



Signs & Portents

WARGAMER

SNIPER!

Experimental Starship Troopers Rules

WOLF DAY AFTERNOON

*Oh no, it's the Funkey Groovey Gang!
GOMC-1 Battle Report inside!*

MONTY'S MODIFICATION MODULE

Things To Do With A King Tanker

Plus... Origins of the Mongoose, more Scenic Mayhem, Dilgar vs. Brakiri ACTA scenario, Exosuits tactical guide and lots, lots more!

S&P Wargamer 34

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Wotcher!

I was somewhat stuck for an editorial this month, so rather than simply rambling on incoherently for some one hundred and fifty words about nothing whatsoever as usual I thought I'd give the topic some Serious Thought.

So, all day yesterday I charged my brain with coming up with something enlightening to share with the readers of Signs & Portents Wargamer. I thought and thought, going through highly complex brain processes and downed a whole pot of Really Strong Black Coffee. Neurons churned, brain cells flowed with power under the pressure. Finally, I came to a conclusion so startling that I knew that the world would be forever changed at my revelation. I knew the answer – the ultimate answer, to everything! Contented, I went to sleep happy, ready to share my vital revelation with the world the next day.

Unfortunately, by the time I woke up in the morning, I'd completely forgotten it all.

Don't you just hate it when that happens?

MATT

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The third instalment of our 'Battles of the Dilgar War' series for *A Call To Arms* focuses on the conflict between the warlike Dilgar and the peaceful Brakiri. Can a race of traders manage to fight on two fronts simultaneously to become the heroes of the League of Non-Aligned Worlds before the Earth Alliance arrives on the scene...?

19 Target: Exosuits!

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Gather round, and Matthew Sprange will tell the tale of how all things came to be in the times of yore, nearly five years past. Learn ye well the tale of the Quintessential Fighter, the Slayer's Guide to Amazons, Judge Dredd and Babylon 5!

35 Monty's Modification Module

So, you've assembled your brand new King Tanker kit but you have a few bits left over. Don't throw them away! Darell C. Phillips has a solution for your extras - why not build yourself a tanker bug emerging from a tunnel network?

34 Scenic Mayhem

It seems that Darell has a surplus of surplus bits this month, as he makes use of the kit parts left over from last month's Scenic Mayhem article in order to make a whole load of interesting terrain features for the *Starship Troopers Miniatures Game* - anything from a Marauder base to a Steel Fortress!

52 Wolf Day Afternoon

Recently, Mongoose Hall had a very important visitor - Signs & Portents editor Matt Sharp! Naturally, I couldn't visit Mongoose Halls without taking the opportunity to take on the other other Mongoose Dreddhead (Nick Robinson) in a battle of *Gangs of Mega-City One*. Will the Funkey Groovey Gang be able to defeat the forces of the Justice Department in a daring Bank Raid? You may be surprised at the result...

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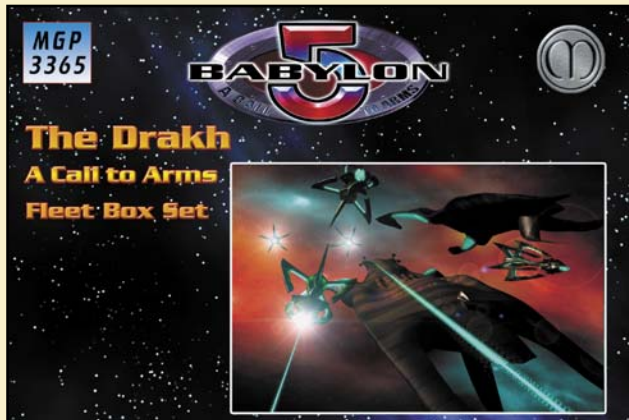
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EYE ON MONGOOSE

Coming This Month



Drakh Fleet Box

Eager to reclaim their place in the galaxy and eventually takeover the domains once held by the Shadows, the Drakh are the new face of evil in the universe of Babylon 5. With access to great technologies gleaned directly from the Shadows and honed to the Drakh's own ends, they form a potent threat to the stability of the ISA. It can only be a matter of time before the powerful fleets of the Drakh rage across interstellar space.

This box set contains:

- 1 x Mothership
- 4 x Light Cruisers
- 3 x Cruisers
- 6 x Light Raiders
- 6 x Heavy Raiders



Drakh Carrier

Together with the Drakh Mothership and Poseidon Supercarrier, this is one of the largest models we have done for A Call to Arms to date!

Often mistaken for a mothership by fleets who have never faced the Drakh before, the carrier is actually somewhat smaller and is used when a mothership would otherwise be considered at risk. Four raiders or scouts can be kept within its cavernous hangers and many others will usually be attached to form a task force that jumps into realspace alongside the carrier. Unlike the carriers of other races, this Drakh vessel is designed to be a battleship that can also carry smaller craft, rather than a specialised ship to carry auxiliary craft. As such, its firepower is impressive and the carrier can easily stand toe-to-toe with similar-sized warships, while gaining the benefit from any raiders carried within.



Drakh Cruiser



Drakh Mothership

Drakh Light
Cruiser

Drakh Scouts

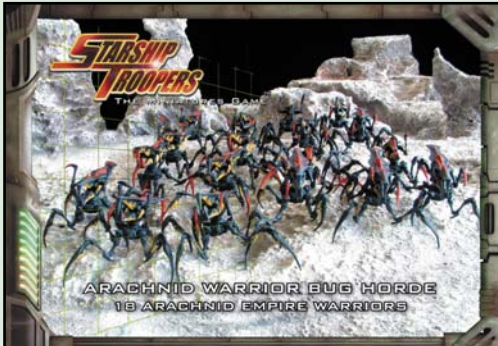
A solid warship, showcasing the finest technology the Drakh have developed from their Shadow sources, the cruiser can be a frightening opponent. Its heavy neutron laser is powerful enough to match the beam weapons of any other race while its reinforced gravitic energy grid can often make it appear invulnerable unless an enemy employs its heaviest weapons first. The Drakh are well aware of the cruiser's potential for subterfuge in this manner and will often seek the surrender of enemy fleets who have never engaged the Drakh before.

Generally recognised as the largest ship in space since the disappearance of the Shadow and Vorlon planet-killing craft, the Drakh mothership is capable of being used as a frontline battleship, advanced carrier or a forward base of operations in hostile space. Able to withstand incredible amounts of damage and with the most advanced gravitic energy grid array found on any Drakh vessel, only the most powerful weapons will have an appreciable effect on the mothership. The Drakh will often send a mothership into the heart of any battle, where its mass and weapon arrays will tear apart the greatest threats the enemy can deploy but they will rarely allow one to be destroyed, preferring to withdraw to repair a heavily damaged mothership before launching another attack at a later date. In addition to its formidable weaponry, a mothership will also usually have a full complement of raiders within their immense hangers, thus forming a fleet unto themselves.

A more traditional warship when compared to the fast destroyer, the light cruiser is a more common sight, leaving the Drakh to rely on their raiders for manoeuvrability within their battle line. In common with all Drakh capital ships, the light cruiser is extremely survivable, thanks to its toughened hull and gravitic energy grid. All round pulse cannons are mated to a heavy neutron laser that is capable of slicing through the best warships of other races.

The smallest Drakh capital ship, scouts are used to watch the enemies of the Drakh, quietly slipping away before patrols can track down their exact location. Their stealth capabilities match those of many Minbari vessels and even if one is cornered by an enemy squadron, the presence of a gravitic energy grid in so small a ship often comes as a surprise. The one weakness of the scout is its lack of jump engines, making it reliant on other Drakh vessels to either carry it within their hulls or else form a jump point.

This pack contains 3 Drakh Scouts.



Warrior Bug Mega-Swarm



Skinnie Guards



Skinnie General & Elite Guards

Also this month, look out for the stunning new Overseer Bug. Mounted on a specially designed unique metal stand, the Overseer provides a fantastic alternative to the Brain Bug for Arachnid players!

Looking to overload your Skinnie and Mobile Infantry opponents by sheer weight of numbers? Then look no further than the Warrior Bug Mega-Swarm box set! Containing 18 warrior bugs, this box set serves as either a great way to start a new Arachnid or seriously bolster the fighting strength of a new one.

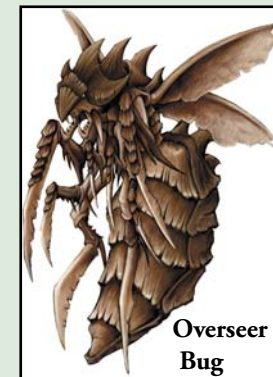
Whether you want to add a heavy tunnelling contingent to your force or overwhelm any enemy on the surface, you cannot do better than the Mega-Swarm box set!

Many tribal leaders create an inner cadre of warriors, troops fanatically loyal to him and rewarded by the very best weaponry and armour he can provide. They are often drawn from the ranks of professional soldiers but very rich tribal leaders will often expand the concept, creating an entire army of guard. In doing so, he will ensure that few enemies can match his troops one-to-one, as his guard will be deployed in heavy armour that will shrug off most hits and be armed with weapons that can even blast apart armoured vehicles. The prestige such an army gains him is without match.

This box set contains 8 Skinnie Guards, complete with weapon options.

Born into the highest orders of Skinnie society, the general usually arises from tribes who have grown fabulously wealthy from an iron grip held on their local resources, be they precious minerals, vast herds of livestock or huge swathes of industrial developments. Trained from birth to lead, the general has a finely tuned military mind, possessing a military genius that is almost unmatched within the Hegemony. Rising through the ranks of the professional soldiery, he is wise in the ways of battle and leads forces well-equipped from the riches of the tribe.

This box set contains 1 Skinnie General and 7 Elite Guards

Overseer
Bug



Vorlons

Every government in the galaxy both fears and respects the Vorlons and keeps extensive files monitoring their activities – however, very little is actually within those files. What is clear is that they are a very ancient race, secretive in their motives and ambitions, and possessing technologies far in excess of anyone else in the galaxy. They are not merely centuries ahead of other races, but millennia. Before Ambassador Kosh arrived on Babylon 5 in 2257, no race had any contact with the Vorlon Empire though it is rumoured that they have had ties with the Minbari far in the past.



Centauri Royal Guard

The Royal Guard serve the Emperor of the Centauri Republic in many different ways, acting in any role from bodyguard to elite trooper on the front lines of battle to an expedient assassination in the dark if such is the Emperor's will. The temperament of these finest members of Republic largely depends on the personality of the Emperor during their service, though certain facets of their training and skills have remained the same for generations. Since the glorious days of the old Republic, when the Centauri stretched forth their hand and saw it close around a hundred star systems, the Royal Guard have been the proud arm supporting that grasp.

This box set contains 8 Centauri Royal Guard and Nobles.



EarthForce Personnel

Ready to place themselves in harm's way to protect civilians and the ideals of the Alliance, this selection of EarthForce personnel are perfect for use with the Babylon 5 RPG.

Sporting a range of officers and soldiers, from bridge crew to GROPOS grunts, this box set continues the range of collectible Babylon 5 miniatures from Mongoose Publishing.

SNIPER!

EXPERIMENTAL RULES FOR SNIPERS IN STARSHIP TROOPERS

Matthew Sprange

There is something seriously cool about snipers. We read about them, we watch films about them. Some very weird people dream of being them (my brother springs to mind here). Is it the discipline required to hunt their prey, the sneakiness of one man with the ability to change history, or just the fact they have some seriously cool guns?

Whatever. A lot of people have been asking for some 'proper' rules for snipers in Starship Troopers. Though we already have the Morita Long in squads, a soldier armed with a sniper rifle does not a sniper make. Though I would be hesitant ordering one man out alone when there are bugs prowling the battlefield, it is clear this is not a view shared by many. So, here we present some rules for snipers in the game.

These rules are not tournament legal but we would very much like you to try them out, then swing by our forums and let us know how you got on. We'll make any recommended changes and then, maybe a little way down the line, make these rules official!



THE MOBILE INFANTRY

Dedicated snipers have existed in the Mobile Infantry since its formation, though their use fell out of favour during the first stages of the Arachnid War. A single man able to place a bullet where an entire squad might fail has always had an appeal to SICON and Mobile Infantry snipers have seen plenty of action

against rogue colony leaders and minor alien races. Arachnids are more problematic for the dedicated sniper, as they have a superb ability to root out hidden sniper nests before an effective attack can be launched. New weapons and technology have been made available to snipers, however, and some platoons (especially the Pathfinders) are once again beginning to deploy them in active service.

COMMAND ASSETS

Snipers are Command Assets, with their availability dependant on the Priority Level of your force.

POWER SUIT PLATOONS

Priority Level 1 – up to one Cap Sniper for 50 points
 Priority Level 2 – up to two Cap Snipers for 50 points per model
 Priority Level 3 – up to three Cap Snipers for 50 points per model

PATHFINDER PLATOONS

Priority Level 1 – up to two Pathfinder Sniper for 60 points per model
 Priority Level 2 – up to three Pathfinder Snipers for 60 points per model
 Priority Level 3 – up to four Pathfinder Snipers for 60 points per model

LIGHT ARMOUR PLATOONS

Priority Level 2 – up to one Light Armour Sniper for 35 points
 Priority Level 3 – up to two Light Armour Snipers for 35 points per model



SKINNIES

Time to annoy all the Skinnie players out there now! We have given a lot of thought to providing rules for snipers or their equivalent in Skinnie armies but we hit a few problems.

First off, there is the culture of the Skinnies and the organisation of their armies. We debated about allowing a Raiders unit to separate and act as snipers instead of using the Ambush rule but this goes against the nature of the Raiders unit (who are basically upgraded militia – snipers need to be something a little more special). Speculating further, a sniper in a Skinnie army should either be a variant soldier or a completely new troop type.

The second problem was lack of an appropriate model. Constrictor rifles, or a variant thereof, is just not going to cut it as a sniper's weapon. An elongated boneshard rifle, however, has some serious potential. Lose a dice, extend the range, give it the Accurate trait, and you have a truly dangerous weapon.

So, what we are going to do is give the MI players a whirl with these rules and see how they get on. If snipers prove popular in Starship Troopers, you can expect to see a new Skinnie troop type coming your way in the near future...

SNIPER

Type	Value	Size	Move	Close Combat	Target	Save	Kill	Traits
Cap Sniper	50	1	4"	D6	4+	4+	7+	Independent Jump/12"
Light Armour Sniper	35	1	4"	D6-1	3+	6+	5+	Independent
Pathfinder Sniper	60	1	4"	D6+1	4+	4+/6+	7+	Independent Jump/12"

Unit Size: A Sniper is an independent model.

Weapons and Equipment: Each Sniper is equipped with a Morita Long sniper rifle with underslung G/L and Lizard Line. Pathfinder Snipers are also equipped with an M-1A6 Power Suit.

SPECIAL RULES

Snipers are subject to the following rules.

Ambush: A Sniper may be concealed in an area of terrain outside the enemy's deployment zone before the game begins. Write down the precise location of the Sniper before any models are deployed on the table. You can reveal the ambush by placing the Sniper on the table at any time. However, the Sniper must be revealed by the end of the Air Phase in turn three or be counted as destroyed.

Camouflage: Whenever taking advantage of cover, a Sniper gains an additional +1 bonus to its armour save.

Prioritise Targets: A Sniper may always attack the target model at the centre of a fire zone, rather than the closest model.

OPTIONS

Snipers may purchase the following options.

Go Career: One Sniper in the platoon may be given the rank of Sergeant for +15 points. The Sniper gains a 6+ dodge save (a Pathfinder Sniper's dodge save goes to 5+) and may be bought heroic traits up to a total value of +25 points.

Weapon Options: A Sniper may be equipped with Frag Grenades for +5 points. A Sniper may also be equipped with Bugshot Long rounds for +10 points.

Bugshot Long Rounds: A development of the Bugshot grenade used by underslung grenade launchers, this heavy shell is loaded separately into the breach of a Morita Long. Though it loses the benefits of semi-automatic fire, greatly reducing a sniper's rate of fire, it is a far more powerful round, fully capable of doing serious damage to the largest Arachnid and guaranteeing a kill against smaller targets. A model armed with Bugshot Long Rounds may choose to either fire its Morita Long normally or use the new profile below for the Bugshot Long.

