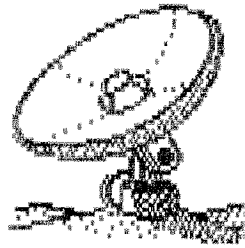
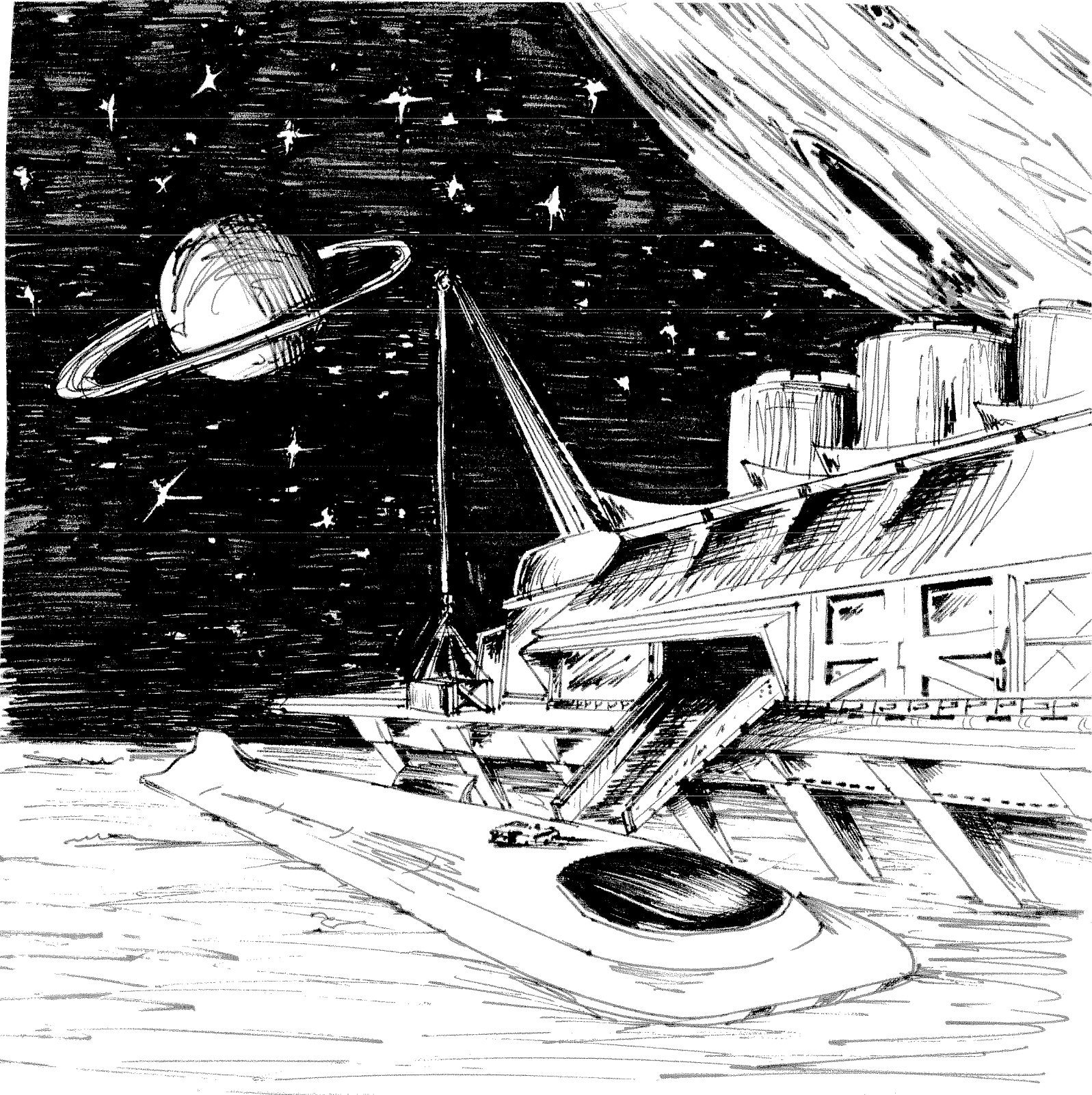


# Terra Traveller TIMES



## CHARACTER GENERATION VARIANT!



# ⊕ FORWARD OBSERVER ⊕

AN EDITORIAL BY MARK "GEO" GELINAS

## CHARACTER CREATION RANDOM, REGULATED, OR REALISTIC?

There are three primary methods of character generation: one in which almost everything, including stats and skills, are entirely random; one in which almost everything is entirely selected; and one which uses a combination of both. Other methods, such as the one used in the STAR WARS RPG, may seem different, but usually are just a variant of one of the primary three. This article examines the strengths and weaknesses of each of the major methods.

### RANDOM

Of GDW's RPG's, MEGATRAVELLER uses a random method of character generation. This method has the advantage in that it is a lot like life. Certainly, there is much in life that we have no control over, such as a physical size, basic intelligence, and cultural background. However, there are things in life we do have some control over, such as our choice of jobs and skills. Provided we have the prerequisites and initiative, we can accomplish about anything we desire.

This fact brings us to one of the major complaints of the random system: there is very little control over what skills the character gets. The end result is that the player will usually generate a number of characters until the result is a set of skills that is satisfactory to that player.

Another strong advantage of the random system is that it allows for variation between the characters. While four Marine characters may have some similar basic combat skills, their personal statistics and supplemental skills will vary significantly. This is important for a well balanced group of characters.

### REGULATED

While GDW does not have any RPG's which uses this method, there are many on the market, primarily the HERO and GURPS systems. This method gives the players a set number of points with which to create a character. These points are distributed between statistics and skills. Often, a character can be given disadvantages to obtain extra points.

