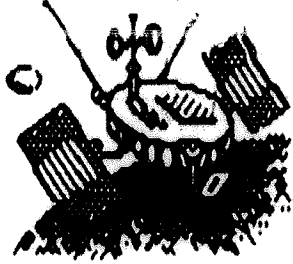


NUMBER 32



"AD ASTRA"

# Terra Traveller TIMES

January/February 1991



**WE'RE BACK!**

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**THE TIMES**  
**SUPPORTS OUR**  
**MILITARY FORCES**  
**SERVING IN**  
**THE MIDDLE EAST**

# ⊕ FORWARD OBSERVER ⊕

AN EDITORIAL BY MARK "GEO" GELINAS

## MECHA, MYTH, AND MAGIC THE MULTIVERSE MESS

In CHALLENGE 47, Julia Martin, an Associate Editor, discussed the current Multi-Genre Game trend in the FROM THE MANAGEMENT COLUMN. In closing, she asked for opinions. This is mine.

### THE PHENOMENA

There are probably few active gamers who have not had some contact with this new trend. It seems that game companies are throwing a variety of genres into one all encompassing game.

Of course there are those referees out there that have been doing this for years, with varying degrees of success. I have listened, with some apprehension, to tales of dungeon explorers ending up on the Starship Enterprise. I usually made a mental note to avoid that referee's games.

As far as game company involvement is concerned, the first attempt at this mixing of genres came with the game SHADOWRUN by FASA. When I first saw the advance promotions for the game, my impression, which proved to be fairly correct, was that it was \_\_\_ & \_\_\_ meets CYBERPUNK.

I know there are probably some of you out there who are thinking that I don't know what I am talking about while you think of the HERO system or GURPS. I am aware of these games, and will discuss them later. There may also be some obscure game that mixed genres before SHADOWRUN, but none that seems to have had as much success. At any rate, with this new trend, wizards can stand shoulder to shoulder with high tech, battle dressed warriors, but is this such a good thing?

### THE PURPOSE

Before I answer that question, let's examine a different question. Why are game companies mixing genres like this? I think the answer can be stated, as I have stated in the past, that for game companies the bottom line is the bottom line. That is not to say that all game companies are heartless money grubbers, the vast majority are not. Nevertheless, they can't be in business just for the fun of it.

A major fact in the gaming industry is that new games sell. Of course the new game must have some appeal to be able to sell, if it is just another fantasy role-playing game, it is liable to sit on the shelf unsold. FASA took a risk with SHADOWRUN, and it payed off. Other companies noting it success, either through pre-release interest and/or sales, have marketed their own brand of multi-genre game. Based on the individual strength of the game and the relative newness of the concept, at least new for game companies, some of these games have sold well, and others have not.

### THE PROBLEM

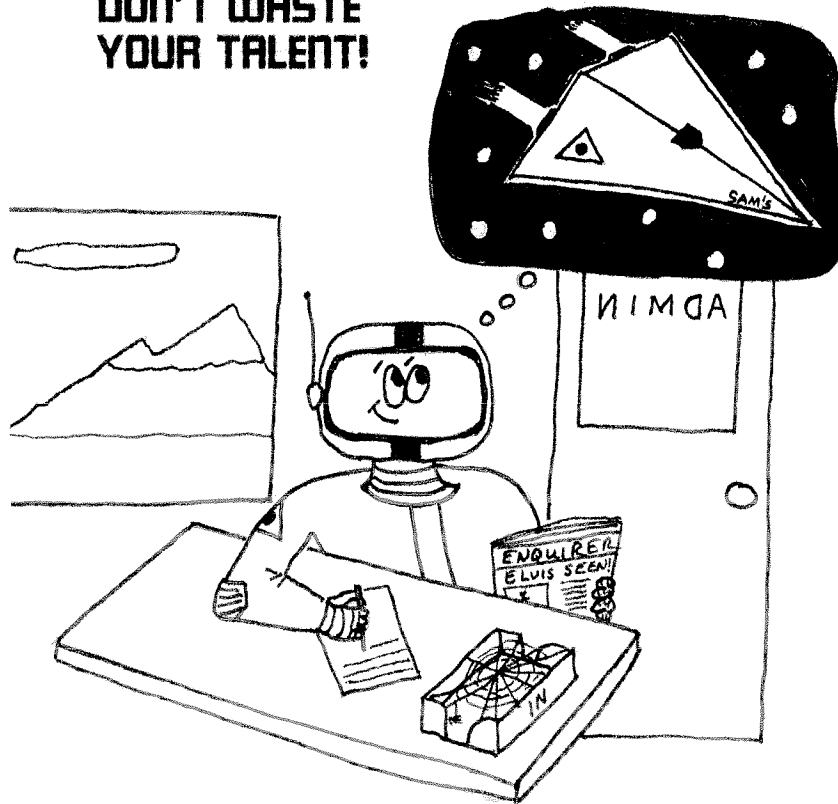
The main problem that I see with this trend is that some genres mix about as well as oil and water. Some genres, such as horror, can find a comfortable niche in just about any setting, becoming more like a theme or sub-theme of that particular setting.

The same can be said of superheroes and high technology, they are often seen in a compatible setting, although the superhero theme is the dominant one. However, unless it is done carefully, fantasy and science fiction do not go together well.

STAR WARS is a good example of science fantasy that works well. The force is magical in a sense, but its use is very limited in that story. However, even with its limitations, it threatens to dominate the whole piece to the exclusion of characters or technology. After all, how many of you have run the role playing game based on that series and found that everyone wants to be a JEDI?

In a looser setting where magic is available to practically anyone, almost everyone want that privilege. Consider, if the superiority you had over an enemy could either be based on high tech weaponry or a personal power, which would you chose? Because high tech weaponry can be taken (Continued on Page 7)

## SPACER SAM SEZ: DON'T WASTE YOUR TALENT!



## GNS

### GRANT BY GENGAR



**Aquaria/Aquaria: 316-1112:** Emperor Gengar at court today made a grant that partially satisfies the request of the Shadsanti Enclave. The Emperor has offered Ambassador Tzlartl of the Enclave tracts of land near existing Aquarian starports for the purpose of establishing port and storage facilities. These facilities would cater to Enclave vessels and encourage trade between these two states. It is significant that the Emperor did not grant the Enclave shipbuilding rights. It is speculated that this is a compromise aimed at increasing trade with the Enclave while maintaining good relations with the Prate. No Pratean reaction has been noted so far, which given the intensity of their earlier reactions is unusual.

### PARTY FOR A PRINCE

**Aquaria/Aquaria: 319-1112:** Eric, son of Gengar, Prince of Aquaria, celebrated his first birthday today. Among guests attending the celebration was the Mother-Of-Us-All.