Name	Range	Damage	Type	Traits
Morita Long w/Bugshot Long	30"	D6+2	Pack	Accurate Ready



Monty's Offer of the Month

Assault on Brakos

This month Monty has actually read S&P and spotted the excellent Assault on Brakos article. He liked it so much he wanted more of you to play it out, so this month we are offering both the Dilgar and Brakiri fleet boxes for the fantastic price of \$150.00/\$85.00 post free! Just print out the coupon and send it in!



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OFFER OF THE MONTH

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Assault on Brakos

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Assault on Brakos

The Battles of the Dilgar War, Part III

Greg Smith

'War is good for business'

Brakiri saying

'Peace is good for business'

Vree maxim

The Brakiri were as complacent about the Dilgar as the humans were about the Minbari thirty years later – and the results were just as disastrous. The Dilgar conquests did not concern them until the Abbai were attacked. The Brakiri Syndicrat Council sent ships to relieve the siege of Abba, confident that the Dilgar could not withstand their forces. Even when the Dilgar destroyed those ships, the Brakiri corporations continued their infighting, assured of their impregnability.

Dilgar forces entered the Tirrith system in January 2231 and claimed Abbai and Drazi facilities as 'spoils of war.' The Vree, Narn and Brakiri forces present did not stop them, not wishing to compromise the neutrality of the resource-rich star system. As more Dilgar ships arrived daily, the Narn contingent departed, and the Vree and Brakiri could only concede when the Dilgar declared the system as their own.



By the time the 21 members of the Syndicrat Council finally realised that the Dilgar were on their doorstep, they had no time to react. The miners and traders returning from Tirrith were followed by a Dilgar fleet that promptly attacked the forces defending Comac IV. The Brakiri immediately dispatched a fleet from Brakos to defend their colony.

Only after the bulk of their forces were sent from their homeworld did the Syndicrat Council discover that a second Dilgar force had defeated their forces at

Ekalta in a surprise strike. That fleet, they learned, was now in hyperspace – heading for Brakos.

The Fleets

Both players must select a fleet, as described below. Then they must each split their fleets into two and secretly note down which ships will fight at Comac and at Brakos.

Dilgar Imperium Fleet: The Dilgar ships that attacked Comac intended to seize

Brakiri Syndicracy Fleet (2231) Fleet

Even in 2231, the Brakiri fleet was a powerful one. The pre-eminence of the Pri-Wakat and Im-Rehsa corporations meant that the Syndicracy had developed or traded for advanced starship technologies. Their Avioki-class cruisers were among the largest ships fielded by the younger races, their Falkosi-fighters were the fastest and they utilised gravitic technology for both propulsion and weaponry.

In some ways their technology exceeded their experience. Early Avioki designs had only forward-mounted weapons and so were easily overwhelmed by fighters and smaller craft. By the time the Dilgar attacked, Avioki and Batrado captains had learned to requisition additional graviton pulsars to mount on their vulnerable flanks – a modification that would not be integrated into standard Avioki designs for almost 20 years.

The Syndicracy military also lacked a dedicated carrier and found they could not withstand the hordes of fighters fielded by the Dilgar. In a matter of months, a dozen Ikorta-class light cruisers were modified to carry fighters rather than troops – a remarkable achievement, given the sluggish speed at which Brakiri military bureaucracy usually operates.

Priority Level: Patrol

Breaching Pod Wing (4 flights)

Falkosi Wing (4 flights)

Priority Level: Skirmish

Ikorta-class light assault cruiser

Priority Level: Raid

Batrado-class armed transport

Priority Level: Battle

Avioki-class heavy cruiser

Space Stations

Alykent Guardpost



the mineral-rich planet and so included many assault ships among their number. The force that had Brakos in its sights comprised faster ships that surprised the defenders at Ekalta before heading for the Brakiri homeworld. The Dilgar fleet consists of ten Fleet Allocation Points chosen at Priority Level: Battle. At least three Fleet Allocation Points of ships must be used in the force selected for Comac.

Brakiri Syndicracy Fleet: The Brakiri sent the bulk of their fleet to Comac – a move that almost cost them their homeworld. The fleet consists of seven Fleet Allocation Points at Priority Level: Battle, chosen from the Brakiri Syndicracy (2231) Fleet List (see below). A single Alykent Guardpost may be chosen but it must be allocated to the portion of the fleet assigned to Brakos. A minimum of three Fleet Allocation Points worth of ships must be assigned to the fleet sent to Comac.

Scenario One: The Invasion of Comac IV

Approximate date: January 30th 2231

The Dilgar forces were intent on capturing the mines on Comac for the minerals that would fuel their war machine. They sent an invasion fleet that

was more than capable of overcoming the Brakiri defences but they did not expect the Brakiri to dispatch such a large fleet against them. However, the Brakiri ships had barely engaged the invaders when the retreat order was given and the Brakiri withdrew to defend their homeworld.

Historical note: The Brakiri forces left Comac IV to the less-than-tender mercies of the Dilgar. Warmaster Jha'Dur was placed in charge of the colony and the Brakiri miners were worked to death and replaced by the unskilled populace. Any resistance was met with genocidal purges and, before the Dilgar retreated in 2232, they bombed the remaining cities from orbit.

Brakiri Syndicracy Fleet: In defence of Comac, the Brakiri have one Batrado armed transport, four patrol boats and two Alanti defence satellites, purchased from the Abbai. The Brakiri fleet selected to fight at Comac will arrive in the first turn.

Dilgar Imperium Fleet: This is simply the fleet chosen to attack Comac.

Pre-Battle Preparation: A single Earth-type planet is placed on the battlefield, as shown on the map. A jump gate is placed 6" from the far table-edge. Further stellar debris is randomly placed, but results that indicate another planet or moon are re-

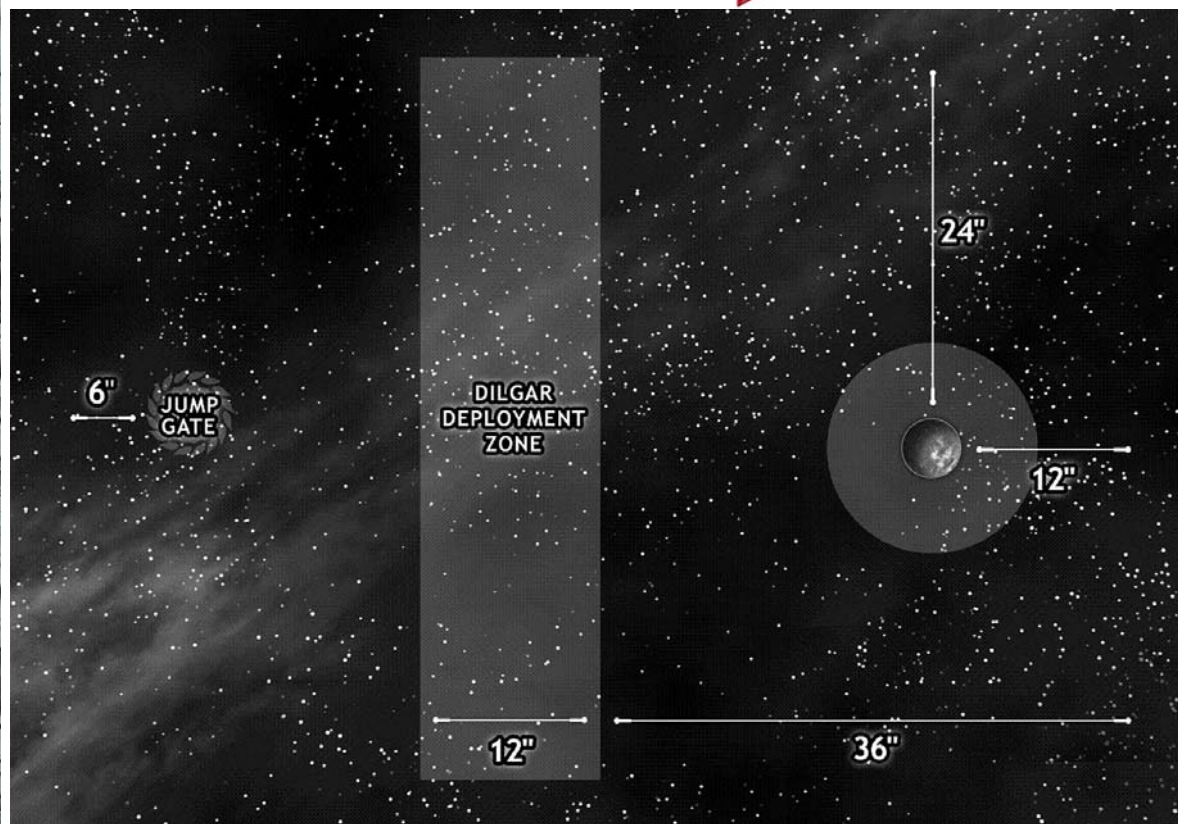
rolled. The Brakiri defenders – the single Batrado, the patrol boats, and orbital satellites – are deployed first, within the gravity well of the planet. The Dilgar forces are placed next, in the deployment zone indicated on the map. The main Brakiri fleet will enter through the jump gate on turn one. Initiative is determined normally.

Scenario Rules: This scenario uses the rules for Planetary Assaults. The Brakiri defenders have 20 Emplacements and 16 Troops.

At the start of turn five, the Brakiri fleet will be given the retreat order. After this, it is up to the Brakiri player whether he wishes to withdraw his ships to defend Brakos or continue fighting for Comac. His ships may withdraw by opening jump points or via the jump gate. A note should be kept of the turn on which each ship exited the table using their jump point or the jump gate, as their arrival in Scenario 2 will depend upon this. The condition of each ship (Damage and Crew points lost and so on.) should also be recorded for the next battle.

Game Length: Until a victory condition is met.

Victory and Defeat: Should the Dilgar successfully capture the planet, by eliminating all troops and emplacements,



Map One: The Invasion of Comac IV

they will be the victors of this battle. The Brakiri player will win if he prevents the Dilgar from achieving his goal. However it is victory or defeat at Brakos that is the important outcome...

Scenario Two: The Battle for Brakos

Approximate Date: 10th February 2231

Brakiri overconfidence meant that their homeworld was ripe for the taking – only

a handful of Brakiri and Vree vessels protected it. The Dilgar did not question their good fortune and launched their assault. However, before they could begin to pound the Brakiri capital with their orbital weapons, the Brakiri fleet emerged from hyperspace.

Historical Note: The Brakiri were able to drive the invaders back but the Dilgar did not leave. Like they had done at Abba, they encircled Brakos and continued to assault it from afar. The Brakiri were not

able to break out but they did prevent the Dilgar from ravaging their world. Even so, Brakos suffered constant bombardments that took years to recover from.

Brakiri Syndicracy Fleet: While the Syndicrat Council left Brakos without defence, the Brakiri player need not have done the same. In addition to the contingent selected to remain at Brakos, the Brakiri fleet includes two Ikorta light assault cruisers, three Vree Xaar patrol boats and four Abbai Alanti defence satellites. The Initiative for this combined fleet is +0.

The remainder of the Brakiri fleet from Scenario 1 will return during the course of the battle. These ships will not have restored any lost Damage or Crew points, however critical effects will be repaired (except vital systems). Any traits lost due to crippling will not be restored.

Dilgar Imperium Fleet: The Dilgar ships selected previously for this battle.

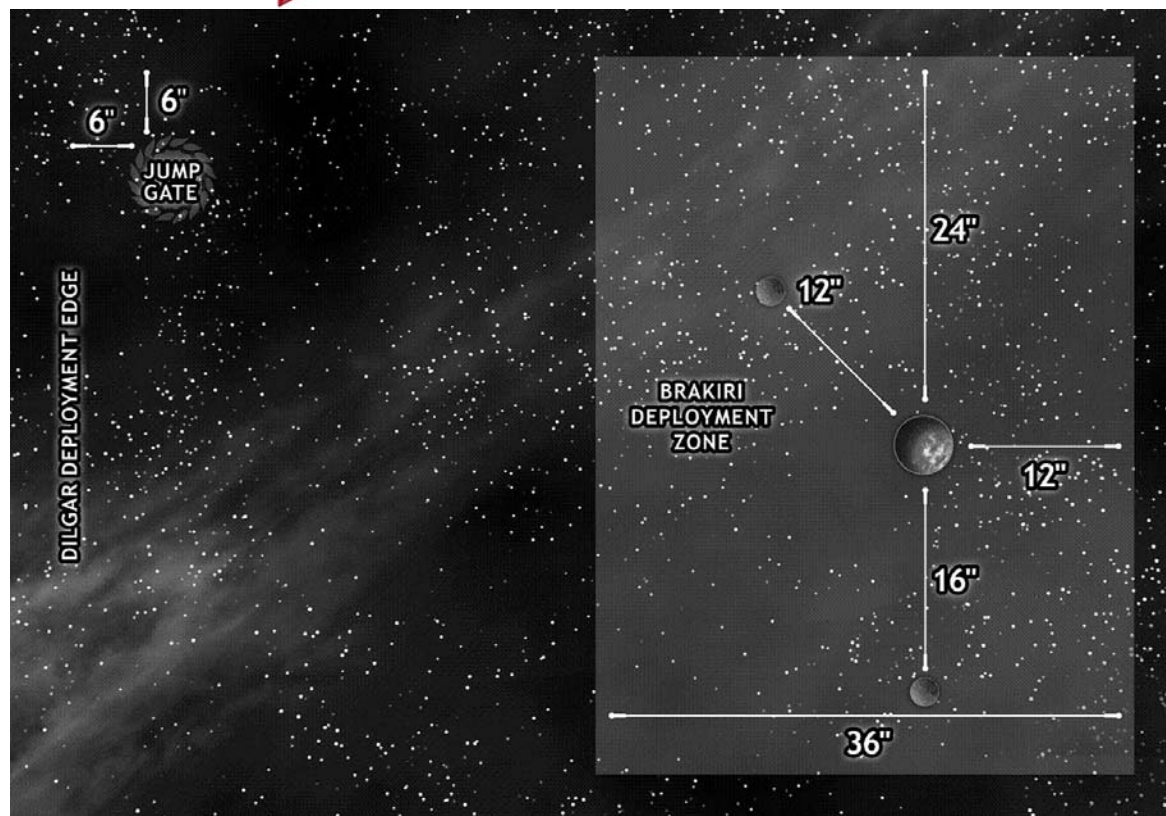
Pre-Battle Preparation: The battle takes place in proximity to Brakos. An Earth-type planet with two moons is placed as shown on the map. A jump gate counter is placed 6" from an opposite corner. No further stellar debris is used. The Brakiri

player deploys his fleet anywhere in the half of the board containing the planet. The Dilgar fleet will enter the table from the far edge in turn one. Initiative is determined normally.

Scenario Rules: The arrival of the Brakiri ships from the first scenario will depend on the turn that they exited the table using the jump gate or a jump point in that scenario. The turn that ships departed from the battlefield in Scenario 1 will be the same turn they arrive in this scenario. For example a ship activating its jump point to depart Comac in turn six and leaving the table in turn seven will be able to declare the Initiate Jump Point! special action in turn seven to arrive in turn eight in this battle. Any ship that was crippled or reduced to a skeleton crew will arrive two turns later than normal.

Game Length: Until a victory condition is met.

Victory and Defeat: The Brakiri will defend their homeworld at all cost, so this is a battle to the bitter end. The Brakiri must destroy all of the Dilgar ships to win. Should the Dilgar defeat all of the Brakiri defenders before reinforcements arrive, they will win - as any ships



Map Two: The Battle for Brakos

emerging from the jump gate will be sitting ducks for the waiting Dilgar fleet. Otherwise, the Dilgar achieve victory by destroying all of the Brakiri ships.

