

MONGOOSE PUBLISHING PRESENTS

Signs & Portents

58

Traveller

The Concluding part of The Starchild

Battlefield Evolution: World at War

A battle report between Alex Fennell and Ted Chang

Mongoose Towers

Find out what happened when the staff met their namesake

Plus... Glorantha, Cthulhutech, VAS, ACTA, Conan and much more!

Signs & Portents 58

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So passes another very productive month here at Mongoose. Many books have been finished off and sent to the printers, Nick the Greek has began to harvest his strawberry crop (much to our delight) and we all had a day out to meet our namesake (read all about this later in this issue). So all in all a good month.

I myself have had my usual quota of rubbish luck, inclusive of an outbreak of a nasty horse illness at the stables and officially becoming the only person unfortunate enough to have an incident in the car resulting in the car being fine but me getting cracked ribs and a bad shoulder! Still I'm used to this sort of thing by now!

In fact judging by how awful my luck is at present I feel that the safest thing to do is to stop typing now for fear of breaking one of my fingers!

So here's a picture of Nick the Greek's dog Milo who guards our offices, waiting for his favourite friend... the postman!

Have a good month



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Convention and Events Diary

Continuum 2008. John Foster Hall [also known as New Hall],
Leicester University. UK.

Friday 1st - Monday 4th August 2008.

<http://www.continuum.uk.net>

Gen Con Indy. Indiana Convention Centre, 100 South Capitol Ave,
Indianapolis, Indiana, 46225.

Thursday 14th - Sunday 17th August 2008.

<http://www.gencon.com/2008/indy>

Gen Con UK 2008. University of Reading, Berkshire. UK.

Thursday 28th - Sunday 31st August 2008.

<http://www.horsemenevents.com/>

TRAVELLERcon/USA 2008. Hotel Brunswick 151 N. Queen Street,
Lancaster, PA 17603.

17-19th October 2008

<http://www.travellercon-usa.com>

Game '08. New Century House, Manchester, UK.

Saturday 1st - Sunday 2nd November 2008.

<http://www.game08.eu/>

THE STARCHILD PART TWO

A Traveller Adventure By Courtney Parsons

ENCOUNTER IV:

THE RAINBOW SUN

The Rainbow Sun is at underground docking bay 13 and security at the starport is tight at the moment due to the recent “terrorist attack” in the rail tunnels. It will not be possible for the group to walk up to the ship and simply saunter aboard. They may be able to obtain a crew ID badge by bribing or even assaulting another crewmember. The Referee should be mindful that he does not press the group here – experienced players will have their own ideas and newcomers will be anxious to try. This portion of the adventure, planning and executing an operation, is the responsibility of the players and experienced Referees will know to take care not to pressure them into a particular course of action or the game will feel contrived. For this portion of the adventure, the Referee should refer to the details of the Type R Subsidized Liner on pg. 119-120 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook* and might-if, for example, the adventurers think to check a relevant Library Data program- photocopy it for their perusal.

The Engineer (Chief Yardin Anois), a tall, part-Vilani spacer with a friendly disposition and a twinkle in his eye, will be helpful as well. He will not let the PCs aboard but he will offer to look himself. When he returns, he says he cannot find her. Yardin is in fact well aware that the girl is aboard, because he is hiding her in his cabin, which is adjacent to the commons area and directly above the j-field mechanism, which seems to have a calming effect on her, even when in low power state. His partial Vilani heritage makes him notoriously difficult to read but a successful Difficult (10+) test of

Deception, Social Sciences (Psychology) or Investigate, indicates that he’s hiding *something* but little else.

There are other crewmembers who might be more easily persuaded or perhaps the group will come up with an entirely different plan – posing as a maintenance crew, for instance. This would involve some computer hacking and the theft or manufacture of uniforms. The exact method of getting aboard is completely up to the group but silly or unrealistic plans will quickly land them in jail or even get them killed.

Aboard the Ship

Before the group reaches this portion of the adventure, a bit of preparation and forethought by the Referee will make it flow much more smoothly. Begin by examining the map of the Subsidized Merchant on p.120 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook* and decide just where any intercom terminals and intercoms will be; each separate area of the vessel has one and some – such as the Bridge and Engineering – have several; the passenger and crew cabins and common areas all have at least one. Also, the Referee may wish to prepare by taking a few moments to create a simple map of the maze-like grid of access tunnels that run beneath the crew deck and between the bulkheads on which Shalini is hiding; should the group be careless with her in the initial encounter, she may well lead them on an extensive chase through the grid. The Referee should again refer to p. 120 for assistance in this endeavor. The grid may be as simple or as complex as you wish it to be. It is not necessary for the two decks to be connected via the grid, should you wish to keep things simple. If, however, you foresee a lengthier chase – perhaps to teach the group a valuable lesson in

forethought and planning for the next adventure – then by all means, make the tunnels a veritable maze with numerous outlets on every deck and room.

Most of the crew is on leave but there are a few still working aboard. Though several options are given on the table, only six or so crew members are likely to be aboard; the referee should take care to mark off each encounter as it occurs and roll no more after six crewmembers and the passengers have been encountered. If the PCs are there at night (during the graveyard watch), there is one couple who are here for a layover who are staying in their quarters. The Chief Engineer is also aboard. Encounters aboard the ship will be random by nature – roll 1d every few rounds while the party is aboard or each time they enter a new area. A 1 indicates an encounter. Roll below for the results, DM -2 if at night. Count a result of zero as a one. Partial statistics are given for each below, as they relate to combat or any reasonable interaction that might occur between the adventurers and the individual; these are guidelines only and the Referee should feel free to flesh them out further as necessary. If the encounters below are armed (Referee’s discretion), it will be with the sidearm types with which they have greatest skill. Otherwise, encounters will be unarmed.

1. Insomniac Passenger (1–3, the man, 4–6 the woman, use the same statistics for either)
565889 Citizen
Gun Combat (Body Pistol)-1; Trade (Architect) -2; Persuade-1
2. Working Passenger
467677 Ex-Rogue
Melee (Blade Combat) -2; Streetwise -2; Melee (Unarmed) -1

3. Working Passenger Citizen
789A96 Gun Combat (Auto Pistol) -3; Carousing -2;
Diplomat -1; Persuade -1
4. Assistant Engineer
878B98 Ex-Scout
Gun Combat (Auto Pistol) -1; Engineer (M-Drive) -1;
Engineer (J-Drive) -2
5. Crewman
AAB977 Ex-Marine
Gun Combat (Energy Pistol) -3; Carousing -2;
Persuade -2
6. Engineer
878B98 Ex-Scout
Gun Combat (Auto Pistol) -1; Engineer (M-Drive) -1;
Engineer (J-Drive) -2
7. Crewman
787986 Citizen
Investigate -1; Diplomat -0; Computers -3
8. Chief Engineer Yarin Anois
See NPC section for the Chief's statistics
9. Sensors Officer
988A98 Ex-Navy
Gun Combat (Slug Pistol) -2; Sensors -2; Computers
-1
10. Steward
567987 Citizen
Steward -3; Diplomat -1; Investigate -1; Deception
-2
11. Astrogator
668997
Astrogation -1; Computers -3; Pilot -1

12. Executive Officer Lyliian Arducci
979BA8 Ex-Navy
Gun Combat (Gauss Pistol -3) Leadership -2;
Astrogation -1; Deception -2; Investigation -2; Melee
Combat (Unarmed) -2; Melee Combat (Blade) -2

Hopefully, the adventurers have authorization (false or otherwise) to be aboard, in which case they can expect little trouble from the crew and passengers. If, however, they have sneaked aboard, hopefully they will have brought snub pistols with tranq rounds or other non-lethal (and *quiet*) weapons, with which to dispose of the potential witnesses. If not, the group may find themselves at odds with local police as well as the *Sodality* and The Spectre-making their objectives considerably more difficult to achieve. If the individuals encountered above have reason to become suspicious of the group, their first action will invariably be to sound an alarm rather than directly confronting the group. Most of the encounters above will avoid combat at all costs – only fighting if cornered. If an encounter is successful in sounding the alarm, the crew will attempt to evacuate the vessel and a heavily armed Starport Authority task force will arrive in 1d6 minutes. If the characters are caught and have shot and killed somebody, they will be arrested for murder or at the very least, assault – and this particular adventure, as such, is pretty much over for them. If the group is arrested for Criminal Trespassing and Breach of Security on Starport property they will pay a fine of Cr100,000 and do 1d months in jail, or 2d years if they do not have the money to pay the fine. Any jailbreak attempts are strictly the purview of the Referee.

Shalini

The final goal of the group is to reach the crawlspace behind the hidden access panel in the Engineer's cabin where Shalini is hiding. Chief Engineer Yardin Anois' cabin will be one of the cabins labeled 'area 3' on the deckplan on *The Traveller Core Rulebook*, p.120. The Engineer may or may not be in his cabin; if he has not

yet been encountered, he will be in the cabin on a 1-3 on 1d6. If he is there, Shalini will be out of the crawlspace and he will be playing with and talking to her when the group arrives. If they press the buzzer and ask to be let in, the Chief will stall them while he quickly opens the access panel (see below) and hurries her inside.

If Chief Anois is not there, getting inside the cabin should not be *too* difficult for a group of relatively experienced adventurers. Defeating security measures and doors on board a vessel is covered on pp. 143-145 of *The Traveller Core Rulebook*. Most of the vessel's security systems are TL 10 and her security measures are Electronic in nature.

Once the group has gained access to the cabin by whatever means, there is evidence inside that two individuals have in fact been living in this single-occupant officer's cabin. A successful Average test of Investigate or Recon (or Int, if none of the adventurers have either skill) will allow the group to notice that the trash receptacle contains candy and ice cream treat wrappers. The bed is missing a blanket and a pillow and finally that there are scrape marks across the floor, leading from the small desk against the wall to the corner of the room. Moving the chair reveals an access panel and that the paint has obviously been worn away around the screws from where they have been removed repeatedly. Listening closely, followed successful Average test of Recon (or the Int skill again) may reveal the sound of someone moving or breathing quietly behind the wall.

If the group opens the accessway and barges in, they may find themselves in for a shock. Shalini is waiting on the other side with a makeshift blade (a scissor-like implement used for clipping gel microconduits that the engineer gave her with which to amuse herself) and the minute she sees a body part appear around the corner from which she is hiding, she will stab at it in terror and then flee further down the access tunnel, which branches out in several different directions. If the group

is not quick, they might lose her very quickly. If she feels cornered, she may use her psionic abilities to thwart the group's pursuit.

If the adventurers make too much noise or stay too long in the cabin, there is a 2 in 6 chance every round that the Engineer will stop by to either check on the girl or come running if he has heard noise. If the adventurers attempt to reason with the Chief, he *may* stop to listen; the Referee may call for a successful Average to Difficult, Persuade test to prevent him from immediately going for the alarm on the intercom panel by the door. If the group can get the Chief to listen and they have thought to bring the datachip with Shalini's father's last message (and something to play it on, of course), the teddy bear and/or the religious symbol (which he will recognize, as Shalini wears one just like it) and explain that they are trying to help, he will agree to assist them. See the description of Chief Yardin Anois in the NPCs section for more information on dealing with him. Shalini will come to his call; she will be wary of the group at first but will warm to them once she sees the symbol or hears her father's voice.

If for some reason the Engineer does not, or can not, appear to assist the group, hopefully they have brought the items Jaye gave them or they may be in for a long and difficult chase indeed.

ENCOUNTER V: THE SPECTRE

If the group manages to escape the vessel without being arrested or being taken down by SPA security forces and if they have Shalini in tow, they are about to discover that their life has become quite a bit more difficult. Sometimes, fortune favours those who would travel the stars but more often, it scorns them. Within the hour after the group has Shalini, the Starport will issue an ion storm advisory

(see Planetary Description for more information on ion storms and the Solar Winds that cause them). The Starport Authority will initiate a full Level 5 (maximum) lockdown before another hour is passed and no one will be allowed to leave- legally, anyway.

The group will be forced to hole up on Jae Taellona until they can find transport off the planet. Perhaps this is a good time for a member of the group to recall Captain Klaargh and his corsairs. If the adventurers have earned their respect, through combat or otherwise, Klaargh will be more than willing to assist them with leaving the planet – for a fee, of course. Whether or not the Corsairs are ultimately to be trusted is an issue for the Referee to decide, certainly they can be up to a point. If the group has not befriended Klaargh, they will have to make other arrangements or wait the storm out, which will last for six solar days.

Meanwhile, the *Zhule Sodality* has been watching *The Rainbow Sun* and unless the group has taken precautions to prevent it, they will be getting ready to take Shalini from them. This time, The Spectre intends to see to the matter personally. If the group has somehow taken care of the agents tailing them and the human informants that are watching *The Rainbow Sun* or if they have managed to somehow exit the ship with Shalini without anyone seeing them, The Spectre will resort to his Clairvoyance ability in an attempt to locate them. Note that although Shalini, due to her Neutralize Psionic Ability power, is immune to this search, the characters themselves are not. See Shalini's description in the NPCs section for more information about Shalini's Neutralize Psionic Ability power.

The likelihood is, however, that no matter where the adventurers go, The Spectre will find them as that is what he does and he does it well. Eventually, probably while the group is holed up in some seedy hotel somewhere (perhaps on the surface?) The Spectre and his men will attack. If the group has managed to set up a defence,

The Spectre will initiate a *Zhule Sodality* Strike Squad to initiate a frontal assault, while he attempts to teleport in behind the group, probably catching them by surprise. He will use his stunner on Shalini to prevent her from using her psionic abilities, grab her and teleport out. Later, he will lock an anti-psionic helmet over her head to prevent her from accessing her abilities. If the attack succeeds, The Spectre will teleport (or run) to an air/raft parked nearby and fly away. As soon as he is able, he will transport Shalini to his ship, hidden in the desert some 500 km. south of Stargate Artica and prepare to take off as soon as the storm lets up just enough that he can do so relatively safely. Meanwhile, he has left orders with the remaining Strike Squadron members that the adventurers are to be disposed of for good.

The Spectre's vessel is a modified Type S Seeker (see *The Traveller Core Rulebook*, pp. 114-116); the Zhodani version of this vessel is essentially the same as the Imperial one on the pages indicated. The storm will slowly begin to abate over the next several days but it will be a minimum of six days before anyone can lift off reliably. If the group (or the Spectre, in the Referee's opinion) wishes to lift off before the six days are up, then it requires three successive tests of Pilot skill. The first day, no flying is possible, no matter how skilled. The second day, the difficulty level becomes Formidable and the third day, Very Difficult and so forth, until the storm is abated.

If The Spectre manages to make it into space with Shalini aboard, he will head directly for the large gas giant (see the Planetary Description section) to refuel, then, if he is being pursued, he will risk misjump by entering jumpspace as soon as his grid is powered without travelling to an optimum jump point. If the characters have allowed him to get this far, then the characters will have to resort to space combat in order to resolve the situation and a possible boarding action. All the data necessary to play out this scenario is given in *The Traveller Core Rulebook*. If the group is aboard

the Vargr corsair, the Referee should not allow them to pass off all the work onto the Vargr. Klaargh may allow them to take up crew stations (gunnery position, even the pilot's station) so they can have an active role in stopping The Spectre's flight. If the group is of no assistance, then Klaargh may claim all booty recovered for himself and crew, including Shalini. Of course, should a space battle become necessary, the adventurers will want to be careful to selectively disable the Seeker's engines without seriously damaging the vessel, else they could hurt Shalini.

CONCLUSION

This adventure may conclude in any number of ways; this is deliberate, since nothing is worse for the players than a game with a predetermined outcome. If the players feel that no action they can take can possibly affect the conclusion, then it detracts greatly from their enjoyment of the game. There is enough information given here for the Referee to accurately predict how the NPCs will react to the player characters' actions and to keep the game alive and fluid, instead of stilted and rigid. This adventure is presented so that it can be organic and evolving. The most minor of the players' actions early on can have an enormous effect on how things turn out later. If the Referee has done his homework and fully familiarized himself with the characters and information presented herein, then he should have no trouble running this adventure and keeping it alive and interesting for the players and most important of all: *responsive to their actions.*

It is, of course, entirely possible that the group abandoned their search for the girl early on to follow Rumour 5 in Encounter III. If they have done this, then certainly, The Spectre's vessel might no longer be in perfect working condition. It is also likely in this event that The Spectre and his men have spread enough money around to discover that the Engineer is keeping Shalini on *The Rainbow Sun* and that they already have

her. If this has happened, the Referee should take care not to reward the adventurers for so quickly abandoning their mission objectives for unlikely tales of possible treasure in the desert, regardless of whether that treasure is real or not. Perhaps the group might pick up a bit of information on the streets when they return about a girl being hidden in an abandoned warehouse on the surface; the possibilities are myriad. When, or *if*, the group deserves a second chance in this case is entirely up to the Referee.

Rewards

If the group manages to be observant and has taken heed of the rumours and information to be gleaned from the Census bureau, then it is likely they have set an effective trap for The Spectre-by researching methods and gathering enough materials to construct an antipsi field, for example. If they have managed to keep the Spectre from capturing Shalini and making off into space with her, then they have done exceptionally well. As a reward and at the Referee's discretion, they may find The Spectre's PDA or map box with the coordinates and security codes to his vessel. If the Referee does not wish them to have the entire vessel, then perhaps they can arrive just after the Vargr raiders have left, leaving them just enough parts to salvage to make a tidy profit in addition to the Free Trader they now legally own on Regina, as well as what is left, if any, of the Cr8000 they were paid for expenses by Jaye A'ssynii.

If the Spectre gets away with Shalini in spite of (or due to a lack of) the group's preparations, then they will most likely be forced to enlist the aid of either the Vargr corsairs or some equally disreputable crew with a fast ship and knowledge of the desert and the solar system. After all, there very few above-board starship crews who would be willing to take on a group of strangers in the middle of a storm claiming to be on a secret (or contrived) mission, unless they were of course willing to

pay far more than the adventurers could afford. If the group is mistrustful of Vargr and chooses to team up with a disreputable human crew of the sort found on the surface of Jae Taellona, then it is likely their "allies" will wait patiently until the group kills The Spectre for them, then they will rise up and kill the adventurers in turn. At the very least, they will probably try to abandon them in space with very little air and even less hope of rescue. If, on the other hand, the group has elected to team up with Klaargh and his men, they will not be betrayed. Klaargh will, however, demand payment for his services, preferably in the form of The Spectre's scout vessel, if it becomes available. If, for some reason, the scout vessel does not become available and the group cannot pay Klaargh a reasonable fee (at least Cr10,000) upon arrival at their destination or at the completion of the mission, then this adventure could have a very nasty end indeed.

Further Adventures

If the Referee and the players have enjoyed this adventure wish to play on, then that is certainly recommended. *The Starchild* was designed as an introduction to the *Traveller* campaign setting of The Third Imperium. There are more than enough elements here on which to found a campaign. In the most immediate future is the journey to Vanejen and seeing Shalini safely to the "specialist." If the group decides they are finished with this adventure and wish to pursue the matter no further, then it is recommended that this "specialist" indeed be a master healer and he takes Shalini as a patient. The group might wait anxiously in the hospital for 16 or so tense hours of emergency surgery, until the doctor comes out, still in his surgical gown and pronounces the procedure a success. Shalini then returns to Belizo to continue her life as if nothing had happened and the Referee and the players can venture on to Regina using the space travel and trade system in *The Traveller Core Rules*.

If, on the other hand, the Referee and players wish to continue with this particular story arc, then it is recommended that the group find out, preferably after they have dropped Shalini off, that the “specialist” is none other than Sir Gerrold Viscervis, head of research at Imperial Research Station Gamma. In this case and on the heels of some very disturbing rumours about what goes on there, a second rescue may prove to be in order. This adventure will be one in which the group may discover many things, including their first encounter with the enigmatic beings known as the Droyne. Referees and players wishing to proceed down this route are urged once again to obtain a copy of FFE003: *Traveller: The Classic Adventure*, and refer to *Adventure 2: Research Station Gamma*.

Further adventures on Jae Taellona are suggested by the Library Data section at the end of this adventure. The Referee is encouraged to read it and if he finds any of the adventure hooks contained therein useful, to flesh them out into full-fledged adventures.

Finally, if the group has managed to play their cards right and if they have been prudent, then they will not only now be legal shipmasters but they may have a few credits in their pockets besides. If the group has utterly failed in their task, then hopefully they have retained enough of the advance to buy tickets off of Jae Taellona, and quickly. Otherwise, their adventuring days might very well end before they really even began...

Dramatis Personae

Referee’s Notes: The following gives statistics for all the major NPCs encountered in this adventure. To use these NPCs, the Referee will of course need access to a copy of *The Traveller Core Rulebook* from Mongoose Publishing. The characters described here were generated using the point allocation system given in the Alternate Character Generation Rules on page 40. The point value of each character is given in their statistics, just before the UPP value. For characters with multiple careers, the current career is shown in bold and that character’s current rank in that career is in bold as well. Note that the number after the dash in the UPP indicates the Psionic Strength characteristic, which for most (untested) characters is left blank. The Psionic Strength characteristic is described on p. 152 of *The Traveller Core Rulebook* on p. 152. It is strongly recommended that the Referee familiarize himself with the Psionics chapter on pp. 152–159 of *The Traveller Core Rulebook* prior to running this adventure. Take note of the fact that Shalini’s psionic faculties are a special case and due to a matter of unprecedented raw talent and natural ability. If a Player Character wishes to develop psionic aptitude, he is consigned to do so by the rules given in the Psionics chapter; that is, by first locating an underground Psionics Institute faction and convincing them to allow him to undergo testing.

Shalini A’ssunii

Notes: The abilities given under “Special Abilities” are the powers that Shalini has access to in addition to all the



Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing	Psionic Strength
Shalini A’ssunii	None	4	11	7	13	8	5	15

Background Skills (12 points): Animals-2 Survival-1; Athletics (Co-ordination; gymnastics)-2; Athletics (Endurance; running)-0; Melee Combat (Knife)-0 Total =12

Psionic Talents (26 points): Telepathy- 4; Awareness-2; Telekinesis-4; Electrokinesis-3

Special Abilities (0 points): Affect Machines (Telekinesis); Electromagnetic Pulse (Electrokinesis); Neutralize Psionic ability (Telepathy)

powers that are normally accessible due to her Talents. A description of these new powers, in addition to a short explanation of the Electrokinesis ability, is given in the New Equipment section of the Appendix, below.

Shalini is a sweet young girl with the same dark-skinned, rich complexion that all those from the equatorial regions of her world possess. She is very beautiful, with luxurious, flowing hair with a slightly kinky quality due to her mixed African ancestry.

Shalini is quite bright and catches on quickly, despite the bucolic nature of her upbringing. Her capacity for problem-solving is quite remarkable and she may surprise the adventurers with her immediate grasp of the nature of their situation. She may even have some useful insights into the problems faced by the group, if the referee feels that the characters need it. She might even be of some limited use if the characters are ambushed by The Spectre or his men. Keep in mind, however, that no matter how mature, she is still a ten-year-old child who has just lost her parents and who scores of light-years away from home. Her grief should be just incapacitating enough to keep the characters from having unlimited access to her psionic abilities and thus serve as an excellent method for Referee to prevent the characters from abusing them. By the same

token, however, she should not hinder the group too much from completing their goals. Keep in mind, also, that even she is not aware of the full extent of her powers and they tend to only manifest when she feels frightened, nervous or is under duress. Jump space is extremely unpleasant for her, due to spatial distortions and temporal variances that are imperceptible to most people, even those with psionic abilities, thought there are others who are similarly sensitive and they are prone to jump sickness. This fact can be deduced by the adventurers from the rumours given them by the Rainbow Sun crew members in Encounter III: Avenues of Investigation and they would be well-advised to take heed and make preparations when they enter j-space with her on board, or her electrokinesis ability may wreak havoc that is not within her powers to prevent, just as it did on the journey from Belizo.

The Spectre

Point Value: 100

Age: 154 (34 Terms)

UPP: DCEAA8-B
(See NPC Table)

Notes: The Spectre was once a handsome, young Zhodani noble with a bright future ahead of him. He was a skilled psionist and had the very rare teleportation ability. The Spectre, whose true name was forgotten long ago and now only known to him, became a professional psion and thus began a long and successful career as a gladiator in the Psionic Games. For many years he was the Golden Child, a Hero of the Consulate. During this halcyon time he married a beautiful young wife who bore him a daughter, Zuey, who was his entire world. One day, his wife and daughter were travelling to visit her mother when the orbital Starport where they were changing flights came under the attack of a group of “freedom” fighters, Zhodani proles who were backed by Imperial Foreign Intelligence Service. The terrorists had in their possession a nuclear warhead stolen from a naval base and when Consulate Commandos boarded the station to take it back, they detonated the warhead. On that day, The Spectre swore vengeance against the Imperium and all of Humanti that was not of Zhodane. When the Consulate once again clashed with the Imperial Fringe during the Third Frontier War, The Spectre (who was not called such then) volunteered and served 4 terms in the Consulate Special Forces. His skills in Stealth and Recon and his success at impossible missions on enemy soil earned him the nickname The Spectre, so dubbed by his enemies. This nickname entered the realm of

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	S o c i a l Standing	P s i o n i c Strength
The Spectre	Agent, Army Special Forces	13	12	14	10	10	8	11

Rank: 4 (Special Agent); Marine NCO 5 (Gunnery Sergeant)

Skills (92 points): Heavy Weapons (Man Portable Artillery)-4 (+8), Gun Combat (Slug Rifle)- 2(+4), Gun Combat (Slug Pistol)-2 (+4) 16 pts. Gun Combat (Energy Pistol)-2 (+4) Flyer (Grav)-2(+4), Recon-3 (+6) 30 pts., Stealth-4 (+8), Leadership-1 (+2) 40 pts., Athletics (Endurance)-2 (+4), Athletics (Coordination)-2 (+4), 48pts. Athletics (Strength)-1 (+2), Melee (Blade)-3 (+6), Melee (Unarmed)-2 (+4), Comms-0 (+1), Medic-0 (+1), Persuade-2 (+4), 66 pts. Deception-2 (+4), Computers-2 (+4), Investigate-3 (+6), Streetwise-2 (+4), Battle Dress 4 (+8)

Psionic Abilities (20 points): Awareness-2 (+4), Clairvoyance-4 (+8), Teleportation-4 (+8)



legend nearly 122 Imperial Standard Years ago, when The Spectre was on a mission to sabotage a naval repair yard at Jae Taellona. He was caught by a contingent of Imperial Marines and Sternmetal Horizons security forces who were stationed there; they chased him down and nearly burned him alive – only his ability to teleport, which he thought had long deserted him, activated by some instinct and saved him.

Now he works as a deep cover agent for the Zhodani government, the Zhule Sodality and occasionally, Ine Givar. His face is deeply scarred and hideous and he has become a twisted, hateful shade of his former self; now, he calls himself “The Spectre” in earnest and is never seen outside of his Zhodani Commando battledress, which is specially modified to enhance his psionic abilities. His existence is maintained through the use of powerful anagathics, psionics-enhancing steroids and the Zhodani equivalent of medical opioid derivatives; all of these drugs are powerful euphorics and numbing agents but the issue of addiction is long been moot for him. In addition to the genetically-engineered psi drugs he takes daily, his brain has been pin cushioned with psi-enhancing implants, not only bringing his psi powers to an unprecedented level for his age but also staving off their inexorable decay as well. He is well-paid for his services, though each day he lives on past his years requires more and more drugs to sustain him. About 80 years ago, when the Zhule Sodality first gained a permanent foothold on Jae Taellona, he was put into cold sleep until he was needed again. He has only been

awakened a handful of times since then but when the Sodality’s leaders first received their datachit containing the logtapes of The Rainbow Sun, they knew that this mission would require a special operative.

The Spectre used to live only to see the Marches burn and the Imperials suffer for the death of his wife and daughter but now, he only wishes to die. The Sodality and therefore, his beloved Consulate, needs him and he is too well-trained to allow his own desire for death to override his duty, however much he might wish for the quietude of death. It is not, however, beyond impossibility for the adventurers to detect this tendency in this otherwise relentless killing-machine and to use that to their advantage. The Spectre makes a powerful foe – the Referee is urged to use his abilities wisely.

Combat Notes: In combat, The Spectre is never concerned about defeating his foes as he is with the success of the mission. He has no wish to kill indiscriminately; in fact, he abides by a strict chivalric code of honour that the ancient Zhodani nobles adhered to before the development of star travel. He is likely to leave his opponents alive if their death has no bearing on the success of this mission. If, on the other hand, he has orders to leave no witnesses or if he deems it critical to the ultimate success of the mission, he is quite capable of killing in a chillingly calculated manner. His nickname is indicative of his tactics; he usually travels alone but for this mission, he is taking no risks and there is a 3 in 6 chance he will have 1d6+1 Zhule operatives (like

those described below) with him. His favourite tactic is to teleport in quietly, then use his stun and smoke grenades to create confusion, then teleport to a short distance away while his enemies are distracted. Then, depending on the mission objective, he will use his PGMP-13 to hose down his stunned targets, complete his objective, then perform one last teleport out of the area. If a Strike Squad is with him, he will have them distract Shalini’s guardians with cover fire whilst he teleports in behind them to retrieve the girl.