### DERELICT DISCOVERED

**Lohor/Armor: 125-1114:** A derelict starship was discovered in the Lohor belt earlier this week. The finder of the vessel, Sam "Crash" Johnson, is a better who has worked the Lohor belt for several years. Shortly after the Navy investigated the wreck site, the area was prohibited to non-Naval traffic. Mr. Johnson has refused to give reporters any details of what he found, which has only heightened speculation. A Naval press release states that there is no possibility of contamination from the wreck, but that it was quarantined for security reasons. To date no Naval vessels have been reported missing.

### GRESHAM GONE?

**Sofar/Diaspora: 186-1118:** Unconfirmed reports reaching Sofar seem to indicate that the world of Gresham has capitulated to the Solomani. There has been no Naval confirmation of this rumor.

### WONDER WEAPON WIELDED?

**Capital/Core: 026-1121:** There are unconfirmed reports circulating that Emperor Lucan has unleashed a newly developed weapon against his opponents.



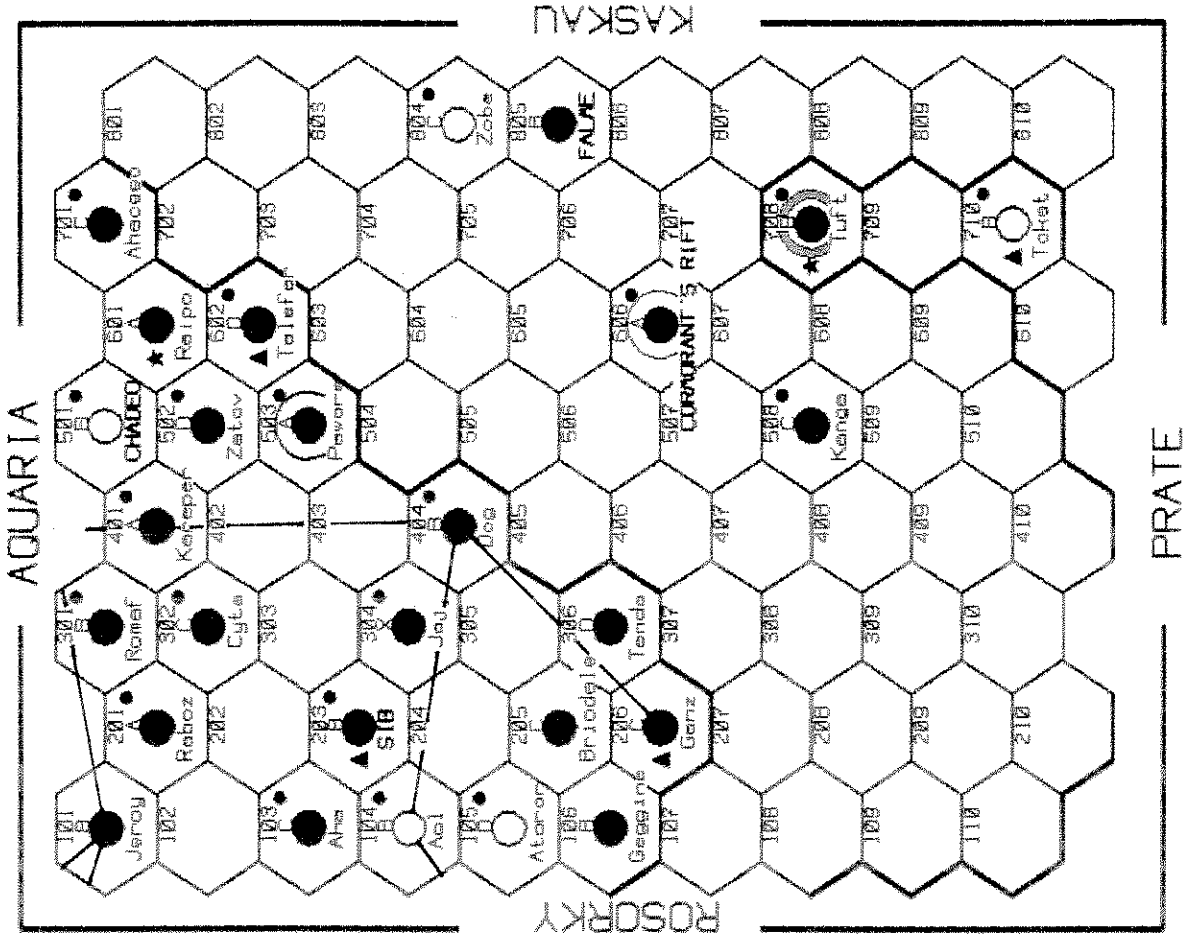
# GEO'S VARIANTS

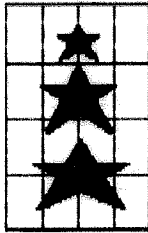
This issue brings another subsector of FULANI Sector.

## CORMORANT'S RIFT

KEY NAME	UPP	B MARKS	Z DATA	AL STAR1	STAR2
161 JEROY	B-677657-7	Ni,Xb	126	AQ F8 V	
162 ABA	C-437231-A	Ni,Lo	131	AQ M8 V	MI D
164 AOL	B-286223-9	Ni,Lo,Pa,Xb	623	AQ K8 V	
165 ATOROK	D-316338-7	Ni,Na,Lo	364	AQ M3 V	
166 GEGGINE	B-797799-6	Ag	136	AQ A7 III	
261 BAROZ	A-534486-C	Ni	432	AQ K1 V	
263 SIB	B-432ABA-A	S Na,Pa,Hi	523	AQ K3 V	
265 BRIONALE	C-437215-7	Ni,Lo	116	AQ M8 V	
266 GANZ	C-636279-7	S Lo,Xb	236	AQ F1 V	
361 ROMAF	B-6B1679-7	Fl	723	AQ M4 V	
362 CYTA	C-431891-6	Na,Pa	112	AQ K4 V	
364 JAJ	X-436885-4		921	AQ K2 III	
366 TENDA	D-882193-7	Ni,Lo,Fl	936	AQ C1 V	
461 KAREBER	A-55334P-B	Ni,Pa,Lo,Xb	824	AQ XT V	M2 D
464 BOC	B-797672-7	N Xb,O:283	122	AQ C3 V	
561 CHADDO	B-318997-A	Na,Lo,Hi	112	AQ XT V	
592 ZATOV	D-885545-7	Ni,Fl	631	AQ M6 V	
593 PAWORE	A-554411-B	Ni,Na	A 123	AQ C6 II	
598 KANGA	C-416679-7	Ni,Lo	322	IN P8 V	
661 KAIPO	A-554576-8	N Ag,NI	428	AQ T5 V	
662 TALEFAR	D-883155-7	S Ni,Lo,Fl	121	AQ T5 V	
666 CORMORANT'S RIFT	A-584957-G	Hi,Na	A 584	IN M8 V	M2 D
701 AHACKSO	C-551568-9	Ni,Pa,O:581	221	AQ T9 III	
706 TUPY	B-615645-B	N Ni,Lo	R 234	PE M1 V	
710 TORAT	B-316323-D	S Ni,Lo	116	PE M6 V	
804 ZONE	C-416576-7	Ni	421	IN M6 V	M8 D
805 PALME	B-646899-7	IN,Hi	606	IN C6 V	