Overall Victory and Defeat

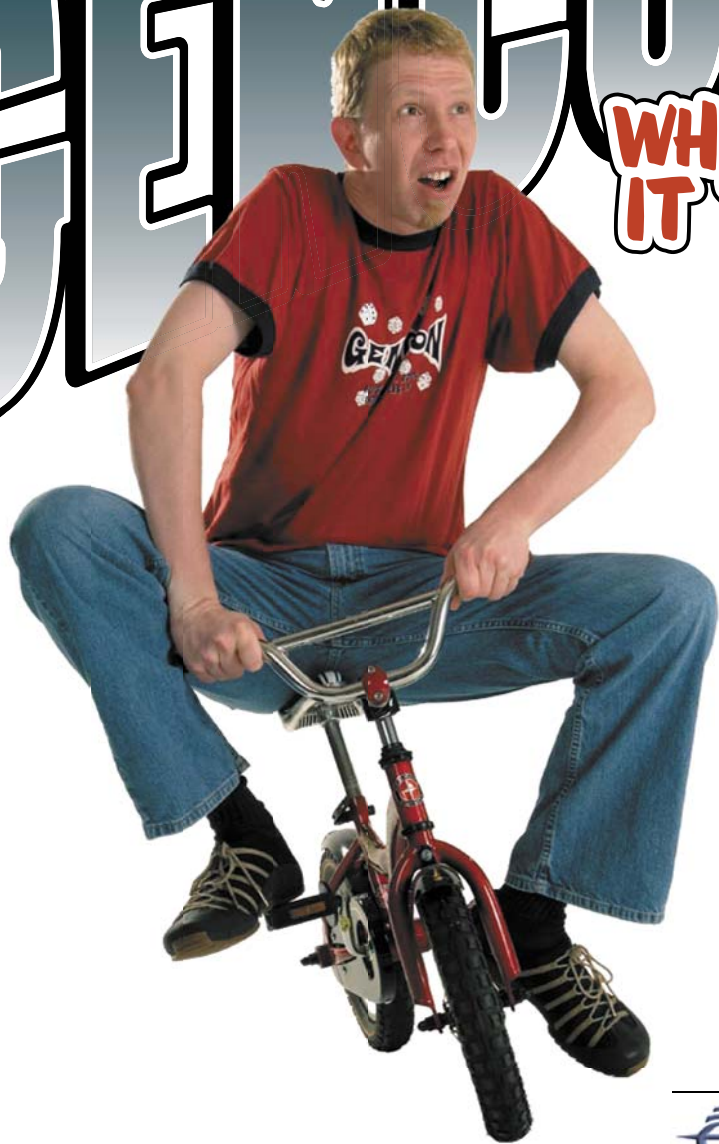
There can be no draw in the battle for a race's home planet, only triumphant victory or crushing defeat. The Brakiri have either saved their world or the Dilgar

will have annihilated it. The winner of Scenario 2 is the overall winner of this game, however the results of the first conflict are important. If the Dilgar won both battles, they can claim a major victory and the Brakiri people will be slaughtered to the verge of extinction. A Brakiri double victory will mean that the Dilgar onslaught will have been stopped in its tracks and the Brakiri, not the Earth Alliance, will be hailed as the saviours of the league.



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TARGET: EXOSUITS!

BEATING THE MOBILE INFANTRY AT THEIR OWN GAME

MATTHEW SPRANCE

Well, it seems as if every MI player is walking around at the moment with a grin larger than that of the Cheshire Cat's. Why? They finally have their Exosuits to play with. All over the world, bug players are hugging their poor, abused warrior bugs, running to keep them safe from withering automatic fire. However, it does not have to be this way...

This article takes a look at the Exosuits and highlights the weaknesses in their design that you, as an Arachnid player, can take advantage of, as well as some truly devious tricks that can make the MI player think seriously about going back to using regular power suit troopers!



STUDY YOUR ENEMY

On the face of it, the Exosuit platoon is a fearsome beast. A full squad of 6 Cougar Exosuits, with no upgrades, can kick out 36 dice of D6+1, Piercing/1 hell every *turn* (and Grizzlies can double this to 72!). On top of that, they all get a dodge save, have 2 Hits (so even when you get

close, they can soak up the damage) and have a jump range greater than that of an entire turn's movement of a warrior bug. What price a bug army when facing this tidy little lot?

Well, it is not all plain sailing for the MI player, no matter how it appears on the other side of the table. That squad will be costing him 625 points – though it

will likely be floating around 660 points, even if he does not take any Firestorm upgrades, as there is no way an MI player will take such an expensive squad and not include a Corporal and a full suite of traits for the Sergeant. In addition, he must also take a Lieutenant, adding a minimum of 160 points on top of that (and likely 260 points with some decent traits – he will want his officer to be a walking god of battle).

That is 920 points, a truly significant portion of any army he chooses to field. Alternatively, you could field an awful lot of bugs for that many points. This is important – however dangerous Exosuits look, they cost a great deal of points and are much to risk when the shooting starts. You may only have to kill half a dozen models or so to earn enough Mission Points to win a game! Now, a wise MI player will take just one or two small Exosuit squads and back them up with a Marauder or power suit platoon to construct a balanced force. However, you will find that MI players tend to have really, really tiny brains (!), and so you can expect a prevalence of all Exosuit armies for a short while to come. This means you will be facing a lot of enemies that have no self-balance and so, once you figure out how to beat them, will simply not be competitive. After a while, even the tiny-brained MI will work this out and then you'll be back to the old slog of fighting hardened forces but, for now, you can have it all your own way.

Before we move on to what you can actually do to start beating down this threat, let us take a look at the Exosuit stat line and work out exactly what we need to give respect to. First off is a Move of 6". Now, this would be faintly annoying, as it allows troopers to keep pace with most of your bugs but it usually won't be a factor as the MI player will be more enamoured

with his 15" jump. You should be okay with this too. If he is jumping, he won't be firing as often, effectively halving his firepower at a stroke.

D10 for a Close Combat score is respectable but unless you are playing against the kind of player who regularly charges in with M8 Marauders, you won't need to worry about it. The same goes for the Piercing/2 trait. MI players like weapons that create big bangs and bright flashes.

Target 5+ is better than a power-suited trooper but you already know how squishy they are. There are few bugs in your force that this will cause a problem to. What is more important are their Saves. A 3+ armour save will see a lot of your blows skidding off an Exosuit and even when a save is failed, the 2 Hits can keep a trooper going (though reducing him to one action, remember – a crippled Exosuit is better for you than a fully functioning one, as it forces the MI player to choose between moving away from your approaching forces or firing at them). What you want to focus on is the 8+ Kill. Now, he does have a 6+ dodge to annoy you when you think you have



earned a 'certain' kill (which is exactly why we put it in there!) but it is nothing he can rely on. Best of all, if you hit that Kill score (which is not really a problem for many of your bugs – even firefries can do it!), you completely avoid the problems caused by both the armour save and the 2 Hits! This, then is what we need to focus on – getting Kills, not merely scratching their armour.

PLAYING TO YOUR ADVANTAGES

You will always outnumber an MI force (unless you are facing a truly humble Light Armour platoon!) but this becomes even more extreme when facing Exosuits. This means that you will a) be able to 'control' the battlefield, as you will have bugs standing on most of it and, b) your

will find you are playing a very forgiving force. You can lose 20 bugs in a single turn if you make a mistake, and it will not have a significant effect on your chances of winning. If the MI player loses just 2 models because he makes a mistake, he has just lost a large proportion of his overall firepower.

This does not mean you can be blasé about your forces – just because you *can* afford some losses does not mean you should go looking for them. So, keep fast-moving forces off the table as reserves until they are needed, put vital units underground, and keep everything on the table in or around cover until the final charge. This last point is important – even if it takes another turn to reach the enemy, use terrain. Start placing large numbers of warrior bugs out in the open and the MI player *will* make you pay for it.

BY THE BUG

So far, we have learned that Exosuits can dish out a great deal of firepower but cannot take much abuse in return, if you place the right kind of units against them. We have also learned that an MI player must not make any mistakes during a game if he has Exosuits, while you can take a more relaxed approach. And we know that use of cover as you approach is vital. Now it is time to look at some

specific tactics you can use to bring the Exosuit army to ruin...

PLASMA BUG

This is an obvious one. Put a plasma bug on the table, and MI players tend to develop a fixation with it. Now, an Exosuit squad will make short work of a plasma bug but they have to get relatively close to attack it – which means they will be running into the bulk of your army. If they try their usual retreating tactic, they will be moving away from the plasma bug and be running straight into its target zone. You can never be quite sure where a plasma blast will land but a 3" template covers a lot of ground and everything under it will suffer greatly – 2xD10+3, Multihit and Piercing/1. This means that you will wipe out an Exosuit simply by rolling 5 or more (a 60% chance on *each* dice, assuming he does not make his damnable dodge). Even if you fail that, so long as you don't roll a 1 on both dice (pretty unlikely) you will have already reduced his armour save to 4+ and that Multihit means you only need one attack to get through to take an Exosuit off the table. And you are getting two chances at this!



As a well-placed 3" template can cover a whole 6 man Exosuit squad, this is clearly an attractive option, especially as that plasma bug costs less than half the points of the squad. My recommendation? Always take at least one plasma bug and, in 2,000 point games, take two. I would say go for three, but only go this far if you are sure you have a balanced force that can keep marauding Exosuit squads away from your backline.

Oh, one more tip here – fed up of deploying a plasma bug, only for the MI to grab the first turn and destroy it before it launches so much as a burp of plasma? Keep it off the table as a reserve. Ordinarily, this means that you cannot fire the turn you bring it on but combine it with a brain bug – that Co-ordinate ability will give you the third action you need to shoot...

TANKER BUG

The prevailing theory here is that if you deploy a tanker bug out in the open against an Exosuit platoon, you will lose it in the first turn. However, statistically speaking, things do not work out that way. If your opponent uses Sixguns alone, he needs 72 shots, on average, to kill a single tanker. Even more for a thorny tanker. Now, as we have seen, a full Exosuit squad can do this in a single turn but that is a whole turn he must spend doing *nothing* else – doing nothing more than killing a 250 point unit with his 650+ point unit. That alone can buy you time to advance closer, setting up a trap that will surround and crush the squad.

He does, of course, also have access to Firestorms and Thermic Lances. Disregard the latter – true, they can cause some serious damage but if he is getting his squads that close to your forces, you are probably about to win the game anyway. Firestorms command some respect but they will not hit your Kill score and you have a 50% chance of just shrugging them off your armour anyway – just watch out for the ‘double hits’.

This all makes tankers a very viable option against Exosuits, especially as their attacks will on average, hit their Kill score. Any tanker species will do. The base model has that 12” spit, which can



be used to extend the reach of the tanker, and the thorny tanker has a better chance of shrugging off Sixgun and Firestorm attacks, while retaining the ability to react when close and use its Multihit trait even when it fails to reach the Kill score.

Special note here must be made to the king tanker. It ties up a lot of your points but (and I love this little fact) it is *completely* immune to Sixguns, while Firestorms will spend most of the game just bouncing off its carapace.

So, my recommendation is to take tankers, take as many as seems sensible (at least two, preferably three in a 2,000 point game), and do not place them in

tunnels. Put them front and centre, as far forward as possible. And use your brain bug’s Co-ordinate to get them moving even faster.

They will not win the game for you – tankers are simply too slow to catch Exosuits alone. You need to use them in concert with other bug species to surround and pin down the bouncing MI. However, you can be reasonably sure that tankers will survive a match against Exosuits. He just won’t have enough models to cause a serious threat.

BLISTER/BLASTER BUGS

The first thing to mention here is that you should only take these against Exosuits

if you are also taking enough warriors to effectively hide them until the time is right. Stick a unit of these in front of an Exosuit squad and you can kiss goodbye to them.

It is difficult to recommend blasters against Exosuits. They have the nice range and D6+1 is nothing to sniff at but the lack of Piercing and inability to hit the magical Kill score reduces their effectiveness. Keep them for hitting power suited and Light Armour troopers.

Blisters are worth a look if you think you can keep them safe, as they can hit that Kill score and have a range that is half-decent. However, there is a better choice here...

FIREFRIES

Ah yes, the much maligned firefries! Normally, you will be thinking twice about these as they are extremely susceptible to reaction fire. However, against an Exosuit force, you truly have the weight of numbers on your side and when the Sixguns open up, it makes little difference whether they are firing at warrior bugs or firefries.

In their favour, firefries have an effective 21" range with their flame attack when combined with a jump, and so can take great advantage of cover, popping out to wipe out an Exosuit squad completely.

While their attack only has a 30% chance of hitting that Kill score (and they are relying on pure luck to kill Exosuits with combined Target hits), they are *cheap*. For that 660 point Exosuit squad we have been talking about, you can go Priority Level 3 and take three units of ten firefries, and still have some change. That is 30 D10 attacks that you will have a reasonable chance of being able to deliver before the MI get a shot off. On average, that is 9 Kills you will get – 50% more than you actually need to get your points back!

My recommendation here is to seriously think about taking firefries instead of warrior bugs. They are only 5 points more, can move just as fast, will be more or less as survivable against Sixgun fire, and have a 9" attack that can be combined with a jump – and is utterly lethal to Exosuits. If you do not want to go the whole hog, think about two units of ten, each led underground by a burrower bug...

Against an Exosuit army, you cannot go wrong with firefries as part of a balanced force.

CONTROL BUG

Now, this is not a game winning tactic, so you should only try it when you are confident of winning anyway. However, it is cheap and perfect for rubbing salt

into the wound as you start to rack up victories!

Ten of these Independent bugs cost just 100 points – practically nothing. However, the chance to turn even just one Exosuit against his former mates has got to be worth it! The key is actually getting them close enough.

If you have controlled the battlefield from the start of the game, you may be able to slip control bugs close enough as part of a combined force of warriors, tankers and firefries – he just won't see them coming until it is too late. If the Exosuits are putting up a strong fight, your only realistic chance to do serious damage is to close range under cover, get into reaction range while remaining out of line of sight, and then jumping. Sounds tough but, at just 100 points, sounds like it might be worth a bash, eh? Well, you can swing things further in your favour...

100 points is what a single Exosuit costs and you will be getting ten chances to take one down. As Risk:Reward ratios go, this is pretty good. You can further trim the odds by gauging your approach to an Exosuit squad. Don't plough straight towards an Exosuit line – try to flank them so you can launch a flank attack. That way, even if you have to reveal yourself to reaction fire before you jump,



you may find you only suffer reaction fire from just one Exosuit. Now, the results of that will be horrific enough but think about this – the maximum number of control bugs a single Exosuit can destroy in a turn is six. Leaving four to make the actual attack.

Once you get into close combat with an Exosuit, you will find the Piercing/2 trait comes in handy to crack them open and, best of all, you only need one hit in order to turn them onto your side. Any control bugs that survive this mad rush can be considered a bonus, as they will have already earned their points!

Needless to say, the presence of a brain bug will help you enter reaction range, Ready and then jump in a single turn.

HOPPER BUGS

A good unit to use against Exosuits, as you can purchase 13 of them for the same points cost as a 6 man squad. They will die

easily to Sixgun fire but if you use Attack tactics and keep them off table as reserves, you will be able to enter the battlefield at a forward point and use their great speed to close range immediately. I rarely recommend suicide charges with hoppers but against Exosuits, it is acceptable, simply because you only need to kill a few troopers to start having a massive affect on the game.

Each hopper bug has a 40% chance of killing an Exosuit outright and when you have 13 against 6, you have a half reasonable chance of wiping them out. Even if you don't manage it, you might survive the Sixguns of the remaining troopers and then have another go with your own reactions...

My recommendation here, if you choose to include hoppers, is to take at least one unit of six, and use them as reserves. Bring them on the table only when you are sure you can get them all into close combat immediately.

BRAIN BUGS

I have already made a great deal of noise about the brain bug's Co-ordinate and I would usually recommend taking one. However, I would be tempted to keep it underground until victory seems assured as it *will* be a prime target for an Exosuit squad. MI players seem to make it a point of pride to destroy brain bugs...

That said, there are numerous psychic talents that make a brain bug a viable unit to keep on the table as well. Rupture is the obvious one, natch, but do not forget about Ego War. This does a very good job of pinning down an Exosuit squad while allowing your own units to close range safely. Do that in conjunction with a charging unit of control bugs, and you could find yourself in command of an entire Exosuit squad yourself!

There is More...

These are the main tactics I use when fighting against Exosuit armies and if you use just half of them, you should find things get a lot easier for you. However, do not close your mind to other possibilities – I would never recommend going into battle without a good number of warrior bugs which, in number, can do as much damage to Exosuits as any other bugs. They also work very well as ambushes if you find the MI player likes to bounce around a lot and even just one warrior bug can prove to be a serious distraction to the MI if it is in the right place.

So, regroup your bugs, re-write your army list and start proving to our local MI players just why it is that smart people play Arachnids!