Equipment Carried: Zhodani Battle Dress (TL 13, see *The Traveller Core Rulebook*, p. 88) with Vislight Chameleon laminate and Multispectral HUD, PGMP-13 with Intelligent, Xaser, and Gyrostabilization options(see *The Traveller Core Rulebook*, p. 102), Gauss Rifle, Laser Pistol, Stunner, Commdot, 6 grenades (2 frag, 2 stun, 1 smoke), Combat Utility Webbing (see Library Data)

Zhule Sodality Strike Squad

Point Value: 40

Age: 34 (4 terms)

UPP: 9A8987-5
(See NPC Table)

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	S o c i a l Standing	P s i o n i c Strength
Zhule Society Strike Squad	Agent (3 Terms), Army (1 Term)	8	10	8/12	9/5	7/2	5/7	5/0

Rank (1 point): Agent 1

Skills (18 Points): Gun Combat (Slug or Energy Rifle)-2 (+4); Gun Combat (Slug Pistol)-1 (+2); Stealth-1 (+2); Recon-1 (+2); Melee (Blade)-1 (+2); Deception-1 (+2); Athletics (Endurance)-1 (+2); Athletics (Coordination)-1 (+2)

Psionic Abilities (2 points): Telepathy-1



Notes: These are the statistics for the extraction team first encountered by the group in the rail tunnels. Further, since this is the type of Zhule Sodality operative that is most likely to be encountered by the group during this adventure; these stats may be used as needed for multiple encounters. Although the initial team encountered is armed with laser rifles, the ACR is also a common weapon for these squads. The Referee is encouraged, if he wishes to tweak these stats as necessary so that there will be more variation in the types of agents encountered. Note that only 1 in 4 of these operatives will have psionic abilities; those that do not may substitute the 2 points spent on the Telepathy ability for anything the Referee wishes – an extra gun combat skill, for example.

Equipment Carried: Laser Rifle-11 or ACR, Blade (bayonet), Gauss Pistol, Tactical Bodysuit (treat as Smart Fabric that functions as full-body Cloth with layer of Reflec and IR Chamelion), Multispectral goggles (Combination IR and Light-Intensifying, see *The Traveller Core Rulebook*, p. 96), TL8 portable Comm, 6 Stun grenades, Combat Utility Webbing (see Library Data)

Chief Engineer Yardin Anois

Point Value: 90

Age: 54 (9 terms)

UPP: 9A8987-5

(See NPC Table)

Notes: Chief Anois (on-WAH)- or, “the Chief,” as he is called by his friends and co-workers- is an effervescent, friendly man with a perpetual twinkle in his grey eyes and a smile on his lips. His head is clean-shaven and he sports a bushy, white beard. The Chief is getting on in years and some say he is far older than his apparent age, because time out in the space lanes tends to slow to a crawl but nevertheless his characteristics are slowly but surely declining with age; he is no longer as strong as he used to be, nor as nimble. His impressive array of skills, qualify him for a far better job than that of Chief Engineer aboard the Rainbow Sun; he could easily be a Department Chief aboard a major corporate freighter

or passenger liner for Tukera, Oberlindes or any of the Imperial Megacorps or government contractors. The acquisition of wealth, however, at the expense of freedom, has never held much attraction for the Chief. The Chief speaks with a thick accent, faintly reminiscent of Terran French-Canadian, like all those do who hail from Heya, his homeworld, a farming planet in the Regina subsector. His agricultural upbringing is the reason he immediately took a liking to Shalini and when he saw that there were people out to get her, he was eager to help. His plan was to hide her in the crawlspaces between decks when he was on duty, then spend time with her in his cabin when he was not, since he never had a daughter of his own. He has given even given her crayons, construction paper and a pair of something like scissors to amuse herself with when he is working. The Chief only wants what is best for the girl and is willing to do whatever is necessary to see that she is protected. He is an old, wary spacehand and bribing, tricking or intimidating him is all but totally impossible; honesty and forthrightness is the only way to impress an old stardog like the Chief. If the adventurers approach him as a potential ally, however and are candid and

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	S o c i a l Standing
Chief Engineer Yardin Anois	Merchant (5 Terms) Imperial Navy (3 Terms)	6 (+1)	9 (+5)	7 (+2)=8	10 (+6)	11 (+8)	8 (+3)=17
Rank (20 points): Merchant 4 (2nd Mate); Navy NCO 6 (Master Chief)							

Skills (45 points) : Engineer (J-Drive)-3 (+6); Engineer (M-Drive)-3 (+6); Engineer (Power)-2 (+4); Engineer 16 (Electronics)-1 (+2); Engineer (Life Support)-2 (+4); Gun Combat (Slug Pistol)-3 (+6); Pilot (Small Craft)- 2 (+4); Vacc Suit-1 (+2); Computers-4 (+8); Zero G-1 (+2) Admin-0 (+1)



convincingly sincere with him, he will reluctantly let them take Shalini, since he has no way of getting her to Vanejen on his own.

Equipment Carried: TL-11 Electronics Toolkit, TL-12 Engineering Pocket Toolkit, Cr40, Utility Blade
The Chief keeps a small automatic pistol in his desk in his office.

Commander Klaargh

Point Value: 90

Age: 46 (7 terms)

UPP: 8DBA9B
(See NPC Table)

Notes: Commander Klaargh has clawed, bit and fought his way to the top every bloody, vicious step of the way; such is the way of life for a Corsair and he does not regret it for a Trexalonian second. He has been serving on Corsairs since he was born. His broodmother was a Captain and out of her entire litter, she knew he would be special and she told him so. He did not inherit her ship; when she became old and weak and too long in the teeth to bear any more young, she met The Challenge bravely, jaws first. Her first officer called her out and

told her she smelled old and of weakness; as is tradition, she could have stepped down from her command and lived- but in shame. That is not life. So she died by the point of her own first officer's (who was Klaargh's father, some say, though he was not even half her age) knifepoint and Klaargh watched as his teeth ripped the warm flesh of throat and blood spewed forth from her punctured jugular. Klaargh prayed to the Allmother that he might be strong enough to be granted such a worthy death as she.

Klaargh, since he was on the losing side, was given the chance to join the winners. In honour of his mother, he did not accept, even as all who had stood with him gratefully embraced the quarter that was proffered and changed sides. Klaargh was stubborn and as to be expected, he was abandoned on an asteroid with nothing but his wits, a Vacc Suit and six hours of air. He was fortunate, under the Code they could have chosen to kill him outright. Klaargh wandered found an old, long-abandoned mining installation and enough air for several weeks. He managed to repair the ancient comm system and call for help. Eventually, he was rescued by a human crew and spent three years aboard their ship, learning their soft, weak ways. Eventually, he returned to a Vargr world near the border of the Imperium and the Extents and worked his way into the crew of a Corsair ship as a lowly Comms officer – the same posting he had aboard his original vessel. Klaargh was patient,

chose the right mate and the right companions this time and planned his coup very carefully. Eventually, he took the second officer's place when he met with an unfortunate accident during an EVA repair mission – not an entirely lawful method of ascension but an effective one. He took on his predecessor's role fully, quickly becoming a proficient starship pilot. Eventually, the first mate experienced an accident as well, one with a defective Vacc Suit and Klaargh rose in his stead. When it came time to challenge his captain, he did so by lawful combat.

Klaargh prefers to use his laser pistol in combat if he can, though if there is a boarding action he will use his Gauss Rifle until he is out of clips, then toss it aside and draw his Laser Pistol. Both weapons are ancient, almost antiques, both fashioned in the same ornate, unusual style. The most noticeable feature is the rococo spiked fin that decorates the cooling vent along each weapon's dorsal length. The entire effect, along with his double-bladed dagger and spiked armour, which hand-painted with blood-red Vagr runes and death-lord symbols is fearsome and vicious-looking, and is enough to frighten many would-be challengers and victims into submission. Klaargh is strong for his race but his real strength in battle is his speed; the ability to strike first and aim true has won him a great many battles.

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	S o c i a l Standing
Commander Klaargh	Corsair (7 Terms)	8/3	13/12	11/8 = 23	10/6	9/5	11/8 = 19
Rank (12 points): Captain 6							

Skills (36 Points): Gun Combat (Energy Pistol)-3 (+6); Leadership-3 (+6); Comms-2 (+4); Gun Combat (Slug Rifle)- 2 (+4); Melee Combat (Natural Weapons)-2 (+4); Melee Combat (Blade)-1 (+2); Tactics (Naval)-4 (+8); Pilot (Spacecraft)-1 (+2)



Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	S o c i a l Standing
Pack Leader Ghzyrkha	Corsair (4 Terms)	7/2	10/6	9/5 = 13	11/8	7/2	8/3 = 13

Rank (10 points): Corsair 5 (Leader)

Skills (24 Points): Astrogation-3 (+6); Leadership-2 (+6); Sensors-2 (+4); Gun Combat (Slug Rifle)- 2 (+4); Melee Combat (Natural Weapons)-1 (+2); Melee Combat (Blade)-1 (+2);

Equipment: TL 12 Ornatly Decorated Combat Armor, Gauss Pistol, Gauss Rifle, Double-Bladed Combat Dagger (does 1d6+4 instead of 1d6+2), TL8 Personal Communicator

Pack Leader Ghzyrkha

Point Value: 60

Age: 34 (4 terms)

UPP: 8DBA9B
(See NPC Table)

Notes: Lady Ghzyrkha has been Klaargh’s mate for 20 years and his first officer for 10. Her loyalty and love for her Chosen is deep but she is a Vargr, after all and she worries that she has caught the scent of indecision

a few times recently. She is young and has felt a few times that Klaargh’s days may be numbered, though she is far from decided on this. Just in case, however, Lady Ghzyrkha has her eye on a junior officer, who she intends to sponsor and assist as she did Klaargh – she was the one, after all, who took care of the First Officer’s Vacc Suit. Ghzyrkha prefers to be the “power behind the throne,” so to speak, rather than to be the one to directly challenge Leaders who have grown soft. After all, the penalties for miscalculation are far less permanent that way. The arrival of the adventurers into the volatile situation on board the ship may serve as a catalyst for a decision – whether to make her move now or wait a few more moon-cycles until Klaargh has grown so soft that everyone can see it. The only problem with the second choice is that, if she waits too late, someone else who she has not got her claws into may decide to act first, leaving her in the unenviable position of having a new Captain in power over which she has no influence. Perhaps one

of the humans that Klaargh has foolishly taken aboard and chosen to aid out of some misguided sense of male loyalty could be made suitable to the task at hand...

Equipment: Vargr Tactical Bodysuit (TL 10 Cloth with reflective weave) or TL-11 Combat Armour; Shotgun, Blade, Personal Comm

Vargr Corsair Pack Member

Point Value: 35

Age: 30 (3 terms)

UPP: 597877
(See NPC Table)

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	S o c i a l Standing
Vargr Corsair Pack Member	Corsair (3 Terms)	5/0	9/5	7/2=7	8/3	7/2	7/2=7

Rank (4 points): Corsair 2 (Corporal)

Skills (17 Points): Gun Combat (Slug or Energy Rifle)-2 (+4); Astrogation, Comms, or Sensors-2 (+4); Melee Combat (Natural Weapons)-2 (+4); Engineering (any)-2 (+4) or Medic-2; Carousing-0 (+1)



Notes: These are generic statistics for the Referee to use for members of Klaargh's crew as needed. These are general guidelines only; the Referee should feel free to adjust this basic template as needed to reflect individuality among the crew members. The crew is fiercely loyal to Klaargh for the moment and will gleefully die at his command, although that could change in a second.

Equipment: Vargr Tactical Cloth Bodysuit (TL 10 Cloth armor), Accelerator Rifle or Laser Rifle, Gauss Pistol or Medkit, Blade, Personal Comm

LIBRARY DATA

Anathium: An exceedingly rare, valuable, iridescent metal ore with a low degree of radioactivity that is highly valued for its ability to achieve superconductivity over a broad range of temperatures. Its free electron pairs can therefore be easily stimulated into a superconductive state without the use of a liquid supercoolant or extreme heat, the primary obstacle to the widespread implementation of superconductor applications from their discovery at TL 6 and prior to the discovery of the gravitic wavefunction that leads to the development of contragrav at TL 9. Anathium is extremely valuable due to its versatility; it has recently come into very high demand due to a recent initiative in by the Minister of the Interior in the Domain of Deneb to assist in the development of planets of TL 5-8, through the construction of large-scale public transportation systems. Anathium makes large maglevs, hoversails and monorails at Tls 5-7, previously inconceivable on such worlds, feasible and maintainable with the materials and techniques at those Tls. Before that, however, Anathium was and still is, primarily used in the construction of high-quality and precision contragrav modules. While other metals can, in theory, be made to work almost as well, they do so only after a gruelling, painstakingly fastidious process of refinement and materials synthesis. The process is prohibitively expensive at Tls lower than 12 and the final result almost never performs to expectation. The

resulting schism in demand has strained labour relations on Jae Taellona and has all but led to an all-out trade war between Oberlindes Lines and Sternmetal Horizons. Other applications of a more experimental nature are reportedly being investigated as well. By far, the largest exporter of Anathium in the Domain of Deneb is Jae Taellona in the Rhylanor subsector, with Macene and Glisten being distant seconds.

Combat Utility Webbing: A combination shoulder harness/utility belt that uses TL 12 materials technology to firmly secure items, similar to the Velcro cloth of earlier Tls but far more advanced, allows the wearer to comfortably carry and quickly access up to four weapons – two sidearms and two rifles. There is also room for 4 smaller items, such as a melee weapon and extra clips or ammo packs. The CUW also holds up to 6 grenades or items of similar size. 0.5 kg, Cr900.

Dh'oughz Khfae: Literally translated as “The Duellists' Honour,” Dh'oughz Khfae is an ancient invention of Vargr WarPacks, an unwritten code of behaviour dating back at least as far as their known pre-contact history. Dh'oughz Khfae is generally frowned upon by modern Vargr mainstream society, since they have tried to suppress some of the more barbaric practices that date back to their pre-history as pack animals in order to make themselves more palatable to interstellar society as a whole. The code is practiced unapologetically among the corsairs as well as Vargr isolationists; however, as are many of the other unwritten laws of pack social structure. Dh'oughz Khfae governs the many situations under which a Vargr may challenge his alpha, as well as the appropriate codes of behaviour during a duel among equals and inferiors.

There are literally hundreds of thousands of subtleties and nuances that govern Dh'oughz Khfae, from the stance chosen by the challenger, to the choice of weapons and how they are grasped, to the expression on one's face and the exact pitch range of one's bark of

victory, most of which are beyond a human's capacity to comprehend. Fortunately, however, those humans who have been unlucky enough to find themselves challenged have reported that the Vargr do not expect the “ignorant monkeys” to fully grasp the depths of Dh'oughz Khfae. In general, a human who has been lawfully challenged under Dh'oughz Khfae is expected to conduct himself honourably, to use only honourable insults to taunt his opponent. In an “acceptable” insult, for example, the opponent's mate and pack members are fair game but insults directed at the opponent's mother are not, since Vargr are born in litters and the challenged may be unwittingly insulting half the spectators as well. Interestingly enough, insults to the opponent's father are reportedly met with puzzlement, since a Vargr invariably has no idea who his father is, nor does he care – family consists of siblings and mother, as far as he is concerned – it is considered a social faux pas for a Vargr to show interest in his litter. In general, it is reported that if the challenged sticks to a Gentleman's code of conduct similar to that practiced by Terrans in their second millennium AD (ca -3500 to -2500 Imperial) then that will, for the most part, be satisfactory to the Vargr.

dX: A microscopic tablet-style data storage medium for recording and storing datastreams of enormous magnitude and of extremely high frequencies. The most common use for dX is the storage of super-high THz X-boat network feeds. Each tablet can store hundreds to thousands of terabytes of data, so it is widely used to transport datastreams, for media applications and for physical backup and storage of planetary X-boat feeds.

It is important to note that dX tablets vary wildly in their capacities and write speeds, because they are “grown,” not manufactured, by a nanomolecular process that closely resembles a living organism. The dX tablet possesses a remarkable faculty to hard-write high-capacity data configurations at astoundingly high frequencies that would normally require a mainframe

to process, such as dedicated encryption subroutines and cipher patterns. This makes it the most secure data storage medium in existence and the medium of choice for intelligence-gathering and investigative operatives both in and out of the field.

Unfortunately, its size as well as its compatibility with a standard Wafer Jack (adapter required, TL 14, Wt. neg. Cr500) make it a prime candidate for illegal data trafficking as well as a host of other illegitimate uses. dX is forbidden to civilians on many worlds, since it has a notorious reputation as the only storage medium capable of retaining and processing the notorious Endorphin-Cascade Induction Stimsim programs.

ECIS: Acronym for Endorphin Cascade Induction Stimsim; a powerfully addictive virtual reality simulation that can only be accessed with a Wafer Jack neural shunt. The “wafer” (generally a dX tablet) is sold to the user, who places it in a preinstalled Wafer Jack interface with a dX adapter (see above), who then experiences the reality simulation (called a “stimsim”) digitally encoded on the tablet. This “stimsim” is different from normal programs of its type in that it uses direct electrical impulses to stimulate neural centres in the cerebral cortex for the express purpose of initiating an endorphin “cascade,” which begins with an overwhelming discharge of endorphins from the hypothalamus. Other electrical impulses stimulate natural neurochemicals into a by a slow, self-sustaining exothermic reaction in the neural matrix. This reaction effectively causes a sort of feedback loop that can reportedly hyperstimulates the endocrine system, keeping the cascade of endorphins passing through the receptors and the brain’s natural reuptake mechanism for up to 22 hours.

The ecstasy reportedly experienced by users is without parallel. Of course, this process is extremely dangerous, as it can utterly deplete the user’s entire supply of natural pain blockers, leaving him vulnerable and overly sensitive to any external stimuli. There have been reports of users,

many of who were first-time users, whose endocrine systems are damaged by the hyperstimulation and are rendered utterly incapable of replenishing the natural endorphin supply. Those who are so afflicted generally succumb to suicide but the few who were unfortunate enough to live on – or too physically weak even to take their own lives – are stricken irrevocably insane. Their minds continuously process what would normally be a trivial discomfort as searing, unbearable agony. Finally, death is not an uncommon side effect of “Skading” though it does not happen as often as one might expect. Still, when it does happen, it is often due to sloppy, amateurish software coding or black-market dX chips of shoddy cultivation or materials. In either case, the result is generally the same: the electrical impulses are directed to the wrong neural cluster, yet they still retain their characteristic micro-surgical precision, resulting in wildly unpredictable brain-to-body command signals. These signals can be as catastrophic as the selective failure of a CNS-regulated organ function – such as breathing or heart regulation – or even total system failure or they can be as innocuous as false sensation of itching in a random body part or a feeling of irresistible drowsiness. There is no known way to determine if a given tablet or software is defective.

Despite the well-publicized risks and its legendary unpredictability, “Skading” continues to be an enormously popular pastime with young, rebellious types. Experts and medical researchers remain befuddled by the relative rarity of devastating catastrophic incidents when compared to the sheer volume of ECIS abusers. In the Spinward Marches sector, Jae Taellona is the only world that does not prohibit the sale or production of ECIS software and paraphernalia, except in situations where it has been discovered that a minor is involved.

Viasuit: This suit, designed specifically by Sternmetal Horizons, LIC for use in its mining facilities on Jae Taellona, is especially designed to improve the survival rate in underground mining accidents. It has also proven

to be useful to those stranded or otherwise forced to make long treks across the arid Jae Taellonan. Its primary purpose is to keep the wearer alive in the event of a cave-in, which used to happen quite frequently. More often, however, it is used in the desert and few on Jae Taellona dare enter the desert, even in a sealed vehicle, unless they are wearing one. In reality, the Viasuit can be used to survive for an extended period of time in nearly any hostile environment save hard vacuum.

The advantage of the Viasuit is that it can run for an extended period of time before it requires recharging and that it is not hampered by a limited air supply. Though it is lightly armoured to prevent damage to the wearer from falling rocks and debris (treat as Cloth), it is certainly not intended to be used in place of armour in a combat situation. The Viasuit is equipped with four TL-11 CO2 scrubbers that actually continue to convert CO2 back into oxygen, using from several thin layers of cations on the surface of the filter and water molecules taken from the body’s secretions. The cation layers are eventually depleted in this process and scrubber filters need to be exchanged once every 139 hours – the CO2 scrubbers have a window that slowly turns from green to red as they get closer to needing replacement. The suit also draws moisture from the body and the ambient air and filters and recycles it for use to keep the wearer alive in the event there is no water source to be found.

In general, a wearer should be able to survive for up to two weeks when wearing a Viasuit, as long as there is a trace or more of oxygen to breathe. The suit maintains power through organic cells that recharge themselves when exposed to body heat, sunlight and nearly any natural heat source imaginable. The suit does have its limitations, however, as it must undergo a full maintenance cycle once a month – during which time it cannot be worn – and its power cells must be connected to a major power source, such as a starship power grid, or an industrial power outlet and be exposed to a current for 12 hours once every two weeks. This repolarises and

realigns the cathode-anode configuration; otherwise the batteries will begin to fail within one to six days of missing the two week maintenance date as polarity fades and they can no longer hold a charge. Despite these limitations, however, the Viasuit is a prized survival gear and technically illegal to buy or own if the possessor is not an employee of Sternmetal Horizons, LIC. This inconsistently-enforced restriction only serves to make the suits more expensive – not less available. 5 Kg., Cr5500.

Antisediton and Fidelity Act of 908: Generally considered to be the most draconian, restrictive piece of legislation in the history of the Third Imperium, the Act is generally thought to have begun in 907 when the Archduke of Deneb travelled to Capital to attend a special emergency session of the Moot of High Lords. Records from many Moot meetings (including this one) of the time are vague at best but it is thought that during the meeting, the Archduke successfully managed to whip the embers of fear into open flame by exacerbating dual concerns over the Scylla and Charybdis of the increasingly hostile Solomani Autonomous District coreward and the militant build-up of Consulate forces along the Fringe rimward. In response to the Archduke's intimations that the enemy was infiltrating Imperial culture on both fronts, the Moot passed the Antisediton and Fidelity Act of 908. The Act criminalized many things which could not be enforced, often to what many felt were ridiculous lengths. Speaking out against the war – either one – was forbidden, as well as criminalizing the possession of reading materials which the Archduke's appointed "Council of Treasonous Activities" deemed as "seditious" or "pro-Zhodane." This act managed to stifle the exchange of popular music, theatre and art by the worlds of the Fringe, which, up until then, had flowed freely. Suspicion and mistrust began to fester in the border worlds, as those of Zhodani descent were jailed for no other reason than their heritage. To the relief of many, the Act was repealed in 986 almost

simultaneously with the signing of the Armistice, in the wake of a quarter century or more of an almost unilateral failure to consistently enforce the terms of the legislation. Although most scholars today consider the Act an unequivocal blunder, it has left a legacy that persists to this day. No longer do Imperial and Consulate citizens mix or exchange culture, trade routes that once bound the worlds of the Fringe to each other now lay silent and untraversed; tourists and visitors from the Consulate are closely watched on Imperial soil and vice versa. Suspicion and paranoia run unchecked, as the citizenry know nothing about their neighbours. The TAS has considered issuing an Amber Zone advisory for the entire District 268 and Chronor subsectors but thus far, this has only been a suggestion.

Thiti Nut: A nut that is raised on trees that have so far only been grown successfully on Belizo. The nut is considered to be a delicacy only affordable by the most affluent; it sells for Cr5000 an ounce. Tukera Lines has a contract with the planetary government giving them a monopoly on the shipping of the Thiti Nut. By the time the company and the planetary government take their share of the profits, only a few credits manage to trickle down to the relatively poor farmers of Belizo.

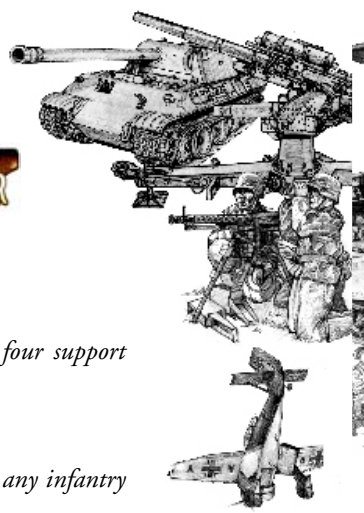
Xnet: An informal, rather loose association of regular topics discussed by Scouts, members of the Imperial Postal Administration, computer and communications enthusiasts which are grouped into literally billions of different "headers," based on topic. Each header can be thought of as a sort of chain letter, which gathers comments and branches out into other headers as the mail packet proceeds to each subsequent destination. This practice can trace its roots to the "Usenet" communication network that still exists on Terra, as well as Usenet's lesser imitators on other worlds, as well as the ultimate evolution of the peer-to-peer commentary network, better-known great FlameNet that exists within the planetary datasphere on Core.

Zhule Sodality Name derived from an obscure Zhodani dialect taken by or given collectively to a resistance movement that exists in localized pockets in various subsectors of the Domain of Deneb. The movement is generally believed to have originated on Jae Taellona about 80 years before the Third Frontier War as a labour equality movement, which was crushed by Sternmetal Horizons when the Antisediton and Fidelity Act came into effect. It is thought that a core group of highly-trained, deep cover Zhodani agents managed to assimilate the desperate remnants of the movement. Over the course of the Third Frontier War, this core group managed to grow into a full blown resistance movement by managing multiple small cells of true believers who were always ready to sacrifice themselves for the cause of Jae Taellonan independence and the workers' freedom from corporate greed and Imperial oppression. The terrorists were responsible for the deaths of thousands and countless delays and supply line disruptions that might have cost the Imperium the war, had their leader not been hunted down and destroyed by a small, poorly-armed group of intrepid marines and security personnel trapped and killed their leader while he was attempting to sabotage the Naval repair yard in 984. The last of the Sodality was thought to have been arrested in 991 and he died in prison in 1022. There have been rumours of time to time of a resurfacing of the Sodality but although a new, rejuvenated labour movement seems to be in progress on Jae Taellona at the time of this entry, so far authorities have met such rumours with little more than cynical amusement.



Firefight in France

By Alex Fennell and Ted Chang



With Alex back in the UK office for a week it was decided that he and Ted would finally square off against one another on the gaming table for a game of Battlefield Evolution: World at War. As the past few battle reports for World at War played out in the office have been scenario based Alex and Ted would be playing a game using the Engagements rules from the back of the rulebook.

anything foolish with them. Taking four sections also allows me to take four support assets.

Two MMG Support Teams: 150pts
If I can set these teams up in cover they can provide withering fire against any infantry units Ted sends forwards.

One Medium Mortar Team: 75pts
I don't normally use mortar teams and so was looking forwards to seeing how these would work in the game.

One Sniper Team: 60pts
Another team I don't normally use. I was hoping I could use these guys as a nuisance factor to draw Ted away from the rest of my army.

Two Churchill Infantry Tanks: 660pts
I really like the 3 hits that these tanks have, making them very survivable against anything short of dedicated tank destroyers. The machine guns and main weapon are pretty good as well!

One Firefly Medium Tank: 285pts
Slightly weaker than the Churchill, this tank provides me with an awesome main gun if Ted takes any heavy armour.



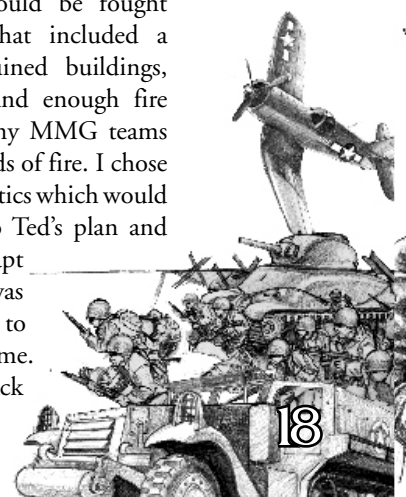
Alex:
So, 2,000 points to spend and me without my usual army, which was languishing back in the US office. Ransacking the miniatures in the studio gave me the following army with which to fight off Ted's Germans.

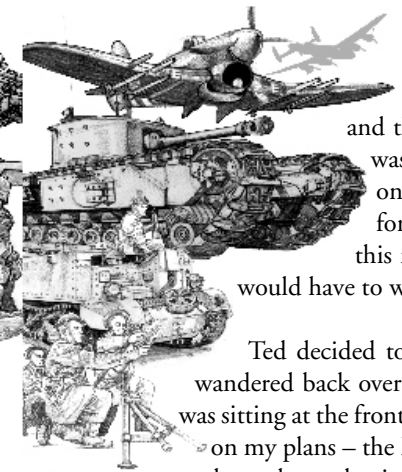
Command Section with additional PIAT team and light artillery: 180pts
I like using a Command section as it gives me access to some extra anti-armour capability and the artillery option usually comes as a nasty surprise to an opponent.

Four Infantry Sections: 560pts
Whats not to like about these guys? 40 infantrymen can prove pretty resilient as long as I don't do



Our battle would be fought over terrain that included a number of ruined buildings, some woods and enough fire lanes to give my MMG teams some good fields of fire. I chose Probe as my tactics which would let me react to Ted's plan and hopefully adapt to whatever it was he was going to throw against me. Ted chose Attack





and this meant my mission for the game was 'delay' while his was 'overrun'. I was pretty confident about keeping at least one of my units alive for the bonus points. Ted's bonus was for getting his own units in my deployment zone and for this reason I chose the Encounter deployment, since then he would have to work a little to get his units across the board.

