a quantifiable number. Perhaps the best answer I can give is in relation to Challenge. To start, standard of writing is comparable. Overall standard of artwork in this issue is almost there - certainly the "Remembrance" piece would certainly suit. Several pieces had an unfinished appearance but I like what I see in S-GK better than I do in Challenge. The general layout is comparable. Internal

appearance of S-GK necessarily falls short of Challenge for technical reasons, but I like it better. There's something about Challenge that is almost an eyesore. I don't like the look and feel of that mag, especially their selection of artists. Compared to previous issues 5 was about the same. It did have a better cover illustration than last.

Re your comment "After issue 6 S-GK may be heading in a new direction.." While Imperial Lines will support a New Era setting in Massilia, that support will necessarily be thin. I'm hoping that someone might do a fanzine to satisfy the demand for supplemental material, but that S-GK could be that source seems too much to hope for.

● S-GK issue 7 (my last issue as Editor by the way before Leighton takes over the task of taking S-GK where no Fanzine has gone before - Good Luck Mate!) will be a HubWorlds special detailing in part some aspects of this TNE setting but written under the MT rules for the moment. Its also under consideration that S-GK may put out TNE supplements in addition to the main mag to cover various aspects of the HubWorlds. Adie Stewart is the newly appointed 'HubWorlds Development Team' Co-ordinator so get writing...

### ☛J. Gareth Parry

I look forward to receiving future issues in order that my exploration of Dagudashaag Sector may continue. To date, all issues have given me immense enjoyment, and many plots for new adventures. The quality of the material is well up to that seen in the professional US magazines, in content and presentation.

### ☛Hugh Foster

Judging by the demand for back copies of TD, you're cutting your throat destroying the S-GK masters! Why not stick them in a bank vault for a couple of years...

● Ah, you've discovered my weakness - kryptonite! No, sorry its honesty. I'd rather hand on the benefits to my subscribers so they also share in any increased worth of back issues. I may however issue "the best of.." Specials or an extended Encyclopedia Dagudashaag in the future.

### ☛Paolo Bertiglia

Cercasi appassionati italiani di Traveller nelle sue varie incarnazioni per scambio di idee e materiale. Scrivete a Paolo Bertiglia, Corso Siracusa 198, c.a.p. 10137, Torino, Italia.

● So why not write to Paolo and form a network. He's also looking for copies (or good photocopies) of issues 1 - 3 if anyone could help..

### ☛Christina Luckings

I'm enjoying reading the articles although my little solo traveller hasn't actually made it to Dag Sector yet. She's currently stuck in Alpha Crucis and has been for some time - I've been overrun by house and office work and haven't got round to generating any more planetary stats..

● Hopefully the Second Survey data I sent has helped a little.

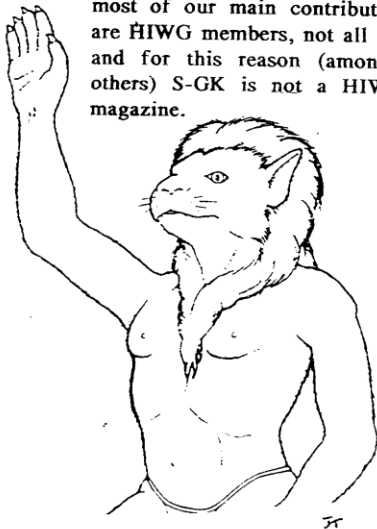
### ☛Adie Stewart

In the recent past the efforts of HIWG have been somewhat skirted over by the 'big boys' at GDW and DGP. Material we have produced has been ignored or even rendered useless by new products released by the aforementioned, and in general HIWG has been regarded as a fringe group who cause problems rather than creating useful products. This problem has been compounded by the fact that most of the HIWG (UK) members not having access to networks such as GENie, which has limited our ability to stay right up to date with current events. Thus our efforts may be weeks or months behind what is happening in the states.

The speed of the US postal system hasn't helped either.

There have been a number of comments about HIWG (UK) collapsing as an organisation. While this may be partly true I for one still feel its going strong. While there have been some difficulties (STArport folding, for instance) HIWG (UK) has a core of hardworking and dedicated members who produce excellent quality material and who, as has been acknowledged by Mike Mikesh, are at the cutting edge of the game. It strikes me that a good percentage of the members of HIWG are pedestrian, preferring to receive and read documents rather than creating them themselves. HIWG (UK) has certainly not fallen into this trap: Signal GK is a perfect example of this.

● I'm afraid I have to disagree with you slightly Adie, while there is a strong core of workers in HIWG (UK) there are many who have never produced anything. The Theta Borealis project is a prime example.. While several people agreed to take on the task of developing that sector only a couple - Stuart being one - actually produced anything. Even in Signal GK most of the material has been produced by a core of six people... Also, while on the subject of Signal GK while most of our main contributors are HIWG members, not all are and for this reason (amongst others) S-GK is not a HIWG magazine.



## FEEDBACK COMMENTS

“Make it better next time..”

“2 Years old already, it seems only 6 months ago I got issue 1! Keep up the good work..”

“I'm a solo Traveller so although the imagination put into scenario's/races is breathtaking its not always useful for little me. Sod New Era - they're copying Star Trek©. I'm too old (and poor) to buy more Traveller “hardware”. Keep going as you are, you're keeping this lady very satisfied!”