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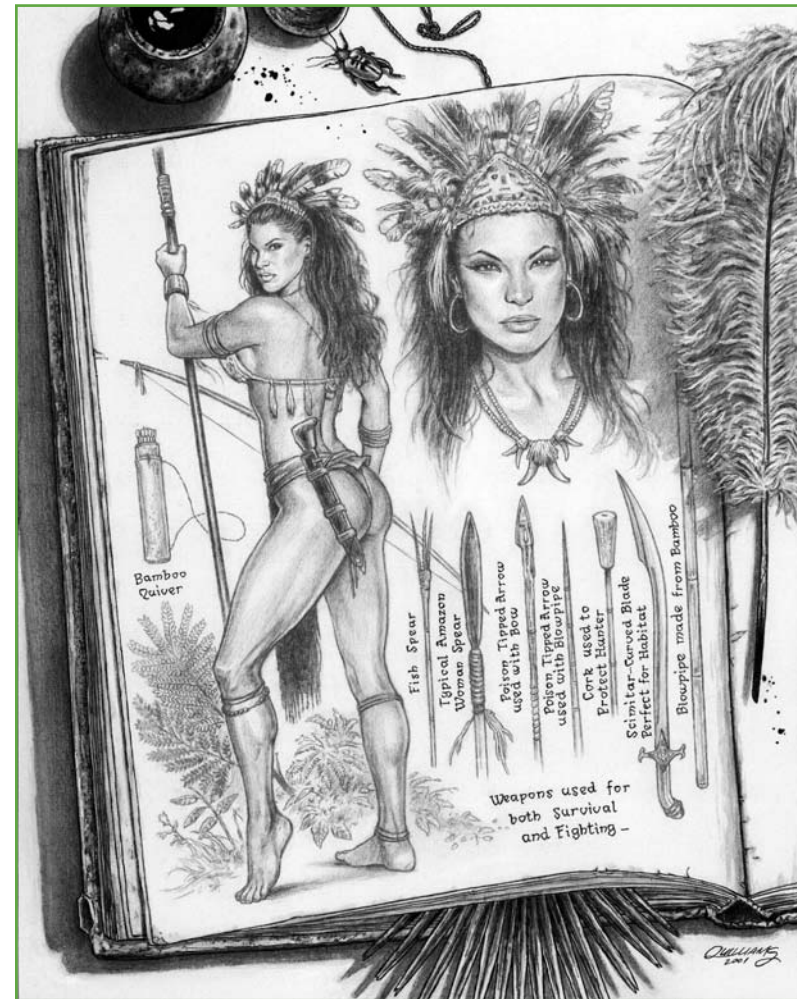
Continuing an Irregular Series of Articles on
the Birth of Mongoose, Part Two

Matthew Sprange

In the last article, we looked at the formation of Mongoose; the hectic run up to actually getting a business off the ground. This we succeeded in doing but were to rapidly discover that starting a business is actually a lot easier than keeping one going...

We had decided, before any money was actually committed, to have enough funds to print three books (the Slayer's Guides to Hobgoblins, Gnolls and Centaurs) without needing any money back from the first to fund future prints runs. This turned out to be a critical choice, as we could storm ahead and release three books, back to back, one per month. Why was this good? Because it kept us in the distributors' eyes. During this time of the D20 boom, if you had the attention of the distributors, nine tenths of the battle was won.

However, things were getting better. Hobgoblins sold in stunning numbers, wiping out the first print run and forcing us to do another. Gnolls and Centaurs quickly followed suit. On top of that, we had been budgeting for people to take the normal 30-day credit terms, and then add another 30 days just to annoy us. Fortunately, that turned out not to be the case, as Alex very quickly became adept at phoning people up each and every day when they owed us money. In the end, they got bored of his voice and started to write cheques.



Amazon Anatomy, by Chris Quilliams

What this meant was that a lot (relatively speaking) of money was coming in, and it was coming in on time. Both Alex and I quit our jobs and started to work on Mongoose full time – a decision, I still maintain, that was one of the best we ever made.

We had already planned to start going to the heady heights of 64 page books later in the year but the success of the Slayer's Guide and fast payment convinced us to push the plans forward. So it was that I started working on the next series of books, destined to be known as the Encyclopaedia Arcane.

A New Series

We could have simply done more Slayer's Guides but we wanted to expand and I fancied tackling another subject anyway. But what to do? Everyone else was still working on scenarios, and

we had monsters covered. Perhaps something for characters, I mused. After all, there were more players in the world than Games Masters. I hit upon the idea of writing variant magic systems for D20, either simple variations of spells in the Player's Handbook, or completely new rules. Encouraged with this thought, I decided we would do something a bit daring – Demonology, followed by Necromancy. Both sold extremely well (each clearing something like 7,000 copies in a month or two). The first book marked our first book with a spine (it felt like an achievement back then), while the second marked the end of our fifth month in business. Surely there was no stopping us?

Month six was not so good – at least in terms of creativity. Sales were as good as ever. With the Encyclopaedias rattling on, we



Amazon Centrefold, by Chris Quilliams

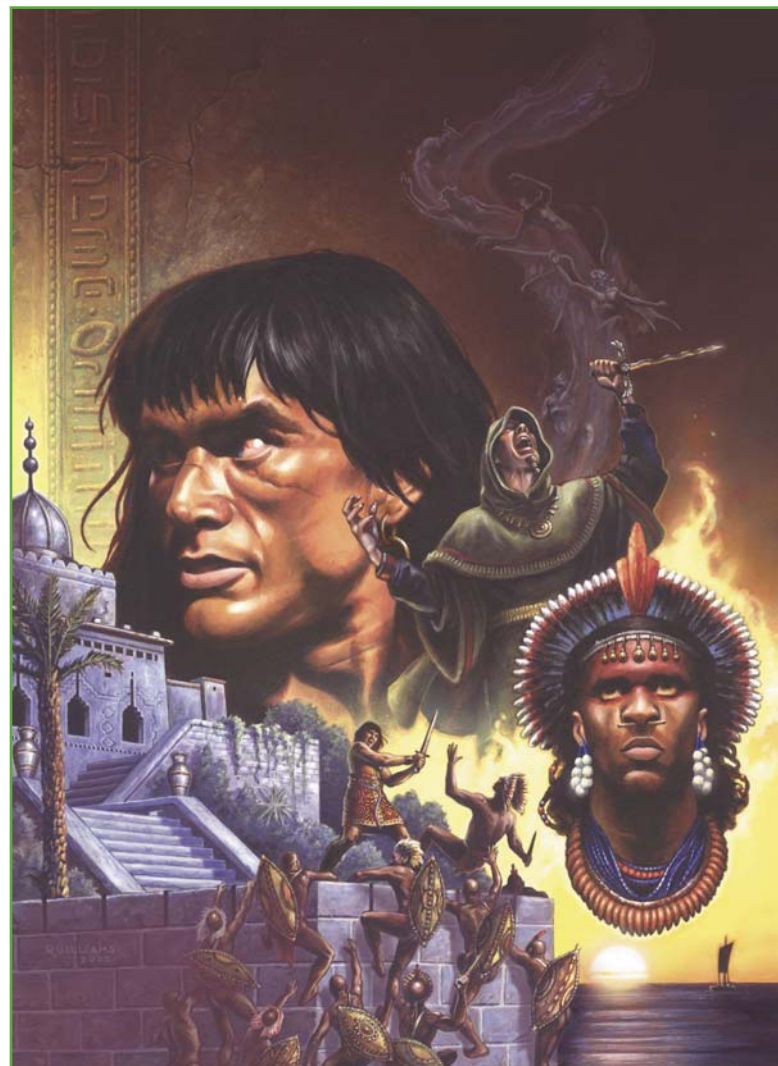
decided to up the ante again and not only do an 80 page book, but a second (32 page) book as well. Again, we had planned to go to two books about after a year of work, but previous successes encouraged us. You see, we had figured out one very fundamental fact.

We make x profit with one book a month. If we do two books a month we get $2x$ profit. This way of thinking was to dominate Mongoose's way of business for more than two years, culminating in us doing nine books in one month a little later on.

This rampant capitalism did have an effect though. First off, we could have turned a profit (that is, brought in more money to our bank account than we had started) very quickly, inside the first three months. However, because we were always pushing forward with newer and bigger books, effectively investing in the company's future, we were not to turn a profit until the end of 2001, another three months on. Which, all things considered, is still pretty good going. However, we would continue to invest in this way for a long time to come – it turned out to be the right decision though, in hindsight, things could have been managed a little better. But I'll come on to that at a later date.

The second problem was that I could no longer write everything we produced – remember, this was all still quite new to me and I was still 'gearing up'. So, we drafted in our very first freelance writer, Mike Major, a friend of possibly the best artist in the RPG industry, Chris Quilliams. Mr Quilliams originally did all the 'anatomy' pictures of the Slayer's Guides, and he did the delectable full spread for Amazons (I'll get onto that in a minute). These days, he does most of the covers for Conan - a truly gifted artist.

So, Mike wrote the Slayer's Guide to Troglodytes while I did Gladiator, the first of a new series of books that would look



Conan - Shadow of the Sorcerer, by Chris Quilliams

at different types of campaign. This may seem all rather old hat now, but a book like that tended to catch eyes back then! Unfortunately, Mike's first book was not as well written as I had hoped and I was not as good an editor as I might have been. Troglodytes was by no means a bad book, but we might have been able to do better. Gladiator had a different problem

altogether. I was 'this' close to writing what would have basically been an historical study of gladiators and arenas, and was struggling to introduce fantasy elements into it. As it turned out, I should probably have gone with my former instincts – overall, it was not one of my better books.

Competition

As I mentioned in the last article, I had been keeping a record of all the other D20 publishers, noting down what they were all up to and what they had announced. This allowed us to plot, month by month, what other companies were up to and where to place our books so they would not clash with anything of a similar nature. This was important as other companies were beginning to realise that scenarios were not the only thing that could be done for D20. However, it also had other benefits. For example, we could see that, towards the end of 2001, a number of companies were failing to hit the release dates they had set themselves with D20 books, by an average of 2 months

This was important because one company had announced a sourcebook set on the oceans, and we were getting set to release *Seas of Blood* – both books detailing nautical adventures for the D20 System. We were originally going to wait a few months and then release *Seas of Blood*. However, when we saw this constant slippage, we decided to wedge our book in first. In the end, we managed to get to the market first by a mere two weeks...

Insanity

The final months of 2001 were an absolute blur. Alex was constantly on the phone, either selling books or trying to force money out of people (!), in-between laying books out. For my part, aside from maintaining the cashflow forecast (the rudder that navigates Mongoose to this day), watching what the market was doing, and a million other things, I was going through

one of the most intense writing periods of my life (beaten only by the last few months of 2005, but that is a tale for another time).

Seas of Blood was the first 128 page I had written and also one of the most demanding in terms of research (where I picked up my interest in Horatio Nelson, of all things). The Quintessential Fighter was being completed, I teamed up with a freelancer (Teresa Capsey) to do the *Slayer's Guide to Amazons*, and the first hardbacks were tackled. It is worth going through some of these books individually.

Slayer's Guide to Amazons

An innocent enough title and, yes, it was certainly aimed at a certain section of the market (successfully too, it sold out a hefty print run in good order).



Amazon, by Chris Quilliams

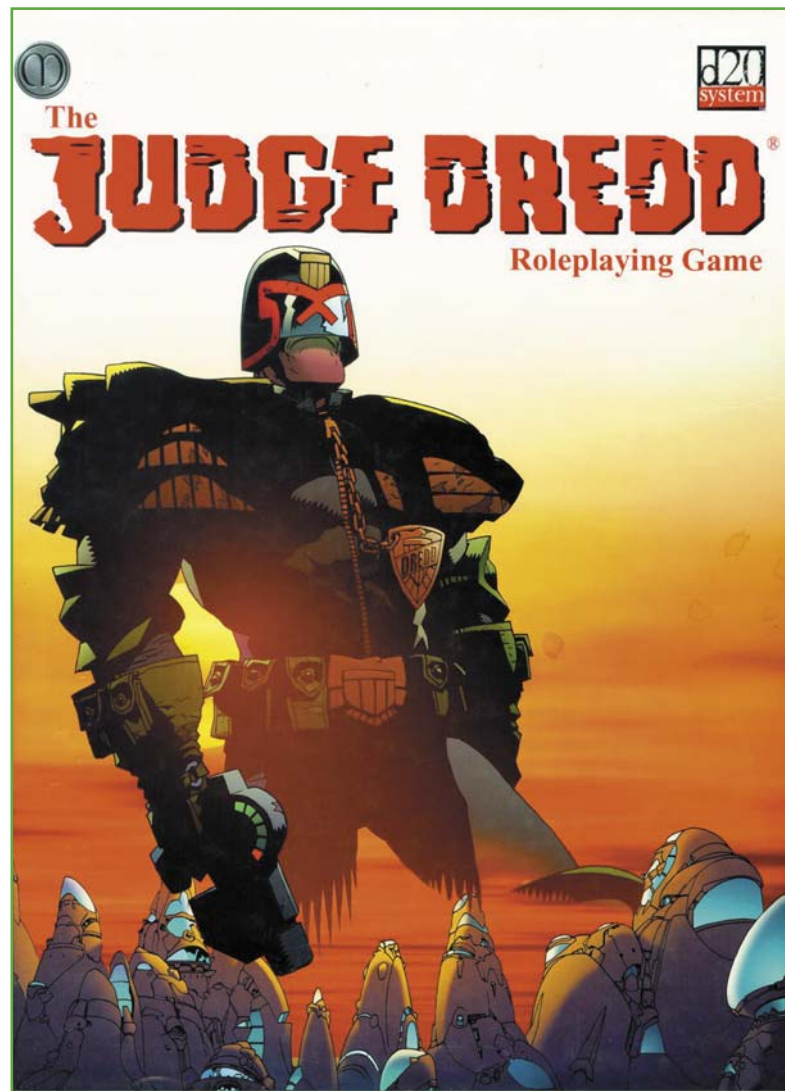
However, Amazons was written in a completely serious manner, explaining the race of warrior women, their society and customs. The *joke* was in the artwork – capped off with a full centrespread of a very nice looking lady Ranger by Chris Quilliams. My one regret for this book was that the Amazons on the front cover were minging. If they had been as good as the centrespread, we could have sold twice as many...

Judge Dredd RPG

This book was an important step for many, many reasons. First of all, it was a hardback book – and we had not done one of those before. And let me say, nothing makes you feel accomplishment as a publisher like seeing your first hardback. To our eyes, back then, it was gorgeous.

It was also our first colour book – sort of... You see, we were still printing in the UK at that time and the costs were very high. We simply could not afford a full colour book and anyway, most of our artwork was black and white. So, we printed it in what we called ‘false colour’. If you look at the book, you will see that it has very strong, colourful borders, but everything else (aside from an 8 page insert) is black and white. To cut costs, we had the printers do a large run of bordered pages *before* the book itself was printed, effectively using them as a template for each page. As you can see, while we were not smart enough to start printing overseas (though Judge Dredd was the book that finally pushed us to start printing briefly in the US, and then to Canada), we were smart enough to figure tricks to bring the costs downwards.

Perhaps most important of all, this was also our first licence. Now, when we started talking about a licensed book, we did not have the first clue on how to go about it. We talked about various properties we could go for and, in the end, settled on



The Judge Dredd Roleplaying Game, cover by Kevin Walker

the 2000AD comic strip. It was British, fairly local (just 30-odd miles away from us), and the comic featured several strong settings that could work as RPGs, including my favourite. Judge Dredd.

So, I got Alex to track down the licence holders, a company called Rebellion (a software developer who, among other things, produced *Aliens vs. Predator*), made an appointment and then drove off to Oxford. There we met Jason Kingsley, owner of the company and a most competent businessman. We started to chew the cud, laying out what we wanted to do and how but it did not take us long to work out that the licence was pretty much in the bag as we walked in. You see, Jason had been looking for ways to boost Judge Dredd's image as a property and an RPG was something cheap and visually strong – just what he was looking for. Waving aside any sort of formal royalties, we settled on him taking one third of the profits from the book.

Now, in terms of revenue, Jason has done very well out of that deal and, if we could have the time over, we might have chosen a more traditional advance/royalties arrangement. However, by choosing to take just a proportion of the profits, it became a very low risk venture for us – so long as we could pay all the costs of production with the proceeds from the book, we simply could not lose.

As a footnote to this, we had hoped for Judge Dredd to be the first D20-based RPG to come to the market but, without checking dates, I have a feeling we were pipped by Green Ronin, with their first incarnation of *Mutants & Masterminds*.