Cormorant's Rift is subsector F of Fulani. Its highest population is 58 billion on Sib, and the highest tech is G on Cormorant's Rift. The world of Rabor is an Imperial Estate World. The Imperial family and many nobles have large estates on there. Large tracts of land are also held in reserve for future grants. Briadale is owned by World Builders, LLC, a terraforming corporation. Tenda is a relatively unimportant world whose few inhabitants see no need to form a government. Pawore is currently controlled by Aquaria Biotech, LLC. This corporation is seeking ways to make this otherwise ideal world safe for habitation. Many dangerous life forms dwell in this world's seas. The system of Cormorant's Rift has an abundance of anti-matter which it trades to the Kasakas who use it for fuel. In exchange Cormorant's Rift gets access to the high technology of Kasaku. Taft is a Red Zone because the system is the primary Fraternal Naval Research Facility. It also has an extensive Naval Exercise Range.





# DIASPORA: STARLANE TO THE CORE

BY MARK "GEO" GELINAS: HWG DIASPORA ANALYST

## PERSONALITY

**SECTOR COMMANDANT  
IMPERIAL MARINE CORP  
GENERAL ROBERT BIIRANO III**

Service: Marines Terms: 8 Rank: O-10  
UPP: 7759A9 Age: 54 Born: 123-1066

**HEMOWORLD:** Oreo(2540 Masillia B1009AD-F  
Hi,In,Na,Cp 403) B, Small, Vacuum, Desert, Hi  
Population, Extreme Law, High Stellar.

**SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS:** Graduate Imperial  
Naval Academy, Attache, Command College,  
Commando School, Command College

**MEDALS AND RIBBONS:** Combat Ribbons x 6,  
Command Clusters x 5, Purple Hearts x 5,  
MCUF's x 6, Ship's Boat Pilot Wings, Commando  
Insignia, Pistol Sharpshooter Ribbon, Rifle  
Marksman Ribbon, Ship's Troop Insignia with 7  
Stars.

**SKILLS:** Leader-4, Recon-3, Combat  
Rifleman-3, Handgun-2, Ship's Boat-2, Vacc  
Suit-2, VRF Gauss Gun-1, Survival-2, Tactics-1,  
Computer-0, Grav Vehicle-0, Rifle-0

**BENEFITS:** 9mm Autopistol, Travellers Aid  
Society Membership, Cr 1,800

**DESCRIPTION:** The General stands 1.84  
meters tall and weighs 104 kilograms. He has  
dark brown hair which has flecks of gray. He  
keeps his hair cut short. His eyes are a steel  
gray. Not a man of high fashion, he prefers to  
wear his uniform or simple civilian clothes. He  
always wears his Academy Ring except when  
going into combat.

**HISTORY:** Robert was born on Oreo and spent  
most of his life there. His father, also a Marine  
Officer moved to Diaspora for a new post and  
promotion. Robert was accepted in the  
Academy with an athletic scholarship. He  
entered the Corp upon graduation and has  
served a distinguished career with the  
Marines. He only recently rose to the rank of  
Commandant when his predecessor was killed  
during the Diasporan counteroffensive against  
the Solomani incursion.

## TIMES 31 ERRATA

**KASAKAN SCOUT-** The strength of the EMS arrays are  
incorrect. Passive EMS is Interstellar range, and Active EMS is Far  
Orbit range. The listed task values are correct.

**ROSORKY SUBSECTOR-** The X-Boat lines were  
inadvertently left off the subsector map. X-Boat lines run from  
Ladate (610 Alea) to Soserag; from Soserag to Rosorky; from  
Rosorky to Nedi; from Nedi to Byto; from Byto to Aol (104  
Cormorant's Rift).

# DARK RIVER DATA

## LIBRARY DATA UPDATE

**Church Democracy-** A description of the  
representative democracy found on some Va'can States worlds.  
In order to be eligible for election, a candidate must be affiliated  
with the Church of Nurom, but not necessarily of the priesthood.

**Dadissa Plant-** A plant native to the world of Hep/Scorpion,  
renown for its water collection capabilities. A chemical derivative  
of this plant increases fluid retention in humans, which is a  
valuable commodity on that mostly barren world. The plant has  
thick, tough, orange leaves.

**GENARO LCC-** The military shipbuilding firm of the Va'can  
States. Its shipyard is at Nurom/Scorpion and it constructs all  
vessels at TL 15.

**Hep (405 Scorpion C-552134-7 Ni,Po,Lo)-**  
This world serves as a retreat for the priests of the Nurom  
Redefined Universal Church. The permanent population represents  
the instructors who live there, but thousands of visitors and  
hundreds of students visit Hep each year. Non-church affiliated  
members are welcome to visit the world, but are not encouraged  
to travel beyond the enclave set aside for them.

**HOLP-** The term for the High Priest of Holon of the Nurom  
Redefined Universal Church.

**MIKORETTI SHIPBUILDERS LCC-** The civilian  
shipbuilding firm of the Va'can States. MIKORETTI has shipyards in  
the systems of Ondet/Efusa Rift and Jeonetti/Efusa Rift. All  
MIKORETTI vessels are constructed at TL 13.

**Roberto XXIII (b. 342-1060)-** Current HOLP of the  
Church of Nurom. Born as Christopher Bukar of the planet Nurom.  
HOLP Roberto is the 125 person to serve in this capacity since the  
founding of the Church of Nurom.

**Weowab (506 Scorpion B-551645-6 S  
Ni,Po)-** This world is a major entry point to the Va'can States.  
As such it is a showcase world to travellers from outside that  
state. One unique feature of Weowab is that it has a  
representative democracy, called a "church democracy", while  
most other member worlds have governments more dominated by  
the priesthood of the Va'can States.

## CAUGHT IN THE CURRENT

### SCENARIOS IN DARK RIVER A DELIBERATE PLANT PLAYERS' INFORMATION

The player characters are adventurers who are travelling  
from Casioxes to Mel for a lucrative job prospect. They will be  
taking independent transport to Weowab. From there, they will be  
using Va'can transport to Hep, Lalobak, and Hadana. From there  
they will take independent transport to Mel. While on Casioxes,  
they are approached by a representative of Akko research. He is  
offers to pay for the characters' transport to Mel if they  
perform a small job while on Hep. Akko research is interested in  
obtaining a quantity of Dadissa plant in order to develop a water  
retention medication. The representative will provide the  
characters with a 1 kiloliter cargo module for the samples.