Ted decided to take the first turn and after he had set up his army I wandered back over to the table to see what I was up against. A King Tiger was sitting at the front of his deployment zone! This would have a marked effect on my plans – the kill score of 13, 4 hits and armour save of 2+ would make the tank a real pain to shift. I saw as well that he had a couple of Panzer IVs, a PAK40 anti-tank gun with a half-track as well as some infantry units. The force was anchored around the large ruined building in his deployment zone and looked set to rush forwards to the ruined church just ahead.

Seeing the King Tiger spearheading his force I decided to keep my own tanks in reserve to come in on my first turn, along with an infantry squad who I imagined would be entering the board using the tanks for protection. The rest of my army deployed within and on the far side of the large wood in my deployment zone, trying to minimize the number of shots Ted could get at me. I placed the PIAT teams in the ruined building out of line of sight in case Ted's lighter tanks came past on their way to my deployment zone.

Ted:
Alex had called in to the UK office for a few days and since I have beaten everyone else in the office I was looking forward to trying my arm with him. I decided to take a German force as I really wanted to use a King Tiger in the army. My 2,000 points got me the following.

Grenadier Command Squad:
100pts

Three Grenadier Squads, one with a panzerfaust: 515pts

One PaK40 Anti-tank gun with SdKfz 251/1 halftrack: 185pts



One Tiger II Tank: 800pts

Two Panzer IV Tanks: 400pts

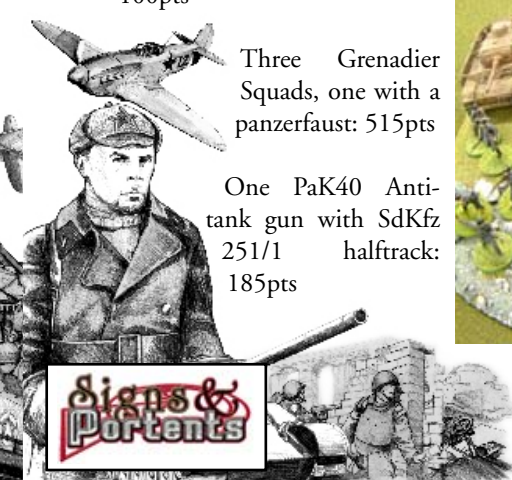
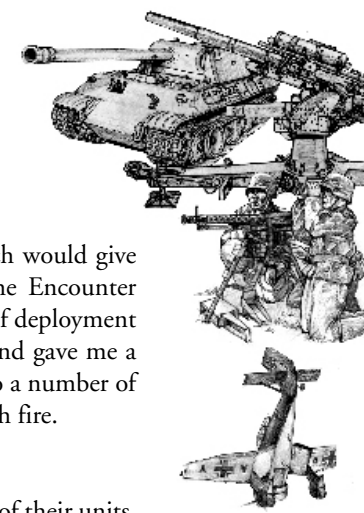
The choice of tactics ended up with my mission being overrun, which would give me bonus points for getting units into Alex's deployment zone. The Encounter deployment would make that a little tricky but since I had the choice of deployment zones I took the one that gave Alex only two pieces to hide behind and gave me a good ruined building from which to launch my attack. There were also a number of buildings nearby which would let me advance without taking too much fire.

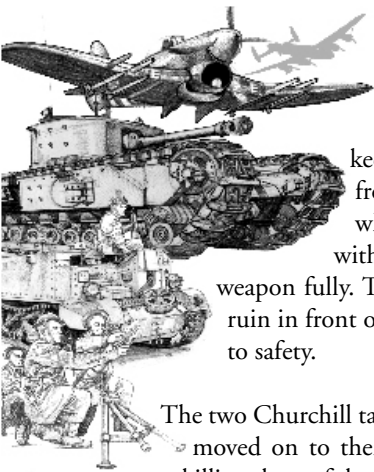
Turn 1

The Germans had the first turn and moved forwards with the majority of their units, closing in on the British deployment zone. No British targets were available and so every unit took two move actions or in the case of the halftrack a ready action followed by a tracked move. The halftrack was able to make it to the far side of the woods on the British side of the board and the infantry unit stayed inside, unable to disembark.



The King Tiger moved up to behind the ruined church with an infantry squad and the two Panzer IVs moved to the far side of a nearby building with an infantry squad right behind. The command squad moved into that building and the PaK40 took up a firing position at the end of the wood in the deployment zone, covering a large part of the British deployment zone.





The British advanced through their cover cautiously, keeping more than one inch from the edges to prevent them from being seen. The exceptions were the two MMG teams who took up positions in the wood and nearby building, with the ones in the wood taking a ready action to set up their weapon fully. The section on the right took a double move towards the ruin in front of them but it was a little too far for all of them to make it to safety.

The two Churchill tanks advanced onto the board side by side while the Firefly moved on to their left and tried a speculative shot into the PaK40 gun, killing three of the crew! The 3" mortar lobbed a shell high into the air which came down just to side of the German Infantry advancing behind the Panzer IVs and killed three of them. The survivors reacted by moving forwards slightly. The sniper team in the craters stayed hidden.

Turn 2

With targets now presenting themselves the German gunners manning the PaK40 took careful aim at the approaching Firefly and scored a solid hit, rocking the tank back on its chassis and reducing it to one hit. The first of the Panzer IVs moved forwards and opened fire on the British section on the right with its two MGs. Three Infantrymen died and the survivors used their reaction to move out of sight behind



the ruined building. The second Panzer IV moved up to support the first and opened fire with its main gun into the building housing the MMG

team. Fortunately for the British the roll to hit was a one which resulted in no casualties.



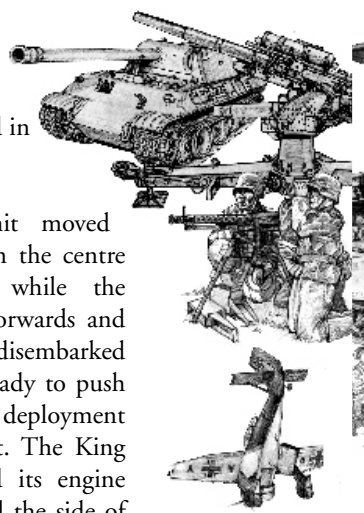
The Infantry unit moved to take position in the centre ruined building while the halftrack moved forwards and the squad inside disembarked into the woods, ready to push towards the British deployment zone from the left. The King Tiger then revved its engine and moved around the side of the church, drawing a bead on the lead Churchill. Narrowly missing the kill score the tank scored a significant hit on the

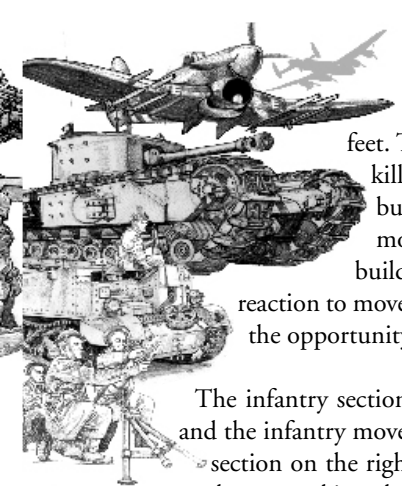
British tank which started smoking badly, though it was still in the fight for the time being.

The British Lt started the British turn by moving up to the edge of the wood he was



in, taking a careful bead on the German infantry next to the Panzer IV and calling in an artillery strike. The gunners' accuracy was slightly off but still the two members of the German Command Squad who had crept up to the edge of the ruined building were blasted off their





feet. The Firefly took a shot at the last crewman of the PaK40, killing him and then scooted around the side of the nearby building to try to avoid the oncoming German armour. The mortar team fired into the reduced unit behind the ruined building but caused no casualties. The Infantry used the reaction to move up to close behind the building. The British snipers took the opportunity to reveal themselves and finished those last two.

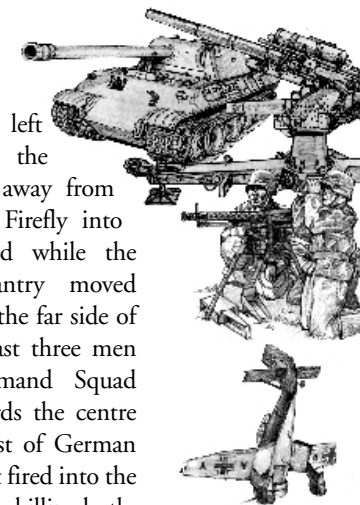
The infantry section in the wood redeployed towards the back of the wood and the infantry moved up within the ruin facing the King Tiger. The Infantry section on the right spent two actions moving through the ruins they were close to, taking themselves out of sight of the Panzer IVs. The section on the left moved up behind the recently moved Firefly and the building it was using as cover. A PIAT gunner moved up to face the King Tiger and let loose a shot which narrowly missed the behemoth. The smoking Churchill fired a shot in return at the King Tiger and scored a Kill result, taking two hits off it, before moving forwards. The last Churchill used a ready action to engage its tracks and lurched ahead of its comrade, firing at the King Tiger and successfully reducing it to one hit.

Turn 3

The German Infantry sections in the middle of the board started things off by moving to the edge of the ruin and opening fire on the MMG team in the building by the wood, killing them to a man. The King Tiger fired at the lead Churchill as part of a tracked move into the ruin scoring a kill result and leaving the tank dangerously vulnerable. Both Panzer IVs moved up to beside the King Tiger and although the first missed the second scored an unsaved hit on the rear Churchill, killing it.



Over on the left of the board the halftrack moved away from the approaching Firefly into the nearby wood while the dismounted infantry moved twice through to the far side of the wood. The last three men from the Command Squad moved out towards the centre ruin while the last of German squad on the right fired into the two British snipers, killing both. Their second action took them into the ruin in front of them.



The British Section on the right continued their move through the ruin, hoping for some shots in the following turn. The Section in the wood continued their redeployment towards the left, though the terrain was slowing them down. The Infantry behind the Firefly moved slowly through the building in front of them, preparing to hold the area against the potential assault from that direction. The MMG section opened fire on the Germans in the centre ruin and managed to kill 3 of them. Reaction fire from the squad only killed 1 in return though suppressed the team enough so that they could not use their second action. The British Section in the ruin by the Churchill moved up and fired on the same German section, killing three more and suppressing the remainder.





The PIAT gun then fired twice and took off a hit from the closest Panzer IV. The last Churchill, realizing it could not finish off the Tiger now it was in cover, took aim at the second Panzer IV and scored a kill, leaving it a smoking wreck! Its second action was to move forward slowly. The Firefly was now the only British unit that had a chance of killing the King Tiger and it moved to the low hill from behind the building, firing at the German Tank as it did. Luckily for the British a hit was scored and the German Tank failed its armour save which killed it!

Turn 4

Things were not looking good for the Germans at the start of turn 4. Down two to one in terms of armour, they only had two weapons that could take out the two surviving British tanks.



building and the last of the squad on the right moved cautiously through the ruins without exposing themselves to the British in the building opposite them. The halftrack gunned its engines and moved through the woods to take up a position on the far side of the building housing the British infantry, who elected not to react. The dismounted infantry moved through the wood to take up positions in the building opposite.

The last of the German infantry in the centre ruined building lined up their Panzerschreck and let fly at the oncoming Churchill. One solid hit and failed armour save later the Churchill was destroyed! Sensing glory, the



last surviving Panzer IV moved forwards and drew a bead on the Firefly that had destroyed the King Tiger but missed with its shot.

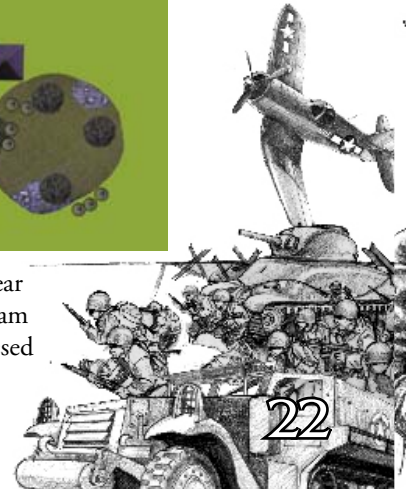
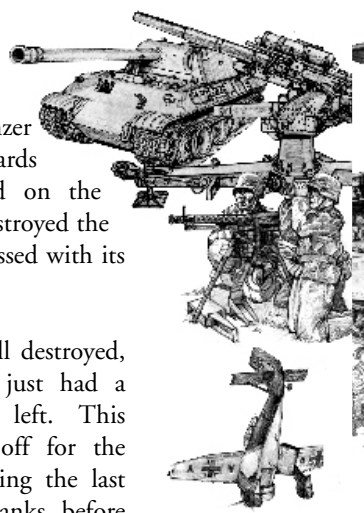
With the Churchill destroyed, the British force just had a damaged Firefly left. This started the turn off for the British by destroying the last of the German tanks before moving off to the left to

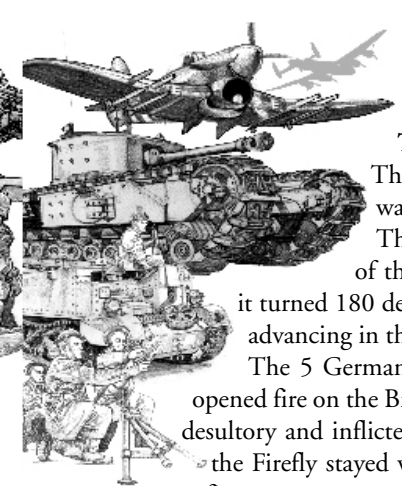
threaten the halftrack by the building. The British Infantry inside the building moved up but did not reveal themselves. If the Germans wanted a firefight, they were going to have to expose themselves to fire first.

The British MMG unit opened up on the Germans in the centre building and whilst they only killed one, they suppressed the remaining three who elected to withdraw out of sight. The British infantry on the left moved to the edge of the ruin facing



the ruin housing the five German infantrymen. The squad at the rear continued their move to the left, now out in the open. The mortar team tried a speculative shot into the German Command squad but missed by a long way.





Turn 5

The last of the German armour was destroyed and the Firefly was now a serious threat to the German infantry on the left.

The halftrack gunned its engines and moved around the rear of the building to try and draw it away. As part of the move it turned 180 degrees to bring its rear MG to bear on the British infantry advancing in the open behind the ruined building, killing the first three.

The 5 Germans on the right advanced to the edge of their cover and opened fire on the British there, killing two. Reaction fire from the British was desultory and inflicted no casualties. The Infantry in the building in front of the Firefly stayed where they were, unwilling to expose themselves to tank fire.



British infantry caught in the open fired at the halftrack and managed to damage it with rifle fire but were unable to kill it. The infantry on the right opened fire at the enemy opposite, killing two and suppressing the remainder. The German infantry reacted by moving back and out of sight. The mortars again tried to shoot at the German Command squad but again missed.

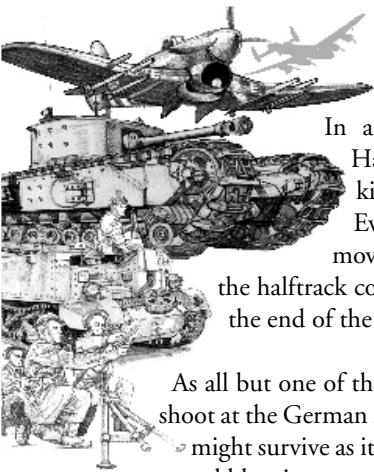


In the British turn, the Firefly moved around the building to engage the halftrack but missed with its shot. The infantry within the nearby building moved out of sight of the halftrack as best they could. The



Turn 6





In an effort to score bonus victory points the German Halftrack sped forwards into the British deployment zone, killing two more of the infantry in the open as it went. Everything else on the German side stayed hidden, as to move forwards would only invite fire in the British turn. If the halftrack could stay alive, it would be worth bonus points for Ted at the end of the game.

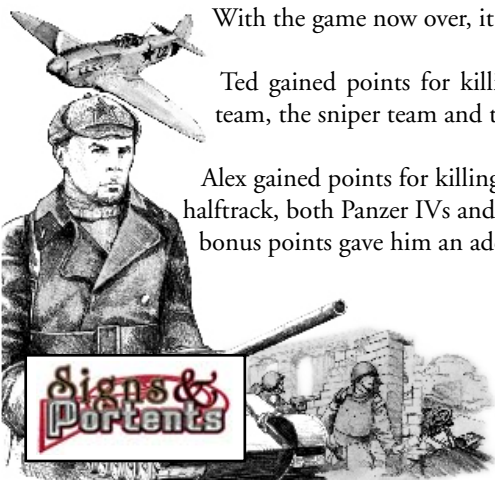
As all but one of the German forces were well and truly hidden, what could shoot at the German halftrack did so. It looked for a moment that the halftrack might survive as it shrugged off rifle and PIAT fire until the Firefly took aim and blew it apart with a single shot.



With the game now over, it was time to work victory points.

Ted gained points for killing half of two infantry sections, an MMG team, the sniper team and two Churchill tanks for a total of 935 points.

Alex gained points for killing half of two infantry squads, the PaK 40 and halftrack, both Panzer IVs and the King Tiger for 1545 points. The mission bonus points gave him an additional 386 points.



Victory for the British!

Well, that went well. My plan was to bring my tanks onto the board together and keep them concentrated on Ted's armour while relying on the high kill score of the Churchills to keep them alive. Whilst I did not get the single kill shot on the King Tiger I was hoping for with the Firefly, the presence of my heavier tanks caused Ted to concentrate on them which allowed the Firefly to head left to stave off any potential threat from the infantry there. I was lucky that Ted only moved into cover with his King Tiger when it was badly damaged, as a fresh King Tiger in the ruins would have been very difficult for me to shift.

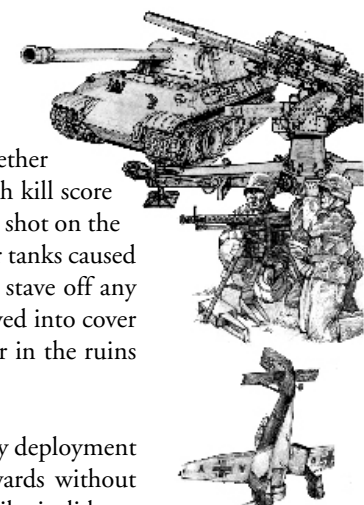
My Infantry did what was required of them, moving forwards out of my deployment zone in two directions to delay Ted bringing his own infantry forwards without dealing with them first. The mortar team was a great investment. Whilst it did not kill very many of the enemy it was able to fire every turn and proved to be an incredible nuisance.

Curses!

Who invited this guy over to the UK anyway? This mission was always going to be tough for me, given that I had to get units into Alex's deployment zone in order to score any bonus points while he just had to keep at least one unit alive to get his bonus points. In hindsight, I should have driven the King Tiger into the ruins in the centre of the board at the start of the game to benefit from the improved kill score and save. It could then have stayed there trading fire with the Churchills and would have meant Alex would have had to task his Firefly with killing it.

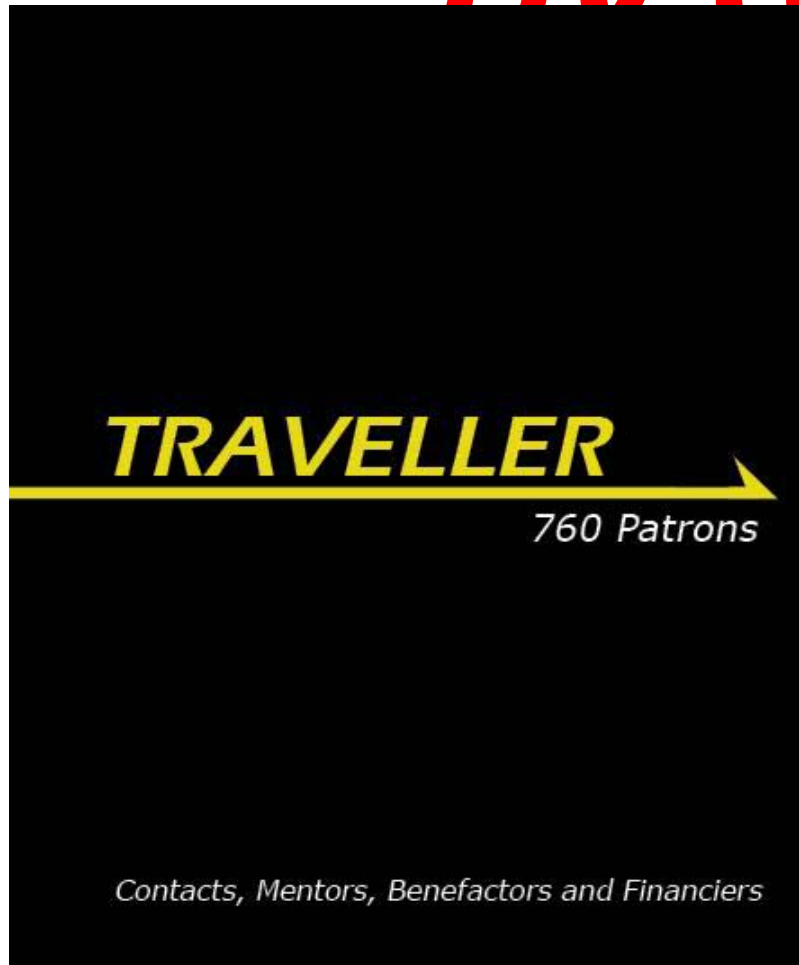
My Infantry performed okay but once Alex moved two of his sections forwards they had to engage these troops rather than just rush for the deployment zone which ended up stalling their advance.

Oh well, at least he's back over in the US office now and I can continue beating everyone here at Mongoose Towers.



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Breaking the Stones

By Lawrence Whitaker

Breaking the Stones is a Gloranthan campaign set in the city of Dangk and the ruins of Hrelar Amali, both in Ralios. The setting is split into two parts. In this part we present Dangk; part two presents Hrelar Amali.

Dangk is a small, unremarkable southern Ralios city but the ruins harbour a great secret of mythic importance that is irresistible to the Middle Sea Empire. If the God Learners can crack Hrelar Amali's secret, the most sacred myths of the Orlanthe pantheon will be exposed and vulnerable to the God Learners' experiments in myth-re-engineering. The God Learners are close to breaking Hrelar Amali's secret but a great deal rests on assumption and conjecture. They suspect much – and may even be correct – but still require certain codes and facts to be verified beyond any doubt, before they can be sure.

The Secret of the Stones

Hrelar Amali's history begins with the Green Age, when life was beginning to take hold in Glorantha. Flamal, the Seed Father, took root at Hrelar Amali, becoming The Great Tree and all plants originate from its roots. Hrelar Amali thus holds a very potent significance for the Aldryami because it is, in essence, their spiritual home and the source of all things green in the world.

Hrelar Amali persisted through prehistory and was at one point a source of light and refuge during the Lesser and Great Darkness, even though the Great Tree of Hrelar Amali was devoured by Zorak Zoran towards the end of the Lesser Darkness. It was part

of Mastakos the Charioteer's Trail West, when he crossed the world in only eight steps.

When the Lightbringers brought the sun god, Yelm, back from Hell, Lhankor Mhy raised the first of many temples at Hrelar Amali, its purpose to fully and singularly document the Lightbringers' Quest to rescue Yelm and return him to the sky, thus ending the Greater Darkness. The Lightbringers' Quest (see *Glorantha: the Second Age*, p37-38) is central and sacred to Orlanthe belief since it signalled a sea change in the relationships of the Gods, ultimately leading to The Great Compromise, which created Time and established the boundaries between the Gods' Plane and the Mortal Plane. Lhankor Mhy chose Hrelar Amali as the place to commemorate the triumph of life over Darkness and Chaos precisely because it was the place where Flamal caused life to begin.

Lhankor Mhy took it upon himself to etch into every last inch of its stones the full story of the Lightbringers' Quest, from its start to its end. The walls of the temple were thus filled with the True Word of the Gods, written in their own language and communicated with the full authority of One Who Was There. There is no purer form of myth. Grey Scholars, Sage Priests, Wind Lords and countless other students may have *interpretations* of the Lightbringers' Quest (and indeed, most interpretations contain a common set of accuracies, as well as the inevitable embellishments, contractions and omissions), but Hrelar Amali describes the myth with absolute accuracy and honesty and in the very handwriting of Lhankor Mhy himself. To be able to

decipher the God Script, to read its millions of words of detail, is to achieve an unparalleled understanding of the Lightbringers' Quest. More importantly, it offers a gateway to the Quest itself and the opportunity to join with the Lightbringers and experience what they experienced. It is highly likely that Harmast Barefoot, the first mortal to complete the Lightbringers' Quest, sought inspiration from Hrelar Amali during the Gbaji War, although his HeroQuest began at the hill of Orlanthe Victorious in Dragon Pass. God Learner Revealers also speculate that Harmast understood the God Script carved into the ruins – something thought to be beyond the ability of any but the most experienced sorcerers.

For the God Learners, such knowledge is an opportunity to dismantle, rearrange and fundamentally reshape the Lightbringers' Quest: a heresy for the Orlanthe; a blasphemy against the tenets of the Great Compromise.

In the First Age, the descendants of Eeneral came to the lowlands around Felster Lake and made it their home. One of these tribes, the Utoni, settled in the valley of Hrelar Amali and added their own temples to those built by the Aldryami and Lhankor Mhy, creating a vast temple complex. The Utoni, led by the hero, King Dan, evolved into the devout and magically astute Dangan Confederacy a new alliance and friendship with the Aldryami of Tarinwood. The Dangan Confederacy converted to Orlanthe partly through the powerful influence of the Lightbringers' Temple but also through careful study and enlightened attitude to the Orlanthe who made pilgrimage to this holy site.

The Dangan Confederacy fell sometime between 350 and 450, during the Gbaji Wars, when the Seshnegi raged through southern Ralios, besieging, looting and then sacking Hrelar Amali as part of their murderous conquest of the area. Hrelar Amali has been ruined since that time, although it still attracts pilgrims from across Ralios, including the Hsunchen from the north.

What the God Learners Know

The God Learners know that Hrelar Amali is covered in God Script and that it relates in some way to the Lightbringers' Quest. They also know that the God Script recounts several hundred separate myths that are linked by some underlying precepts that bind them into a whole. Thus they *suspect* that what they have in the ruins is *a telling* of the Lightbringers' Quest but they can do little with this information unless they can unlock the following essential elements:

- The name of the writer
- The cipher for the certain key myths, which appear to have been transcribed in an arcane code
- Reassembly of the ruins into as close a representation of the original temple as possible
- A method for filling-in the gaps in the entire temple script.

If these four elements can be assembled, Hrelar Amali's secret will be broken and the Lightbringers' Quest opened-up for some serious meta-engineering. This is probably the last thing that the God Learners expect to achieve; however it is certainly a highly desirable prize – yet a disastrous one for many reasons.

God Learner Study Groups

The first study groups were formed by the God Learners circa 500 but these were relatively disorganised, ad-hoc institutions with no clearly defined remit other than to expand the Empire's knowledge base. 400 years later, study groups have developed. Predominantly known as *Revealers*, these are highly organised, tightly focused research teams. Revealers are always formed to research a single subject and are always disbanded when the task is complete. Some Revealers have been operating for 100 years or more, whilst others might only last days. They are hot-houses of intellectual and magical activity, intensely private and operating to the detailed Study Codes drawn-up by St. Serezos the Revealer, which he condensed from certain obscure passages of the *Abiding Book*.

Revealers, depending on what is being studied, can number in the hundreds but the structure is always the same. At the head is the *Chancellor*, responsible for directing the study methodologies and outcomes. The Chancellor carries the Revealers' reputation and the most experienced and successful Chancellors lead the largest or most prestigious study projects.

The body of the group is arranged into *Faculties*. Typical faculties are History, Magic, Myth Interpretation, Engineering, Security and Accounting. Each has its own *Faculty Head* (even in small groups, where the entire faculty is a single person) and they direct the study according to the programme outlined by the Chancellor.

Beneath the Faculty Head are the *Revealer Fellows*, who carry out the vast bulk of the research, according to the Faculty's programme. Reports are made daily to the Head, who in turn reports to the Chancellor. Methodologies, findings, conclusions and

recommendations are written into the Faculty Ledgers so that an exhaustive record of every aspect of the Revealers is maintained. The Chancellor reviews the Faculty Ledgers and cross-references the findings across the Faculties, ensuring that each has precisely the right information for their particular task.

Revealers are well-funded with budgets approved by the exchequer of Emperor Ilotos. Bruyant Openwing's Revealers, for instance, has a budget sufficient to run a small city (and there are Revealers much larger than Bruyant's elsewhere in the Empire). All Revealers can draw upon the God Learners' considerable religious and magical resources as needs dictate, although the most important Revealers take priority – often at the expense of the smaller or less prestigious.

Revealer membership is highly sought-after and the entry requirements as strict as those for any cult.

- **Revealer Fellows** must have at least 70% in a key skill (such as a particular Lore skill) and must pass the compulsory examinations set by the Chancellor (usually requiring three successful tests against the key skill).
- **Faculty Heads** must exhibit at least 80% in two key skills, have completed at least three years of Study Fellowship and undergo similar examinations.
- **Chancellors** must have attained at least 90% in two key skills and served as a Faculty Head for at least five years.