Babylon 5

With Judge Dredd in the bag, we started looking for other licences and we were way more ambitious now. We knew *Star Wars* was out of our reach (ahem) but my other lifelong passion, *Babylon 5*, seemed ripe for an approach. After all, the series had been off air for quite a while, nothing new was coming out – surely the owners, Warner Brothers, would let it go for a song. Well, Alex found the contact details, made an appointment, and then we drove down to London to meet with the head of publishing.



Babylon 5's Claudia Christian as Susan Ivanova, doing her impression of the Amazon on page 30

We completely wowed them – and it was all down to Judge Dredd. That colourful looking hardback was everything we needed to prove we could handle B5 properly. I also have to say we took a copy of *The Babylon Project* with us, and did some unfavourable comparisons. Well, it certainly did not harm our case.

The deal was made, a traditional advance/royalties arrangement. Our wallets were also \$65,000 lighter – an amount I would be very, very unlikely to pay for a pure RPG licence these days. However, as it turned out, that was cheap. The royalties would blast past that advance in just a few months. But that was for later.

Three interesting points about the *Babylon 5* RPG. First off, it took Warner Brothers an absolute age to process the contracts. If you are a regular visitor of EN World, you may remember me making various posts saying we are about to announce a new licence, no it will be announced next week, no a bit later. Frankly, it was embarrassing and it all happened because Warner Brothers' legal team promised us a date for the final contract, then another, then another. We know some visitors to EN World were getting irate at this – not as much as we were! Anyway,

what Warner Brothers never knew and what I have never told anyone up to now... The Babylon 5 RPG was completely written and ready to go before we so much as sniffed a contract. That was some risk, as they could have told us to bugger off at any point. What can I say? Inspiration overtook me!

Second, this was also the time in which Agents of Gaming lost their licence to produce the B5 Wars miniatures game. There was some speculation at the time that we had 'torpedoed' them by stealing the licence (something we could not refute at the time as we had yet to sign the contract!) but, in truth, they lost the licence because Warner Brothers felt they had taken the licence as far they could take it. As it happens, Agents of Gaming losing the licence was a massive boon for Mongoose, but those events would take another 3 years to unfold – another tale for another time.

Finally, I have a very clear memory of writing the B5 RPG. I was sat, cross-legged on my bed, hunched over a laptop most of the time. The rules had been mostly done and I was working on the season guide chapter. This involved watching each episode in turn, scribbling notes furiously as I went, constantly stopping and pausing the video (no DVDs then!). Anyway, I finished one episode and, gathering my notes to start transcribing them on the laptop, I switched back to the BBC. There, right in front of me, were the towers of the World Trade Centre, smoke billowing out of them. To say this caught my eye is something of an understatement and I watched, trying to figure out what had happened.

The reporter was whittling on about how two planes had crashed into the towers at separate intervals, and was speculating whether it could be an accident or something else. Now, I know a little about aviation and knew there was no way that could be an accident without an incredible set of circumstances. I twigged it was terrorism (growing up through the 80's in

the UK, you tend to pick up on the vibes). So, I carried on watching, waiting for more news about the event to unfold – when, without warning, one of the towers came down. I cast a suspicious eye on the second tower, wondering when that would go too.

Anyway, just thought I would lighten the mood there.

The Quintessential Fighter

With those hardback books under the company's belt, I started looking for another fantasy D20 series. Oh, let's cut the pretence – I was looking for another series that could directly support Dungeons & Dragons. Those books still did well as we thundered towards the end of 2001.

The Slayer's Guides had been mostly 'fluff' books, packed with background and few rules. The Encyclopaedias (at least, the early ones) were a balance of both – I wanted to have a crack at a rules toolkit kind of book. Furthermore, I was still enamoured with the idea of appealing to players, rather than Games Masters. Perhaps a book based on just one character class?

Then I remembered my dust-gathering collection of Complete Handbooks that TSR produced for 2nd edition AD&D. Those vinyl covers were too expensive for us to produce (even though we were now planted firmly in Canada for printing), but the gold leaf and content was easy to reproduce. I wrote the Quintessential Fighter and, along the way, I pinched an idea from Games Workshop. For many of their articles in White Dwarf, they had a formulaic approach, with set headings and sub-headings. I did the same for the Quintessentials in terms of chapters. This allowed pretty much anyone to write a book once the first one had been done (actually, you could see the beginnings of this template system with the early Slayer's Guides). Anyway, the book was written, printed and then sent off to the distributors for sale.

The Quintessentials changed *everything*. I cannot get across the impact they had for Mongoose. They sold like hot cakes. At one point, we were selling an average of one every 30 seconds (a fact we advertised at the next GAMA trade show, much to the annoyance and chagrin of some other D20 publishers – you can see we were adept at making friends in the industry).

They were our first series to bring in over a million Dollars in revenue (Babylon 5 would be the next, followed by Starship Troopers – Conan will be the fourth), and continue to sell fairly well to this day – after five years, two separate series and 36 individual books. They pretty much allowed us to fund everything for the next few years, as well as start looking into various properties (the kind with bricks, not IP – well, you have to branch out, right?)

After that, I always maintained the simplest ideas are often the best and it is a sentiment that has held true. For the Quintessentials, all that was needed was to have a brown cover, with gold leaf, and the name of the character class in a big font. Just one thing puzzled me.

We were late getting into the D20 race, almost a year behind some others. So why had no one else thought of doing these books before us?

The simplest ideas...

And the Rest

So, does this article and the previous one cover everything we did in 2001, the first year Mongoose started in business? Of course not.

There was just too much work to go round, so we started to hire. The first people we took on were two full-time writers. You see,

we had used freelancers up to this point but I had worked out that you could pay someone a pretty decent wage to work full-time, and yet for it to still be cheaper than hiring a freelancer who would likely be very unreliable (there are only a handful in the industry who do as they say they will). It is a practice we continue to this day and, for the life of me, I cannot work out why it is not more common. Just why do other companies still use freelancers as the main source of their material? With a fulltime writer, you have reliability, the ability to work with them, shape them to what you need, train them to write how you need them to. Overall, from a business perspective, they offer better value for money. From their point of view, they have guaranteed work, don't have to scabble for freelance contracts, don't have to scabble for payment when the job is done – and, with Mongoose, they have the chance to become some of the highest earners in the company.

Using freelancers all the time? You are mad.

Anyway the first people to join Mongoose were Alejandro Melchor (in Mexico) and Ian Sturrock (suspiciously close to Wales). Though these two would work from home, we also took on our first editor who began working in my front room until we got 'premises', one Paul Tucker.

So, what is coming up in the next article, as we go through 2002? Well, people get hired and people get fired at Mongoose, we would put a giant spanner into a fulfilment house called Wizard's Attic (and so unintentionally stuff up a great many other publishers), more licences would float our way and we would finally move out of our homes and into new digs – such as they were. Stay tuned for the next episode...



Monty's Modification Module

Converting Miniatures the Mongoose Way

A Tanker- and-a-half

Constructing a 'hull-down Tanker' mod using left-over parts from the King Tanker kit, for the Starship Troopers Miniatures Game

Darell C. Phillips

While recently building my new King Tanker model to add to my growing Arachnid Host (which is a civilised name for *Bug Horde*), I wondered what I might be able to do with the plastic pieces that were left over from the foundational Tanker kit that is used to support the pewter King Tanker features. One obvious way to use the remaining pieces would be as battlefield casualties, spread over the table as 'ghoulish garnish'. Another thought was to create the after effects of a nuke hit on the abdomen and thorax, modelling a pile of green goop, with the head and partial thorax as a radiated trophy of the Mobile Infantry. Not to say that a well-placed grenade into a 'Morita-inspired' hole opened in the topside armour of a raging Tanker by a crazy Ape playing at cowboy doesn't do



an efficient job of it, either. Interviewed later by a UCF reporter, the Trooper said he mistook it for a land whale, and the poor thing had no blowhole, so he decided to give it one ('Blowhole', indeed). The third option that I came up with was to use the pieces to build up a model of a standard Tanker that had its head and a pair of legs protruding from a model of a Tunnel Entrance. This is the subject of this 'Monty's Modification Module'.

In order to plan this in correct sequence, *don't* build the King Tanker first. This project uses some parts that we will need to 'clone' for our use, before they are used in the 'King'. If however you already have an assembled 'King', you can always buy an additional plastic Tanker model to get back on track with the rest of us. You can never have enough Tankers, you know. First, separate all of the parts from the sprue tree, making sure to clean most of the mould lines with sandpaper and/or scraping the lines



sideways with a hobby knife. For the model as I made it, the only parts left at the end of the project will be two feet and two lower legs, along with the two plastic pins that join them. While casting duplicate pieces of licensed product is a 'no-no', this next instruction is so crude in its method that I don't see Mongoose Publishing's legal department getting their undies in a bunch. If I'm correct, then this gets published. If I'm not, then you didn't really read this, and you've fallen asleep again in front of your computer and this is all a dream sequence...

OK, now that I've obviously got your attention (yes, and *you* too!), here is the method. Clay and super glue, and super glue spray accelerator. That's it. I did say 'crude', didn't I? Here's the thing. We need a lower thorax replacement and two upper leg segments, and the King Tanker has priority on the originals. We need crude 'ersatz' parts for the mod to work. To do this, you need to get

some artist clay. I had some Plasticene modelling clay, and used it successfully. Work a piece of the clay about two thumb sizes in volume, with your hands to soften it. Press the lower thorax piece into the clay, just to the edge lines. Peel off the clay, making sure to return the curled clay to the general shape of the removed plastic. Using spray super glue accelerant, spray a good amount into the clay mould, covering the entire surface to be 'glued'. Place droplets of super glue into the cavity, and roll the liquid around the perimeter of the cavity. Be sure not to spill the glue, as you no doubt have experience that super glue is magnetically attracted to fingers (or so it appears, sometimes). Repeat this procedure, reapplying the accelerant and then the glue until a hard 'skin' is created. Do this enough times to create a piece that will not fall apart when it is removed from the clay. Set this 'ersatz lower thorax' aside.

Pick up an upper leg segment, and make sure it is one of the pieces that will be used in the King Tanker model. Press this into a similar-sized softened piece of clay, only halfway embedded, right to where the plastic moulding seam is. Remove the plastic piece and using multiple steps, fill the cavity with layers of hardened glue. If you take a clay impression of the reverse side of the leg and repeat the procedure, you will have two leg halves. You will need two pair of these in order to make two complete upper legs. I don't need to tell you what to use to glue the halves together, now do I? If you need to flatten the sides more for a better fit, you can sandpaper them and carefully trim with a hobby knife.



If you were clever, careful and patient, you will now have two replacement legs and a lower thorax piece. These can be carefully glued to fill in the pieces that will allow you to assemble the balance of the forward Tanker model. If you have been successful thus far, you can prime the assembly and paint it as you would normally. If, however, you find your fingers glued together, maybe using the pieces as battlefield garnish was the better idea, after all. There is always glue debonder, too. I was lucky, and didn't need to offer myself up as an extra for the Sci-Fi channel as a web-handed sea monster.

OK, *now* you can assemble your King Tanker. Be sure to clean the clay off of the plastic legs and thorax pieces. I used tissue and Q-Tips, and the parts came clean nicely. The final part of



this adventure is to create a Bug mound from which our Tanker can be made to look as if it's crawling from. There are many ways to build a mound. Basically, it should have the general shape of one half of a bagel, and stay within the four-inch diameter size of a Tunnel Entrance. For my raw material, I used Styrofoam (that's because I ate the bagel...). For paint, I made use of latex water-based spray paint from Krylon, called H2o. It won't eat at the styro, which is a good thing. I used a light and a

dark colour, and mixed them wet, blending the two for a varied look. I studied the position of the legs of the Tanker assembly, and formed the shape of the mound to conform to them, for a final fit. There was no need to glue it, as I could remove the model and use the Tunnel Entrance as a normal structure.

This completes the modelling project, and we have arrived at the end. But what use is this 'business-end' of a Tanker, beyond it just looking at you from his nice protective mound, you ask? Well, I gave it a bit of thought and wondered, too. Here is an easy rule for its use. Normally, the rules state that a Tanker can exit a Tunnel Entrance, and the model can be placed in contact with the Entrance template without a cover bonus. It can alternately be placed with its centre over the hole, and given a cover bonus of 2, but this lengthens the range of the Tanker Spit to any targets. If the table was a bit crowded in the vicinity of this Entrance, then your full-sized Tanker could be replaced by this proxy, and since I believe that most players play centre point to centre point, this would work fine. The model would represent +2 cover bonus armour save status. This reminds me of a Main Battle Tank hull-down position, so I guess you could call it a 'Hull-Down Tanker'. As far as cost, you might easily use a half bottle of super glue, but that's not much, really. The plastic parts come free with the King Tanker, so that's great, right? Overall, it is not a bad deal. As long as you use this Tanker as a stationary 'pillbox', you get a very cheap Tanker figure. With the King Tanker being a very nice kit in its own right, you could think with this project you're getting a 'Tanker-and-a-half'. By the way, I painted my King Tanker using my method of adopting those 'specialty' paint kits, like what's used on Motorcycle helmets and skateboards. They are usually a kit using three cans, base, colour and top coat, and they shift into two colours depending on the viewing angle. Other issues of Signs & Portents have displayed more of my Arachnids using this paint system, if you are intrigued in using it yourself.



Scenic Mayhem

A BRIDGE TO NOWHERE

**Constructing Non-bridge Structures for Starship Troopers
Using the Technobridge Kit from Pegasus Hobbies**

Darell C. Phillips

Last month's Scenic Mayhem article showed how to use the new Technobridge kit from Pegasus Hobbies to construct a modular bridge for battles where extreme tabletop depth was desired. In that article, I used five of the kits to make a crossing over a crevasse that was as much as ten inches deep in the centre. Each kit contains four bridge sections. There are two flat bridge plates and two tapered bridge 'ends', each three inches 'long' (considering the perspective that these link in a linear fashion) and about seven inches 'wide' with the rails attached. I used the flat plates from five kits, and the bridge ends from only one of the kits. That left me with four pair, or eight pieces of bridge ends. As I said previously, last month's article was about building a large gaming bridge. This month, I'll show you what I did with what was left over...

I suppose another name for this topic would have been to call it 'Tech-NO-Bridge', as it has nothing to do with building bridge models. I have a hard time leaving interesting and detailed plastic shapes alone, without figuring out what I might be able to fashion using them in an unconventional way. What I came up with has added yet another dimension to using these excellent kits for your battles of Starship Troopers Miniatures, or other games such as Gangs of Mega-City One. Due to the



bridge building of last month, I was left with a pile of tapered bridge ends. I began by first just interlocking the two ends together. OK, so now I had a very, very short bridge. Meh. By the way, Merriam-Webster says that 'Meh' is not a word yet. If you ask my opinion about this subject, all I'll probably reply is 'Meh'. That begs the predicament that those that might feel strongly about adding it officially wouldn't know what it means, and those that know what it means by definition shouldn't care if it is added. Hmm, it makes your head hurt just thinking about it. I think I'll stop thinking about that. Now where was I? OK, so now I had a very, very short bridge. Meh. What good was a short bridge, I asked myself? Hmm. I stood the section on its side, with the matching rails attached. Now I had a seven inch high wall that was six inches wide. The side rails, which measure a 'strong' inch, held it up after a fashion. I took the



other three sets of bridge ends and locked them together also, and attached the rails. Gluing these can be considered as optional, as they do have a snug fit to the bridge plates. Using the now assembled sets as walls, I made a box shape out of them on a table. I asked myself 'What could this be used as?' and the answer came to me: 'A maintenance and supply hanger for Marauders'. Cool.

The next steps began to shape its construction. It needed a roof. Since it was nice and spacious vertically, it could hold a second deck above the ground level. The natural material to reach for worked very well for my purposes. Pegasus Hobbies also distributes the Hexagon kit series of construction sets, as well as the Platformer kit. I use both kits for raw building material, but decided the Hexagon series was the one I'd use for this project. I won't go into specifics and show a drawing of the exact pieces I used. I do not think it is necessary to do that for those of you that wish to copy what I did. It is fun to use the various shapes to see what will fill the desired area. You can reference the

photos for hints of how I did it, and you can of course ‘solve’ the jigsaw puzzle yourself by building it to look different than what I ended up with. Let’s just say that I think those reading this and wanting to construct one of these Marauder Hangers can handle fitting the Hexagon pieces inside for themselves.