### REFEREE'S INFORMATION

The plant the characters seek is outside the enclave.  
The authorities will not grant any passes to the outside. They  
may be able to bribe their way out (doubtful) but most likely they  
will have to covertly leave the compound to get the samples. Once  
clear of the retreat, they will be in the barrens and encounter no  
one until after they find the plants. Then they will stumble across  
an exercise of a covert organization known as RED. Of course if  
they are discovered, RED won't want them to spread the word of  
their presence on Hep and possible association with the Va'can  
States. Adjust the size of the force to the characters.

# QUICK REVIEWS

## HINTS AND HARDWARE

A SERVICE TO  
MEGATRAVELLER  
PLAYERS AND REFS

### A WORD FROM COLONEL K.

This issue the Colonel brings you a Solomani Corvette.

#### SOLOMANI MISSILE CORVETTE LM-23 CLASS

**CRAFT ID:** Missile Corevette, Type LM, TL 14,  
Mcr 985,899

**HULL:** 900/2250, Disp=1000, Config=3SL,  
Armor=43G, Unloaded=12,794 Tons,  
Loaded=13,526 Tons

**POWER:** 170/226, Fusion=15,300 Mw,  
Dur=20/60

**LOCO:** 108/144, Man=3, 68/90, Jump=2,  
NOE=40 kph, Cruise=750kph,  
Top=1000kph, MaxAccel=3 G's,  
Agility=2

**COMMO:** Radio=Sys x 2, Maser=Sys x 2,  
Laser=Sys x 2

**SENSORS:** EMMask, Radio Jammer=System  
Densitometer=250m, Neutrino=10kw  
ActEMS=Far Orbit x 2,  
PasEMS=InterStellar x 2,  
EMS Jammer = Far Orbit,  
ActObjScan=Rout, ActObjPin=Rout,  
PasObjScan=Rout, PasObjPin=Rout,  
PasEngScan=Simp, PasEngPin=Rout

**OFF:** Msl=x06, PartAcc=002, Plasma=x03  
Batt = 1 Batt = 1 Batt = 2  
Bear = 1 Bear = 1 Bear = 2

**DEF:** DefDm = +10, Nuclear Damper = 1

**CONTROL:** Comp=8Fibx3, Panel=HoloLinkx100  
Special=HeadsUpHoloX6, LgHoloX2  
Env = Basic Env, Basic LS, Ext LS,  
Grav Plates, Inert Comp

**ACCOM:** Crew=34 x 1(Bridge=2, Eng=3,  
Maint=1, Gunner=9, Flight=3,  
Troops=10, Command=4, Medic=2),  
Bunks=26, Stateroom=5, Low=10,  
SubCraft=Armored Gig x 1

**OTHER:** Fuel=7455 kl, Cargo=210, Scoops,  
Fuel Purification=30 Hours, ECP,  
Missile Mag= 360 Missiles (Nuke),  
ObjSize=Large, EMLevel=Faint

### TASK LIBRARY

Sensor Tasks (Difficulty based on range).

To perform a sensor operation:  
[Varies], Sensor Ops, Edu, 6 seconds

ActObjScan (Active sensor search for objects)  
ActObjPin (Active sensor pinpoint of located objects)  
PasObjScan (Passive sensor search for objects)  
PasObjPin (Passive sensor pinpoint of located objects)  
PasEngPin (Passive sensor pinpoint of located sources)  
M L UL D UD RG CN PLFO XO IP+  
- - S S S R R D F I -

PasEngScan (Passive sensor search for sources)  
M L UL D UD RG CN PLFO XO IP IS+  
- - - - S S S R D F I -

### RATING SYSTEM CATEGORIES

Player Use- How useful is the product to the player.  
Referee Use- How useful is the product to the referee.  
Artwork- A general evaluation of artwork and graphics.  
Content- A general evaluation of overall content which includes layout, ease of use, quality of work, and other factors.  
Overall- A summary rating of the other categories.

#### LEVELS

✓ - Poor quality or of little use.  
✓✓ - Fair quality of of some use.  
✓✓✓ - Average quality or of average use.  
✓✓✓✓ - Above average quality or of above average use.  
✓✓✓✓✓ - Excellent quality or very useful.

## MEGATRAVELLER

### KNIGHTFALL

GAME DESIGNERS' WORKSHOP \$10.00

By Joe Fugate, Sr.

Players Use ✓✓ Referee Use ✓✓✓✓

Artwork ✓✓✓ Content ✓✓✓✓

Overall ✓✓✓1/2

Contains a complete campaign set in Masillia using the Cinematic Nugget format first seen in TRAVELLER'S DIGEST. Included are star maps and complete world data for Masillia Sector.

### FLAMING EYE

DIGEST GROUP PUBLICATIONS \$12.95

By Thom Gressman

Players Use ✓✓ Referee Use ✓✓✓✓

Artwork ✓✓✓ Content ✓✓✓✓

Overall ✓✓✓

Contains two complete campaigns which can be combined for one long campaign. Set on the Vland/Lishun border.

### GENERAL

#### CHALLENGE #45

GAME DESIGNERS' WORKSHOP \$3.50

Players Use ✓✓ Referee Use ✓✓✓✓

Artwork ✓✓ Content ✓✓✓✓

Overall ✓✓✓1/2

Two MEGATRAVELLER adventures and a ship's locker. Also has information for pre-gravitic space flight.

#### CHALLENGE #46

GAME DESIGNERS' WORKSHOP \$3.50

Players Use ✓✓ Referee Use ✓✓✓✓

Artwork ✓✓ Content ✓✓✓✓

Overall ✓✓✓1/2

Special Horror issue. Contains a MEGATRAVELLER and a 2300 AD adventure with a horrific theme.

### TRAVELLERS' DIGEST #2 1

DIGEST GROUP PUBLICATIONS \$4.95

Players Use ✓✓ Referee Use ✓✓✓

Artwork ✓✓✓1/2 Content ✓✓✓

Overall ✓✓✓

The last issue of TRAVELLERS' DIGEST and the conclusion of the grand tour. The second adventure has a good rebellion flavor to it. Also included are 2 subsectors of Zarushagar. Medical Digest has a thorough look at low passage berths.