Revealer Groups offer paid employment, food and board and access to knowledge and training (mundane and magical). To many they serve as extended families; to others, as just a way of making a living. Finally, Revealers are intensely competitive. Each

seeks to add the most to the God Learners' banks of knowledge; each seeks to advance the Empire the furthest. Feuds between Revealers are not uncommon and on some occasions, even blood has been spilled.

Dangk

Dangk takes its name from King Dan, the Utoni hero who established the Dangan Confederacy. Despite its noble heritage, Dangk, in the Second Age, is a drab, colourless city occupying the southern edge of the vast Sodal marshland. It is a mixture of wooden and stone buildings, a rambling accretion of narrow streets, alleys, yards and rat-runs that seem to have been scattered haphazardly like some giant child's building blocks, thrown down in a tantrum and never cleared away.

The original settlement was built completely of wood and flourished during the golden years of the Dangan Confederacy to almost its present size. After the Seshnegi sacked the Hrelar Amali region, putting an end to the Dangan's influence, Dangk as a settlement survived but its glory years were over and it became another backwater city on the edge of the heart of Malkionism.

It burned down in 854 when Uffled the Unshirking angered neighbouring Wolfblood, sparking a bitter feud resulting in minor damage to Wolfblood but Dangk's complete razing. Poor Uffled the Unshirking was subsequently buried alive in the Sodal Marsh, leaving only the protective dyke that still bears his name as a legacy. Dangk was rebuilt between 856 and 869 and along more robust lines. Stone was taken in liberal quantities from the Hrelar ruins and in 870 Dangk was returned to its people (many of whom had married into Wolfblood families). Since then, Dangk and Wolfblood have prospered – as much as marshland communities can prosper – and remained

closely allied up until the God Learners seized control of Dangk in 903. Some fled to Wolfblood, but most remained, tempted by the ostentation of the Middle Sea Empire, and enjoying the prosperity of the God Learners drafted in to work on the 'Hrelar Project'. Dangk's market now attracts traders from Wolfblood, Tarasdal, Azilos, Tiskos and as far east as Estali.

The Sodal Marsh

The River Tanier winds across a marshy floodplain before feeding Lake Bakeel, to the north-west of Dangk. The river and its smaller tributary the Dangkos, frequently burst their banks, especially during Storm Season but Dangk is protected by Uffled's Fence, the kilometre-long dyke built by the hapless Uffled the Unshirking. The marsh is home to otters, egrets and a modest array of wildfowl species. It is also home to monsters and other horrors.

It is said that Sodal Marsh is host to an enclave of Krarsht Worshippers (some are rumoured to live in Dangk), who use magic to dive into the bogs and quick sands and swim down to Krarsht's domain. Where there are Krarsht worshippers, there are Krarshtkids, and more than one soul who has strayed into the marshes has reported sightings of large, many-legged creatures, that sound suspiciously like Krarshtkids.

The Opening Stewardship

In the Earth Season of 903, the God Learners sent Bruyant Openwing to study the ruins of Hrelar Amali. His initial survey established their undoubted importance to the Middle Sea Empire's magical agenda and also established that this would be a long-term enterprise. A base of study was essential and one that could offer the kind of comforts necessary to the calibre

of scholars Bruyant intended to attract to the ruins. Dangk, despite its lack of character, was ideal: close enough to Kustria and the other major Safelster cities but remote enough to avoid unnecessary bureaucracy and factional meddling, whilst still offering certain *standards* of habitation.

Flattery, bribery and a modicum of blackmail swiftly followed, securing the co-operation of Dangk's city elders, the Marsh Council. As more and more God Learner scholars arrived in Dangk, bringing yet more money and more corruption, Bruyant proposed that the governorship of Dangk pass to the Revealers, which now numbered some 300 Revealer Fellows. The Openwing Stewardship was granted legal status in 905 and Dangk effectively passed into the hands of the God Learners.

Bruyant returned full-time to the study of Hrelar Amali, handing civic power to Esclafr Lanpth, a procrastinator who faces the difficult task of balancing the conflicting interests of Bruyant's strident Revealers against the religious concerns of various other scholars and mystics who believe that Hrelar Amali is a heresy against Malkion, and should be levelled, not studied.

Foremost of these zealots is Fluilea Gencourt, one of the most fervent Malkionist proselytisers in the Empire and an ardent denier of Hrelar Amali. He arrived in Dangk three years ago, accompanied by his cadre of supporters, the fanatical Flotsam and has spent his time haranguing the theists of Dangk – resident and pilgrim alike – making a fair few converts to the way of the Invisible God – but also making enemies. Fluilea has no time for tolerance. His methods are based on intimidation, scare-mongering, strong-arming and outright violence. The Flotsam, numbering almost 300, carry-out Fluilea Gencourt's will and happily stir-up resentment and trouble whenever Fluilea's interests are threatened (real

or perceived) and groups of Flotsam have been known to 'Go Orlanthe Bashing' just for fun. When summoned by Esclaftr to account for the violent antics of his followers, Fluilea is apt to shrug and suggest that perhaps pagans should be forbidden from the city altogether, if they do not like the way they are treated.

The stewardship is enforced by the Revealers' Security Faculty. Soldiers drafted in from the Rightness Army, plus mercenaries hired for the task, patrol both Dangk and Hrelar Amali. Whilst the Dangk garrison is capable, it is also bored. Unless one is of a studious nature and deeply interested in the ruins or a fanatic like Gencourt's Flotsam, Dangk has few charms. Security is therefore lax, with corruption and drunkenness common amongst the Dangk Garrison and a blind eye being turned to a fair amount of petty crime.

Districts of Dangk

Dangk is not an attractive place. It is usually damp and has a greyness to it, even on the brightest of days, seeming to sprawl rather lazily with one side pressed-up against the earth dyke of Uffled's Fence, the other teetering on the banked-earth rampart that serves as its eastern wall.

The streets are mud-choked, narrow and unpleasant-smelling. Only the streets of the Revealer District, the Market Place and in the wealthier crescent rows of north-east Dangk, are what might be termed clean or pleasant – although *ever so slightly shabby* is probably more appropriate.

Gates

Dangk has two gates. The Rightness Gate (or the Dangan Gate, to the Dangk locals) is the most northerly and is used solely by the God Learners, Malkioni faithful

and the Rightness Army. The gate garrison (usually four to six soldiers but more are easily summoned from the barracks) checks the identification of everyone approaching from either direction. Non-Malkioni are directed rudely to the Pilgrim Gate, further to the east and fined four silver pieces – double the gate toll.

Pilgrim Gate is for all other traffic: non-Malkioni, Dangkians, pilgrims and merchants. The entrance is always clogged with mud and is narrower than its counterpart.

The towers overlooking both gates are square, stone built structures some six metres tall. The huge wooden and bronze gates can be closed with surprising speed and barred shut with massive wooden beams. The gates are closed and barred one hour before sunset and not opened until sunrise. Anyone caught at Pilgrim Gate remains outside all night. Anyone caught at Rightness Gate will be given entry if they pay the Gate Toll of two silvers – or for free, if they are part of the Revealers.

Rightness Army Barracks

The barracks is surrounded by a stone wall of three metres. The single large gate leads to an earth courtyard covered with straw and sawdust. The buildings are single-storey and a mixture of wood and stone with roofs of tightly-thatched dried reeds from the marsh-banks. The barracks is home to 150 Rightness Army soldiers and mercenaries. Patrols of the streets, wall, Uffled's Fence and the eastern perimeter earth bank are regular but half-hearted. Soldiers usually patrol in threes and it is common for them to find a tavern and spend their Watch either drinking, visiting the many whores working Dangk's streets or simply to find somewhere quiet to sit, play dice or sleep. The main problem is boredom and the soldiery is happiest

when Fluilea Gencourt and his Flotsam start to get troublesome, because it relieves the monotony. Some mercenaries have deliberately stoked resentment between the pilgrim community and the Flotsam in the hope of provoking a small riot (and an excuse to bash some heads – does not matter whose).

The garrison is part of the Security Faculty under the remit of Korlof Gerios, an experienced commander of the Rightness Army, sequestered to the Revealers. Gerios is a follower of the Barmalan warrior tradition, making him a formidable battlefield sorcerer. He divides his time equally between Dangk and Hrelar Amali, alternating with his second-in-command, Rodurus Redbeard. Rodurus is a good and faithful warrior of Malkion but prefers an easier life. As he has almost complete control of the garrison, it is Rodurus's influence that has allowed the attentiveness of the Dangk Garrison to lapse. Rodurus makes a pretence of having things under control and because he enjoys Gerios's confidence, he has been able to get away with it for some time.

Any prisoners are housed at the barracks. The prison is a long, deep, open pit, usually ankle-deep in fetid water, covered by a thick-barred (and protected by sorcery) grid and magically locked. It is open to the elements and anything else the members of the Garrison wish to throw in.

The Garrison maintains its own stable with a full stable crew and 20 horses. If needs be, it can muster a small cavalry unit from amongst its ranks, including Gerios in direct command.

The Revealer district is a neighbourhood of some 50 buildings that is the hub of the Hrelar Amali Project. In this district are kept all the logs, records, studies, charts and findings of the study project. The buildings

are home to 250 scholars, scribes, sorcerers and other Revealers, every single one of them engaged in the study of Hrelar Amali.

The district is subdivided along faculty lines. The largest buildings are the Administration and Mythic Studies buildings. Bruyant can be found here most of the time, writing and receiving reports, checking new avenues of enquiry, cross-referencing old theories against new and so on. Mythic Studies is the nucleus of the faculty system because it informs all the other faculties. Runic Comprehension and Cryptography needs to know the mythic resonance behind codes and scripts to accurately decipher them; the Laboratories need to know what spells to prepare to distil certain aspects of myth and to check how such myths have been tested before; and Interpretative Studies needs to examine the underlying myths, produce and make recommendations on interpretation, so that Engineering and Logistics can work quickly and cost effectively.

Each area within Revealer District is run by the Head of that faculty. The buildings, commandeered from the old Dangk Council, have been adapted to God Learner needs: that is, interconnected, with cellars, basements and underground workshops and storage. Whilst most of Dangk's buildings are drab and functional, the God Learners have imposed their flamboyant architectural style on this district. All the buildings have been embellished with Malkioni motifs and iconography. A portrait of St. Serezos covers the whole north wall of the main Administration building; and over 100 minarets have been sorcerously raised from the roofs of the Interpretative Studies crescent, each one sporting a telescope trained on either the stars or Hrelar Amali.

Revealer District is self-sufficient and focused on its work. Food is prepared in the district according to

strict diets that aid concentration and productivity. The Security Faculty patrols are at their most diligent (i.e., not *very* but better than elsewhere) and the entire district is a hive of activity, from dawn to dawn, with sketches, etchings, rubbings and paintings of the Hrelar Amali ruins being delivered constantly and the sorcerers in the many laboratories and workshops burning their way through spells and experiments in a bid to crack the Hrelar code.

There is intense rivalry between the Faculties, each striving to provide the most meaningful information and each hoping to crack the code first.

Faculty Notables

- *Administration and Mythic Studies* – Bruyant Openwing. Obsessed, voluble, insightful and knowing. On good terms with all the Faculty Heads but most friendly with Serenius Clipfoot and Korlof Gerios
- *Runic Comprehension and Cryptography* – Serenius Clipfoot. Part of the Study Group that concluded the veracity of The Goddess Switch and the one responsible for the creation of Saint Dangan of Dangk. An expert in magical codes and runic significance, he works particularly closely with Jaldorix Wold.
- *Finance* – Muravius Moravios. A master of numbers and engaged in trying to prove beyond doubt Saint Urestes' Theorem – the concept that every living creature is assigned a unique number that, when understood, can be unravelled and rearranged in much the same way as a myth. Proving the Theorem would automatically unlock the Hrelar Amali secret – or vice versa.

- *Interpretative Studies* – Jaldorix Wold. A brilliant, if somewhat insane, theist convert to Malkionism. Jaldorix was a Lhankor Mhy Sage Priest from Pavis who converted to Malkionism following a pilgrimage to Hrelar Amali. He claims he was struck by a vision in which Lhankor Mhy bowed-down before the Invisible God and agreed to help write the Abiding Book. He was duly made apostate by Lhankor Mhy but snapped-up by Bruyant, who makes full use of Jaldorix's knowledge of the Orlanthi and Solar pantheons to interpret the acres of script emanating from the ruins. Jaldorix is viewed with suspicion and contempt by many and his frequent visions of dubious Saints become tiring. In terms of theist interpretation and worshipper behaviour, however; he's without peer.

- *Engineering and Logistics* – Elgasta Ironfoot. Elgasta is the only female Faculty Head in the Revealers and is a Zistorite, being a Spoke in the Cogs of Zistor. Elgasta boasts a pair of mechamagical legs and spends much of her time co-ordinating the efforts of the engineering crews at the ruins. Unknown to Bruyant, Elgasta works to a fully Zistorite agenda: if the riddle of Hrelar Amali is not solved within the next two seasons, the entire complex of ruins is to be moved, wholesale, to Zistorwal. As part of this secret agenda Elgasta has to secretly plant teleport glyphs around the perimeter of the ruins. When activated by an incredibly powerful teleport spell, currently being prepared in Zistorwal, the entire site will come under the control of the Cogs of Zistor where its true nature will be extracted by machine. Needless to say, this would be anathema to Bruyant if he knew.

Market Square

Revealer District might be Dangk's heart but the Market Square is the city's soul. Dangk natives, merchants, pilgrims and even God Learners throng the place, eating

and drinking from the street-food sellers and generally enjoying each other's company. Market Square is the central meeting place in Dangk and most residents visit it at least once a day. News from the different districts is called out by the Dangk Criers and each evening Bruyant Openwing ascends the central stone podium to communicate the latest information, news and breakthroughs at Hrelar Amali. Bruyant's sermons are popular with most God Learners and even some theist pilgrims (who gain some insights into myths relevant to their cults). However, Fluilea Gencourt regularly heckles, supported by a mob of his Flotsam, denouncing Bruyant's findings as heresies against Malkion and asserting loudly that the Revealers are really a sect of the Atroxic Church. It is usual for Fluilea to take the podium himself, spending hours berating the theists' ignorance and declaiming his own brand of Malkionist fundamentalism.

Full markets are held over three days twice each season, beginning on the second and sixth Windsdays, for a total of 10 markets per year. The market is open to all traders who can pay the Pilgrim Gate tax of two silvers, and then the market tax of a further silver per day. The market is still controlled by the Dangk Council and is the one area of power they have been allowed to retain under the Openwing Stewardship.

King Dan's Moot Hall

The moot hall originally built by King Dan during the First Age is one of the few buildings to have survived the razing of Dangk in 854, protected, so the Dangkians believe, by King Dan's immortal spirit. The moot hall has been preserved as a temple to Dangk ever since and is the focus of the native Dangkian's primary faith.

As a City God, Dan has little influence beyond Dangk and exists mainly to reinforce the potency of his

worshippers. Obviously the God Learners scoff at such beliefs but are quite foolish to do so. Every true-born Dangkian maintains an unbreakable bond with Dan, who was a great hero during the First Age. It is Dan's will that has prevented the God Learner Study Group from breaking the code of Hrelar Amali. Dan the God has sent obfuscating dreams to Bruyant Openwing and is behind the mis-categorisation of important references and codes. These small things – all part of a City God's power – have kept the pace of work on Hrelar Amali slow and kept the people of Dangk strong.

Naturally the God Learners could not help tinkering with the Cult of Dan. Serenius Clipfoot broke into one of the Dangan Confederacy myths, altering it to make Dan a late convert to the Invisible God and creating 'Saint Dangan'. The more susceptible and corruptible Dangkians have fallen for this minor God switch but it has done nothing to diminish Dan's power within the city, because, ultimately, Dan does not seek to protect or control any one concept or thing, save his worshippers.

Outside the moot hall, the God Learners have erected a fine-carved statue of St Dangan, hands outstretched to welcome Dangkian and God Learner alike. It is hated by the theist Dan cultists (who occasionally daub it with theist runes and rude inscriptions) and revered by the Saint Dangans. An uneasy compromise exists between the two faiths and this simmering animosity is one of Fluilea's Gencourt's targets.

Uffled's Fence

Uffled the Unshirking was a slacker-king in many ways but did one responsible thing for his citadel before it was sacked: he built the Fence to keep the Sodal Marsh and flood waters at bay. Before the dyke, Dangk was

frequently flooded and houses were built on stilts. The story goes that Uffled only built the Fence because he hated having wet feet – not because he had the good of the populace in mind. Whatever the reason, it worked; Dangk remains (relatively) dry.

Uffled's Fence is a kilometre-long, steeply-banked earth-work some 10 metres high. A deep ditch, three metres wide, creates a natural moat on the western side of the city, and the fence is flattened at the top to allow patrols – although the Rightness Army garrison rarely ventures onto the dyke.

Fluilea's District

The roughly rectangular neighbourhood directly south of the moot hall is Fluilea Gencourt's territory. He occupies a modest little house in the centre of this rather shabby, damp, muddy district and is surrounded by the ramshackle slum residencies of his Flotsam.

The district grows as more and more fall to Fluilea's rhetoric and intimidation. Some are just troublemakers who enjoy the mandate for bullying implied in Fluilea's fundamentalism. Others are genuinely devout, worshipping Fluilea as a living Saint – something Fluilea does not discourage, despite its innate heresy.

Fluilea's name is scratched or painted all over this district, making it clear who rules. The Security Faculty does not patrol here; not because it is scared but because Fluilea has bribed Rodurus Redbeard to keep them out. Most theists give the area a wide berth but occasionally a pilgrim strays into Gencourt Territory unwittingly and receives a beating and a berating. A couple of Ernalda pilgrims (a cult Fluilea hates) disappeared completely in this district three seasons ago. Korlof led an investigation but found nothing

and Fluilea protested loudly and lengthily about being victimised. The Ernardans are still missing.

Pilgrim's District

Separated from Fluilea Gencourt's district by both the Market Square and Revealer Districts, the Pilgrims' District is a sprawling neighbourhood of taverns, inns, flophouses and small theist temples. Pilgrims to Hrelar Amali traditionally use Pilgrims' District as their base and as a result it boasts a cosmopolitan community that has included Uz and Ducks. It is also relatively wealthy: pilgrimages cost money and the money gets spent in Dangk. As a result, some of the best food and drink is found in the Pilgrim District, even though the buildings are nothing much to look at.

Pilgrim District is effectively outside the jurisdiction of the Dangk Council and even the God Learners largely ignore it. The only 'official' involvement is the collection of the market tax for those who want to trade in the Market Square and the purchase of tickets for visiting Hrelar Amali. Tickets are sold from a booth in the centre of the district. A ticket costs 5 silvers and is numbered. Pilgrims are allowed to enter Hrelar Amali only when their number is called. A list of called numbers is displayed on a notice board next to the shack and updated daily. One ticket allows a visit of one day and one night, including travel-time (and it is an eight or nine-hour trip from Dangk to the ruins, if walking).

Volutus the Ass-Man operates a donkey service from Pilgrim Gate down to Hrelar Amali. For a fee of 20 silvers one may hire one of Volutus's assess for a round-trip, which cuts the travel time by a third. It is a popular service and Volutus is a wealthy man in Dangk. He's supported by the Revealers, who want a constant flow of people through Hrelar Amali. The

Revealers' sorcerers keep his fleet of donkeys healthy and Volutus pays them a 10% cut of his profits.

Volutus is a wealthy but *unpopular* man in Dangk.

Although Pilgrim District is not officially controlled, its nominal head is Dhuren Maskalusson. Dhuren runs a large inn (really, an interconnected set of smaller houses) called 'The Storm Spinning Home' and is a Windlord of Orlanth Adventurous. He made Dangk his home 18 years ago after his own pilgrimage to Hrelar Amali and he has taken it upon himself to watch over all the genuine pilgrims who make Dangk their base. Dhuren commands considerable respect throughout Pilgrim District and this extends to both Bruyant and Esclafr, both of whom consult him on theist or civic matters. Fluilea hates him with a passion but is scared of him. Several Flotsam have been sent back to their district with broken bones and missing fingers after daring to make trouble in Dhuren's sight. For Dhuren, the feeling is mutual but he is a patient man (for an Orlanthi) and he is prepared to wait and let Fluilea expose himself before ridding Dangk of this canker for ever.

There are several small shrines to theist gods throughout Pilgrim District. Orlanth, Ernalda, Barntar, Chalana Arroy and Issaries all have shrines close to or within, 'The Storm Spinning Home'. Small temples to Storm Bull, Flamal, Heler and Mastakos are also found close by. A very small shrine to Zorak Zoran (deep underground) is also rumoured to exist, although only trolls are told of its location.

The Church of Malkion

Raised by sorcery, the Church of Malkion is deliberately placed to look down on the moot hall. As God Learner

churches go, it is a modest affair, shaped to celebrate the Four-Fold Way. Inside it contains a central area of worship, with smaller chapels to Saint Serezos, Saint Volanc and Saint Xemela. Whilst small, these chapels maintain at least one Liturgist and a Rune Priest, enabling most cult benefits to be obtained.

The senior priest is Hresnan the Radiant, a devout Malkioni of the Hadmalist tradition and the Abbess of Saint Xemela. She is a good friend of Esclafr but somewhat wary of Bruyant, whom she thinks is too fond of his theist studies and ought to do far more reading of the *Abiding Book*. She considers Fluilea to be a lost sheep but one who will return to more orderly worship when Malkion deems it so. The theists and Dangkists are pagans to be pitied and given charity now and again. The fonts are always open for their conversion to the One True Word and Hresnan waits with open arms and welcoming bosom.

People of Dangk

Bruyant Openwing, Chancellor, Hrelar Amali Revealers

Irritatingly enthusiastic, Bruyant Openwing is a portly, late-middle aged man with a round, ruddy face, wide brown eyes and a frame of unruly white hair that gives him the appearance of a stunned dandelion clock. Bruyant babbles incessantly at high speed, accompanied by blasts of spittle, especially when he is waxing on a particular area of expertise.

He is an astute and faithful servant of the Empire and Malkion. Cracking the secret of Hrelar Amali consumes him and every day he conceives a new theory contradicting those of the day before. He knows he is close to unravelling the secret; he knows that gods were involved before the Great Compromise was forged. He

is certain that the Lightbringers' Quest is central to the entire enigma and he is frustrated that, every time the Revealers get close to striking the truth, some new fact is uncovered putting the truth out of reach.

Theists, he believes, are misguided fools. However their prayers, stories and myths are compelling in their simplicity, hinting at deeper, more potent truths. He admires their singular adherence to the pantheistic, whilst patronisingly certain that, one day, their gods will cease to have relevance and they will unite under the great rightness of the words of the *Abiding Book*.

STR 12
CON 12
DEX 7
SIZ 13
INT 18
POW 16
CHA 17

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	1/5
4-6	Left Leg	1/5
7-9	Abdomen	1/6
10-12	Chest	1/7
13-15	Right Arm	1/4
16-18	Left Arm	1/4
19-20	Head	0/5

Combat Actions: 2
Damage Bonus: +1d2
Magic Points: 16
Strike Rank: +12

Basic Skills

Dodge 33%, Evaluate 83%, Influence 80%, Lore (World) 65%, Perception 62%, Persistence 74%, Resilience 51%, Unarmed 21%

Advanced Skills

Administrative Study Group 95%, Courtesy 80%, Engineering 35%, Language (Jrusteli) 99%, Language (Trade Talk) 90%, Lore (Hrelar Amali) 35%*, Lore (Malkion) 95%, Lore (Theist Interaction) 91%, Survival 31%

**During play, Bruyant's Hrelar Amali Lore increases by 1d3 points per week. Once each week a test against the skill is allowed, and if Bruyant achieves a critical success, he is one-step nearer to understanding the true nature of the temple. He requires 4 such critical successes to achieve perfect understanding of Hrelar Amali's true nature..*

Combat

Shortsword* 75%, Damage 1d6+3, 3/8 (**this is a Zistorite-enhanced magical weapon, providing bonuses of 15% and +3 damage*).

Sorcery

Manipulation (Duration) 92%, Manipulation (Magnitude) 43%, Damage Resistance 61%, Fly 28%, Form/Set (Stone) 39%, Mystic Vision 38%

Fluilea Gencourt, Malkioni Zealot

Small head, small face, small body, big mouth. Tufts of hair protrude from an otherwise bald head, and beady, pernicious eyes glare out from beneath a dense, single eyebrow. Fluilea Gencourt is Dangk's resident religious fundamentalist: a Malkioni of such stridency

that you can almost (but not quite) see the halo. His voice is a piercing shriek, punctuated with his favourite aphorism: 'You stinking theist ingrates' and he is accompanied everywhere by a coterie of equally fervent supporters, The Flotsam, who hang on his every word – especially when it comes to haranguing and even bullying theists who have come to Dangk on a pilgrimage to the ruins.

Fluilea carries a great deal of religious power in Dangk. He is not part of the Study Group but his success as a proselytiser is barely matched and he boasts an extraordinary conversion rate. He descended on Dangk three years ago with two aims: turn as many theists into Malkioni as possible and get the blasphemous ruins of Hrelar Amali completely levelled and even thrown into Lake Felster. God Learner tolerance has passed Fluilea by. Theists are worthless and should be forced into accepting the Invisible God and his Holy Saints; the *Abiding Book* should be read to them morning, noon and night until they can recite it as precisely as he can.

Bitter arguments between Fluilea, Esclafr and Bruyant are common. Bruyant's tolerance is diametrically opposed to Fluilea's fervour and the very study of Hrelar Amali is, in Fluilea's eyes, an act of blasphemy against God and Malkion.

Thus it is that Fluilea has sanctioned his Flotsam to disrupt the work at the ruins in whatever ways they can. The tactics they use are underhand and even involve consorting with Wyrmfriends (through intermediaries, but consorting nonetheless) to provide information useful in sabotage. Fluilea also believes that, if the pilgrims are given a hard enough time, they will stop making the journey and eventually render the ruins powerless, so he ensures that the Flotsam make life very hard for the theist pilgrims.

STR 13
 CON 9
 DEX 10
 SIZ 7
 INT 15
 POW 14
 CHA 11

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	0/4
4-6	Left Leg	0/4
7-9	Abdomen	1/5
10-12	Chest	1/6
13-15	Right Arm	0/3
16-18	Left Arm	0/3
19-20	Head	0/4

Combat Actions: 2
Damage Bonus: None
Magic Points: 14
Strike Rank: +12

Basic Skills

Dodge 40%, Influence 79%, Perception 55%, Persistence 57%, Resilience 36%, Stealth 39%

Advanced Skills

Command Flotsam 95%, Language (Jrusteli) 95%, Language (Trade Talk) 55%, Lore (Malkion) 115%, Lore (The Abiding Book) 99%, Streetwise 72%, Survival 44%

Combat

Unarmed 60%, 1d3; Dagger 63% 1d4+1, 4/6

Sorcery

Compulsion 67%, Enhance Charisma 39%, Lacerate 17%, Manipulation (Duration) 56%, Spell Resistance 30%, Damage Resistance 25%, Mystic Vision 41%

**Esclaf'r Lanp'th ('The Crumbler'),
 Dang'k Administrator**

Esclaf'r maintains a tall and noble bearing with a head tilted at just the right angle to make it seem as though he is squinting down his nose at everyone. He is not; he cricked his neck one morning and it has remained at this angle ever since. His voice is quick but measured and a reassuring smile that just oozes 'leave it with me. It'll be safe in my hands' is never far from his thick, blubbery lips.

He is known as the The Crumbler because he seems to cave-in readily on most points. It is a cunning tactic: Esclaf'r is sharp-witted and devious. Giving-in and backing down from confrontation disarms an opponent to a certain extent. Esclaf'r always pauses for a few moments and then interjects with a casual 'But of course, the repercussions of your action will be...' (and he lists, in agonisingly accurate detail, the precise consequences), followed by a '...but I'm sure you'd already thought of that', which is delivered with the warm aplomb of a true diplomat. The result is usually to make whoever he is arguing with stop, think through what's been said and then mutter something like 'Really? I'll go away and think about it...'

Only Bruyant Openwing and Fluilea Gencourt see through Esclaf'r's guile. Bruyant because his own mind works at twice the speed of most people's and he genuinely has thought his actions through. Twice. Fluilea is simply prepared for any form of

diversionary behaviour and possesses the sheer force of will to simply not care what the results of his tactics are, unless they cross Malkionism, which they rarely do (directly, at least).

Esclaf'r is a highly competent administrator and politician. He knows which palms need greasing, by how much and what other insurances need to be secured to maintain the greasiness. Like most God Learners he's contemptuous of all other religions but canny enough to understand their importance to the prosperity of Dang'k

STR 11
 CON 10
 DEX 10
 SIZ 17
 INT 17
 POW 10
 CHA 14

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	0/6
4-6	Left Leg	0/6
7-9	Abdomen	1/7
10-12	Chest	1/8
13-15	Right Arm	1/5
16-18	Left Arm	1/5
19-20	Head	0/6

Combat Actions: 2
Damage Bonus: +1d2
Magic Points: 10
Strike Rank: +13

Basic Skills

Dodge 40%, Influence 98%, Lore (Animal) 25%, Lore (World) 60% Perception 85%, Persistence 35%, Resilience 31%

Advanced Skills

Courtesy 80%, Language (Jrusteli) 99%, Language (Trade Talk) 85%, Lore (Malkion) 65%, Oratory 80%, Streetwise 48

Sorcery

Enhance Charisma 70%

Korlof Cerios, Head of the Security Faculty

Korlof is every inch the God Learner soldier. Tall, broad-shouldered, forthright and frighteningly good in all matters pertaining to security and killing people.