As to how I attached each wall at the corners, you can glue sections of doweling to the inside corners to beef up the corner strength. Although I think that doweling would have been easier, what I actually used were short metal ‘square keys’. They were a sort of square metal doweling, I suppose, and they were about an inch and-a-half by ¼” thick. I used superglue, and they held to the plastic well enough to give me two fixed corners in the rear area of the base. This made a single piece out of three of the four walls, with the front left open for now.

For the ground level platform, I used a sheet of scribed styrene, cut to fit and painted with Krylon Fusion® ‘Graphite’ spray paint. The second level was a bit trickier because I wanted to have an access ramp to ground level, but one that could fold up and retract when the base was sealed up in ‘turtle mode’. The



solution for my folding access ramp turned out to be the same solution that I needed to be able to have one side of the base/hanger have opening clamshell doors. I made a quick trip to my local hardware store and bought some small ‘piano’ style hinges. I knew that even using superglue on them wasn’t going to keep them attached to the plastic, so I had to get inventive. You might get a good laugh when you see that I don’t throw *anything* away sometimes, that I might be able to use somewhere. You see, when you get a bridge kit, there is some plastic sprue that needs to be

broken off of the railings and plates. I kept the railing sprue from heading into the garbage pail, and using plastic welding glue attached them (welded them, really) through the screw holes of the hinges. I lined the hinges up to where I wanted them, and poked the round sprue through the screw holes and applied the glue. When dry, the sprue pieces gave me something to hang the hinges onto. In order to make the hinges stay attached, I used a hot wire (my styro cutter) and melted the plastic into a mushroom cap. The closest comparison I can think of would be like a rivet holding steel plates to each other. The rivet head is hammered into a flat shape to do the job of holding the plates together.

After I finished the hanger door hinges and the middle platform, I was 'on the roof', so to speak. It took a bit of thinking as to how I was going to fill the top hole and make it look right. Really to the credit of the plastic Hexagon kit, I was able to assemble a shape to give the roof a platform top. A roof, as you can see from the photos, which can easily hold two Reliant gun positions and

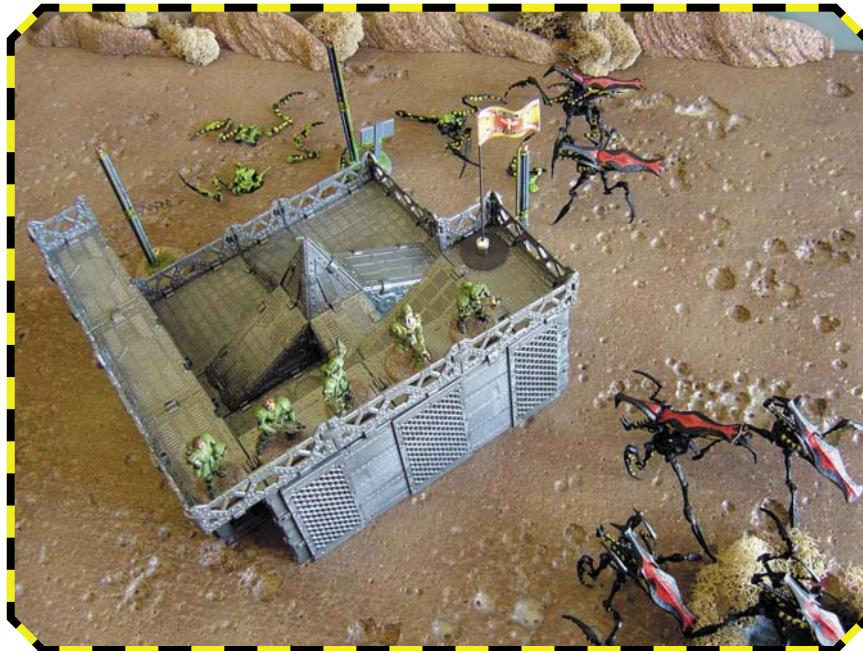


their crew. I constructed a rear outside access ladder to the roof as more for a visual appeal than for a functional purpose. I mean, as far as justifiable roof access, it would have been easier to add a top hatch to the roof. Even the Hexagon kits include hatches in some of the pieces. So sometimes just for appeal and for the look of a finished model and how it is seen as a whole unit, it is good to add details to enhance a model's appearance. It's also a good idea if it seems logical, as well. I used a ladder and cage from Plastruct, Inc. (model #CL-12). Even though it is 1:32 scale, it fits much better with the trooper figures. Being that the

safety cage is one-inch diameter, I can actually place a base-mounted trooper figure within the cage, and have him at various levels of height by threading a Popsicle stick through the cage as a 'bookmark'. Of course, the term 'safety' cage is a bit pointless if it restricts your ability to dodge a pursuing Arachnid Warrior Bug and allows it to make you into a shish kebob! Oh well, what else are bureaucracies for if not to 'help' us? At least it adds to the finished model, and I liked adding it. By the way, I only used half of the ladder and cage kit. This way, I can add another ladder and cage to a different model and manage to skewer even more hapless trooper recruits. Well, just 'meat for the grinder,' as they say. Remember, 'Service Guarantees Skewer-ship'. I just love to include 'inside jokes' as part of a model. As an aside, I just painted up several boxes of the Stalwart Bug Field Generators and included a sign on one of the generator units that was meant as something created by 'trooper humour'. The sign was sticking up at an angle out of the ground, and had this



marked on it 'ARACHNID SCRATCHING POST: Provided as a free service by your friends at the Mobile Infantry.' I'm sure that any Brain Bug with good eyesight didn't see the humour. There's no accounting for good taste, you know. That's the real reason humanity has to kill them all. *'Any Race that can't laugh needs to be expunged from the galaxy.'* If you can fit that phrase on your Marauder miniature, you are welcome to quote me.



About all that is left to describe on the Marauder Base model, is the antenna and flagpole. The antenna was made from brass hobby tubing, of about 1/8" diameter. The triangular 'wind vane' was made from magnetic building toy pieces. The antenna dish was taken from a toy aircraft carrier playset. The flagpole was more brass tubing. The flag line itself was an idea I came up with after I wanted to have a flag that wasn't just wrapped around the pole itself. I've seen that a lot and I wanted to add a bit more of an

accurate appearance to the pole. In order to have the feel of wind tugging on the flags and pulling them away from the pole, I made the line out of steel wire, and glued it with a bend in it. Not really a bend, more accurately it is 'stressed' by bowing it. To do this, simply make the wire longer than the tubing. In case the superglue wasn't going to hold it in place, I drilled very small holes in the ends of the tubing and poked the wire into the insides, then applied glue. A glued map tack that was spherical on the end served as a pole top. The flags are sized and printed normally as a double-sided flag, and wrapped around the wire, glued to itself with glue stick adhesive.

Normally, the project I completed would suffice I suppose for a finished article, but hey, I was further inspired by this very nice bridge kit. But alas, I was out of bridge pieces, and had used all of my 'garbage' up to make my 'treasure' Marauder Base. What was I to do, but break open several more boxes of Technobridges and see what I could make of them? Tee hee... hee.



I was very pleased that in short order my crazy imagination was coming up with some interesting combinations. It was what I was hoping to accomplish. Although at first glance these alternate configurations appear to be unaltered bridge plates, in fact it was necessary to modify them slightly. Here is what was needed, and I almost went too far modifying them by cutting off too much. If you have your dirty hands on these bridge kits by now, you've already noticed that they interlock with a 'twist' motion. Each standard 'middle' bridge plate has a male/female attachment method. In order to get these to stand up on edge but rotated ninety degrees from the Marauder Base orientation, I needed to clip the male part off of one side (ouch!). Also, although at first I did this on the other side as well, I later found that all I needed to remove on the second side was one side of the 'T' piece protruding out. Now for the next few lines of descriptions of what to do, it is probably suggested to make reference to the photos of the alternate units that I made up.

In order to use the bridge plates as aircraft or vehicle hangers, do the following. You'll notice that I didn't have you do any clipping on the bridge ends, but just the 'middle' pieces, right? OK, assemble one bridge end to the other, making an 'A' shaped arch (it also makes for a very short bridge!). Attach the railing normally and set this off to the side. Now take a standard bridge piece (now trimmed), but have the fully clipped edge



face down, to the table. Standing on end, it will sit flush to the table surface. Assemble the railings, but instead of fitting them normally, reverse them so that they curl 'down' and 'under' the bridge plate surface. When sitting on edge, the one on your left side should have the railings pointing to the right. The main plate line should be running away from you. Now assemble the second matching standard plate and reverse assemble the railings to match its twin. Place this one on your right, and mirror image it so that the railings point to each other. The distance between the two plates should be at a spacing of six inches. Now, place the 'roof' onto the 'walls' and adjust the fit. You now have a vehicle hanger! Of course if you used two kits like I did, you would have two vehicle hangers by now. If you don't, get with it, ok?

If you didn't totally remove the second male fitting on the standard plate, it will now sit next to the roof, and not be a bother. Looking at the photos as a reference, these two vehicle hangers can be reconfigured as a wider aircraft hanger, say.

A way to make these structures sit flush to the table and not having to need to clip the bridge plate connectors would be to have a thin sheet of Styrofoam. You then can push the plate edge down and into the styro. Then use a hobby knife and dig out where the connectors depressed the Styrofoam. I've already clipped mine, but that is an option open to you. Yet another option would be to use a filler of some sort (Popsicle sticks?) to allow the bridge edge with the connectors sit flush on the table.

Another structure configuration that you could make would be to combine the two bridge kits and make a cubic monolith structure to fight over. This would make a great structure to call a Large UCF Building, as described in the rules. To do this, you can see the shape that I made using Hexagon pieces. If you wish, duplicate the assembly and set it off to the side for now. Next, disassemble your hangers back into individual pieces (I



hope you didn't glue these, or you are going to need more kits you know...). Now, assemble a standard plate to an end plate, keeping the flush edge of the standard plate exposed. Fit the railings, but return to the normal assembly orientation. Do this for all pieces and you'll have four identical walls. Stand these walls on end, in a closed box shape. If you have duplicated my Hexagon roof accurately, you'll notice that it fits exactly over the top of the box, closing it up. In order to help a little with locking it down, you can use Hexagon connectors on all of the outside perimeter edges to fit onto the sharp edge of the tapered bridge end. Poster putty or other removable tacky putty can be used to hold the inside corners together. If you want a more permanent and less tipsy structure, glue it all together. Hey, at least if you flip it over, it can also be used as storage for Warrior Bugs and such, right?

For a defence position or outpost for MI Hold engagements, a line of these plates can be made into a quick perimeter, and either Hexagon or Platformer kit pieces can be added as Wall Walks (catwalks). It shouldn't be hard to assign points to these various structures. For example, while a Bunker can't measure longer than 6" on any side and is limited to a 4" height, you could make a structure with these plates that would measure 7" long by 4" wide by 3-1/2" high. While not strictly legal in its length, I suppose it could be used as a 'Large Bunker', and valued at a slightly higher cost. Maybe assign it a 20% boost in capacity and cost, making it a 12 Size point capacity, instead of the standard 10 capacity. The cost would go from 100 points up to 120 points.

Next, the rules mention Outpost Wall Sections and Platforms. A Wall Section can be 'up to six inches high and ten inches wide'. If we say that two of our joined



bridge plates standing on end are an Outpost Wall Section we don't make the grade. We miss it by an inch. But if all players were made aware of this fact, and agreed to treat them as 6" high, that might just work fine. I sure think they make a great looking Wall Section, at least. Not only that, but if the plates are stood on-end, the upper set of attached rails could be used as a built-in Wall Walk ledge! If those same pieces are rotated ninety degrees, we then easily fit the rules for Wall Sections as written. You would need to add catwalks, but the pieces are a bit more stable and look even better to me in that orientation when used as a 'fence'.

Lastly, the rules state that 'A Platform is any building connected to one or more Wall Sections that measures no more than 8" high and 10" wide. The Platform may or may not have a roof and it can hold 8 Size points of models (...). Platforms can be stacked to create multi-storey buildings.' I

would request consideration for a small embellishment to be added to this description that says *'A Platform can only be elevated (that would be to a level above 2", but not to exceed 8") when at least three walls are paid for, and collapses later if any two adjacent walls aren't present or are destroyed. Any two non-adjacent walls can support an elevated Platform, but the building can't start that way when it is initially purchased. An exception is non-purchased or scenario-specific pre-damaged structures. Any storey that collapses will collapse all storeys above it as well. A Platform that is by itself can be no more than 2" in height. An armoured floor in a multi-storey building is considered to be at ground level (or below as a foundation).'* Note that this would not replace any current rule. You could still use height of model to be the Size value. What this does do is enable the Wall Section and Platform to be used as 'building blocks' in order to assemble modular structures. I've had a few other thoughts on this, but this is not the venue for a long discussion. I'll



leave this to the experts, as I am more artist than writer-of-rules. Besides, if I push it they might want test subjects for a full-scale field generator and I don't wish to be volunteered...

Regardless of any rules clarification and read the way they currently are, my 'cubic monolith structure' (the one with the pointy top that works as a good Large UCF Building) would cost one Platform and four Wall Sections, for a total of 1.7 million SICON Credits (I mean 170 points! Sorry, my inner role-player personality typed that!). I would consider the 'roof' here to be the actual Platform as I understand the rules at present, while the floor would be un-armoured dirt. If my rule embellishment was considered, a Platform such as what I describe bought with only two of those walls would have no roof. The platform would really be bought at ground level, and could be no more than two inches high. I would also suggest: *'If a Platform is bought as a fully elevated*

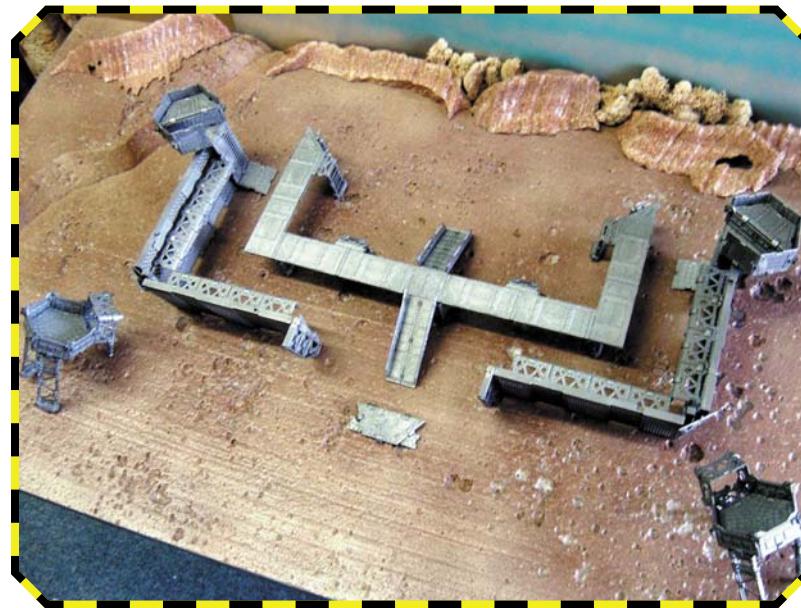
roof (with three or four walls supporting it) and you wanted to armour the 'dirt', an additional Platform would need to be paid for.' Oh, there I go again. I'm sure that I heard a sound in the distance not unlike 'ZzzaaAaapp!' It sounded like a test of some kind...

My Marauder Base would cost out like this:

- A ground level Platform @ 50 points = 50 points.
- Four Wall Sections @ 30 points each = 120 points.
- A mid-level Platform @ 50 points = 50 points.
- An 'armoured roof' Platform @ 50 points = 50 points
- Total cost for my Marauder Base would be 270 points

The two Reliant Gun Platforms are not included, of course.

This makes it cost over 75% as much as a Whiskey Outpost, if I include two Reliant Gun Platforms on the roof. This structure is a valuable asset to be sure, and not one to be lost to the Arachnids.



It's compliant to the rules at present, even though it uses the bridge plates standing on end with the railings attached. The boost in the wall height of 2" when attached to a Platform keeps it within the measurement tolerances. The only violation I see is that I can't actually place any Marauders within the structure, due to the building's limit to model Size 2. The Marauders are Size 3! Wipe that grin off of your face Trooper, or I will volunteer you for what could be called a 'field test' of sorts. Here is how I'll correct this little 'contractor oversight'. By purchasing three levels of Platforms that tie directly into the Wall Sections, I've earned myself an increased capacity of exactly 50%. This just happens to be the same difference that a Size 3 model is over a Size 2. Perfect. The way I'll use the structure is for a rear-area maintenance and supply base that is suddenly attacked and must 'hold until relieved'.