### VOYAGES #13

STARLANCE PUBLICATIONS \$2.75

Players Use ✓✓ Referee Use ✓✓✓✓

Artwork ✓✓ Content ✓✓✓✓

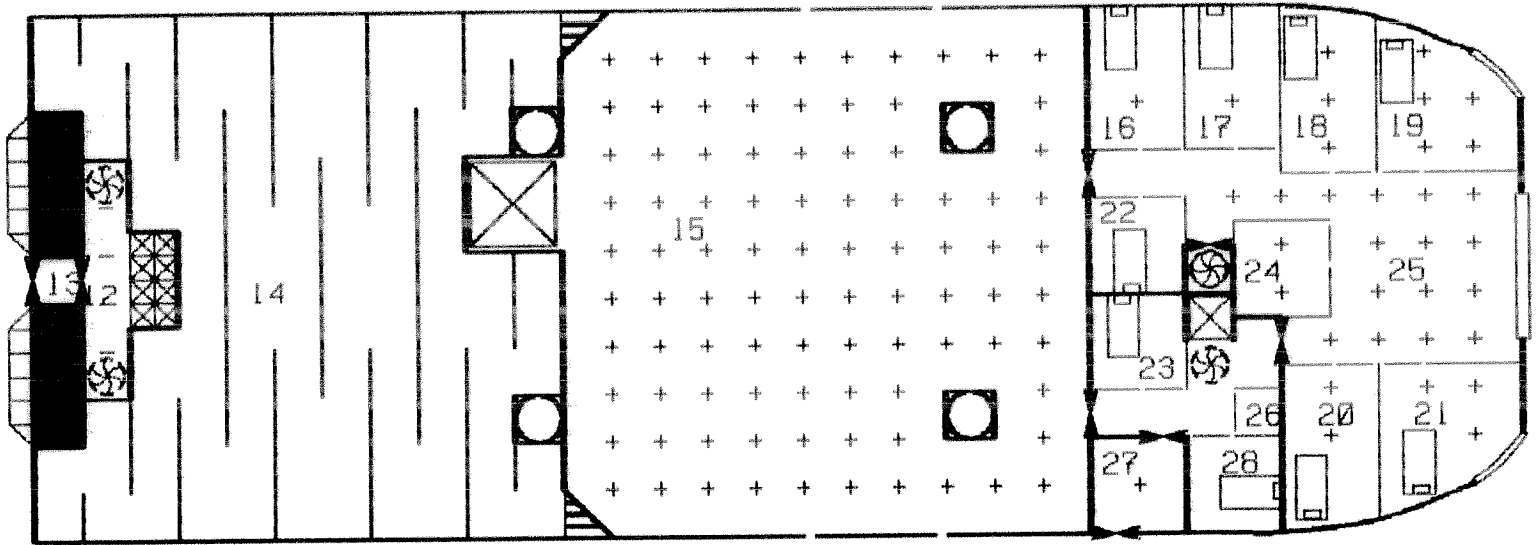
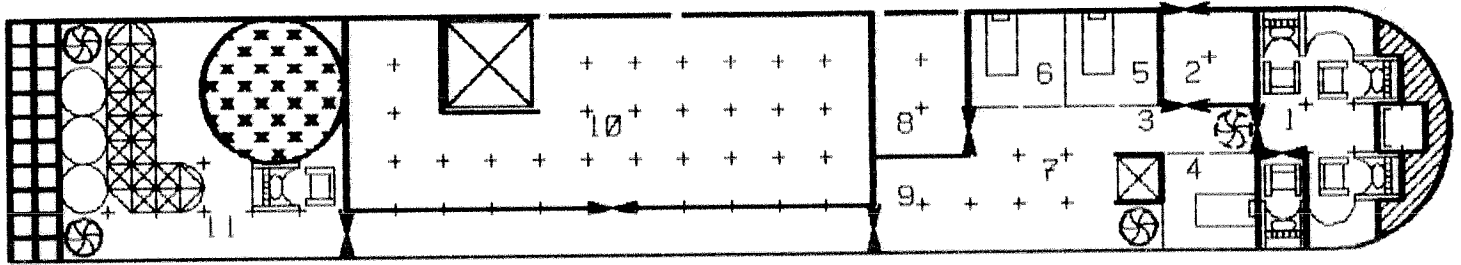
Overall ✓✓✓1/2

Contains a short story set in the MEGATRAVELLER background (but before the Shattered Imperium). Also has deck plans and description of a patrol vessel.

# VASHI CLASS

## AQUARIAN FREE MERCHANT

SCALE  
1.5 METERS



### DECK PLAN KEY

#### UPPER DECK

1. **Bridge**- The control area of the ship. The pilot's console is to the port of the centerline, the engineer's console to the starboard. The navigation station is outboard of the engineering station. Aft of the navigation station is fire control. A computer work station is aft of the pilot's console.
2. **Air Lock**- A standard ship's air/lock.
3. **Passageway**- The iris valve on the overhead of this area leads to the ship's laser turret.
- 4-6. **Staterooms**- A standard crew stateroom with a single bunk and a fresher.
7. **Crew's Lounge**- An area for the crew to relax and eat meals.
8. **Vehicle Bay**- A garage area for a ship's vehicle. Since a vehicle is not included with the ship, this area is often used for other purposes.
9. **Galley**- A food preparation area for use by the crew.
10. **Upper Cargo Bay**- A cargo storage area with a cargo lift in the aft portion and a cargo door to the port. To the starboard is a passageway which connects the crew area to the engine room.
11. **Upper Engine Room**- Besides an engineering control console, this area contains from fore to aft, the power plant, part of the fuel purification plant, and the jump drive.

#### LOWER DECK

12. **Lower Engine Room**- This area contains the remainder of the fuel purification plant and the maneuver drives.
13. **Air Lock**- A standard air/lock.
14. **Fuel Tank**- The ship's baffled fuel tankage with scoops at the forward port and starboard sides. Two of the ship's landing legs are enclosed by the fuel tank.
15. **Lower Cargo Bay**- The larger cargo storage area. The cargo lift is in the aft portion. Cargo doors open to the port and starboard. The remaining landing legs are enclosed here.
- 16-21. **Staterooms**- A standard sized stateroom used for passenger service. Equipped to Aquarian standards.
- 22-23. **Staterooms**- Crew staterooms similar to 4. Stateroom 22 is sometimes used for passenger service.
24. **Galley**- A area for the ship's steward to prepare meals.
25. **Passenger Lounge**- A place for passengers to relax, be entertained, and eat meals.
26. **Ship's Locker**- A secure place for ship's equipage.
27. **Air/Aqua Lock**- A specially designed air/lock which can allow access or egress to a fluid environment.
28. **Sick Bay**- A area for treatment of illnesses or injuries.

NOTE: The area around room 23 is normally secured to passengers at the forward iris valve. The iris valve leading from the passenger area into the cargo bay is also normally secured. The small trunk forward of room 22 leads down to the ship's missile turret and has the missile magazine. Its iris is locked.