His entire life has been spent in the Rightness Army and he has seen much of the Middle Sea Empire's territory, including Zistorwal and Slontos. The latter has left him troubled. He was in charge of the great cordon preventing people from learning of the consequences of the Goddess Switch (see *Magic of Glorantha*, p45) and he saw first-hand the misery being suffered by the folk of Slontos. He knows it is right for the Empire to experiment with these upstart pagan gods but he found himself questioning the outcomes. In truth, the plight of both Slontos and Weneria deeply pains him and he longs to see a solution to the suffering. This is why he requested a transfer to the Hrelar Amali Study Group, so that he might try to find, somewhere among the ruins, an answer to alleviate the consequences of the

Goddess Switch.

This is why the overall security of Dangk and the ruins is not quite as it should be. For all his military bearing, Korlof is preoccupied and he thinks more about what secrets Hrelar Amali holds and how they might help the people of Slontos, than of how to keep them secure. He and Bruyant have shared long nights together pouring over the riddles of the stones. Bruyant does not suspect Korlof has an agenda – he is simply thrilled that a serving soldier is as interested in the ruins as he is. But Fluilea Gencourt, who has spies everywhere, knows Korlof hides a serious weakness and is desperate to find out what it is and exploit it somehow. For the good of the Empire.

STR 16
CON 14
DEX 14
SIZ 16
INT 14
POW 13
CHA 9

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	1/6
4-6	Left Leg	1/6
7-9	Abdomen	2/7
10-12	Chest	2/8
13-15	Right Arm	6/5
16-18	Left Arm	6/5
19-20	Head	5/6

Combat Actions: 3
Damage Bonus: +1d4
Magic Points: 13
Strike Rank: +14

Basic Skills

Dodge 70%, First Aid 51%, Influence 63%, Lore (World) 62%, Perception 65%, Persistence 48%, Resilience 75%, Stealth 66%, Throw 70%

Advanced Skills

Command Garrison 90%, Language (Jrusteli) 85%, Language (Trade Talk) 45%, Lore (Malkion) 80%, Streetwise 65%, Survival 75%, Throwing 90%, Tracking 30%

Legendary Ability

Heroic Aura

Combat

Bastard Sword* 105%, 1d8+4, 4/12; Kite Shield 85%, 1d6, 10/18, Short Spear 95%, 1d8, 2/5 (*This is a Zistorite-enhanced magical weapon, providing bonuses of +20% and +4 damage).

Sorcery

Firebolt 65%, Lacerate 45%, Telepathy 25%, Treat Wounds 45%

Serenius Clipfoot, Head of the Runic Comprehension Faculty

Serenius is a short, round man who habitually dresses in robes of the brightest blue. He is an expert interpreter of codes, especially those embodied in myth. He is the Revealer responsible for meddling with the myths of the Dangan Confederacy to create Saint Dangan.

STR 7
CON 9
DEX 12
SIZ 13

INT 19
 POW 18
 CHA 10

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	0/5
4-6	Left Leg	0/5
7-9	Abdomen	0/6
10-12	Chest	0/7
13-15	Right Arm	0/4
16-18	Left Arm	0/4
19-20	Head	0/5

Combat Actions: 2
Damage Bonus: -1d2
Magic Points: 18
Strike Rank: +16

Basic Skills
 Dodge 30%, Influence 70%, Lore (Animal) 90%,
 Lore (Plant) 85%, Perception 95%, Persistence 60%,
 Resilience 35%

Advanced Skills
 Craft (Codes) 95%, Language (Jrusteli) 100%,
 Language (Trade Talk) 85%, Lore (Theist Myths)
 91%, Lore (Malkion) 81%

Combat
 Dagger 43% 1d4+1, 4/6

Sorcery
 Break HeroQuest 30%, Open HeroQuest Gate 30%,
 Sense HeroQuest Gate 45%, Sense Rune 68%, Spell
 Sense 41%

MURAVIUS MORAVIOS, Head of the Finance Faculty

A stooped man with failing eyes, perpetually ink-stained fingers, a straggling beard that trails to the floor and nervous cough that punctuates every other sentence. Muravius is a mathematical genius intent on proving Saint Urestes' Theorem, which purports to bind all life and myth into a single, calculable number. He is also good with accounts.

STR 11
 CON 11
 DEX 14
 SIZ 8
 INT 17
 POW 7
 CHA 13

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	0/4
4-6	Left Leg	0/4
7-9	Abdomen	0/5
10-12	Chest	0/6
13-15	Right Arm	0/3
16-18	Left Arm	0/3
19-20	Head	0/4

Combat Actions: 3
Damage Bonus: -1d2
Magic Points: 7
Strike Rank: +16

Basic Skills
 Dodge 41%, Influence 94%, Perception 66%,
 Persistence 40%, Resilience 75%

Advanced Skills

Administrate Faculty 90%, Language (Jrusteli) 100%,
 Language (Trade Talk) 65%, Lore (Accounting) 99%,
 Lore (Malkion) 81%, Lore (Mathematics) 103%

Combat

Dagger 23% 1d4+1, 4/6

Jaldorix Wold, Head of Interpretative Studies

An egg-shaped head that is completely bald and covered in unsightly scabs, which he regularly picks and eats, Jaldorix laughs a lot, seems to speak in riddles but knows an awful lot about how to interpret myths, their significance and how all this fits into Malkion's great Plan. Frequently experiences dreams of a divine nature and wants to become a Saint.

STR 12
 CON 8
 DEX 17
 SIZ 15
 INT 16
 POW 12
 CHA 13

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	0/5
4-6	Left Leg	0/5
7-9	Abdomen	0/6
10-12	Chest	0/7
13-15	Right Arm	0/4
16-18	Left Arm	0/4
19-20	Head	0/5

Combat Actions: 3
Damage Bonus: +1d2
Magic Points: 12
Strike Rank: +16

Basic Skills

Dodge 36%, Influence 90%, Perception 95%, Persistence 59%, Resilience 65%

Advanced Skills

Administrative Faculty 94%, Language (Jrusteli) 57%, Language (Trade Talk) 95%, Lore (Lhankor Mhy) 95%, Lore (Malkion) 60%, Lore (Orlanthi) 90%

Combat

Shortsword 53% 1d6, 3/8

Rune Magic

Runetouched (Truth) 75%. Countermagic, Mindspeech, Second Sight

Elgasta Ironfoot, Head of Engineering, Spoke of the Cogs of Zistor

Elgasta is stern-faced with neatly trimmed copper-coloured hair and the pre-insertion tattoos across her lower face for where her mechamagical jaw will be fitted when she next visits the Clanking City. Her legs are already mechamagical and she can be heard from 50 metres away, whirring and hissing as she walks.

Although she is a highly experienced explorer and a very competent engineer, her full loyalties lie with Zistor and she works to the obscure, secretive motives of the Machine God – none of which coincide with Bruyant Openwing.

Elgasta has a stash of Zistorwal magic items in her private quarters. Ranging from magical weapons (typically enchanted with +15%/+3 damage), through to the teleport glyphs. These last items resemble bronze discs inscribed with both the Movement and Stasis runes – indicating travelling without moving. They are keyed to the Clanking City and transport nowhere else. A single glyph transports up to SIZ 50.

STR 16
 CON 17
 DEX 13
 SIZ 11
 INT 18
 POW 17
 CHA 7

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	0/6
4-6	Left Leg	0/6
7-9	Abdomen	0/7
10-12	Chest	0/8
13-15	Right Arm	0/5
16-18	Left Arm	0/5
19-20	Head	0/6

Combat Actions: 3
Damage Bonus: +1d2
Magic Points: 17
Strike Rank: +16

Basic Skills

Athletics 78% (includes mechamagical enhancements), Dodge 55%, Influence 96%, Perception 66%, Persistence 57%, Resilience 81%

Advanced Skills

Administrative Faculty 94%, Engineering 91%, Language (Jrusteli) 100%, Language (Trade Talk) 68%, Lore (Machine God Theology) 90%, Lore (Malkion) 85%, Lore (Runecasting) 65%, Mechanisms 115%

Combat

Bastard Sword* 92%, 1d8+4, 4/12; Dagger* 73% 1d4+4, 4/6

Sorcery

Animate (Metal) 55%, Damage Boosting 56%, Holdfast 41%, Teleport 54%

Runespells

Detect Machine, Repair

*This is a Zistorite-enhanced magical weapon, providing bonuses of +20% and +4 damage.

Dhuren Maskalusson, Inn Proprietor, Wind Lord

Dhuren's origins are unclear; he claims to hail from northern Ralios but his accent indicates otherwise. Broad and bear-like, with a neatly braided blond beard and deep-set blue eyes, Dhuren wears the marks of Orlanth proudly; the motion rune on both arms and the mastery rune on his temple. He is softly spoken but quick to smile and share a joke and is a genial host at his inn, 'The Storm Spinning Home'. He is married to Yjanis, a beautiful red-haired woman who definitely sounds as though she is from Lankst and who is the Chieftainess of the Ernalda the Queen temple within the tavern.

Dhuren enjoys cordial, if perfunctory, relations with the

God Learners. Bryant sometimes visits the 'The Storm' and has the good sense to question Dhuren frequently on the pilgrims' mood, and pass-on information that might be of use to them (such as when the ruins are closed for some intensive study). Dhuren does not like the God Learners but he can work with them as long as they maintain reasonable access to Hrelar Amali.

Dhuren cannot work with Fluilea. The two men are the antithesis of each other. Dhuren hates the bully-boy Flotsam and has clashed on several occasions with Flotsam gangs. Dhuren knows that Fluilea is quite prepared to play dirty and so he watches his back when outside the Pilgrims' Quarter but is otherwise quite happy for Fluilea to make the first foolish move.

STR 13
 CON 17
 DEX 12
 SIZ 16
 INT 14
 POW 17
 CHA 17

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	1/7
4-6	Left Leg	1/7
7-9	Abdomen	2/8
10-12	Chest	2/9
13-15	Right Arm	1/6
16-18	Left Arm	1/6
19-20	Head	0/7

Combat Actions: 2
Damage Bonus: +1d2
Magic Points: 17
Strike Rank: +15

Basic Skills

Acrobatics 33% Athletics 65% Dodge 50%
 Perception 78% Persistence 69% Resilience 30%,
 Riding 27% Stealth 58% Survival 73% Tracking
 79%, Unarmed 90%

Advanced Skills

Craft (Ale Making) 75%, Craft (Inn keeping) 72%,
 Courtesy 55%, Language (Alynx/Fox) 33%, Language
 (Trade Talk) 80%, Lore (Orlanthi Theology) 75%,
 Streetwise 65%

Combat

Bastard Sword 80%, 1d8, 4/12; Long Spear 95%,
 1d10, 2/10; Target Shield 76%, 1d6, 8/12; Longbow,
 77%, 2d8

Rune Spells

Bladesharp, Cover of Night, Mobility

Divine Spells

Storm Voice

Additional German Ships for Victory at Sea

By David Manley

The “Order of Battle” supplement included a number of additional German ships. Many of these were the hypothetical “Z Plan” ships covered by Agis in earlier S&P articles and of course the dreaded *Schnellboote*. However, there remained a number of historical types that were stated but edited out. This article includes details of those ships plus one or two others that slipped through the OOB net.

Scharnhorst-class Battlecruiser (Rearmed)

The two ships of the Scharnhorst class were designed with triple 11” guns. However, by a happy coincidence the barbette diameter of the 11” turret was within a few inches of that of the 15” twin turret used in the Bismarck class (claims that this was a deliberate design feature are, unfortunately, a myth). Long term plans would have seen both ships refitted with 15” guns in the mid 1940s but the onset of WW2 stalled those plans. It was finally decided to refit *Gneisenau* with 15” guns during her extensive refit and repair period that followed Operation Cerberus but this was cancelled after the Battle of the Barents Sea. *Gneisenau* sat in an incomplete state in Gotenhafen, where she was scuttled in 1945.

Ships of this class: Gneisenau,(Scharnhorst)

PL: BATTLE

Speed: 6”

Turning: 1

Target: 4+

Armour: 6+

Damage: 36/12

Crew: 70/23

Special Traits: Aircraft 3, Radar, Torpedo Belt

In Service: 1945 (est)

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
A Turret (2 x 15 in)	40”	2	3	AP
B Turret (2 x 15 in)	40”	2	3	AP
X Turret (2 x 15 in)	40”	2	3	AP
Secondary Armament	16”	3	1	Weak
AAA	8”	5	-	
Port Torpedoes	-	2	3	AP, One-
Shot				
Starboard Torpedoes	-	2	3	AP, One-
Shot				

Length: 770 ft.
Displacement: 38,900 tons
Speed: 31.5 kts.
Crew: 1,754

Tirpitz-class Battleship



Initially built to the same design as Bismarck, Tirpitz benefited from some operational lessons learnt from her ill-fated earlier sister. The most notable change was the addition of two sets of torpedo tubes, salvaged from destroyers sunk at Narvik. Her long periods of inactivity, serving as the “Bogey Man” of the Arctic Convoys earned her another role as a regular target of the RAF, which resulted in an increased AA armament. She fired her guns once on an operational deployment during the invasion of Spitzbergen in 1943. Having been attacked many times from the air and by midget submarines Tirpitz

finally succumbed to the “Tallboy” bombs of 617 Squadron – having sat in shallow water for some time to prevent total loss in an air attack it was ironic that she was moved to unexpectedly deep water shortly before the strike that sank her. Had she remained in her original berth she would have sunk upright; in her new location the water was deep enough to allow her to capsize, with massive loss of life.

Ships of this class: Tirpitz

PL: WAR

Speed: 6”

Turning: 1

Target: 4+

Armour: 6+

Damage: 42/14

Crew: 84/28

Special Traits: Aircraft 4, Torpedo Belt

In Service: 1939

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
A Turret (2 x 15 in)	40”	2	3	AP
B Turret (2 x 15 in)	40”	2	3	AP
X Turret (2 x 15 in)	40”	2	3	AP
Y Turret (2 x 15 in)	40”	2	3	AP
Port Torpedoes Shot	-	2	3	AP, One-
Starboard Torpedoes Shot	-	2	3	AP, One-
Secondary Armament	16”	4	1	Weak
AAA	8”	8	-	

Length: 823 ft.

Displacement: 50,956 tons

Speed: 30 kts.

Crew: 2,092

Type-XXIII U-boat

The Type XXIII was the coastal version of the ocean going Type XXIII U boat. A very small and cramped design, the boat featured two 533mm torpedo tubes with no reloads (the tubes had to be reloaded in harbour). U-2336 was the last U boat to sink a ship when she attacked and sank two British transports in the Firth of Forth. Seven boats were lost either to enemy action or in accidents whilst at sea. 31 boats were scuttled at the end of the war and 20 were surrendered to the Allies.

PL: PATROL

Speed: 2"/3"

Turning: 3

Target: 6+

Armour: 2+

Damage: 2/1

Crew: 1/0

Special Traits: Agile, Silent, Submersible

In Service: 1945

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Forward Torpedoes shot	-	1	3	AP, Single

Length: 114 ft.

Displacement: 275 tons

Speed: 10/12.5 kts.

Crew: 18

Zerstörer 1934-class Destroyer

Ships of this class:

1934 Class: Z1 – Z4 (Leberecht Maas, Georg Thiele, Max Schulz, Richard Beitzen)

1934A Class: Z5 – Z16

The 1934 class was the first design of German destroyer after WW1. In many ways they followed British practice but were under strength, performed badly in heavy seas and had very short endurance. They were also short on magazine space, typically carrying only half the number of shells that their British equivalents embarked. The 1934A class featured some minor improvements but suffered all of the same failings as the earlier four ships. Z1 and Z3 were sunk by the Luftwaffe in a spectacular "friendly fire" incident on 22nd February 1940. Z9, Z11, Z12 and Z13 were amongst the German destroyers sunk at Narvik in 1940.

PL: PATROL

Speed: 7"

Turning: 2

Target: 6+

Armour: 2+

Damage: 4/1

Crew: 13/4

Special Traits:

In Service: 1934

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament	12"	1	1	Weak
AAA	4"	1	-	
Port/Starboard Torpedoes	-	4	3	AP, One-Shot
Depth Charges	3"	3	2	Slow-Loading

Length: 363 ft.
Displacement: 3,155 tons
Speed: 37.5 kts.
Crew: 325

Zerstörer 1936-class Destroyer

Ships of this class: Z35, 35, 43, 44, 45

The Z1936 class utilised the twin 5.9" turret which turned out to be a dismal failure. To counter this unfortunate defect the next group, Z1936B, reverted to a more traditional 5" gun armament. All five ships were destroyed during the war; all except Z45 were sunk; Z45 was bombed on the slipway during construction.

Speed: 8"
Turning: 2
Target: 6+
Armour: 2+
Damage: 4/1
Crew: 13/4
Special Traits: Agile
In Service: 1930+

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament	12"	1	1	Weak
AAA	4"	1	-	
Port/Starboard Torpedoes	-	4	3	AP, One-Shot
Depth Charges	3"	3	2	Slow-Loading

Length: 363 ft.
Displacement: 3,605 tons
Speed: 37.5 kts.
Crew: 313

German Type 35 and 37 Torpedo Boat

The Type 35 and Type 37 class "Flottentorpedoboot" were the German equivalent of the Destroyer Escorts of the RN and USN. They were built to exploit a clause in the naval treaties of the time which excluded ships under 600 tonnes from the displacement limits in force. The design displacement inevitably grew and the ships entered service with unloaded tonnages in excess of 840 tons. They were designed primarily as torpedo carrying ships that were more seaworthy than S boats. They worked extensively in the Baltic, North Sea and the English Channel but were unpopular because of their indifferent sea keeping qualities and their weak gun armament.

Ships of this class: T1 to T21

PL: PATROL
Speed: 7"
Turning: 3
Target: 6+
Armour: 2+
Damage: 3/1
Crew: 5/1
Special Traits: Agile
In Service: 1930+

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament	12"	1	1	Weak
Slow-Loading				
AAA	4"	1	-	
Port/Starboard Torpedoes	-	3	3	AP, One-Shot
Depth Charges	3"	4	2	Slow-Loading

Length: 280 ft.
Displacement: 1,100 tons
Speed: 35.5 kts.
Crew: 119

German Type 23, 24 Torpedo Boat

The Type 23 and 24 class torpedo boats were based on German WW1 designs but were enlarged to give better seakeeping qualities. They were ordered as two classes of six; the 1923 boats were the Raubvogel (Raptor) class, whilst the 1924 boats were the Raubtiers (Predators). They were good sea boats as long as they remained in coastal waters. In common with many pre-war designs they were woefully under armed against air attack but low priority meant they received few if any new weapons. They served in the North Sea and the English Channel and were frequently engaged by Allied coastal forces. All but one ship had been lost by August 1944. In this month the last survivor, Kondor, having been mined the previous month, was declared beyond repair and was decommissioned.

Ships of this class:

Type 1923 – *Mowe, Falke, Greif, Kondor, Albatros, Seeadler*

Type 1924 – *Wolf, Iltis, jaguar, Iltis, Lichs, Tiger*

PL: PATROL

Speed: 7"

Turning: 3

Target: 6+

Armour: 2+

Damage: 3/1

Crew: 6/2

Special Traits: Agile

In Service: 1923

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament	8"	1	1	Weak
AAA	4"	1	-	
Port/Starboard Torpedoes	-	3	3	AP, One-
Shot				
Depth Charges	3"	4	2	S l o w-
Loading				

Length: 288 ft.

Displacement: 1,290 tons

Speed: 33.6 kts.

Crew: 129

ZG3 class Destroyer

ZG3 was a British built "H" Class destroyer sold to the Greek Navy as the Vasilefs Georgios. The ship was captured by the Germans during the invasion of Greece in 1940 and pressed into service with the Kriegsmarine as ZG3 (later names Hermes). She served in the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean until 1943. She was scuttled off Tunis in May 1943 having been heavily damaged in air attacks.

PL: PATROL

Speed: 7"

Turning: 2

Target: 6+

Armour: 2+

Damage: 3/1

Crew: 8/2

Special Traits: Agile

In Service: 1935

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament	12"	1	1	Weak
AAA	5"	1	-	
Port/Starboard Torpedoes	-	4	4	AP, One-
Shot				
Depth Charges	3"	3	3	S l o w-
Loading				

Length: 323 ft.

Displacement: 2,095 tons

Speed: 36 kts.

Crew: 190

Niobe class Cruiser

Niobe was built in the last years of the 19th century as a light cruiser for the German High Seas Fleet. She survived the Great War and was sold to the fledgling Yugoslav Navy as the *Dalmacija*. In 1941 she was captured by the Italians and renamed *Cattaro*, then captured again by the Germans in 1943, at which point she regained her original name. She was crewed by a mix of German and Croatian personnel. She was destroyed in action with British MTBs in December 1943.

PL: PATROL

Speed: 4"

Turning: 2

Target: 6+

Armour: 2+

Damage: 3/1

Crew: 10/4

Special Traits: Agile

In Service: 1898 (refitted 1943)

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament	12"	4	1	Weak
AAA	5"	1	-	
Port/Starboard Torpedoes Shot	-	1	3	AB, One-

Length: 345 ft.

Displacement: 2,962 tons

Speed: 22 kts.

Crew: 250

F Class Escort

The F Class were referred to as Fleet Escorts and served as trials ships for propulsion systems and structural designs that were to be used in the later classes of larger German fleet destroyers. Because of this they suffered from

numerous teething problems and never really became fully operational warships. They were used for a number of secondary roles. F3, F5, F6 and F9 were sunk during the war.

Ships of this class: *F1 to F10*

PL: PATROL

Speed: 6"

Turning: 3

Target: 6+

Armour: 2+

Damage: 3/1

Crew: 5/1

Special Traits: None

In Service: 1935

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
Secondary Armament Slow-Loading AAA	12"	1	1	Weak,
Depth Charges	4"	1	-	
Loading	3"	4	2	Slow-

Length: 249 ft.

Displacement: 1,028 tons

Speed: 28 kts.

Crew: 121

Bremse Class Minelayer

Bremse served as a minelayer and a gunnery training ship. Like many German ships of the early 1930s she was a trials platform for new technology, this time for the diesel propulsion systems designed for the Deutschland class heavy cruisers. *Bremse* was sunk by British cruisers in 1941.

Ships of this class: *Bremse*

PL: PATROL**Speed:** 6"**Turning:** 3**Target:** 6+**Armour:** 2+**Damage:** 3/1**Crew:** 7/2**Special Traits:** None**In Service:** 1935**Weapon**

Secondary Armament

AAA

Range

12"

4"

AD

1

2

DD

1

-

Special

Weak

Length: 318 ft.**Displacement:** 1,870 tons**Speed:** 27 kts.**Crew:** 192

Brummer Class Minelayer

Brummer was a larger minelayer / gunnery training ship. She was sunk in 1941. She was replaced by a captured Norwegian vessel that was given the same name. This ship was bombed and sunk in 1945.

Ships of this class: *Bremse***PL: PATROL****Speed:** 6"**Turning:** 3**Target:** 6+**Armour:** 2+**Damage:** 3/1**Crew:** 8/2**Special Traits:** None**In Service:** 1935**Weapon**

Secondary Armament

AAA

Range

12"

4"

AD

1

2

DD

1

-

Special

Weak

Length: 370 ft.**Displacement:** 3,010 tons**Speed:** 27 kts.**Crew:** 182NB: Use the stats for the *Bremse* to represent the second *Brummer*

Mongoose Goes Wild

By Charlotte Law

On one fine June day, Mr. Matthew Sprange decided that it would be a great group bonding day if the staff of Mongoose Towers took a trip to meet our namesake. For those of you who are not aware, as a company we sponsor a Banded Mongoose at the Cotswold Wildlife Park. This little chap is our company Mascot... Montgomery; and Matt believed that meeting the final member of the team would make for a fun time for all.

So into Matt's Jaguar we jumped and clung on as he sped us through the glorious English countryside. Thanks to Matt's extreme determination to be the first ones in we arrived at 9.30am and had to wait at the gates for half an hour until they opened. However Matt's enthusiasm paid off. He had claimed that should we be the first in we could get to the penguins and stroke them before the keepers arrived for feeding time. We were somewhat sceptical yet he was not wrong and we were soon well acquainted with one particularly friendly young penguin, shown here with the man himself.



We continued around the small animal section and tested out the call of the wild. Those of you who have seen the film *Evolution* will be familiar with the "Kakaw" call, which I was determined, would work with every single animal; a theory that soon

caught on with the whole crew "kakaw"ing at every pen. Unfortunately for Nick the Greek, this was not always successful, particularly with the kookaburra.



After Meercats, Monkeys, Bats, Hedgehogs, Reptiles and a good half hour in the tropical house searching for the rather elusive Sloth, Matt treated us to a slap up meal complete with ice cream in the on site restaurant. An event which Nick in particular rather enjoyed.



By this point the whole crew had become consumed with a desire to touch as many animals as possible... without being told off! With this in mind we then moved on to the farm yard, where we were certain that our “kakaw”ing would reap some good animal snuggles...



On to the goat petting pen, Nick and I managed to make good friends with one of the little furry fella...



...whereas Matt's goat taming was not quite as successful.

... If only we persisted!!!

Firstly we managed to make friends with two foreign cows with rather large horns, who we managed to talk into a photo op.



However the huge cuddly pig was too busy sleeping to respond to our desperate cries.



We moved on to the Wallabies, Wolves, Camels and rather evil Emus and by the lovely pond with the cute little duckies (please note that Ted was responsible for photography and so the cute duckies were inevitable... not that I complained...awwww! – The harder they are the harder they fall for cute things hey!).



Finally after Zebras, Lions, a Rhino and a rather playful Ostrich, we finally made it to the Banded Mongoose enclosure.

Unfortunately the Mongooses were not so pleased to see us at first and so we began the slow process of coaxing them out of their nice little house, with much “kakaw”ing, of course.



Eventually our persistence paid off and they came out to play...



Finally Montgomery emerged for a photo shoot.



We felt thoroughly satisfied to have met the final member of the Mongoose team.

So after a great day out and a meeting with Montgomery, the team at Mongoose Towers are even more of a big happy family, with some extra friends thrown in for good measure. In fact you could say that we are now as close as a group of Ring Tailed Lemurs...

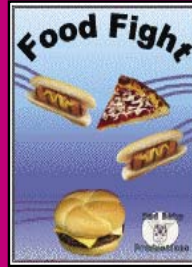
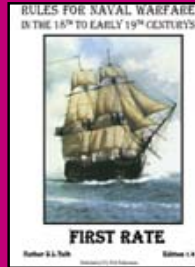


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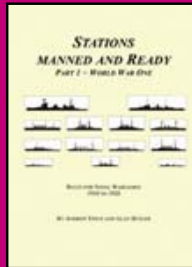
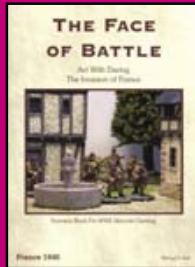
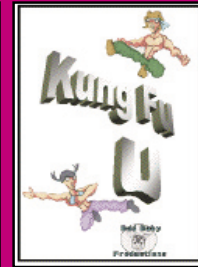
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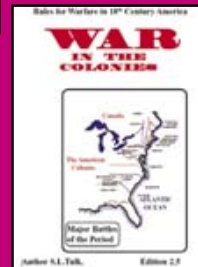
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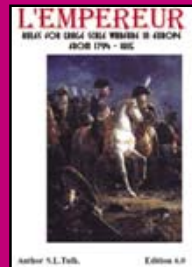
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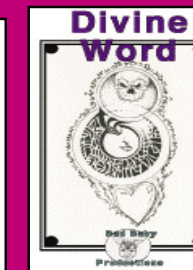


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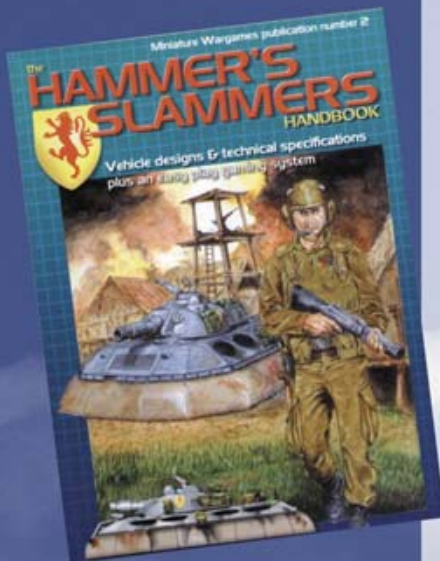

The Lightning Division

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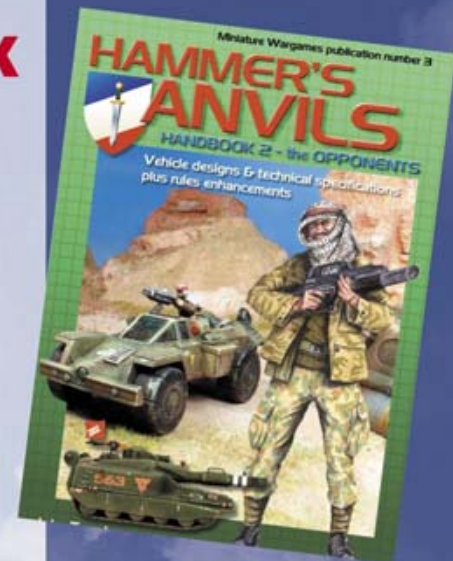


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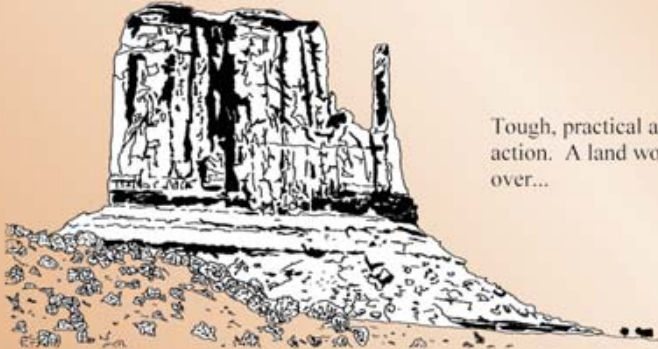
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American Air Power

Additional Air Units for the United States

Matthew Sprange

While work continues on the first set of supplements for Battlefield Evolution: World at War, I have been tinkering with a little project of my own. You see, I am a self-confessed prop-head and with so many 1/72 kits and die cast models available, I just could not resist sneaking a few more air units into the game.