In closing, I found fooling around with the loose pieces of the bridge kit to be as fun as building the bridge. So fun you noticed that I used extra kits as 'NO-bridges'. We'll call these 'NB's' officially, ok? But bridge plates do make for some quick structures, I think. They are an affordable addition to your gaming table. Not only that, but you can also make a bridge with them!





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Wolf Day Afternoon

A Gangs of Mega-City One Battle Report

NICK ROBINSON AND MATT SHARP

++item++

STATUS **RED**

Vehicle Hijack

Automatic security drone 4X4U-28 reports Securo-Pod registration code LYN-32409-2360-JTM involved in collision and immobilised. Large group of armed entities detected on approach vector. Defence protocols in force.

Instruction: All nearest available units – respond!

Matt Sharp was due to visit Mongoose Hall on one of his regular pilgrimages to the Mecca of Dredd gaming (not many people get to go on a pilgrimage to Swindon) and it was decided to ambush him (as it turned out, literally) by having him play a game of Gangs of Mega-City One. Since I already had a gang of desperados from the previous fight with Ted Chang I was to face off against the resident expert on all things Dredd.

Once Matt had been informed that we were to do a battle report he thought it a great idea if we ran through the Bank Raid scenario from Signs and Portents 23. This seemed like a brilliant idea at the time, but having not actually read the scenario (whereas Matt had written it) I was a little bit of a disadvantage, something I really should have paid some attention to before we started playing. Those who have gamed with me in the past



have realised that this is one of my main weaknesses (along with not reading and understanding the rules properly) and take full advantage of it before proceeding to obliterate me in whatever game we happen to be playing at the time (I still have problems with Risk!)

Funky Groovey Gang

Name	Type	Speed	Agility	Resilience	CC	Hits	WTF	Equipment/Traits/Injuries	Rep
Iggy Warnerdon	Mutant Top Dog	5"	3+	7 (9)	3D	2	2+	Scaly Skin (+1 Res), Spit Gun, Judge Killers Las Cleaver, Shell Jacket, Hardened Criminal, -1 Ag, +1 Hits, Natural Leader, Armour Penetration, Duck & Weave	17
Worm	Troggie Lieutenant	5"	4+	6 (8)	2D	1	3+	Spit Gun, Cleaver, Shell Jacket, -1 WTF, Thundering Charge, -1 Ag	11
Punchy	Mutant Punk	5"	3+	7 (8)	3D	1	4+	Three Arms (+1 CC), Laser Pistol, Shell Jacket, -1 Ag, Laz Cleaver, Scout, Thick Skin, Tough, -1 Ag	14
East Clintwood	Mutant Punk	5"	5+	6 (7)	2D	1	3+	Regeneration (Tough), Stump Gun, Padded Jacket	1
Fido Lupus	Werewolf Punk	7"	3+	7	4D	2	3+	Claws & Teeth (Cleaver), +1 CC, +1 Res, +1 Hits	4
Mr Handsome	Mutant Juve	5"	4+	6 (7)	1D	1	4+	Keen Senses, Spit Pistol, Padded Jacket, -1 Ag	4
Grubb	Troggie Juve	5"	5+	6 (7)	1D	1	4+	Cleaver, Handgun, Padded Jacket, Armour Piercing, -1 WFT	1
Maggott	Troggie Juve	5"	5+	6 (7)	1D	1	5+	Hand Gun, Armour Piercing, Knife, Padded Jacket	
Rimpule	Gutter Lawyer	5"	5+	6	1D	1	4+	Handgun, Luck of Grud, Slippery, Sly, Smart	5
Joan Graces	Futsie	5"	4+	7	4D	2	4+	Handgun, Luck of Grud, Laz Knife	5
Base Rep									64
Modifier									1

Gang Territory

Name	Type	Rep	Credits
David Naughton Block	City Block	-	1,500
Drew Barrymore Centre for the Youthfully Wayward	Juve Centre	1	1,000
Nick Leeson Spend Spend Spend Mall	Shopping Mall	-	1,500
Sean Pertwee Block	City Block	-	1,500
John Landis Block	City Block	-	1,500
Michael Jackson Con-Apts	City Block	-	1,500

To make the game a little bit different we decided the ‘bank’ in question would really be a security van that the gang had managed to ambush via a handy barricade in front of it and the simple expedient of ramming it with another vehicle so it could not reverse out of trouble...

The Funky Groovy Gang

As the victors of the last Gangs battle report the Funky Groovy Gang were to have the honour of taking on the forces of law and order. As a result I altered the gang a little, with Punchy getting a nice Shell Jacket, a shiny new laz cleaver and -1 agility, and Grubb improving his Will to Fight by one. Other than that the gang kept back a wad of credits, I believed that the impending fight would result in the need to hire a load more punks to replace the inevitable casualties, indeed I might end up needing a whole new gang...

The Forces of The Law

Having convinced Nick to play the Bank Raid! scenario, I was charged with the task of forming a patrol of Judges and security forces to cope with Nick’s notorious Funkey Groovey Gang of murderous Undercity dwellers. I chose the bank security forces first – a remote security drone was a must, as it provided a bonus to the chances of the Judges arriving on the scene. It was represented in the game by a small turret on the top of the Securo-Pod. A Securo-bot was also a must have, as they have staying power, even if they’re not particularly hard hitters. A couple of security guards were added to make up the numbers – I wasn’t expecting them to last long, but they might make themselves useful!



The scene before the raid commences - the Funky Groovey Gang ambush a Securo-Pod

The Law

Name	Type	Speed	Agility	Res	CC	Hits	WTF	Equipment/Traits/Injuries	Rep
Molinas	Senior Judge	6"	2+	8	4D	5	2+	Boot Knife, Lawgiver, Daystick, Respirator, Street Armour, Stumm Gas Grenades, Lawmaster, Nerves of Steel, Heroic Rush, Luck of Grud, Duck & Weave	10
Lawmaster	Lawmaster	10"	5+	8	-	5	-	-	5
Sipowicz	Street Judge	5"	3+	7	3D	3	2+	Boot Knife, Lawgiver, Daystick, Respirator, Street Armour, Stumm Gas Grenades, Nerves of Steel	5
Lorenzo	Street Judge	5"	3+	7	3D	3	2+	Boot Knife, Lawgiver, Daystick, Respirator, Street Armour, Stumm Gas Grenades, Nerves of Steel	5
Gilland	Street Judge	5"	3+	7	3D	3	2+	Boot Knife, Lawgiver, Daystick, Respirator, Street Armour, Stumm Gas Grenades, Nerves of Steel	5
Benedetto	Riot Judge	4"	3+	7 (9)	3D	3	2+	Boot Knife, Lawgiver, Respirator, Riot Armour, Stumm Gas Grenades, Nerves of Steel	7
Marino	Riot Judge	4"	3+	7 (9)	3D	3	2+	Boot Knife, Lawgiver, Respirator, Riot Armour, Stumm Gas Grenades, Nerves of Steel	7
Buntz	Psi Judge	5"	3+	7	3D	3	2+	Boot Knife, Lawgiver, Respirator, Riot Armour, Stumm Gas Grenades, Nerves of Steel	8
Bertane	Security Guard	5"	4+	5 (7)	2D	1	3+	Shell Jacket, Electra Zap Gun	3
Toomey	Security Guard	5"	4+	5 (7)	2D	1	3+	Shell Jacket, Electra Zap Gun	3
Call-Me-Dennis	Securo-Bot	5"	5+	6 (7)	2D	2	-	Electra Zap Gun, Electro Pod, Metal Skin (+1 Res Armour)	5
Drone	Security Drone	-	4+	8	-	2	-	Electra Zap Gun, Security Scanner	1

Then onto the Judges. First up was Senior Judge Molinas. I wanted him to be the hard hitter of the Justice Department forces, so I spent a few points on a Lawmaster. Next, a Psi Judge should provide a few surprises. I then added a few Street Judges to the roster to perform the grunt work, before finally adding a pair of Riot Squad Judges (one with the standard Daystick and Riot Shield, the other with a Riot Foam thrower) for variety.

Set Up

Funky Groovy Gang

From the layout of the table we decided it would be logical that my gangers would start out on the side behind the barricade, whilst the judges would start on the opposite edge of the table. With luck I might be able to pull off the bank job before the judges could arrive in sufficient force to annihilate my gang.



Initial set up of the Security Forces



Starting positions of the Funky Groovey Gang



The security would be set up first. The Drone would be represented by the small turret on top of the armoured van, the security guards would be placed around their vehicle, ready to defend it and themselves from my perps, while the Securo-bot took up position at the rear of the vehicle.

Punchy would deploy close behind the barricade, out of sight from the guards, using his Scout trait. Iggy Warnedon and the bulk of the gang would be behind the smaller barricade in front of the van, whilst Rimpule, the gutter lawyer, Mr Handsome and Worm my lieutenant would be to the left, the aim would be to stop judges sneaking around the flank later in the game whilst keeping Rimpule in a (hopefully) safer part of the battlefield.

The Forces of The Law

Most of the forces of the Law would start off table only appearing on a good die roll. The security drone had to be part of the security van being attacked; fortunately, the model had a turret on its top that fit the bill perfectly. The two guards and security robot would be placed around the armoured car attempting to hold back the inevitable rush of villainous gang members.

Unfortunately this also meant that the security for the van was in an exposed position and would likely not last long at all, they would have to wait for the judges to arrive to and hold out until they did.

Turn One

Matt: Before the turn began, I had to roll to see if any of his Judge Patrol arrived at the heist. Fortunately, the security drone offered a bonus to the roll and a pair of lawmen arrived on the scene. Less fortunately, both ended up arriving from my table edge, which was right at the other end of the table from the action! Oh, well - Street Judge Marino and Riot Squad Judge Marino were on the case, even if it might take them a couple of turns to reach the perps.



Turn One - in the distance, the Judges begin to arrive...

Funky Groovey Gang (Nick)

On the first turn I decided to activate my Top Dog, Iggy, Punchy, who in his advanced position thanks to his Scout trait was close to the Security Van already, and the hero of the last fight against the Apes of Wrath gang, Fido the werewolf. I hoped these three would quickly overwhelm the guards and be able to grab the loot prior to the judges arriving in force.

Iggy began the turn by blasting away at the security guard Bertane. With his spit gun he was able to score a good wound and then I managed to get a 12 on the injury chart – a kill, with the first shot of the game! Bertane hit the ground minus several vital anatomical parts; getting blasted by a spit gun can never be a pleasant experience!

Fido then charged at the robot, engaging in hand-to-hand combat, hoping to rip it to pieces. Fido did manage to win the melee combat but failed to cause any damage.



Turn One - Guard down! The Funky Groovey Gang move forward.

Punchy meanwhile popped off a shot at the other security guard getting a hit for his efforts but not managing to cause a wound. The security drone reacted to this, managing to score a hit but the mutant was too tough to be bothered by a mere Electra Zap Gun.

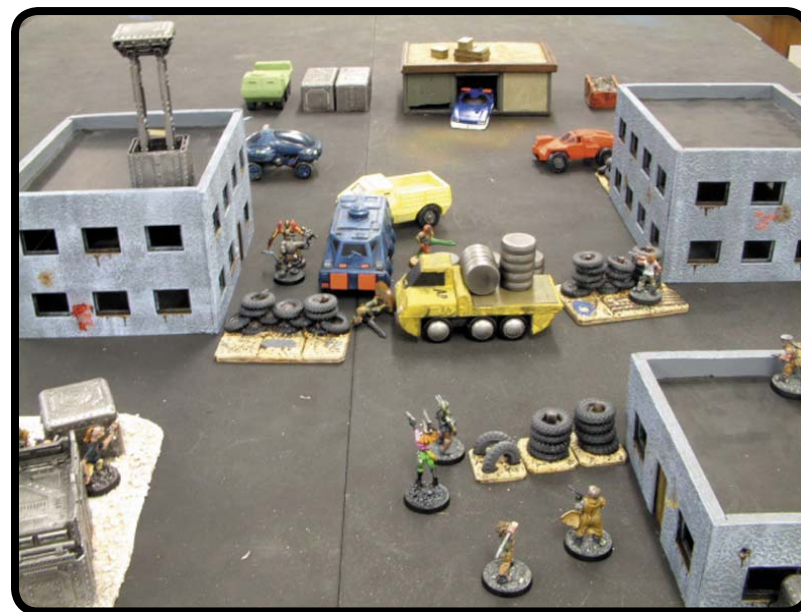
The Forces of Law and Order (Matt)

Deciding to deal with the close figures near the van first, I opened up with both the drone and Toomey the security guard blasting away at the three-armed monstrosity that is Punchy. Despite getting three hits between them, a succession of awful dice rolls (something of a trademark in my miniatures gaming!) means that nothing resembling a wound resulted. These muties are tough! To continue my awful dice rolling, with a nice selection of ones, Fido won the hand-to-hand combat with the Securo-Bot Call-Me-Dennis in both actions. Fortunately Nick's to-wound rolls were as bad as my own, as Fido ineffectually clawed at the chrome bodywork of Dennis.

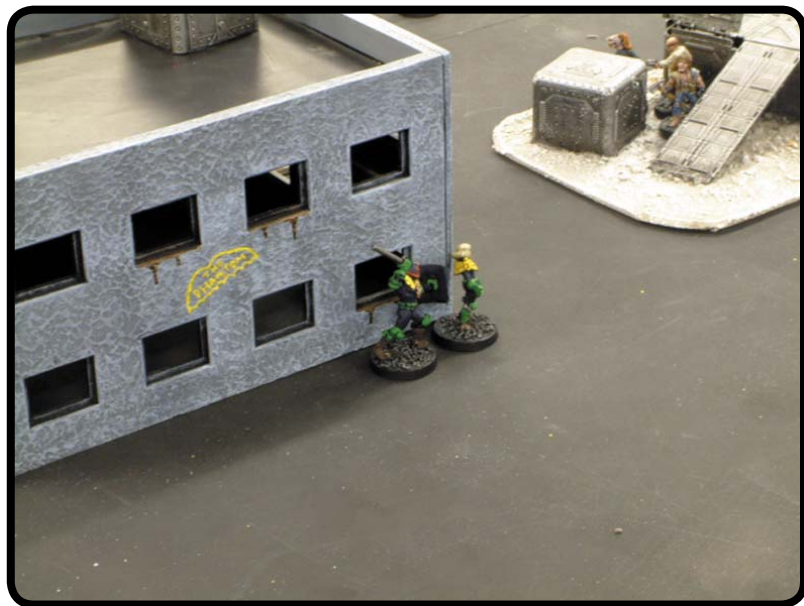
Meanwhile, Judges Sipowicz and Marino began their long journey from the far side of the game board to try and reach the fight before the security was overwhelmed.

Turn Two

Matt: The dice were on my side for a change when it came to rolling for new arrivals! Senior Judge Molinas roared into the scene astride his Lawmaster, unfortunately he was also a long way from the action but at least he he could move an awful lot faster. Psi Judge Buntz and Benedetto both appeared closer to the action, on the right table edge. Unfortunately, while I placed Benetetto behind some convenient cover, I chose to place Psi Judge Buntz as close to the enemy as possible in order to get the maximum effect from he paranormal powers as quickly as possible – this did mean that she was immediately blasted by four members of the gang who had been left on Alert Status! D'oh!



Turn One - 'Please do not attack the Securo-bot. The Securo-bot is your friend! Please Call-Me-Dennis!'



Turn Two - more Judges arrive, but a bit too close to the action...

Funky Groovy Gang (Nick)

It was whilst Matt was rolling for his reinforcements I found out that on each turn the security drone became more and more effective at calling up the judges. It was also at this point I wished I had read the special rules for the scenario just a little bit more carefully (as usual).

I decided to activate Iggy again as I would need his firepower. Also Worm, Mr Handsome and Punchy would all get their chance to shine as I realised that I could be in big trouble with nearly all the judges now on the table.

First of all as Fido was already in hand-to-hand combat with Call-Me-Dennis. Matt and I rolled the dice and once again Matt rolled awfully; however, the metallic armour of the robot meant that it (still) stood there unharmed.