# MEGATRAVELLER

## AQUARIAN FREE MERCHANT

**CRAFT ID:** Merchant, Type MF, TL 13,  
MCR 48.19 (includes 20% discount)  
**HULL:** 180/450, Disp=200, Config=4SL,  
Armor=40G, Unloaded= 1180 Tons,  
Loaded= 2355 Tons  
**POWER:** 5/10, Fusion = 738 Mw, Dur=28/84  
**LOCO:** 3/7, Man=1, 5/10, Jump=2,  
NOE=170 kph, Cruise=750kph,  
Top=1000kph, MaxAccel=1 G, Ag=0  
**COMMO:** Radio=Sys x 1, Maser=Plan x 1  
**SENSORS:** ActEMS=FarOrb, PasEMS=InterStellar  
ActObjScan=Rout, ActObjPin=Rout,  
PasEngScan=Rout  
**OFF:** PLaser = x02, Msl = x02  
Batt = 1 Batt = 1  
Bear = 1 Bear = 1  
**DEF:** DefDm = +3  
**CONTROL:** Comp=2 x 3, Panel=HoloLink x 32,  
Special=HeadsUpHoloX2,  
Env = Basic Env, Basic LS, Ext LS,  
Grav Plates, Inert Comp, A/L x 3  
**ACCOM:** Crew=5(Pilot, Engineer, Gunner,  
Steward, Medic), Sm Stateroom=5,  
Stateroom=6, SubCraft=27 kl space  
**OTHER:** Fuel=459 kl, Cargo=1101 kl, Scoops,  
Fuel Purif=24 Hrs, Mag=10 Msls,  
ObjSize=Ave, EMLevel=Faint

The Aquarian Free Merchant is a small merchant vessel designed with the independent trader in mind. Its tech level of 13 is the average tech level in the Aquarian Empire, and therefore this vessel is fairly common in and around Aquarian space.

An industrious merchant just carrying freight and passengers can make a small profit with this craft. The vessel is fitted with a fuel purification plant, and if the owner uses its capabilities, the margin of profit is larger. Because of the sometimes hostile areas Aquarian merchants operate in, this vessel comes with a modest array of weaponry.

Being of Aquarian manufacture, this vessel has some features unique to this amphibious race. For example, each of the large staterooms is equipped with a water tank for passenger comfort. The ship can land in water and one of its accesses is a water lock. No subcraft comes with the vessel, but there is room for a small air/raft. Some merchants who make frequent water landings use a small boat instead. Still others use the area for secure storage of valuable cargo.

### TASK LIBRARY

Sensor Tasks (Difficulty based on range).

To perform a sensor operation:  
[Varies], Sensor Ops, Edu, 6 seconds

ActObjScan (Active sensor search for objects)  
ActObjPin (Active sensor pinpoint of located objects)  
PasEngScan (Passive sensor search for sources)  
M L U D UD RG CN PL FO XO P+  
- - S S S R R D F I -



## NEW SOFTWARE QUANTUM LEAP

### EARTH/CYBERTECH

A program which defends against the Whirling Vortex by bypassing it. An unmodified attack roll is made against the cyberjockey who gets his normal modifiers. If the Vortex succeeds it destroys 1D6 programs in the volume before the cyberjockey passes on. PERMANENT. VOLUME: 5 PRICE: 1,000 Lv

### CYBERPUNK

CLASS: Attack STRENGTH: 6

The Quantum Leap is a program which bypasses a Whirling Vortex. Upon entering a square which contains a Whirling Vortex, the netrunner makes a normal attack roll. If he succeeds, he may pass through that square with no effect. Quantum Leap does not destroy the Vortex. The Quantum Leap cost \$3,000. APPEARANCE: DUNGEON INTERFACE: A gold rimmed portal appears, when the netrunner steps through he is beyond the Vortex. TRONNIC INTERFACE: A stylized graphic tunnel. MEGA-CITY INTERFACE: A subway entrance appears which when entered will take the netrunner beyond the pool.

(FORWARD OBSERVER cont.)- away more easily than personal power, most would choose the later, and the science gets lost in the shuffle. I have observed several multi-genre games and this seems to be the case in any which involve a magic system.

Another, lesser, problem is that of game mechanics. In order to fit all the genres into a game system that will work for all of them, game mechanics must be developed. Sometimes the resulting mechanics can be quite convoluted. At least one company has taken their original game system, developed for a fantasy genre, and has used it for other games that they have released, with a varying degree of success.

### THE PRACTICAL WAY

In spite of its problems, the multi-genre game system does have the benefits of allowing greater variety in a game. It also allows the player to use a character from one genre in another, if the referee allows such things, and there are some who do. However, there is a more practical way of going about it than lumping all the genres into one game.

That way is to build a basic system and release supplemental material for other genres. More than one game company has done this successfully. TSR did this in that it took the system from its original game and used it for other games.

HERO GAMES is probably the first company which build a series of games from a basic system. After they had several years of experience with the system, and learned some valuable lessons, they have revised the whole system, including their original game. STEVE JACKSON GAMES followed HERO's lead with the GURPS basic game.

Both of these two latter game systems have a variety of genres available to the referee, but the referee is free to choose a few or as many of them as he cares to mix.

The WORKSHOP is now building a family of games based on the successful 2nd Edition TWILIGHT:2000 rules. I would not be surprised to see the next editions of 2300 AD and TRAVELLER modified to use that system. In fact, since 2300 AD is the future of TWILIGHT:2000 it would be natural for GDW to do so.

As it is, the TWILIGHT family of games covers the post holocaust genre (TWILIGHT itself), the pulp fiction genre (to an extent with CADILLACS AND DINOSAURS), the modern adventure genre (MERC:2000), and modern horror (DARK CONSPIRACY). The WORKSHOP could conceivably expand on this line to cover almost any genre or time period, although some would be admittedly harder than others.

I think this is the real trend for the future of the gaming industry. Once the novelty of these multi-genre games has worn off, most referees will probably put them on the shelf and go with a single genre game. Of course there are some who will never switch in the first place.

# SO YOU WANT TO BE AN ALIEN?

BY JOHN CRIDER  
PART V

## DO ASLAN HAVE RELIGION?

When an anthropologist studies a culture, one of the most influential areas of a culture is its guiding philosophy or religion. In fact, no great civilization on Earth existed without some unifying philosophy or religion to bring together the people to do great things. Despite this fact, in the gaming environment, religion is not considered unless it figures directly into the campaign. The player characters themselves rarely are active in religious activities, which at first seems to be a trivial point until you realize that the culture's guiding philosophy will influence how and why a character reacts to a situation. The limitations imposed also brings out a more realistic character and make the play more challenging.

So for our first look at Alien culture, let's look at religion. The referee must make the first and most important decision: is there a Supreme Being? And if so, how much does that being influence the actions of mortal?

The answer takes one of several forms, each of which creates certain limitations.

-There is no Supreme Being: This means that all events in the universe are random and without purpose. Luck dice rolls, in theory, should not be used. All religions are useful only for the control and direction of people.