With so few Air Assets available to the average army, you are not going to be flooding the battlefield with aircraft. However, this supplement will enable you to use pretty much any model aircraft you find, with pretty much any weapons load you deem fit. We are also planning some tweaks to the Air Phase with this book, to give fellow prop-heads the chance to relish the effects of air power but more on that at a later date. For now, we are previewing a few of the choices available to Late War US forces.

The following units are available as Air Assets to all US forces.

P-38 Lightning – 275 points

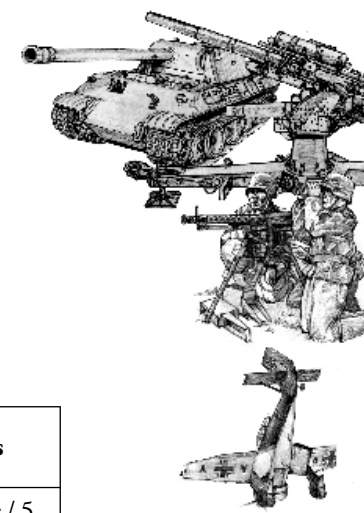
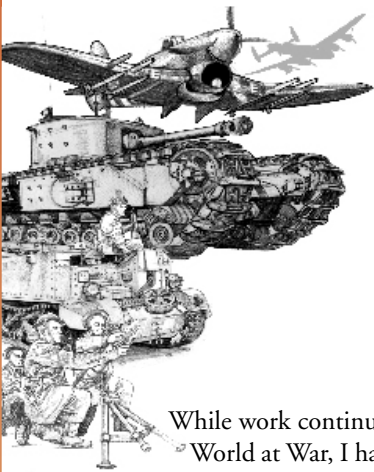
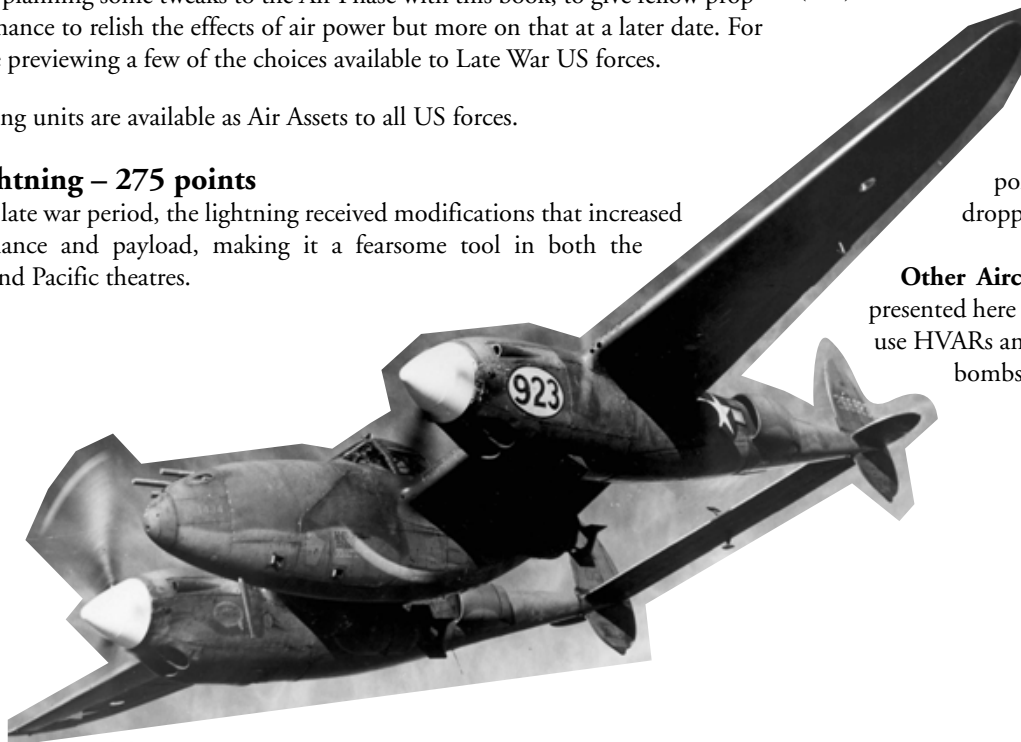
During the late war period, the lightning received modifications that increased its performance and payload, making it a fearsome tool in both the European and Pacific theatres.

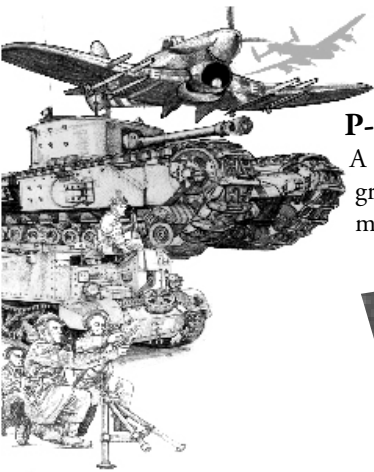
Type	Size	Move	Close Combat	Target	Save	Kill	Traits
P-38	5	Cruise Burn	4xD10	6+	5+/5+	8+	Hits/5, Multifire/ all

Unit: P-38 with a 20mm Hispano cannon (FaF) and four Browning .50 MG (FaF).

Options: The P-38 may be given four 250 lb. bombs for +100 points, four 500 lb. bombs for +150 points, two 1,000 lb. bombs for +125 points, or two 2,000 lb. bombs for +200 points. It may also be given 12 M8 rockets for +45 points or 10 HVARs for +220 points. All ordnance may be dropped in a single Shoot (Bomb) action.

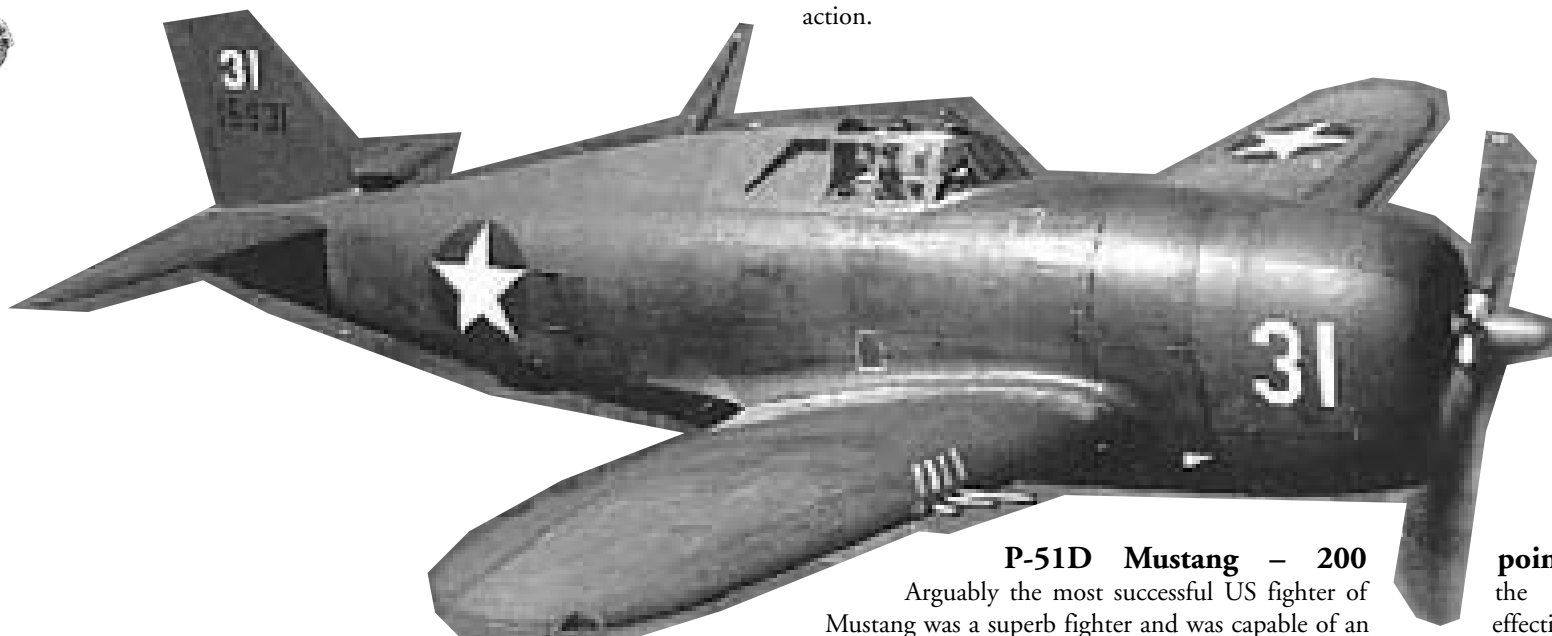
Other Aircraft: Though primarily based on the P-38J, the Lightning presented here also covers the L variant well. The L was the first to be able to use HVARs and its strengthened wings allowed the use of massive 2,000 lb. bombs – useful against ships but likely overkill on the battlefield.





P-47D Thunderbolt – 215 points

A good fighter in the air, the Thunderbolt excelled in the ground attack role. Able to carry heavier ordnance than many other fighter-bombers, it could devastate an enemy attack before momentum had been built up.



P-51D Mustang – 200 points

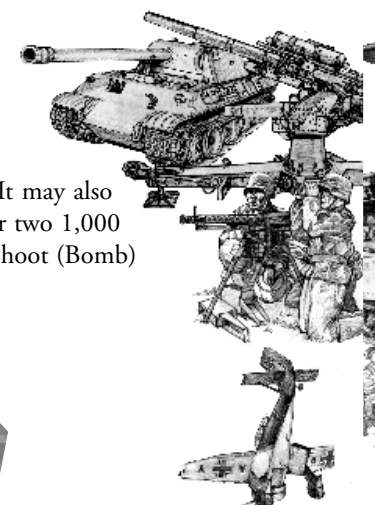
Arguably the most successful US fighter of the war, the Mustang was a superb fighter and was capable of an effective ground attack role too.

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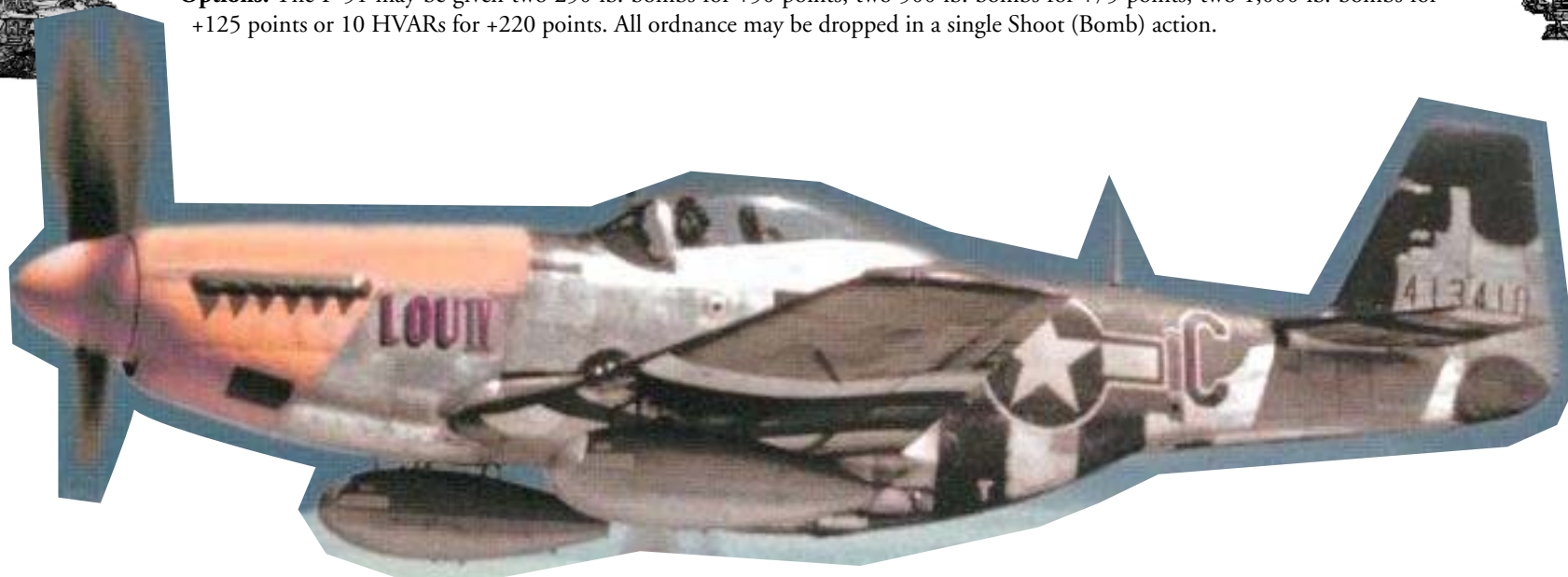
Type	Size	Move	C l o s e C o m b a t	Target	Save	Kill	Traits
P-47	5	Cruise Burn	4xD10	6+	4+/5+	9+	H i t s / 3 , M u l t i f i r e / a l l

Type	Size	Move	C l o s e C o m b a t	Target	Save	Kill	Traits
P-51	4	Cruise Burn	4xD10	6+	5+/ 4+	8+	H i t s / 2 , M u l t i f i r e / a l l

Unit: P-51 with six Browning .50 MGs (FaF).



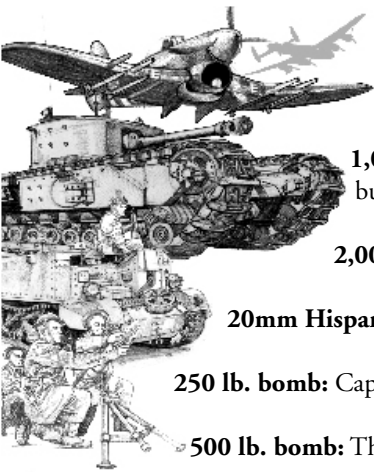
Options: The P-51 may be given two 250 lb. bombs for +50 points, two 500 lb. bombs for +75 points, two 1,000 lb. bombs for +125 points or 10 HVARs for +220 points. All ordnance may be dropped in a single Shoot (Bomb) action.



US Airborne Armoury

Weapon	Range	Damage	Traits
1,000 lb. bomb	Dropped	D10+2	Lethal Zone/6", Multihit, Piercing/3, One Shot
2,000 lb. bomb	Dropped	D10+2	Lethal Zone/8", Multihit, Piercing/5, One Shot
20mm Hispano cannon	36"	D6+2	Auto, Piercing/1
250 lb. bomb	Dropped	D6+3	Lethal Zone/4", Multihit, One Shot
500 lb. bomb	Dropped	D10	Lethal Zone/6", Multihit, One Shot
Browning .303 MG	30"	D6	Auto
Browning .50 MG	30"	D6+1	Auto, Piercing/1
HVAR	48"	D6+3	Lethal Zone/1", Piercing/4, One Shot
M8 rocket	48"	D6+1	Lethal Zone/1", Piercing/2, One Shot





1,000 lb. bomb: Carried only by larger aircraft and the biggest fighter-bombers, the 1,000 lb. bomb was easily capable of destroying a large building or the most heavily-armoured vehicle.

2,000 lb. bomb: Used primarily on shipping and hardened structures, this weapon could breach bunker and the decks of warships alike.

20mm Hispano cannon: This 20mm cannon was a superb weapon that went on to form the armament of many aircraft.

250 lb. bomb: Capable of being attached to a wide variety of aircraft, this simple weapon could turn a dogfighter into an effective bomber.

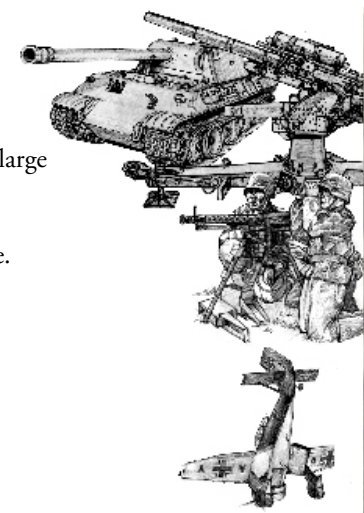
500 lb. bomb: The standard medium-bomb used by fighter-bombers, accurate delivery could destroy armoured vehicles and tear apart bunkers.

Browning .303 MG: One of the most successful weapons of the war, the Browning .303 was used as the main armament on a huge number of allied fighters.

Browning .50 MG: As the need for heavier machine guns became apparent, the .50 MG was added to the allied armoury, greatly increasing the effect of its fighters.

HVAR: The High Velocity Air Rocket was a revelation in battle, far superior to the M8 and capable of blasting apart tanks and bunkers with equal ease. The HVAR must be fired either in pairs or as a salvo using all remaining rockets on the aircraft – either counts as firing a single weapon, for the purposes of the Multifire trait.

M8 rocket: The first air-launched rocket used in combat, the M8 had obvious shortcomings but it was also a pioneer. The M8 must be fired either in pairs or as a salvo using all remaining rockets on the aircraft – either counts as firing a single weapon, for the purposes of the Multifire trait. However, all successful attacks that match or beat a Target score must be re-rolled.





THE BOOK OF THE ELEPHANT PART I

BY CHRIS LITES

In the dangerous and lurid streets of Shadizar, a treasure has emerged. Years ago a young barbarian thief infiltrated the mysterious Tower of the Elephant and destroyed it in a single night, but something has survived: The Book of the Elephant.

Some claim it is a book of demon-tutored spells, while others say it leads to a fabulous treasure lost down eons forgotten by men. Whatever it is, the avaricious heart of the wicked city has been roused by it. Now, every cut-purse, power-drunk noble and lotus eating zealot wants to get their hands on such boundless power and wealth. They have come to a place of unparalleled greed, ancient mystery and devilish power. The Book of the Elephant represents all three lusts, but who will obtain it and what price will they have to pay?

This scenario is a Conan® RPG adventure for four to six 3rd –level player characters, although it may be adapted to other level parties by using the “Scaling the Adventure” sidebar.

STANDARD PREPARATION

Welcome to Hyboria! As the GM you should read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, new monsters, new magic or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages or write notes in the side margins.

When you run a Conan® RPG adventure we assume that you have access to the *Conan the Role-Playing Game* book. Material from the *Scrolls of Skelos*, *Pirate Isles* or *Road of Kings* products by Mongoose Publishing; or from other

Conan materials will be specially noted.

In regards to formatting of this adventure, read-aloud text for the players is set aside in *ITALICS* or in boxes and the Games Master (GM) text will be directly beneath that. If you paraphrase the read-aloud text, be sure not to miss any important points.

Any questions or suggestions for improvement of this scenario can be sent to the author via EMAIL, as indicated on the front of the scenario.

SPECIAL PREPARATION

Familiarity with the original Robert E. Howard story, *The Tower of the Elephant* is essential. This scenario also relies on *Shadizar : The Wicked City* Boxed Set.

SCENARIO BACKGROUND

Some years ago a barbarian thief sought to loot *The Tower of the Elephant* in Arenjun. This was of course Conan and the full tale can be read in the classic Robert E. Howard story of the same name. How long ago this took place is up to the GM. What is important is that *The Tower of the Elephant* was destroyed and all knowledge therein thought lost.

However, it was not all lost. After Conan left the tower in ruins, something survived; a strange crystal, which was taken by a scavenging thief. What became of him is unknown, though many say he went mad. He too disappeared into story and the book was lost again. The crystal has since become known as *The Book of the Elephant*, for it stores information in a visual form as would a book store text. Contained inside the crystal are the dark secrets of Yara

the Priest and the memories of his tortured prisoner, Yag Kosha, the ancient being from the planet Yag.

The Book of the Elephant has surfaced again and is on its way to Shadizar the Wicked where the bulk of the adventure takes place. Within Shadizar, several factions seek to possess the book for their own ends and the Player Characters become embroiled in the middle, facing a noble house set against the king, wicked thieves and a strange and decadent new cult.

Uncounted eons ago, Yag Kosha of the Planet Yag, came with his people to Earth. This was long before the rise of humanity in a time that has faded into the collective amnesia of the race. Yet Yag and his elephant headed aliens from the Outer Dark did come and lived here on Earth for thousands of human generations. Eventually they became worshipped by the Yellow Priests of Khitai until only one, Yag Kosha, remained. His fate is chronicled in the Robert E, Howard original story, which is essential reading for any GM running this adventure.

During his imprisonment in the tower, Yag Kosha was forced to perform many magics for High Priest Yara. However, Yag Kosha secretly kept a record of his life and memory in the form of a powerful emerald in which he placed his memories. In this rare stone, he sought preserve the knowledge of his people and himself through the eons so that their existence would not vanish with his own withering form.

What is not widely known is that the men who worshipped the exiles of Yag had

among them a splinter faction who preached that the real gods were not the exiled rebels but the Kings of Yag themselves. These men eventually broke off into their own cult, perverting and misusing the sorceries taught to them by the rebels

Lung Wu, a Khitan Priest of the Cult of Yag, seeks to find The Book of the Elephant. It is his belief that he may use the memories of Yag Kosha contained therein to find the actual location of the planet Yag and call forth his dark gods from their home world so that they might remake and rule the Earth.

The eventual answers to this mystery are not in the purview of this initial adventure and can be left to the GM to flesh out. However, suggestions for further plot developments are included in the appendix should any GM wish to expand the adventure into a campaign centring around The Kings of Yag and their human followers.

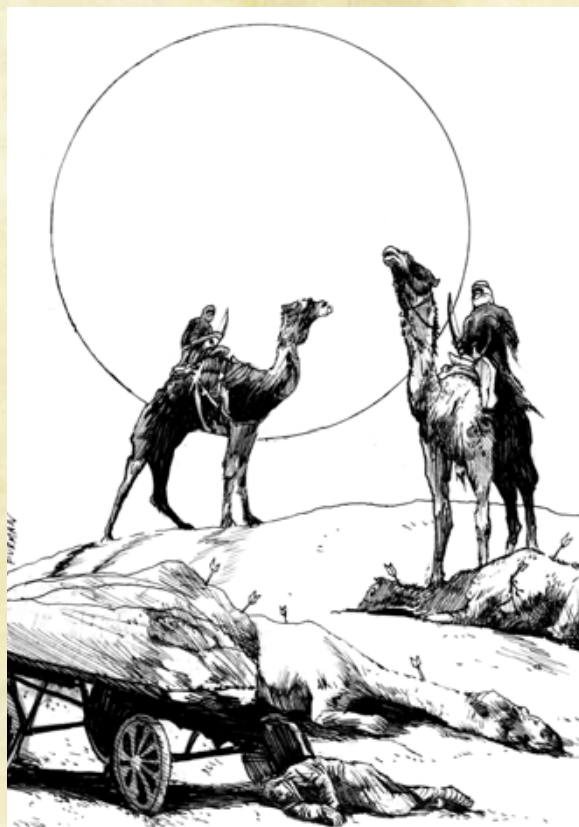
Lung Wu is the chief adversary the PCs will face in this adventure. He is from Khitai and if that were that not enough to make him strange to Western Hyborians, he is also the leader of a new cult in Shadizar dedicated to the worship of the Kings of Yag. Such alien fealty as he has rendered to these beings from the rim of the Outer Dark has driven him to strange philosophies and made his mind unknowable to most rational men. Many would call him mad but he is not. He has merely come to see the world through other eyes.

In addition to Lu Wong, the party will have to contend with a decadent noble family who seek to possess the book to use against Tiridates, King of Shadizar. They will likewise face the thieves who steal the book for this noble house. The histories of all these NPCs and more, are outlined further in the adventure.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The Book of the Elephant is a mostly non-linear adventure. The party is presented with a situation and has many options that they may pursue to resolve it. Only the initial encounter follows a linear path and may be omitted at the GM's discretion. The GM can then substitute one of the alternate hooks listed or create a campaign specific one of his own.

As written, the party has been hired by a merchant in a caravan who is headed to Shadizar from Numalia. The caravan route takes them through the Southern Karpash Mountains and across the Aranza desert where the adventure begins.



On route to Shadizar, in the Aranza desert, the caravan is ambushed by Zuagir nomads who are being led by an Aquilonian thief called Servius. He has hired the Zuagir specifically to steal an item that the caravan is transporting, the Book of the Elephant. The players, at this point, know only that something is being kept inside an iron box, which their employer, Elohan, values greatly.

Fighting a pitched battle with Zuagir eventually results in the caravan's defeat and the party is robbed of all weapons, valuables, food and water. This leaves them in the harsh desert, struggling to survive. As the caravan's patron, Elohan, lies dying, he pleads with the party to warn his family that the theft of the iron box leaves them in grave danger.

The party then follows the trail of Servius, the thief, through the Aranza desert and to Shadizar where they will exact their revenge and obtain The Book of the Elephant.

Once inside Shadizar, the party has several options by which they can track down Servius and the Book of the Elephant. A possible progression of these investigations follows.

The players contact Elohan's family where they will learn that Elohan was transporting the Book of the Elephant for a new cult within Shadizar. Elohan's brother, Eblis, will offer to retain their services to steal-back the book and exact revenge on the parties responsible for his brother's death.

The trail will then lead them to a Zamoran fence named Vakos, who brokered the theft. The party will find him celebrating the wealth his brokering of the Book has brought him at Suwong's Brothel. He will reveal the whereabouts of Servius but before he can explain why the Book is important or who hired him to steal it, the party will be attacked by Grey Khitan Apes, directed by the strange

pipe music of an unknown cultist. The Grey Apes abduct Vakos and a chase across the moonlit rooftops of Shadizar ensues.

With the apes vanished into the night and with them the information as to who commissioned the theft, the players will be forced to seek out Servius himself. They will find him frequenting pit fighting games in The Maul and will question and possibly kill him for leaving them in the desert. This will lead the players to the estate of a Zamoran noble family, House Kasamir.

Meanwhile, while all of the above is going on, the characters have drawn the attention of Aharesus, vizier to King Tiridates. Aharesus has dispatched one of his spies to keep tabs on the party and will eventually intercede with a proposition of his own in his efforts to obtain the book.

Here they will encounter the ambitious matron of the family, Lady Agnessa, who has her son, Oleksander, earmarked for the throne of Zamora. They will learn that Oleksander's sister, Oleysa, had infiltrated the Cult of Yag in order to make off with the Book so as to use it to further the family's political aims. Yet now, as the party arrives at the estate, they find that the item they came to steal back has been stolen again in turn, and they must proceed to the Temple of Yag itself to confront the Khitan High Priest Lung Wu, whose mad plan is to draw forth the Ancient Kings of the Planet Yag through space and time itself.

In the end, the players will have to prevent the fell priest's scheme from succeeding or risk unleashing the wrath of The Kings of Yag, a power from the Outer Dark, upon all of Hyboria.

The Book of the Elephant is fraught with danger, betrayals and a sinister secret out of time and space. During the course of the scenario the players will learn not only the

secrets of the original story, *The Tower of the Elephant* but also come to realize that the Kings of Yag, who exiled Yag Kosha and his rebel ilk to Earth, yet live on their home planet Yag which has begun to die. Thus the Kings have great motive and urgency to seek out the planet Earth and claim it as their own.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The adventure begins with the characters working for or travelling with a caravan coming from the West and heading to Shadizar the Wicked.

What has led the characters to the caravan itself or Shadizar in particular is up to the GM and should, of course, be tailored for individual campaigns.

What is important is that the players are a part of the caravan led by a Shemite merchant named Elohan, which is headed to Shadizar. The path of the caravan will take the group through the Aranza Desert West of the city. There the caravan will be ambushed by Zuagir nomads led by the Aquilonian thief Servius.

The GM may run the battle as he sees fit but the end result should leave the party stranded in the desert without weapons and without water. This should provide sufficient motivation for the party to get to the nearest city, Shadizar, in order to survive.

Further, after the battle, Servius and his Zuagirs loot the caravan, taking not only anything of value, but specifically a locked iron box, the contents of which the thief seems to singularly desire.

In addition to survival, the players may at this point be motivated by:

Revenge: A classic Conan trope, the characters have been robbed and left for dead in the open Aranza Desert.

Any barbarian character's code of honour will demand recompense in blood for the slight.