Now I decided to get rid of the pesky drone – I could not afford any more judges turning up as I feared the gang would be overwhelmed far too quickly if they did. Iggy aimed and shot at the drone, blasting it to pieces. At the sight of this (or seeing the firepower the spit gun provided, no doubt) Toomey, the last security guard, failed his Will to Fight roll and decided the ranks of the unemployed were better than being dead and ran away. Not bad for one shot, Iggy now aimed his sights on the Psi judge and missed. Ah, well.

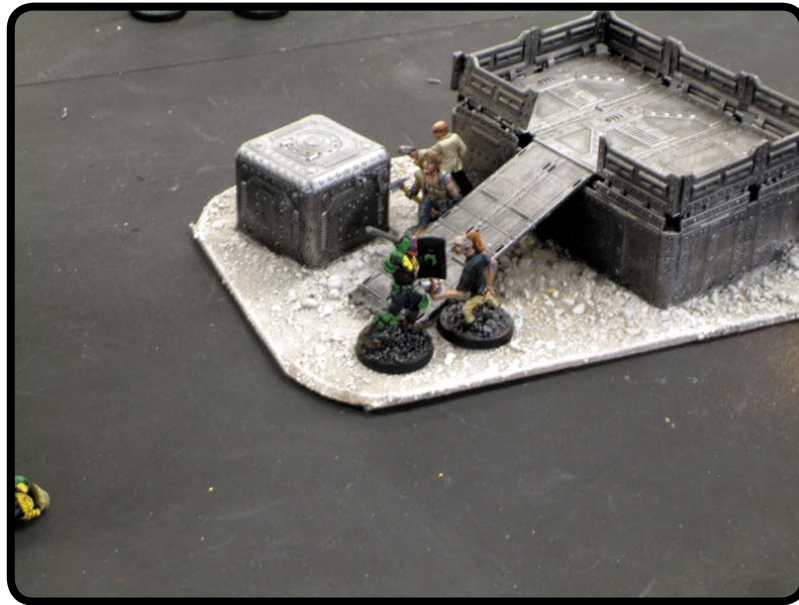
Mr Handsome and Worm then blasted away at Psi Judge Buntz with their combined firepower. A series of great rolls later and three hits had been caused, meaning a roll on the injury table was required; however, the result was a disappointing 'scratched' result – but at least Buntz would not be able to mess with my gang members' minds on Matt's next turn.

Punchy then moved up to the vehicles doors in preparation to break them open. It was at this point I read just how tough the doors were, and again wished I had read the scenario rules properly.

All in all it was not a bad turn for my gang though. The drone and last security guard were out of the picture and one of the Judges was in real trouble. Perhaps I could win this game after all...

The Forces of Law and Order (Matt)

Hmm, choosing to bring the Psi Judge onto the table as close as possible to the action proved to be a mistake, as she was immediately knocked down by a hail of fire from a group of perps hiding in cover on Alert status. Oh, well – I made a mental note not to do that again...



Turn Two - Judge Nenedetto mixes it with Worm

First things first, the fight between robot and werewolf continued by the van. And once again a series of useless rolls meant that the dogface won and then proceeded to fail to do any damage.

Having just witnessed the brutal gunning down of Psi Judge Buntz, Riot Judge Benedetto was close to three of the gang members and moved up towards the group led by Worm. This prompted a reaction shot by the gutter lawyer Rimpule, who fortunately missed. His attempt to make the nearby group of perps surrender went unheeded, so Benedetto charged the nearest enemy, Mr Handsome... and promptly lost the combat, much to Nick's merriment. Fortunately, the heavily armoured judge was far too tough for the mutant to do any harm.

After this brief show of incompetent dice rolling, all I had left to do was to move Judges Molinas, Sipowicz and Benedetto closer to the fight.



Turn Two - The main bulk of the Justice Department forces continue their advance

Turn Three

Matt: The loss of the security drone meant that there was only a one in six chance of a Judge turning up – unbelievably, considering my usual luck with dice, I rolled a double six! Judges Lorenzo and Gilland had evidently been taking their time arriving in an attempt to outflank the gang, as they arrived on Nick's table edge, right in the thick of the action. Unfortunately, I chose to position both of them as close to the action as possible, which meant that they were both immediately met with a hail of fire from almost the entire gang, weakening them both severely...

Funky Groovy Gang (Nick)

Typical. I react to the security drone and its ability to summon judges and Matt goes and rolls a double six bringing on the last two judges on my table edge. Now I am in real trouble unless I can get very lucky my gang might be headed for Resyik en masse.



Turn Three - the final Judges arrive, outflanking the Funky Groovey Gang

I activate Iggy, Worm (who then activates Rimpule) and Fido.

Worm moves and fires at Psi Judge Buntz, causing a scratch injury, meaning that she will not be able to act on Matt's turn again.

Rimpule moves rapidly away from Benedetto, I fear I may need the special skills of the lawyer with this many Judges now fighting the gang.

Then it is Iggy's turn. He sets his sights on Buntz and manages to cause a single injury; I roll the dice and inflict a minor injury to the Judge, removing her from the fight. Sadly (and as expected) Benedetto made his Will to Fight roll and stayed on the table.

For his second action Iggy turned his spit gun on the newly arrived Judge Gilland. Three hits, three injuries. Brilliant!

Then I managed to inflict another minor injury and Gilland, too, was gone from the battle. Once again the nearby judge (Lorenzo this time) made the WtF roll and would no doubt get his revenge next turn.

Fido now moved away from the Call-Me-Dennis and charged into Judge Molinas; however the end result was that neither was harmed.

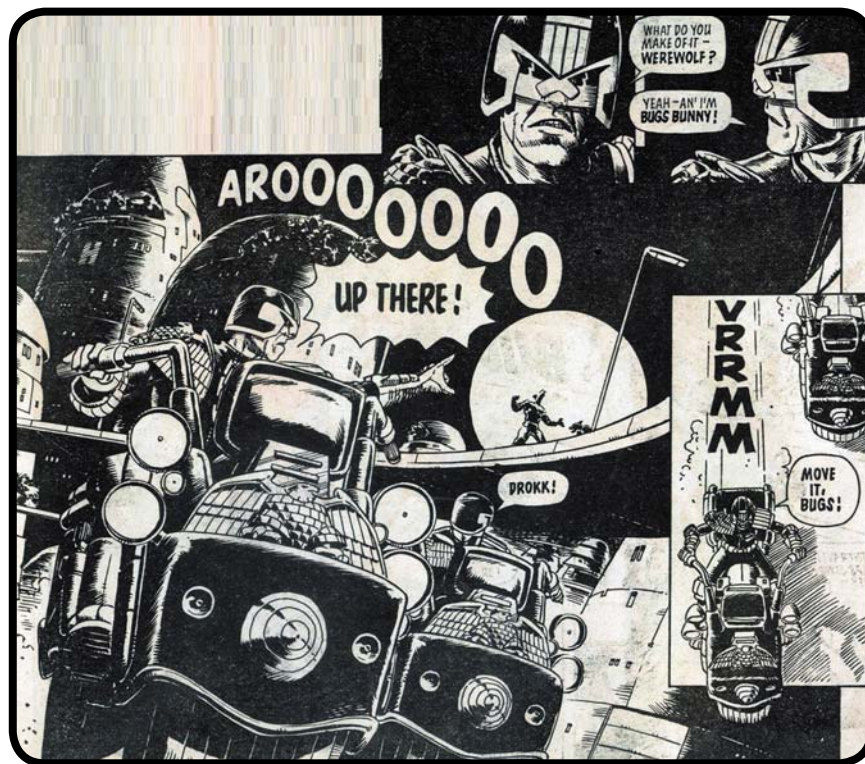
Despite the arrival of the Judges I was still in with a slim chance as with two less Judges and if Fido could manage to tie up Molinas I had some hope.

The Forces of Law and Order (Matt)

The loss of a couple of Judges in a single turn was a bit of a shock (and a record in a Mongoose game) but even now I still considered my chances to be very good at being able to stop the raid and round up the lawless desperados.



Turn Three - werewolf attack!



The Securo-Bot acted first – unfortunately, due to a quirk of its default programming that only recognised armed models as targets, the robot chose to ignore the homicidal (but unarmed) werewolf standing right next to it, instead switching to Alert status. Hmm...

My optimism was still there despite losing the melee combat between Molinas and Fido. After all, Molinas was not injured.

My optimism was still there despite the failure of Judge Lorenzo to hit the mutants in front of him with his high explosive rounds. After all, even though I had rolled badly, the Alert status fire from the gangers all missed their mark as well.

Judge Benedetto then blasted away at Worm, and... missed. By now it was readily apparent even to Nick that my optimism was beginning to fade.

Finally both Sipowicz and Marino blasted at the combat between Fido and Molinas, a fairly desperate measure that resulted in a couple of hits on both the combatants but... failing to cause any injury.

At this point, Ian ‘Doghouse’ Belcher passed by the table. Pausing briefly to examine the action, he turned to me. ‘Are you *losing* when you’re playing with the Judges?’ he asked, incredulously. I could only nod.

An awful turn. Nothing worthwhile achieved and now the intact Undercity gang would have another chance to remove a Judge or two.



Turn Three - Judge down!



Turn Three - Fido holds Judge Molinas in check

Turn Four Funky Groovy Gang (Nick)

With the situation still critical with the gang still surrounded I decided I would try to make the odds a little better by using Iggy, East Clintwood and Joan Graces to try and eliminate Judge Lorenzo whilst Fido would hopefully still continue to hold off the three judges approaching from the far end of the game table. I hoped that Judge Benedetto would continue to be ineffective so the gangers were ignoring him.

First off the fight between Fido and Molinas continued. Once again Fido was ineffectual, being unable to harm the Judge. However he was still unharmed himself and a good screen for the rest of my gang.

Iggy blasted away at Lorenzo with the Spit Gun, managing to score a couple of good wounds reducing the judge to a single hit.

East Clintwood then levelled his stump gun and fired. On scoring a hit I then proceeded to double six with the injury roll. Suddenly the man with the overcoat had boosted his notoriety and become a feared Judge Killer as Lorenzo was blown apart by the blast!

That left Joan with no immediate target, so I moved the futsie up to support Worm on the left of the gang, to help tie down Benedetto.

However with another turn gone the Judges had lost yet another badge, leaving the odds less in their favour, but I still felt that if Matt could discover how to roll higher than a one on a dice I would be in big trouble.



Turn Four - Death of a Judge

Forces of Law and Order (Matt)

Now things were getting serious as I had only four of the judges left (and the default programming of the security robot left it just about useless). I had to start doing better.

First of all I moved Judge Molinas away from the werewolf, risking the chance that he might get hurt as he did so. Fortunately Fido was ineffectual again and I was able to get a shot off with his Lawmaster's bike cannon, reducing its Hits by one. Much better.

With a terse bark of 'Hi-Ex!' Judge Marino fired at the werewolf. After failing to connect with the first shot I managed to jam the gun on the second. Now I had to admit I was wondering if Nick's amazing good fortune would continue, especially when both Benedetto and Sipowicz both proceeded to spray the area with bullets and not manage to hit anything they were aiming for.

Turn Five

Funky Groovy Gang (Nick)

By now foolish thoughts were entering my head such as, for example, 'I might actually have a chance at winning this.' Still my gang was more or less intact, although not in very good positions, and if I was able to take down Sipowicz I might be able to force the Judges to make some WTF rolls and with Matt's dice rolling you never know.



Iggy blasted away at Sipowicz but failed to inflict any sort of injury. Clint and Grubb then both moved forward, hoping to be able to help Iggy bag a judge in the next round.

The Forces of Law and Order (Matt)

For the first time in the game Nick has failed to harm any of my force; at last, my luck must be changing!

Benedetto aimed at Mr Handsome and fired. A hit, and then no injury. So he fired again. Another hit, followed by another '1' on the die roll. By this time my run of poor rolls was getting a little depressing.

Then Marino unjammed his gun and fired an incendiary into the werewolf. This is not a very nice thing to do for although

I had failed to injure the beast with the shot it was now on fire and presumably not too pleased about this!

Sipowicz then fired a couple of high explosive rounds into the werewolf, the first failed to do anything, the second was a critical hit that laid out Fido with a minor injury. At last – some payback!

Last of all Senior Judge Molinas moved in a position to be able to get a clear shot at Punchy. With the reaction fire from the mutant failing to do anything he opened up with his trusty bike cannon, inflicting another minor injury and taking a second mutant out of the fight.



Turn Five - down, Fido!

Turn Six

Funky Groovy Gang (Nick)

It had to happen sooner or later. Matt had begun to use the Judges to their full potential by the simple expedient of not having awful luck with his dice rolls. Considering I now had all four surviving Judges about to open up on my gang I needed to quickly finish them off somehow.

Iggy opened fire once more, getting multiple shots on target, Sipowicz lost one hit, then another and then her last one, with a quick throw of the dice and one minor injury later the Judge was out of the fight (and Iggy had yet another victim).

With the loss of Sipowicz, Matt had to make a couple more WtF rolls for both Molinas and Marino, I needed him to come up with one or both (unlikely I know) failing. Unfortunately after



Turn Six- Code 99 Red: Judge in distress!

the last turn he had learnt the art of not dropping the dice on a one and passed the tests with flying colours.

Following this up with some woeful shooting from the other activated gang members meant that my goose was well and truly cooked.

The Forces of Law and Order (Matt)

With Iggy Warnedon well within range Molinas opened up with his bike cannon, finally scoring a good hit and getting a minor injury result. With that one shot the rest of the mutant gang had no real chance to retrieve the situation and voluntarily failed their WtF rolls, escaping back into their turf.

Aftermath

Nick Robinson / The Funky Groovy Gang

Well that was certainly good fun. Matt's inability to do anything worthwhile for the first four turns meant that I was able to make the game close, never an easy thing when facing Judges. I made a couple of really bad mistakes in my tactics, if I had made sure I knew the special scenario rules in the first place I may have had a chance to win. By not doing so I set myself up for defeat, no matter how much bad luck my opponent would have. Even so, taking out four Judges must be some sort of record when using a small gang with a low reputation.

The Gutter Lawyer certainly showed his worth after the game by using his ability to bail out Iggy from custody,



Turn Six- Run away!



Aftermath - the surviving Justice Department forces

meaning that although I had lost a couple of good gang members in Fido and Punchy the gang would still be strong enough in future fights - especially with the credits I will spend on getting replacement gang members and better equipment.

Matt Sharp / Forces of Law and Order

Well, that was a bit of a disaster, to be honest! Even though I was eventually victorious, the loss of no less than four Judges, two security guards and a security drone before I had even managed to eliminate *one single member* of Nick's gang will probably live on in legends at Mongoose Halls for a long time to come. Of course, I'm going to blame bad dice rolling for all my ills, but I made quite a few tactical errors. First and foremost, there were a couple of times where I brought in reinforcements within range of the gang's Alert status firepower. This was because I wanted to have my forces close enough to immediately unleash their own firepower, but on both

occasions the hail of bullets was enough to stall my approach. I should have brought my forces in further away, or behind cover. Plus, Nick's muties are *tough!* A Riot Squad Judge armed with a Daystick is usually enough to flatten any juve or punk in hand to hand combat, but on this occasion he couldn't even make a dent in the tough hide of the Undercity dwellers. Fido the werewolf stood up to the combined firepower of four Judges for a couple of turns, easily stalling my advance – there was no way that I was going to leave the slaving beast behind me while I took on the rest of the gang! I think it was my only lucky rolls – for the arrival of the Judges onto the scene – that finally swung it for me. Most of the bank security forces had been wiped out in the first couple of turns, and Nick had proved adept isolating and eliminating Judges one at a time (the best tactic when facing Judges is to concentrate your firepower on a single target until it goes down!) If the Judges had been slower arriving, they would definitely have faced a harder fight. As it was, the gang was forced to flee without even attempting to get into the bank vault...

Maybe next time I visit Mongoose Halls, I'll bring along the League of Extraordinary Violence or the Children of the Revolution and there'll be some payback on the cards!

Rimpule certainly knew how the system worked, Iggy thought. A juicy bribe to a clerical support worker at the Justice Department medical facility had managed to put him in a low security holding cube meant for a slow driver, once the fine had been paid by the gutter lawyer the mutant was able to leave his cell and sneak out using the disguise Rimpule had brought with him. It would be several days before the judges realised that the dangerous felon was back on the streets recruiting new members for his gang, the reputation of which had gone up no end for taking down no less than four judges in a firefight. It was a pity about Fido though, but Iggy knew where to get himself a new pet...



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