-A Supreme Being exists, but doesn't affect actions of people: The "free will" theory run amok, but it gives direction to the universe and all within it. Religions attempt to serve their purpose, but may be corrupted due to the lack of "guidance from above."

-A Supreme Being affects mortal history at significant times only: This allows the Supreme Being the advantage of self revelation and providing guidance to entire cultures through either prophets (Chosen Ones to speak the Supreme Being's message) or direct Supreme intervention. This will allow the synchronization of entire cultures to the Supreme Being's plan. Notice this would most likely produce a type of coordination of all sentient cultural religions in overall philosophy. This is a happy medium between a Supreme Being that does everything and one that does nothing.

-The Supreme Being takes an active role in the lives of mortals: In this universe, the Supreme Being knows everything about everyone and every action has a purpose. People receive divine inspiration often, and talking to the Supreme Being becomes a natural and casual affair. The good are rewarded and the wicked are punished. Every person is a pawn to be used and to ask favors. The referee can literally make anything happen in this universe. A few notes at this point. Organized religions may occur in all versions of the universe, though major similarities in religions of homeworlds without contact should only be possible if the Supreme Being exercises some influence on the people. Also, organized religion that opposes the Supreme Being's plans may be present in all universes (except if the Deity personally zaps all offenders). False prophets are a recurring theme in history.

With an active Supreme Being, there should not be one true religion since geographic and demographic boundaries make distribution of this one religion throughout the universe impossible. That doesn't mean that some of the religions don't claim this title. But all related religions should reflect the consolidation of purpose, the same goal even without prior contact.

The goal of all religions should be determined by the referee. After the religion's goals are defined, the only remaining details to work out are dogma, the rules imposed by mortals to carry out the Supreme Being's plan.

Some cultures do not perceive of a Supreme Being with the same perspective of organized religions, however, they follow a guiding philosophy to maintain order in its own way. In a universe with an active Supreme Being, this philosophy should share most of the Supreme Being's goals. Since this guiding philosophy has its own dogma, we will include it under the general title of religion.

Once religions are established, and dogmatic rules and traditions are written, then the religions must be brought into the culture of all Alien races, which will affect all characters, player and non-player.

After integrating the religions into the native cultures, then the effects of Alien contact must be determined. A particular religion that is strange in one culture may seek to expand its influence by gathering Aliens of another culture into its folds through missionary work. The expansion of religion, if successful,

will then impact the native culture. This aspect of religion is sadly overlooked by many referees.

The effects of religion on a character will take place on several levels. Early experience with religion will affect the character's actions to some degree. If a character is brought up in a vegetarian culture, he may chose to remain vegetarian even if he rejects the religious dogmatic rules.

Eventually, a character will come to accept some form of religion to some degree, whether is a philosophy or dogmatic entity. Notice that a refusal to believe in a Supreme Being is also considered a philosophy of sorts. So a being which rejects his childhood religion will eventually find something to believe in.

Every being will also have a different depth of belief in his accepted religion. Some people find the companionship nice when in public, but in private, the dogma seems forgotten. Every individual has his own true depth of devotion and displayed depth of devotion. To make a character come alive, both will have to be determined.

So once again how does all this relate to how the game is played? Since the referee is the creator and master of his universe, he must handle the job of Supreme Being, deciding whether or not to exist and the amount of interaction with all races. No one else can do it for him. It is up to the referee to decide the goals of the religions of different races, their religious history, and build up a dogma appropriate to the evolved culture and race. When the dogmas are drawn up and documented, making the information available to all the players as necessary will ensure the players have a more vibrant view of their culture and its history. From there it is up to the players.

When drawing up the characters, the player should have an idea of the culture the character was raised in, including religion. Note the character's parents' religion (determined by referee, dice, or player) on the character's sheet. Who knows, this background information may affect the outcome of an adventure someday. The player should feel free to "flesh out" the rest of the character. This includes accepted religion and depth of acceptance. The depth of acceptance will significantly affect all the actions of a character. The player must know enough about the dogma to support the level chosen, otherwise the character will appear shallow and non-committed. The level of acceptance is not necessarily a number, but rather a feeling. It will change over a character's lifetime based upon significant events (like Moses at the burning bush) or just by the normal tendency towards religion when death gets close. It will be dynamic, changing in nuances from moment to moment. But if this factor is forgotten, then it will change wildly or unpredictably.

The incorporation of religion into a campaign is difficult and requires open minds to run properly. But if successful, it will add a whole new dimension to the universe, Alien cultures, characters, and maybe even players. It may be argued that novice players may not be able to keep up with such a complicated system. If this is true, then play a human. This way the religion and religious depth will be run with the player's own feeling and beliefs. When the player is ready to master a new religion for a character, then the player is ready to play an Alien.

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## SPACE HAIKU

BY GEO

### MERCURY

Swiftly fleeing orb,  
Blasted ever by the sun  
Scorched and barren.

### VENUS

Cloud wrapped maiden,  
Brilliant in skies above,  
Evening or morn.

### EARTH

Sol's brightest jewel,  
Blessed with air and water,  
The home of much life.



⊕PARTING SHOTS⊕  
**VARIETY IN ROLE PLAYING**  
 GUEST SHOT  
 BY SCOTT "MAD DOG" MADDOW

Listen to this example of a MEGATRAVELLER game and tell me if it sounds familiar:

Ref: OK, everyone make make a difficult perception roll and let me know the results.

Varn: (an ex-army commando) I make it, thanks to my Recon-4.

Will: (an ex-army commando) I make it, thanks to my Recon-4.

Lou: (an ex-army commando) I got it, my Recon-4 saved me though.

Phil: (a young scout) The sky is blue, lo the grass is green.

Ref: I guess that means you didn't make it, eh Phil?

See the pattern? This is great if the adventure revolves around military action (although Phil may not think so). There is a problem when Varn, Will, and Lou always play a character that just happens to have Recon-4 and Combat Rifleman-5. Why if those prerequisites are not met, the character is a hopeless case who won't survive a minute of action. Let me ask this: where is the fun if there is never a chance of being suprized, or missing the target, or failing to repair a vital piece of equipment.

Lack of variety is long reaching and often robs a game of fun and excitement from referee's and players alike. A good idea is to try something different every now and then. If you are in the middle of a campaign, ask your, ref if you could try something, maybe just for a single run to see if you like it. For example, if you always played a technical type character, send your character to school for a month or two of game time and bring in a character trained for combat. If you have been playing a "ground pounder", try playing a "spacer". Most referees will agree if your attempt at something new will not adversely affect the game. He may feel that a little variety will spice things up. If it turn out that it was not fun, you have not lost anything, and you have provided your referee with a fully developed NPC. He could use him later or let a player who is visiting your group use him.

As a player, you may wish to consider variety in the group for another reason: lack of variety may force your group into situations that are not necessarily desirable. For example let's look back at the same gaming group who opened this article.