Greed: The contents of the iron box are clearly the goal of the ambush and are therefore clearly valuable. Any characters who are poor (and after this, they will all be) will have ample motivation to pursue this treasure.

Altruism: If there are any characters of honour and principle in the group, they may find the dying request of Elohan, the merchant, to be motivation to pursue the course of the adventure. As he lies dying from his wounds, Elohan will beg the PCs to travel to Shadizar and inform his family not merely of his fate but of a grave danger that now befalls them. For, in losing the precious cargo, Elohan has now earned the ire of the man who had commissioned him to bring it hence.

These three motives are primal, adaptable and should provide the spark the characters need to stalk the trail left by Servius as he heads with his thieves to Shadizar the Wicked.

Should the GM wish to forgo the desert caravan and ambush scenario, he may easily design an alternate path by which the players are hired by any of the parties involved to retrieve the Book of the Elephant. Such a path could presuppose that the party of adventurers is already located in the city and thus circumvent the first initial encounter.

However, in so doing, the ire which motivates the party to revenge themselves on those who have wronged them will likely be removed and a considerable amount of drama lost.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

Ideally, this scenario's challenges are designed for four to six characters of 3rd

level. However, the following tips are handy for tailoring the adventure for other levels of characters:

- *The Book of the Elephant* is a highly adaptable scenario as much of it relies on the players themselves investigating, role playing and finding creative ways to solve obstacles they encounter.
- Scaling the encounters likely to result in combat should be a simple matter of raising or lowering the number or strength of a given hostile encounter so as to match the necessary challenge level.

PLAYERS INTRODUCTION

Hundreds of leagues have scrolled past as the caravan has made its way over the Southern Karpash Mountains, left behind now, on the horizon, like black and broken teeth.

Elohan, a Shemite merchant, has hired you to accompany him on his trek to Shadizar the Wicked. That shining jewel of legend haunted Zamora lies across the bellish oven of the Aranza desert which now you traverse.

Shadizar is a city of vice and thievery; malice and treachery, where a man can win a fortune as easy as he may lose his life and fate is dictated by a strong arm and an avaricious heart.

You know little of Elohan, only that he lives in the dark and mysterious city and that he has been obsessed with a particular item in his possession. He has spent days fussing over it, tending to it and quelling a rampant paranoia that some thief has come in the night and absconded with it.

It is an iron box, securely bound and buried under a host of furs and pelts in one of the wagons. What lies within none will say but rumours have flown across the campfires at night as to what demon's work the Shemite merchant might carry to The Wicked City.

But rumour-mongering is not your business. You are, in your latest incarnations, merely sell-swords picking up money en route to Shadizar where you will no doubt spend it drinking and wenching, living only for the night and the bawdy laughter that accompanies the lives of adventurers and men of fortune.

The GM should role play a day's passage through the hot Aranza desert. A night of camping and story telling may be in order. The caravan has good Kothian wine and some of the merchants have made it available to sell-swords such as the players.

At some point the subject of what is inside the box should come up. If the party seeks to look inside, be advised that Elohan never lets it out of sight and he has a personal body guard who also watches over it.

If pressed, Elohan will give up only that it was something that he acquired from a thief gone mad in the city of Numalia. What drove the thief mad he will decline to speculate? Besides, the PCs are not being paid to ask questions.

Treat the body guard as a Typical Royal Guard from page 17 of *Dark Dens of Iniquity*.

TARSUS

Medium Humanoid Zamorian Soldier 6; HD: 6d10+12 (45 hp); Init: +3, SPD: 25 ft.; Dodge DV : 14; Parry DV: 17; DR: 11; BAB/Grp: +6/+8; Atk: Bill +8; or short sword +8 melee; Full Atk: Bill +8/+3 melee; pr short sword +8/+3 melee; DMG: Bill 2d8+3/x3/AP 9, or short sword 1d8+2/19-20 x2/AP 3

Once the day has passed lead into the next encounter in which the party is ambushed.

ENCOUNTER ONE: WAR IN THE SUN

Under the oppressive heat of the Zamoran sun the caravan trudges through the unforgiving desert. This place is like unto the hell of demons, nary a drop of water nor creature in sight. It is a place of bones bleached and scoured by the sand and of loneliness and death.

The dunes all around you blur as they meet the sky, the flame-like air distorting them in the eye. They twist and move as you pass them, until suddenly, you aware that it is no mere trick of the light. The dunes themselves are bursting forth!

From well concealed trenches, Zuagir nomads are pouring forth! Their tulwars glitter with menace and their eyes are a fury of balefire; it is an ambush, man against man in a bloody melee under the uncaring eye of the sun!

Elohan and caravan are about to be attacked by Zuagir raiders led by the aforementioned Aquilonian thief, Servius and his cohorts. The GM may allow a DC 18 spot check for the PCs to remain unsurprised in the first round of combat.

The PCs have scant moments to prepare a defence against the closing circle of Zuagir riders who charge from the dunes at them. They are outnumbered and encircled.

Elohan will panic while Tarsus orders the men to fight on bravely against the onslaught. "No room in Arallu for the weak!"

Elohan is a 6th level merchant as listed in *Secrets of the Streets* on page 7.

Caravan Guards (Medium-Size Humanoid) 2nd Lvl Soldiers (10): hp 15; Init: +2; PARRY DV 12; Dodge: 12; Fort +4 Ref +2 Will +0; Attack: Longsword or dagger +4 melee, +2 dmg.

Zuagir Raiders (Medium-Size Humanoid) 2nd Level Nomds (30): hp 17, 16, 12, 9; Init: +1; Parry 14; Dodge 14; Fort +4 Ref +1 Will +0; Attack: Tulwar +3 melee, +2 dmg; Ranged : Shemite Bow +4, 1d10 dmg, Crit x3

The raiders have been hired by Servius and his men and brought up through Koth to hit this caravan. The goal of the raid is the iron box, which contains The Book of the Elephant but the entire caravan will be looted.

The character's should be allowed to play out the encounter in any way they see fit but ultimately this is simply not a battle that they are going to win. The GM may, at his or her discretion, throw a handful of lower level raiders at the party to provide a satisfying beginning of mayhem and Hyborian bloodshed but the vast numbers will eventually catch up with them.

For purposes of play, the Zuagir raiders may have an unlimited supply of men.

If the PCs manage to defeat the raiders then the GM will need to use an alternate method of getting the player's drawn into the adventure later.

Servius will not quit; he will persist in further attempts to obtain the book. He may bribe the gate guards at the West gate to search and seize the cargo he wanted or he may simply wait for the caravan to enter the city and steal it. Either is possible but is not the most advantageous to him. He knows that there is another group and a cult at that, that is supposed to take possession of the book and he wants to lay his hands on it long before it reaches the city.

The Zuagir raiders are clothed in desert fashion and armed for guerilla operations. They typify the

ruthless efficiency of those modern nomads such as the Bedouin. They are masters of the desert and masters of ambush.

They hit fast, rising up out of a quiet desert like a sandstorm and leave their prey devastated. They disappear as quickly as they appeared and vanish into the horizon.

Anyone trying to escape the ambush will be pursued as Servius and the Zuagirs do not know where the box is when the attack begins.

The characters, having been defeated by Servius and the Zuagir nomads, will be lined up with any other survivors and stripped of all valuables including food and water.

Servius will explain that, while he may be a thief, he is not a butcher and will therefore: "Let fate decide whether they live or die according to the whims of the desert winds and their gods who master them."

He will then leave along with his minions and the Zuagir. They will later split; the Zuagir having no desire to approach the city and its civilized privations.

The PC's may track either party.

Tracking the Zuagir is a difficulty Survival 20 check that will increase to a 25 as the Zuagirs press further south toward Koth. It is nearly impossible to track them in the open desert as the shifting winds scatter any signs of passage.

Tracking Servius is a DC 15 Survival check. He is heading to Shadizar.

The PC's are now alone in the desert and in genuine danger from the terrain.

To a thirsty man the very sand sparkles like an oasis on the horizon. The heat is relentless, the combined fury of all the fires of Arralu bear down from the sun. Surely the ire of the gods does not burn so. Even the carrion that whirls above in slow circles are mocking you, waiting for the first to fall.

This is no place for men, nor beasts, nor anything but the howling winds which scour this land.

Lodged in the throat are particles of dust kicked up by the desert so that the very act of breathing feels like grimly imagined tortures and every step makes one curse their birth.

In every direction there is nothing but desolation, barren of all structure, barren of all hope.

The PC's must make Survival checks to find water. It will take three days to reach the outskirts of the grasslands that border Shadizar, until then the PCs are trapped in the desert.

Survival checks are made with a DC 16. Each successful check finds enough water for one man, for one day. Each day without water will cause STR and CON loss of 1D6. A day with half water will halve the STR and CON loss. GMs must play up the danger and the oppressive fear of being trapped alone against such forces of nature. The players should come out realizing that armed men and demons are not the only thing to fear in the savage Hyborian age.

If they opt to remain stationary and wait for another caravan, the party must be reminded that none is likely to come for some time.

On the third or fourth day, depending on speed, the players will reach the West Gate of Shadizar.

ENCOUNTER TWO: WELCOME TO SHADIZAR

Against the blue mantle of the sky, the spires and gold topped minarets of Shadizar the Wicked gleam like rare gems. Beyond the walls lies civilization, nearly forgotten in the wastes behind. The site of the city is lurid, tempting and desperately welcome.

Outside the West Gate filter the dispossessed, the sell swords and the desperate. Those who did not fare well within the Zamoran jewel have their heads impaled on pikes which line the road inside and serve as reminder to anyone foolish enough to disobey the will of King Tirdates. Desiccated flesh, even now being plucked by vultures, dead eyes and open mouths captured in their final horrors greet you.

The PCs have finally reached civilization but must face yet another obstacle: the soldiers guarding the West Gate are demanding taxes to enter.

The PCs can try and bluff their way through or they may try and filch a purse from another going inside. They may also opt to wait and scale the walls by night.

The guards themselves have no pity and may even laugh at the character's state of impoverishment and desperation.

The guards are demanding one silver per person to enter. They may be Bluffed or possibly Intimidated but the there is a circumstance penalty of -5 due to the appearance of dire beggars the PCs give. If they come up with a sufficiently good story, this -5 may be lifted at the GM's discretion.

The Zamoran soldier's stats can be taken from Sample Zamorian Soldier stats on page 33 of the *Shadizar Games Master's Guide*.

ENCOUNTER THREE: A RETCHED HIVE OF SCUM AND VILLAINY

The alleys torque like strange arteries. Filth and mud is flung from windows without care and into the fetid streets where whores and cut-throats lurk. The smells of boiling stews waft from the ale houses on the wine-drunk voices of mercenaries. The sounds of lascivious women spill laughter from the shadows like the jingle of coins.

You have come to a world of splendorous towers etched against the blank curtain of sky. Welcome to Shadizar, a city of strange sorceries, unimaginable vice and the decadent fanes of time-ravaged gods. Promises, both obscene and sublime, have drawn you but this is no a place for the faint of heart. Cowardly men sink and are left behind, like the old and infirm amidst a breaking ship. No pity, no remorse, and no quarter will be given here.

As this portion of the adventure is a matrix style plot, the players have many options open to them. Depending on their motives, the players may do any number of things.

Among the likely courses they may pursue are the following:

The Players may first elect to secure weapons and/ or money if they have not already done so. They may attempt to filch coins from passers by or go to a tavern that provides opportunities for fleecing a crowd. If the PC's elect to go to a tavern, the GM may use The House of Suwong in The Maul. It can be found on page 45 of *The Game Master's Guide*. The GM may proceed to encounter 5 or one may want to wait before giving the player's access to Vakos as, at this point, they do not yet know who he is.

The PCs may decide to find Elohan's family. Finding one merchant among a city full of them may be difficult without money as nearly everyone in Shadizar expects something in return for information. If the players are bristling under the difficulty the GM may elect to give them a break and have the information dispensed freely. However remember, Shadizar is supposed to be an unforgiving town and this adventure provides an introduction to the cut-throat and decadent nature of civilization in Howard's Hyboria. Remember how Conan was welcomed to civilization, after all. When the PCs find Elohan's home, proceed to encounter 8. They PCs are working against a Gather Information check of DC 17 with silver and a DC of 20 without.

The PCs may elect to skip Elohan entirely and instead look for Servius and his thieves. His henchmen may have spilled his name during their initial encounter in the desert at the GMs discretion. Again, finding one thief in a city of cut-purses is going to be difficult. The PCs again must make a Gather Information check of 18 with silver. Without silver, no one is likely to give up a fellow thief, treat it as a DC 25 or simply as impossibility without any sort of favour trading. Loose talk such as that finds a man with his throat cut in some Maul alleyway. The PCs may resort to more aggressive forms of interrogation once they spy an NPC who likely has the information they desire.

A third option is for the PCs to attempt to earn money at The Pit of Arallu, Encounter 6. There they can run into Servius if the GM wishes or he may hold off until the PCs have done due investigative diligence by speaking with Vakos, as Vakos is the only person who leads directly to Servius.

If the PCs are at a loss as to how to proceed they may be approached by Khalid the beggar orphan in Encounter 4.

ENCOUNTERS IN THE MAUL

The following encounters take place in The Maul district of Shadizar. The GM may reference Shadizar the Wicked for any information he or she feels necessary to augment these encounters.

The following encounters are broken down by their location in the city districts of Shadizar and may thus be played in the order determined by your players. Additionally, several encounters are triggered by events or at the discretion of the GM.

ENCOUNTER FOUR: ASK THE DUST - THE MAUL

Amidst the sweltering crowd of outcasts and lepers who swarm The Maul like an infestation lay the beggar class. They are scarcely noticed by the predators whose eyes dart furtively for any opportunity toward larceny and hired murder; these grim faced souls eke out a slim existence on the margins of a district already ignored by many.

Among them are a horde of urchins, children, orphans and foundlings who have taken to the streets to ply their nimble fingers both in prostration and pick-pocketing. These dirty boys and girls are the invisible eyes and ears of Shadizar, swarming foreigners and natives alike with their dirty paws and open, hungry mouths.

The Dust (see page 42, *Game Master's Guide*) are indeed the invisible intelligence agents of Shadizar. They are small and overlooked by the power players, thieves and nobles and as such, often come across all manner of information.

Should the players choose to seek them out, they will encounter Khalid, a young Turanian orphan who can provide them with information which will lead them to Vakos the Fence.

Khalid, a street-wise youth, is still just a boy and may attach himself to one of the male characters as a kind of paternal figure, should his charisma be high enough. If he finds such a player in the group, he will be willing to aid them for free (though The Beggar King, Hagag, will have other ideas.)

Khalid can be Bluffed and/or Intimidated but, being a street-kid, he is not easily impressed or tricked. Treat any attempt to coerce information out of him as a DC 18.

If the PCs convince Khalid to help them, he will take them to Hagag the Beggar King. Hagag is a professional beggar; his position as their "king" is in fact quite highly regarded among his ilk.

Khalid unfastens a sewer grating that leads below. You follow down fetid tunnels with too many turns to count, through the intestinal-like tracts of Shadizar's underbelly.

Finally you emerge into the deeper tunnels hewn out by the ancient Zhemri and used as catacombs. Few bones remain ensconced now, only the occasional femur or misplaced jaw. Khalid leads you into another chamber where a throne of bones has been erected, held together by a yellowing resin.

On it, sits Hagag, The Beggar King. Rats scurry over both the throne and his own skeletal frame. One of Hagag's eye is but a missing socket, rimmed with red scar-tissue. His face is wan, his one good eye flickering in the candle light, his skin as waxy as the tallow that melts around him. A rat scurries down one arm and into the palm of his hand like a faithful pet.

Hagag serves as a kind of Fagin to the street youths and a vizier to the poor and distraught. However, he is not quite sane, years of a street life have left him skeletal, thin to the point of vanishing and he lost an eye to a disease years ago. He twitches involuntarily when he talks and often speaks in cryptic metaphors.

Yet he is wise, informed and ultimately helpful for the PCs if they can convince him to give over his information. Treat any attempts to Intimidate him or Bluff him as DC 25 checks.

Hagag the Beggar King, 6th Level Robber, 39 Hp, see page 23 of *The Game Master's Guide*.

WHAT HAGAG KNOWS:

Hagag knows that a new cult has come into Shadizar. It is said that behind their walls they erected their strange temple in a single night. The temple itself is unlike anything Shadizar the Wicked has seen before and Shadizar has seen a great deal.

Hagag is aware that the merchant Elohan, who hired the players and was killed in the ambush, was contracted by this new Cult of Yag through Vakos the Fence. If pressed and suitably compensated in some fashion, Hagag will tell the PCs that Vakos frequents The House of Suwong a brothel located in The Maul. The House of Suwong is detailed below in Encounter 5.

ENCOUNTER FIVE: THE HOUSE OF SUWONG - THE MAUL

The smoke hangs over the common room like a strata of cloud. Wenches lay slung over their customers, whispering into their ears, laughing at their jokes, revelling at their tales of prowess both martial and salacious.

Bare flesh in every flavour is on display, thin gossamer threads barely concealing wide, swinging hips and ample breasts. The brothel sweats with wine, lust and the fevered lotus dreams of those who frequent her.

Behind the bar, a plump, aging Khitan woman, once a beauty, is fauned over by several of her whores and not a few of her customers. She is bedecked in the trinkets of a life spent as a seductress

and engages the willing with adroit niceties and fascinating legends of the past.

Suwong's is a place of some renown in Shadizar. It has seen adventure, scandal and the daily grind of the commerce of flesh. Suwong herself knew Conan, though only by association through the treacherous wench Jenna. At the GMs discretion, Suwong herself may be regaling customers with tales of the barbarian king in his youth. In fact, Suwong herself knows something of the story of The Tower of the Elephant.

She had heard the story from the mouth of the barbarian himself and can tell the PCs what she knows. Conan, as a young thief in The City of Thieves, penetrated the tower with another thief from Nemedra, the Prince of Thieves himself, Taurus. There, Taurus was killed and Conan claimed to have met an ancient being from the Outer Dark called Yag Kosha whom he stated had the body of a man and the head of an elephant. Some foul sorcery bound the creature to the tower but Conan, with a magic given him by the creature itself, defeated the fell priest Yara whose tower it was and escaped before it collapsed into scintillating shards of strange glass, brighter than any gem.

Suwong herself is wary of the tale but freely passes it along. She expects the PCs to engage her women and will suggest that they leave should they decline. If they persist on going without entertaining one of her girls, she may summon her Shemite bouncers.

Use the Sample Slave Warrior Stats on page 15 of Dens of Iniquity for the bouncers.

Bouncers: (Medium Humanoid Barbarian 4/ Soldier 2) HP 45, (2 in number)

Once again, nothing in Shadizar is free.
If the PCs are entertaining women

from Suwong's stable and buying jacks of wine, she will entertain the PCs pursuit of Vakos but will not betray him as he is a client. However, listening to the lilting voices of the wenches across his lap or the men he gambles with will eventually bring his name to the player's ear with a successful Listen check at DC 15.

Vakos is seated with a whore strapped over his lap and a wine-jack in one hand. He is Zamorian by birth, dusky-skinned and black haired. He is celebrating the money he has received for selling out Elohan in a drunken orgy of debauchery. He is dicing and drinking with two gamblers.

However, the thief can handle his drink and he is here with two of his associates. He is difficult to Bluff and to Intimidate. The PCs are unlikely to have enough money to bribe him as he has just come in to a good deal.

The best plan would be to observe him and waylay him later when he is thoroughly drunk and passed out or when he has taken one of the women (or two or three of them) home.

Vakos: 6th Level Cutpurse, HP 27, see page 23 of *The Game Master's Guide* for details.

Vakos Associates: (2) 6th Level Robbers, HP 39 see same page as above.

If the party manages to get the drop on Vakos they may catch him naked and unarmed with his wine drenched women. At this point, he will likely be intimidated enough to give up his employer, Lady Agnessa and the whereabouts of Servius. He further knows where to find Servius, the Aquilonian thief, in this case at The Pit of Arallu. See Encounter 6 for The Pit of Arallu.

Getting him to give up his money will be something else altogether. If threatened with death, Vakos will lead

the PCs to his secret stash of money that is located in a lockbox in his home. However, the lockbox has a secret compartment inside it in which a deadly cobra lairs. If Vakos does not properly open the mechanism, then the compartment inside opens and the angered viper will strike anyone who opens the box. The trap is a DC 16 for a Find Traps check and a DC 16 to Disable.

If Vakos is forced into opening the box himself, he will do so in such a way that the cobra is released and throw the open box and snake, at the strongest looking PC.

The cobra's poison is deadly. If the PCs are poisoned they will have to force Vakos to give up an antidote. If he has escaped or been killed then they have a whole new side-adventure ahead of them this night unless they can find the antidote (Search check DC 20.)

Small Viper (1) HP 4, see page 304 of *Conan RPG*.

Vakos has 230 sp stashed in the lock-box plus 2D6 silver left after his night of revelry. His companions each have 1D6 sp on them.

Don't miss the August Issue of S&P for Part Two of this Three Part Epic.



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Battles Among the Stars



Three New Scenarios for A Call to Arms

By Matthew Sprange

Babylon 5: A Call to Arms is a highly tactical game, with players striving to capitalise on the strengths of their fleets, while prying apart the weaknesses of their enemies. In order to develop the fleet mastery of all the admirals out there, we present three new scenarios!

Gravity Well

A recent battle saw the loss of the flagship for one fleet, but distress signals have been picked up from the admiral's lifeboat. The signals are being transmitted from within an asteroid that encircles a dangerously volatile star. A rescue attempt is launched immediately, but it soon becomes clear that the enemy have picked up the signals too, and are interested in having a little 'chat' with the admiral.

Fleets: Both fleets have three Fleet Allocation Points.

Pre-Battle Preparation: Roll for Initiative as normal – the losing fleet will be forced to set up first. The fleets are deployed anywhere in their own deployment zones as shown on the scenario map.

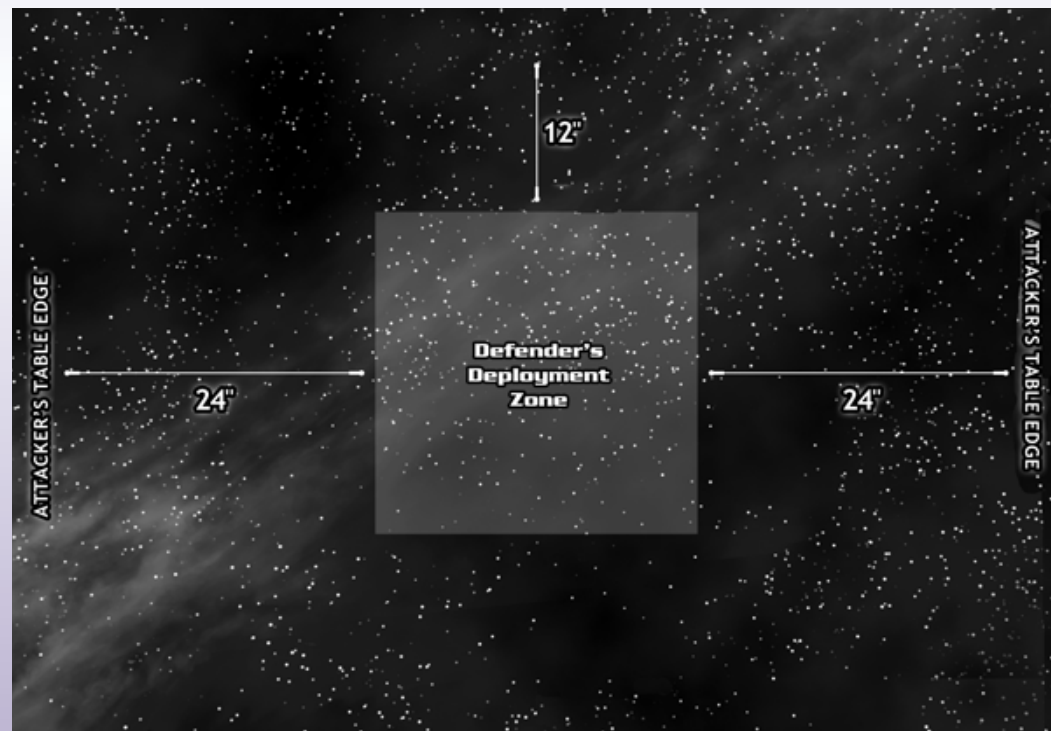
Scenario Rules: The asteroid field is Density 7. Any ship (not fighter flight) that is within the asteroid field during the End Phase and did not perform any Special Actions in that turn may

search for the admiral by rolling one dice – a bonus of +1 is added to this roll if any friendly fighter flights are within 6" of the ship and are also within the asteroid field. On the roll of a 6, the admiral's lifeboat has been found, and he will be immediately transported to the ship.

If a ship carrying the admiral is boarded by the enemy and its crew completely wiped out, then

the admiral may be immediately placed on board any ship friendly to the boarders that is within 6". In this way, the admiral may change hands several times during the battle!

In addition, fighting this close to an unstable star will cause its own problems for the fleet. The star's immense gravity field will cause every ship to be moved D6" (roll separately for each) directly



towards the star's table edge before the start of every Movement Phase. Any ship that is within 18" of the star's table edge in an End Phase will be forced to weather terrible radiation bursts and solar flares. It will automatically suffer D3 critical hits.

Game Length: Until victory conditions are met.

Victory and Defeat: If a ship finds the admiral and leaves the table by any edge other than the star's, or by jumping to hyperspace, its player may claim victory. If the ship carrying the admiral is destroyed (or if he is never found!), then the battle is a draw.

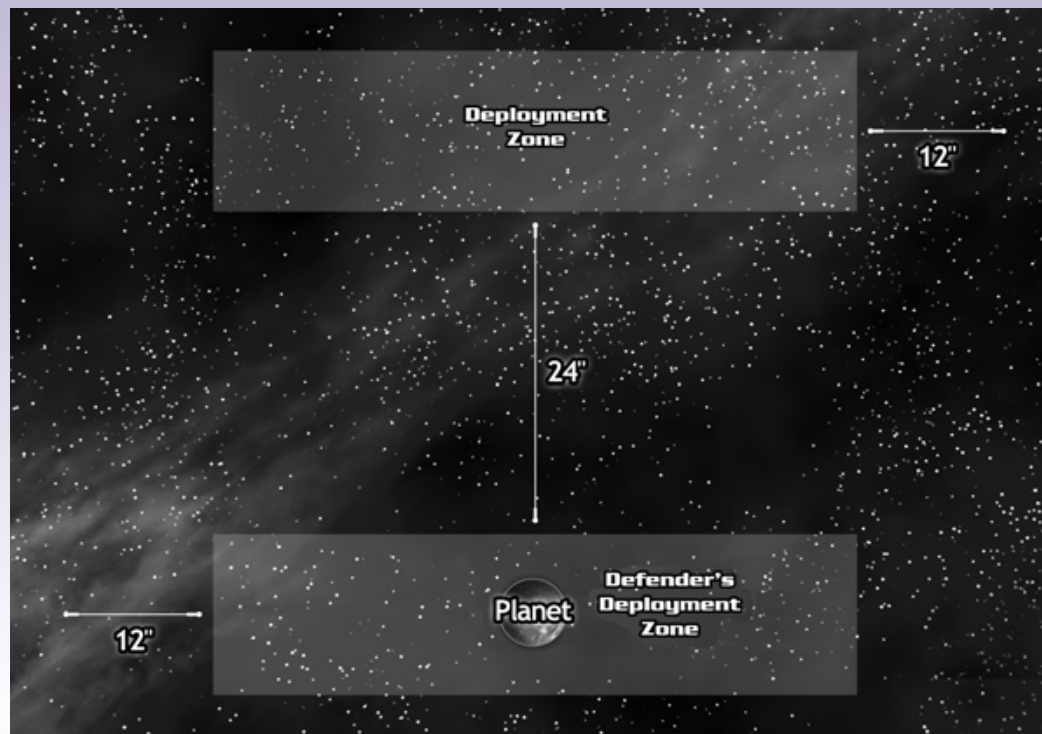
Optional: You can experiment with random Fleet Allocation Points in this battle, as you will find they greatly influence the way it is played.

Invasion

A surprise attack is launched on a far-flung colony, and the defending fleet has been caught completely unprepared. Utterly doomed and unable to flee, the defenders must fight to the bitter end, hoping for reinforcements or just the slim chance that every minute they buy means another civilian transport can escape.

Fleets: The defending player has five Fleet Allocation Points. The attacking player starts with three Fleet Allocation Points, and receives one more Fleet Allocation Point every turn.

Pre-Battle Preparation: The defending fleet sets up first and is deployed anywhere in its deployment zone as shown on the scenario map. The attacking



fleet moves in from its table edge on the first turn. Stellar debris is generated randomly.

[[[Map: Defender has one long table edge, up to 12" into the table, but nothing deployed within 12" of a short table edge. A medium planet is in the middle of the deployment zone. The attacker has the opposite long table edge]]]

Scenario Rules: The attacking fleet receives one Fleet Allocation point worth of ships at the start of every turn. These ships move in from the attacker's table edge. The defending player may not perform any Tactical Withdrawals.

Game Length: Eight turns.

Victory and Defeat: The attacker wins if he can wipe out the defender's fleet. The defender claims (a moral) victory if he has at least one ship (not fighter flight) still on the table without being Stricken.