“Very interesting material but seemed to lack something.. I love (S-GK) but maybe only up to issue 6 then we shall see where you go”

“Text much clearer, articles more like Classic Traveller than cyberpunk!.. Can you stick to the Mega Trav rules rather than going on to New Era - especially if New Era will be too much like other GDW products combat & skills wise..”

“I wish to congratulate on what is, in my opinion, the highest quality Traveller material being published anywhere today. Your attention to detail, creativity and above all consistent quality makes S-GK better than professional “zines...”

“Really liked the S'mrii”

“I liked the S'mrii very much. I also like the “cyber” without the “punk” technological detail.. Children's Story was very depressing but then that's the point isn't it?”

“Why not open up to ‘alternate’ histories? These could either be alternate histories in the Imperium (What if? Scenario's) or true alternate backgrounds possibly loosely based on existing science fiction material. Also I believe that for a brief while we should stick to MT. This is for several reasons:

1. All contributors have experience of MT and little or none of TNE.
2. Ditto for most readers.
3. Backlog of adventures etc.

However, as time wears on & if we hope to expand S-GK the move to TNE will be made. Hopefully this will be a willing change. P.S. remember TNE may be wonderful, the greatest SFRPG ever made! Let's reserve judgement until it comes out..”

● Amen. Even although we will be running TNE material we will still be writing them for MT rules for the moment.. As for alternate histories, given the amount of notice GDW have taken of HIWG's work isn't that what we've been doing since day one!?!

“S-GK.. Where (based) is not important but mapping Dagudashaag was building into an area with enough detail for a good campaign..”

“I notice you are using trade class ‘FI’ for atmos D-F hydro 1-, this is correct according to the rules but never made sense to me. Why should ‘low ellipsoid’ atmospheres, for instance have ‘fluid, non-water oceans’? I also see you are using filled in circles for such worlds on maps - this matches what GDW/DGP say in MT rules but not maps (see boxed set colour map). It doesn't matter, every map I see seems to have different rules even within GDW/DGP - issue is trivial anyway. S-GK is generally very impressive..”



**FEEDBACK FOR ISSUE 5**

General Layout	7.8
Standard of Artwork	7.5
<b>Standard of Writing</b>	<b>8.5</b>
Children's Story	6.7
Contact: S'mrii	7.8
Port of Call: Mimu	8.0
Gathering of Strangers	7.2
INDISS News	6.9
A.K.A. Silomerch	6.5
<b>Legends &amp; Lore</b>	<b>8.2</b>
<b>Library Data</b>	<b>8.2</b>
Warzone	6.9

**GENERAL FEEDBACK**

Do you want S-GK to adventure in..	
Classic Traveller Era	24%
<b>Rebellion Era</b>	<b>28%</b>
Hard Times	4.8%
New Era	14.3%
100 Years Beyond	4.8%
Open to all Era's	19.9%
Stay within Dagudashaag	30%
Dagudashaag & surrounding Sectors	26.6%
<b>Whole Imperium</b>	<b>36.7%</b>
Move outside the Imperium	6.7%
Library Data to continue to record	
<b>Dagudashaag</b>	<b>78.6%</b>
Whatever Subsector covered in mag.	21.4%
What is your favourite part of S-GK	
Adventures	2nd
<b>Port of call</b>	<b>1st</b>
Contact	3rd
AKA	6th
News	5th
Legends & Lore	4th



"ALL THE BEST TO YOU"

**THANK YOU**

We got a great response to our last feedback sheet. As you can see, the results were unexpected in some ways: Duncan's excellent S'mrii and Mimu articles dropped from pole position mainly because a few people found the special just a little too much S'mrii oriented and gave lower scores accordingly for all S'mrii-related articles. The majority of you voted one or other their top article but it only shows what a couple of really low votes can do to the overall marks.

On the Direction Feedback, I found it comforting that although change is wanted, most seem content with the general direction we've taken to date. From Issue 8 S-GK will be edited by Leighton though I will still produce the magazine and keep subscriptions sorted etc. I know he has several new and exciting concepts he wishes to introduce and I think you'll find it exciting. I am having to leave as Editor because of work commitments and a desire to try out some new material: one being a UK superhero fanzine I've been considering for a couple of years, the other to try and get the Encyclopedia Dagudashaag written. I'm still retaining S-GK and will continue to write for it but Leighton will now direct it and decide on articles and artwork.

This issue was a problem to complete: First my computer, hard disk and files were stolen and they trashed my paper files so a great deal of valuable artwork was lost not to mention my complete collection of S-GK's.. Then I cracked a couple of ribs and couldn't spend too much time in front of a computer because of the pain. Still its completed and I'd like to thank everyone in the DDT for putting up with my lousy temper and bad manners over the last month or so as a result!

I would also like to thank Dee for the loan of a computer and printer so I could finish this. Now I've just got to sort out the insurance claim!

Renewals : £5 for the next three copies from myself if UK-based, otherwise £7.50.

Sub's and letters etc. to:

☛ **Joe Campbell**  
 ☛ **The Sanctuary, 45 Fairfield,**  
 ☛ **Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire,**  
 ☛ **UK, HX7 6JD**

Next issue out in the Summer... See you then!