Ref: Varn, Will, and Lou, as combat veterans you hear a familiar sound - the hum of a heavy grav vehicle.

Varn: I jump behind a rock and ready my RAM grenade launcher!

Will: Me too!

Lou: I also!

Phil: Hey, where did everybody go?

Ref: Well, those behind cover notice a very large grav tank, and your military experience also tells you that your weapons will do little more than scratch the paint job. Phil, this ominous looking vehicle sprouting bigger weapons than even your party carries cuts you off from where you figure the rest of the group has gone.

Phil: I carefully and slowly remove my gun belt and let it drop. Then I raise my hands.

Ref: These two K'Kree wearing battle dress come out of the tank and escort you aboard. Soon after, you guys hiding behind the rock see the tank head off towards the east.

Varn: Boy, was he stupid!

Will: Yeah! And what a wimp!

Lou: What they said!

Well things look pretty bleak as Phil is the only one who knows how to fly the starship, or even have an inkling as to how to operate its radio, or bring the power plant up to provide power to the silly thing in the first place. It looks like those tough commandos are just going to have to rescue poor Phil.

Notice how complicated things have become? Of course there is some humor here, poor Phil staring down the barrel of a K'Kree Portable Fusion Gun armed with only a TL 9 laser pistol. Of course there is also some opportunity for adventure here, as the commandos will have to rescue Phil or learn to like vegetables, being stuck on a K'Kree world. This lack of variety does limit the group's options however.

If there had been more variety in the group, maybe this scenario would have worked out differently. The other players would not have assumed that their pilot was a seasoned combat veteran able to recognize a threat, and they might have warned him. Of course they could still abandon their "friend", but cold starting a fusion power plant is not something you learn by trial and error.

In closing, the bottom line is give it a try. Do something different and don't get caught in a gaming rut. It's only a game. Fun is what is important.

### ADS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Classified Ads are \$.50 for 1 month's printing of 25 words or less.

#### DARK RIVER: A SECTOR DIVIDED

The first printing of this supplement has sold out. However, MGE is willing to produce more for those who did not have an opportunity to get a copy. Send \$5.00 to Mark Gelinis, Box 50014, Ladson, SC 29456. Orders from England should include an extra \$1.50 if they want the supplement mailed Air Mail.

#### LIBRARY DATA UPDATE, VOLUME 11

Now available in one place, all the updates which have appeared in the TIMES from Issue 26 through Issue 31. Send a legal sized SASE for a copy to LIBRARY DATA UPDATE, C/O Mark Gelinis, Box 50014, Ladson, SC 29456.

#### NOTICE

Coverage of TWILIGHT:2000, Z300 AD, and SPACE 1888 has been limited recently due to lack of articles. The Editors main game is MEGATRAVELLER, so he writes mostly for that.



# COMING EVENTS

**ORIGINS- JULY 4TH WEEKEND-** Held in Baltimore, Maryland this year. The best gaming convention of the year. The staff of the TIMES might be able to make it there.

## EVENT HORIZON CURRENT AND FUTURE RELEASES

The reader is advised that these are tentative dates. Any number of factors could delay a project, or even cause it to be cancelled.

**FROM THE WORKSHOP:** MERC:2000 and CADILLACS AND DINOSAURS should be in stores now. DARK CONSPIRACY, a game of modern horror, should appear in March. All three games are based on the successful TWILIGHT:2000 2nd Edition rules. CHALLENGE is still on a bi-monthly schedule, and are tentatively scheduled to go monthly in July of '91. They have a growing need for articles. They especially need adventures. The more articles for a particular game they have, the better chance that game will have more coverage. I encourage you to write, but send to GDW for a contributor's guideline first.

**FROM DIGEST GROUP:** FLAMING EYE arrived in the stores just before Christmas. The first issue of MEGATRAVELLER JOURNAL, which will contain only MEGATRAVELLER related material, should be out. This means that Digest Group will be looking for even more material, but again, write for guidelines. Digest Group has many products in various stages of production.

**SEEKER:** The SUBSIDIZED MERCHANT and FAR TRADER deck plans are now available. Seeker also produces deck plans 2300 AD ships. Now available is a consumer guide containing equipment. In the works are some adventures in GATEWAY Sector. SEEKER is looking for someone who can produce quality artwork, both technical and non-technical in nature, using a MACINTOSH computer. Interested parties should send a letter of query to the address below.

For catalog send SASE to Box 519, Mountain Home, ID 83647.

**HIWG:** History of the Imperium Working Group. An association of referees and players discussing the future history of MEGATRAVELLER's Shattered Imperium. Several items produced by members have been used by Game Designers' Workshop or Digest Group Publications. Annual membership is \$12.00. Membership includes a subscription to TIFFANY STAR, HIWG'S newsletter. TIFFANY STAR now has increased its rate to 12 issues a year. Send to Ed Edwards, 1410 E. Boyd, Norman, OK 73071. Join HIWG and lend your voice to those discussing the future of the Shattered Imperium.

**PARAGON SOFTWARE:** This company now has two titles related to GDW games. The first is ZHODANI CONSPIRACY, based on the MEGATRAVELLER system. The other is based on the SPACE 1889 system. Look for them in your nearest software store.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TRAVELLER is a registered trademark and 2300 AD, TWILIGHT:2000, MEGATRAVELLER, and SPACE 1889 are trademarks of GDW and are used by permission. TRAVELLERS' DIGEST is a copyright of Digest Group Publications.

## TERRA TRAVELLER CLUB

The Terra Traveller Club is an association of players and referees dedicated to the playing and promotion of GDW RPG's in general and MEGATRAVELLER in particular. Registration for the club is a one time fee of \$1.00 sent to the Spokesman, Mark Gelinas, at Box 50014, Ladson, SC 29456. You will be sent a membership card and a coupon for \$.50 off your next TIMES subscription. To minimize costs, membership does not include a TIMES subscription. Only those members who want the TIMES need to subscribe.

## TERRA TRAVELLER TIMES

The TIMES is a newsletter of the Terra Traveller Club. Submissions of artwork or articles are accepted subject to Editorial approval, and cannot be returned without a SASE. Subscriptions are \$6.00 for six issues. Membership is NOT a requirement to subscribe.

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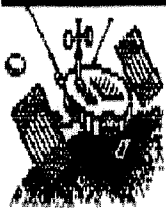
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## BACK ISSUES

Back issues of the TIMES are no longer available. Reprints can be done by special request at \$.75 per issue. For postage, please include \$.25 for one issue and \$.20 for each additional issue ordered. Please allow at least 6 weeks for your order to be processed. An intervening sea tour could make this longer.

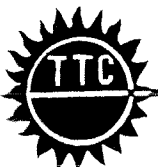
## AD RATES

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GAMING IN THE FUTURE