Optional: If you fancy a truly epic, Battle of the Line-type clash, consider multiplying the Fleet Allocation Points on both sides. For example, you might decide to fight a battle three times the size, and so the defender would start with fifteen Fleet Allocation Points, and the attacker would start with six, and receive three more every turn. Such epic confrontations are perfect for multiplayer team games – they are a good chance for you to get all your ships on the table!

On the Back Foot

The war has been going on for months now, and both fleets believe they have the measure of the other. Tactical surprises are becoming rare, and battles are turning into slugfests of attrition. Seeking to turn the odds and bring the war to a quick end, one side launches a major offensive which immediately catches their enemy off guard. Suddenly fighting for their very survival, a small battle fleet desperately tries to hold out while reinforcements speed towards them.

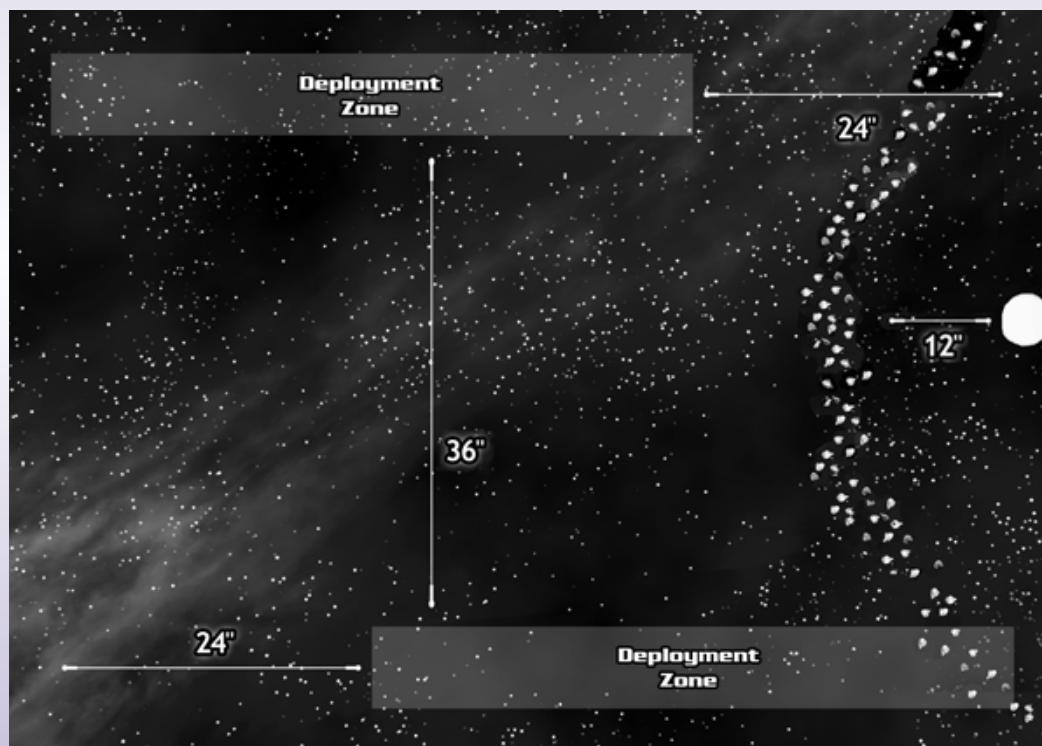
Fleets: The attacker has eight Fleet Allocation Points. The Defender starts with five Fleet Allocation Points, and receives another five Fleet Allocation Points as reinforcements.

Pre-Battle Preparation: The defending fleet is deployed first, anywhere within its deployment zone, as shown on the map. The attacking fleet is split into two forces, each of four Fleet Allocation Points. Each will move onto the table in the first turn from opposite short table edges. Stellar debris is generated randomly.

Scenario Rules: The attacking fleets move in from the short table edges during the first turn. The defender's reinforcement fleet moves in from his long table edge at the start of the fifth turn.

Game Length: Twelve turns

Victory and Defeat: This scenario uses Victory Points in order to determine who wins. Note that the defender must minimise his losses during the first part of the game, or he risks the attacker earning more Victory Points than it is possible for him to claim himself!



Peace Through Superior Firepower

By Alan Oliver

The world of the Strange Aeon is a violent place and any character out and about in it is going to need something to keep them safe. Presented here are four weapons manufacturers and a sample of their products. They range from the budget end of the market to the ultra expensive elite weaponry that no starting character would ever dream of getting their hands on.

Stallag

Our first manufacturer is a bit of an oddball. Stallag weapons are common, incredibly so, probably as common in the twenty first century as the AK47 was in the twentieth century. However despite Stallag weapons turning up in almost every firefight on the face of the planet, Stallag itself no longer exists!

It all started during the second arcanotech war. Stallag industries was a Russian small arms production company producing military hardware for the NEG. The company was nothing special, just another big Russian corporation with factories spread across the country, hundreds of thousands of employees and a somewhat top heavy management structure. However what it did have was Maxine Kerenko, a more than slightly brilliant analyst. It was Maxine who realised that not only would Stallag industries not survive the Migou invasion but neither would Russia as a country.

Maxine came up with a plan. Through force of personality she got it past the board of directors, at least in part because at the time they were distracted with their own survival and profit extraction plans and the Kerenko plan was put into operation.

Stage one was Research and Development. Stallag needed to design a range of guns to specific criteria; effective but simple to produce with basic manufacturing resources. This would have been a task of Herculean proportions if they had started from scratch. However Stallag already had both a large range of modern weapons and details of a huge number of older weapon designs. This meant they were able to have the plans ready in only six months.

Stage two was the release of the full specs and blueprints for the range directly to the Russian people, so that they could arm themselves against the oncoming night. Stage two relied upon the resilience of the Russian mindset, the ability to fight till their last breath even when official NEG military was running away. Not only would it keep the Russian spirit alive as resistance fighters fought for the motherland but it would also bleed the Migou forces in their rear areas as freedom fighters continue to attack and harass them.

In Russia the plan worked and Stallag weapons are still to be found in the hands of the resistance fighting deep behind Migou lines. However the plans were out there on the information super highway and spread across the world in days. Soon they had become the cheap option for every streetgang, petty warlord, cultists, organised crime family and psycho with access to a machine shop. Since their release Maxine Kerenko's name has become a curse to NEG law enforcement officers the world over, while in what remains of mother Russia she is a virtual saint.

As for the guns themselves, they are simple and rugged. They were always intended for resistance troops fighting without much support so they have to be reliable. However they are not the finest weapons on the market, accuracy suffers from the simple manufacturing techniques and the automatic weapons are prone to jam.

Most of these guns have picked up street names to go with their original Stallag designations. Some of these street names are obvious, while others are a little more obscure.

Stallag weapons also have a variable cost. They are not purchasable from your average arms store. Instead if you are building one yourself there are material costs, hire of facilities even hire of technicians. On the other hand there are loads of these weapons on the streets and they can be picked up for next to nothing if you know the right people.

Stallag Medium Auto-pistol “the Pug”

This is a short barrelled, ten millimetre auto pistol, a very basic design that would not be unfamiliar to a soldier 100 years ago. The simplicity of the design makes this a more reliable weapon than most other guns in the Stallag range, although it still depends on the skill of the manufacturer.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
The Pug	Med auto-pistol	10mm	10/20/30	+1	2	8	PA	1d10x60Tn

Stallag Heavy Auto-pistol “the Hog”

A big heavy auto pistol, the long barrel has a solid weight under the barrel to counter the massive muzzle climb that the heavy round delivers. These are big guns, too big to carry easily in a shoulder holster and are better off carried on a hip or thigh rig. Assuming that they are made by a good technician they are very tough weapons, you can crack Migou skulls all day with these hogs and they will still shoot true. Just ensure that you do not drop one on your foot.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
The Hog	Large auto-pistol	15mm	10/20/30	+2	1	10	P	1d10x100Tn

Stallag Light Sub-machine Gun

“Three packer”

This is a pistol grip light machine gun, with the extended mag fitting up through the pistol grip. The muzzle can easily be modified to accept a basic suppressor, which will not make the weapon silent due to the ejecting rounds and the breach noise but does reduce the sound significantly. It got its name as the ‘three packer’ because if you are using them, you will want to carry three. The first is the one you use, the second is the

one you go to when the first jams. The third is the source of spares for repairing the other two when they break. These are unreliable weapons, to put it mildly. So much so that some people have not bothered to fit clip ejection systems to them, knowing that the gun will jam before it runs out of ammunition. The weapons also do not have a single shot option on them, just fully automatic. Definitely a favourite of the spray and prey fans.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Three Packer	Light SMG	9mm	10/25/40	0	3/1-5/30	90	R	1d10 x 150Tn

Stallag Heavy Sub-machine gun

“Arm breaker”

This is a very heavy sub-machine gun only suitable for those with enhanced strength. The weapon is a bull-pup configuration with a curved magazine coming up and over the weapon, pistol grips forward and aft. The weapon is designed for run and gun, firing from the hip. Originally intended for close assault on Migou ships and facilities but now used in almost any close quarters fighting. It is not as prone to jamming and mechanical failure as the three packer, probably because there are fewer small parts involved. To use two handed requires strength of seven and to use one handed requires a strength of 10. Use with a lower strength than required runs a risk of injury, most commonly broken arms. Injuries are at the story guides discretion.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Arm Breaker	Heavy SMG	15mm	15/30/50	+2	3/1-5/30	60	R	1d10 x 200 Tn

Stallag Light Assault Rifle “The AKAK”

Based upon the AK47 from the 20th century, the later models with the folding metal stock. With a weapon as reliable and iconic as the AK, all they really had to do was adjust it for the modern 5mm rifle rounds and make a few other simple changes to produce a weapon that has rapidly become the light assault rifle of choice for Russian freedom fighters and cultists alike. Unlike most of the Stallag range, the AKAK is very

reliable; it has managed to carry forward the tradition of the original. Outwardly the AKAK looks much like the 20th century weapon, with the curved magazine and the metal folding stock.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
AKAK	Light assault rifle	5mm	25/75/150	+1	3 or 4/1-5/30	30	R	1d10 x 150 Tn

Stallag Heavy Rifle “Elephant Gun”

This is a semi-automatic, heavy calibre rifle. It was intended as a basic infantry rifle, although with its good range it can also double as a sniper rifle. It is a bull pup configuration to allow for a long barrel without making the weapon too unwieldy. It is known as an elephant gun because it is powerful enough to take down something the size of an elephant with one shot, at least that’s what they tell you. Some say it is actually because if you do not brace it right when you fire it, it will kick like an elephant.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Elephant gun	Heavy rifle	20mm	100/400/1000	+3	1	15	R	1d10 x 250 Tn

Pro-T(ect) by Atlantis I.G.

Above Stallag weapons in price you have the Pro-T(ect) range of disposable firearms. Unpopular with police and other legal enforcement types due to their regular use by professional criminals and cultists, steps have been taken to try and get Atlantis I.G. to withdraw the range without success.

The Pro-T range is a set sealed unit polymer and ceramic firearms that are designed as one use weapons. The target purchasers are people who will need a reliable firearm in a hostile environment. The big selling point, as far as the advertising goes, is that they are completely sealed until they are first cocked. This makes them reliable weapons even after immersion in water or being buried in mud or sand.

The outer casing of the pro-TECT weapons are also a tough polymer that is stain and wear resistant, the fact that this also makes them fingerprint and DNA print resistant as well is purely coincidental, at least if you ask Atlantis I.G. it is.

To prevent their use by criminals each bullet has a magnetic identity dot fitted, which identifies the serial number of the weapon that it was fitted to. Atlantis I.G. use this security measure to ‘prove’ that they are not selling weapons deliberately aimed at professional criminals. Of course the fact that these magnetic IDD’s can be wiped clean by passing the weapon through any industrial electro-magnet does make this security measure pointless when dealing with pros. Of course common street thugs who try and copy the pros do get caught because of this system, so it does work in a way.

The weapons are favourites for pro criminals because they can be used and dumped without hesitation, leaving no fingerprint or DNA evidence, they are useful weapons in a fight, being reliable and having the hitting power to do the job and they do not cost the earth. The later is obviously important when you’re replacing them after each ‘mission’.

Pro-T Holdout

This is the smallest of the Pro-T range and is compact enough to slip into your underwear if you have to. It does not carry too many rounds but then it is only expected to be used in an emergency. The weapon is much smaller than the Midnight special from Springfield and is almost certainly the smallest firearm currently available. This makes it particularly popular with professional criminals who need a reliable backup and as unpopular with law enforcement officials who have to search for them.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Pro-T Holdout	Auto pistol-sml	5mm	10/20/30	0	3	6C	PA	300Tn

Pro-T Backup Pistol

This is a small automatic pistol but still larger than the holdout. It is still small enough to wear in an ankle holster as a backup pistol and this is the use that it is most often put to. However because it is still a rather slimline automatic, a number of security conscious corporate types

have started to wear them in shoulder holsters under their designer suit jackets, simply because they don't ruin the hang of the jacket as much as a bulkier pistol would.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Pro-T Backup	Auto pistol-Sml	5mm	15/30/50	0	3	21C	PA	325Tn

Pro-T Heavy Pistol

This is a large automatic pistol, lighter calibre than most heavy pistols but with a much larger magazine. They are intended to be the main weapon in use, so they pack enough ammo that they will keep blasting for the duration of the fight. A pair of these in your shoulder rigs and you should be able to handle anything. Also the caseless ammo blocks used in the heavy pistol are the same as those used by the Pro-T Machine pistol, which makes for simpler logistics when equipping a team.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Pro-T Heavy Pistol	Auto pistol-Lge	10mm	15/30/50	+1	3	30C	PA	700Tn

Pro-T Machine Pistol

Largest of the pistol designs from Pro-T, although not that much larger than the heavy pistol. The caseless ammo blocks slide into the pistol grip. They are also interchangeable with the Pro-T heavy pistol, which makes for easier logistical planning, whether it is supplying security guards or planning for that big heist. They are not as useful for extended firefights as they will quickly burn through their ammo when used on automatic and if used in a single shot mode they are less effective than the heavy pistol. Some still like the heavier hitting power that they provide.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Pro-T Machine pistol	Machine pistol	10mm	15/30/50	+2	2 or 3/1-5/15	30C	RA	1200Tn

Pro-T Light Submachine Gun

Single handed light submachine gun, magazine feeding through the pistol grip. This is quite a small magazine, only a 30 round caseless block of ammo, however it is the same caseless ammo blocks as used in the heavy and machine pistols, further extending the logistical flexibility of the Pro-T range. The Pro-T LSMG is very reliable when first used, however it does tend to decline rapidly after four or five clips have been used through it. This is due to a residue build up caused by the caseless propellant. Typically the weapon becomes useless somewhere between the fifth and tenth clip being fired through it. However given the disposable nature of the Pro-T range, this is rarely a problem.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Pro-T Light SMG	Lt SMG	10mm	15/30/50	+2	3 or 3/1-5/15	30C	RA	1200Tn

Pro-T Heavy Submachine Gun

This is a heavier weapon designed to be used two handed rather than as a heavy pistol. It uses a much larger block of 10mm caseless ammo which feeds into the top of the weapon well behind the pistol grip. This keeps the overall weapon length relatively short while allowing for a decent barrel length, giving it better range than many other submachine guns. The clip size is also well above average, allowing for continued use of the weapon in a prolonged firefight. It also avoids the propellant residue problems of the light submachine gun, as the ammo blocks are specifically designed for a fully automatic weapon.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Pro-T Heavy SMG	Heavy SMG	10mm	25/50/80	+2	3 or 3/1-5/20	80C	R	1350Tn

Pro-T Assault Rifle

The largest of the Pro-T range, this is a compact assault rifle with a collapsible stock and an integral x4 mag scope sight. The sight is powerful enough to drop range one category. They are a favourite of organised crime professionals and special forces alike as they are effective against everyone up to power armoured SWAT, accurate enough to pick off targets but still capable of switching to rock and roll and laying down a significant barrage of fire. With the stock collapsed they can more or less be concealed under a suit

jacket, at least against casual observation, and their compact design makes them very useful for close-quarters firefights inside buildings where a longer weapon would get in the way. Reliability is good for four or five clips, however after that they do start to suffer from reliability problems, however this is rarely an issue with their regular users.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Pro-T Assault Rifle	Lt Assault rifle	5mm	35/85/200	+1	3 or 4/1-5/30	60C	RA	1500Tn

Pro-T Ammo Blocks

All the Pro-T range come fully loaded as standard. However some people do like to carry spare ammo with them into battle, so they also produce the caseless ammo in the assorted sizes for the whole range. Cost of the spare blocks of ammo is slightly above average due to the magnetic dot security devices; however other manufacturer's ammo cannot be loaded into Pro-T weapons due to the distinctive clip shapes used.

5mm caseless	5 x 6 round blocks	10Tn
5mm caseless	3 x 21 round blocks	20Tn
10mm caseless	30 round block	10Tn
10mm caseless	80 round block	30Tn
5mm caseless rifle	60 round block	25Tn

Bling Bang

This is a range of custom firearms for the mega rich, made by a company that started in the early years of the century making custom firearms for the mega-rich rap stars and gansta-rappers. Their weapons are big, ostentatious, hand crafted pieces of jewellery for the mega-rich bad boys and girls of the modern media gangsta scene. In a world where personal safety issues lead many normal members of society into carrying personal firearms, the super rich need some way of standing out from the crowd and what could be better than a gold plated, diamond encrusted super gun to do that.

Of course real pro criminals would never use a weapon from Bling Bang, all those precious metal surfaces to take beautifully clear finger prints from, combined with a

money trail a mile wide, these weapons are a cops dream when it comes to identifying the perpetrator of a crime.

While virtually useless for real criminals, these guns are still very well made firearms. From a self defence standpoint they actually make sense, not only do they look good but if you are attacked you can actually defend yourself with one of these. Of course the sort of people who can afford to buy one of these guns can probably afford to hire their own private security army anyway, which would offer them a far greater degree of protection.

Bling Bang only produce three different guns, however each one is then customised to the buyers personal specifications. This means that you will not be buying a Bling Bang gun off the shelf. Instead you have to contact the company with the details of which firearm you are after and your personal choices in upgrades.

The Evicerator!

This is a huge calibre revolver, which fires special shells that would look more at home in a shotgun or hunting rifle. The barrel is a huge 14" long leaving plenty of room for beautiful inlays or etching work to be done down the slab sides of the piece, although many customers prefer to leave the name of the gun clearly displayed due to the fear factor that it represents. All of this combines to make an absurdly over the top revolver that dwarves all other handguns, has a bullet that will blow a hole through a car engine block and a kick that will break your arms if your not ready for it.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Evicerator	Revolver-huge	19.5mm	10/30/60	+3	1	5	P	50,000Tn

Note: If not braced, holding the pistol two handed and at least strength seven then expect to be injured by the kick when fired.

The Phoenix

This is another huge pistol, this time an automatic. Its inspiration came from the 20th century Desert Eagle, which became popular with movie makers and posers because

of its huge size and impressive weight. It is a big pistol firing custom made specialist rounds, definitely powerful enough to stop a charging cultist dead. The weapon requires just as much strength and preparation to fire as the Eviscerator.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Phoenix	Auto pistol- huge	17.5mm	15/40/60	+3	1	7	RA	55,000Tn

Note: If not braced, holding the pistol two handed and at least strength seven then expect to be injured by the kick when fired.

The Castrator

The last of the Bling Bang guns, this is a smaller weapon designed for the ladies, who might not be strong enough to use the other two weapons. Although with the right decoration, it certainly does not look effeminate so still a good seller with the less well built men. This is not a normal gun at all but a specialist needler weapon that fires pre-poisoned darts. It has a long slender barrel, a fully sculpted body and a small and delicate grip suitable for a well manicured ladies hand. There is an optional larger grip and trigger assembly to make the weapon more suitable for the men. It takes its name from one of the standard loads available for it, which is a libido inhibitor that leaves the victim incapable for up to a month, in addition to the normal damage from the needles. There are other standard loads for the weapon, one is a simple knock out toxin, another is a lethal toxin however that load is under a separate legal restriction. There is even an excitor neuro-drug rumoured to be available from Bling Bang, although details of its effects remain scarce.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Castrator	Auto Needle- med	5mm	10/20/40	0	3	12N	PA	50,000Tn

Upgrades and Ammo

Of course, the basic weapon is nothing without the trimmings. Most of these can be combined, however a little common sense may be required. Ammo prices are expensive and are per individual bullet, not per clip, however each round is custom made and they are not available from anyone else.

Oiled gunmetal finish, this is the default finish	1,000Tn
Coloured and lacquered finish	5,000Tn
Custom paint job, depending on size and artist	5-
125,000Tn	
Silver plated	10,000Tn
Gold plated	50,000Tn
Platinum plated	125,000Tn
Sapphire sights, red dot reflected into sapphire set in the sight	100,000Tn
Diamond sights, red dot reflected into a diamond set in the sight	250,000Tn
Hand carved wooden grips, personalised designs	5,000Tn
Rare mahogany or ebony carved wooden grips	20,000Tn
Carved Ivory grips	15,000Tn
Carved Ivory grips from extinct species	100,000Tn
Migou skin leather grips	150,000Tn
19.5mm bullet, lead	20Tn
19.5mm bullet, silver	100Tn
19.5mm bullet, gold	500Tn
19.5mm bullet, gold, diamond tipped *	10,000Tn
17.5mm bullet, lead	20Tn
17.5mm bullet, silver	90Tn
17.5mm bullet, gold	450Tn
17.5mm bullet, gold, diamond tipped *	10,000Tn
Clip of 5mm needles – no toxin	40Tn
Clip of 5mm needles – castrator toxin **	400Tn
Clip of 5mm needles – KO toxin **	350Tn
Clip of 5mm needles – lethal toxin **	4,000Tn
Legal – RA	
Clip of 5mm needles – excitor neuro-drug **	2,000Tn

* Diamond tipped bullets are rumoured to have exceptional armour penetration, potentially ignoring all armour. However this is left to the story guide's discretion as this could just be a Bling Bang marketing ploy.

** Bling Bang toxin and drug needle effects are left to the story guide's discretion.

Smithfield Slayer by Templar

I.G.

Originally a German company, Templar rapidly grew into an international mega-corp during the early years of the 21st century. They started out mainly as a major projects construction company, however they have swallowed up any number of smaller companies over the decades and now own businesses involved in just about every part of life, including weapons manufacture and military hardware which have been big growth industries for the last couple of decades.

When they purchased Smithfield weaponry 15 years ago, they scrapped all the old weapons lines and concentrated their massive financial clout on the research and development side of the business. They abandoned conventional weaponry and focused on railgun weaponry exclusively.

This led to the release of the Slayer range of rail guns, which are significantly better than those in the hands of the military, however the slayer weapons come at a price. They are as expensive as they are good, well beyond the price range of the regular military, although some Special Forces units can stretch their budgets far enough to buy slayer weapons.

The slayer weapons are a lot more complex than other rail guns. In their inactive form they are sleek and compact aerodynamic shapes with smooth surfaces that would look more at home as part of an aircraft. When activated the casing opens up and the weapon reconfigures to its operational format. The parts do not even remain in physical contact with each other, instead they are held in magnetic fields, this means that the weapons smart control systems can adjust the configuration for maximum accuracy and hitting power. These weapons need a LAI to control them due to their complexity and have sonic and laser range finders as additional senses, as well as voice recognition tied to the owner.

The heavy amount of electro magnetic fields involved in the operation of the weapon can be a drawback, as the weapon can be prone to malfunction in areas where there are strong

magnetic fields. Not just your naturally occurring fields, we are talking serious industrial strength electro-magnets, plasma containment fields and other top end technology.

The internal power supply cannot keep the weapon in active configuration indefinitely; they are only good for about an hour of activity before they need a change of energy cell or a recharge.

Smithfield Hand Slayer

The Hand Slayer is the smallest Rail weapon currently on the market, although its price does put it out of the reach of most people and they remain rather rare. The weapon is slightly larger than a CS-44 "Enforcer" but still small enough to be worn in a holster on the thigh or in a shoulder rig, although it will have to be either a Smithfield shoulder rig or a modified one from another manufacturer. The Smithfield hand slayer custom shoulder holster costs a mere 850Tn.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Smithfield	Rail heavy	15mm	20/40/80	+2	2	20N	R	87,500Tn
Hand Slayer	auto-pistol							

Smithfield Slayer

This was the first of the Slayer range to enter full scale production and is the most commonly seen of the range. Because it has been in circulation for longer than the other weapons the price has been reduced a little to keep sales of the weapon going. The slayer is designed mainly for use two handed, although there is a modified version which is balanced for single handed use, the Slayer-Woo. The fore-grip is below the barrel while the pistol grip is just behind the breach. The whole weapon is quite large, easily equal in size to the other heavy sub-machine guns on the market.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Smithfield	Heavy	10mm	30/60/120	+2	4 or	60N	R	187,500Tn
Slayer	Rail				5/1-			
	SMG				5/30			

Smithfield Slayer-Woo

This is a version of the normal slayer, modified and balanced for use one handed, although this does require the user to be unusually strong. The pistol grip has been moved forward to alter the centre of balance and the barrel length has had to be reduced slightly to compensate, which has led to a slight reduction in range. The name comes from a movie director of the previous century who made a certain style of two weapon combat popular in his movies.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Smithfield	Heavy	10mm	25/50/100	+2	4 or	60N	R	192,500Tn
Slayer-Woo	Rail SMG				5/1-5/30			

* The Slayer-Woo requires a Strength of eight to use one handed, those with a lower strength can only fire the weapon in single shot mode.

Smithfield Battle Slayer

This is a Rail battle rifle, intended for full scale military combat. It features a bull pup design to make firing from the hip more practical but still has the capability of having scopes mounted for increased accuracy when firing at range. The Battle Slayer is less common than the normal slayer but is more common than the other Slayer rifles.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Smithfield	Battle	9mm	50/100/250	+2	4 or	60N	R	227,500Tn
Battle	Rail rifle				4/1-5/			
Slayer	- heavy				30			

Smithfield Reaper

This is the 'big gun' of the slayer range, a full scale heavy rail machine gun intended for fire support for a whole squad of infantry. They have only been produced in very

limited numbers and their use is monitored very closely by the NEG authorities. The weapon can be fired in one of two ways. When set up on the ground, it rests on its own magnetic field, which acts as a bi or tripod for the weapon and giving it incredible stability. Alternatively it can be fired from the hip by the use of the Reaper harness, however this normally requires the user to be in power armour to handle the strain of the weapon. Ammo is in the form of a side mounted cassette, which holds enough rounds to keep the weapon in action for a reasonable amount of time. The name comes from its effectiveness against massed infantry, where it will cut through them like a scythe through grass. The Reaper harness rig only costs another 12,500Tn but does include additional power cells, extending its active life to 2.5 hours.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Smithfield	Rail	10mm	125/600/	+2	8/1-10/	600	R	497,500Tn
Reaper	HMG		1500		100			

Smithfield Killer

The killer is the last of the Slayer range, being a huge and powerful anti-material sniper rifle. This weapon is powerful enough to threaten light vehicles, although its primary purpose is against command targets in power armour. Its use against un-armoured infantry tends to leave little of the body left for identification, as the impact causes such a shock wave through the body that much of the flesh is ripped apart. It is a big rifle, nearly four feet long and somewhat heavy, which does limit its usefulness. It also features the same magnetic field stabilization as the reaper, giving it an effective instant bi-pod when lying prone.

WEAPON	TYPE	CAL	RNG (yd)	DMG	SHT	RNDS	LGL	COST
Smithfield	Rail AM	15mm	150/750/	+4	1	15	R	677,500Tn
Killer	sniper rifle		1500					

Story Guide Notes

Just some thoughts as to what roles these weapons might play in actual game play.

Stallag

These are cheap and nasty weapons, suitable for players running on really tight budgets or for equipping street gangs and cultists. They are so commonly available that they can be given to the player's enemies without causing a logistical trail that will otherwise interfere with game play.

Atlantis I.G. Pro-T

This range is obviously intended for the professional criminal market, whether that's the players themselves or their opposition. Will be most significant in investigative games where the lack of fingerprints and other clues will have a major effect. They may also be useful as backup weapons for units of military characters, due to their reliability in hostile conditions. The price range should put them within the reach of most player characters, so they should see plenty of use.

Bling Bang

These guns are as much about the humour as anything else. While they are respectable weapons, they are not really that practical. However players who love big and shiny guns will instantly love them. As a way of getting players to waste a lot of money, they may prove useful. Or possibly they might be the prize if a particularly ostentatious 'bad guy' is using one. Definitely a range for the story guide to have fun with.

Smithfield Slayer

These are intended to be scary elite weapons, the sort of thing to throw against the players when you really want to hurt them. They should be well beyond the price range of most player characters but if they are not, then they will be a major drain on the players resources. These weapons are good but probably not as good as the price would suggest. Not to be thrown around lightly, as once they fall into the players hands, they will make good use of them.

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We will need a brief synopsis of your intended article, no more than one page long. Also include a paragraph or two of your actual writing style, so we can see whether you have what it takes and any samples of previously published work. If we like what we see, we will commission a first draft from you and you will be on your way to becoming a Mongoose contributing writer. And every article we publish will be paid for...which is nice.

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Please ensure that final submissions are no longer than around 5'000 words. We have had several recent submissions that have had to be broken down into many sections and we are not comfortable doing this too often.

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