The major advantage of this method is that the player can, within the limits of points available, create the character desired. Of course, there are always those players who won't be satisfied unless they can role play a major deity, but that is a personality problem, not a game system problem.

Another advantage of this system, if used with disadvantages, is that it helps define the character's personality.

The major disadvantage that this system has is that the characters are too much the same. This is not necessarily in skills and statistics, but in overall composition. Essentially, unless regulated by the referee, a novice character has the same number of points available as the aged veteran. It doesn't allow for a variety between characters.

Furthermore, players will tend to place most of their skill points on the major skills that they need, particularly combat skills. Skills such as admin may be given only a few points if it is selected at all. While these more mundane skills are not glamorous, they are certainly necessary to a well rounded group. This can be overcome if either the referee insists that some of these skills be taken as part of a training package, or the party is generated together, and each member of the party develops some of these mundane skills putting more points in them that usual. This latter method makes everyone in the party uniquely useful.

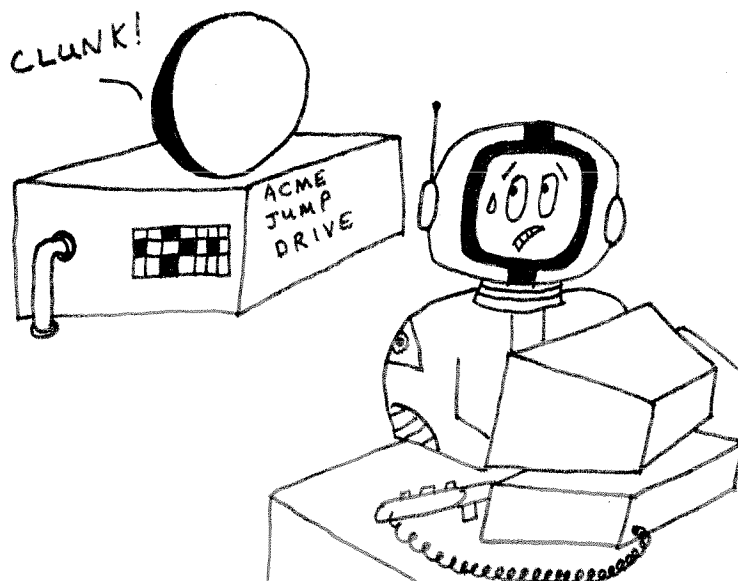
### REALISTIC

The third method combines elements of the previous two. All of the rest of GDW's RPG's use this method (Yes, SPACE 1889 does use templates, but stats can be randomly rolled, and points for selecting extra skills are available).

In this method, some attributes, usually statistics, are generated randomly, which has the benefit of being similar to life's experience. Generating statistics also frees the player from having to juggle points between skills and statistics.

(Continued on Page 9)

## SPACER SAM SEZ: WHEN EQUIPMENT TALKS, LISTEN!



GNS



### HEIR ANNOUNCED

**Aquaria/Aquaria: 031-1113:** The-Mother-of-Us-All, the head of the Aquarian religion, announced today that young Prince Eric has been chosen as the heir to the Throne of the Aquarian Empire. Aquaria has not had a designated heir since the late Prince Uri was stripped of the designation by Mother some time ago. The consensus among Aquarian Nobility is that this comes as a welcome relief after many months of concern about a possible succession crisis.

### PEACE PROCLAIMED!

**Boris/Natasha: 245-1114:** The government of the Brotherhood of Kari declared today that the state of emergency brought on by the disappearance of the BLUE NOVA has been cancelled. The report went on to declare that the vessel had been found on the Brotherhood side of the Treaty Zone. No word was mentioned on how the vessel got there. Observers have noted that the traffic of naval couriers has been higher than usual, and speculate that fleets are being brought down from alert standing, and in many cases recalled to Brotherhood borders.

### STATE of the SECTOR

**Libert/Diaspora: 001-1119:** The missing Sector Duke reappeared today long enough to make a brief "State of the Sector" address at Holiday celebrations at the sector capital. In his message Duke Eneri described conditions in the sector as difficult but hopeful. He commended Sector Admiral Nile's efforts in keeping the sector out of Solomani hands. He further noted that the sector is still part of the Imperial domain. The duke refused to answer any questions about his support for Emperor Lucan. The duke's spokesperson answered the mystery about the duke's disappearance by stating that the duke has spent several weeks studying the sector's situation. Observers noted that Duke Eneri looked much older and very tired.

### LANGUAGE LIMITED

**Capital/Core: 1112-1121:** "High Sylean will be the only language spoken at Imperial audiences!" This unexpected proclamation was issued by Emperor Lucan today. His intent is to honor Sylean citizens whom have "remained loyal throughout this crisis." The decree applies to foreign dignitaries as well.



# GEO'S VARIANTS

This issue brings a variant character generation system for MEGATRAVELLER based on the TWILIGHT:2000 2nd ed system.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Numerous passages are quoted directly or derived from passages found in TWILIGHT:2000 2nd Edition.

## DIE ROLLING CONVENTIONS

This variant uses the basic MEGATRAVELLER die roll conventions with the following addition.

**Rolling vs. Against an Attribute:** To achieve success the die roll must be less than or equal to the numerical value of the attribute (unless otherwise specified). Die roll modifiers (if any) are made to the die roll before comparing the result with the attribute number.

## OVERVIEW

**BACKGROUND:** Each player decides on the gender of his character and names the character. Then the player either chooses a homeworld for the character or generates the homeworld's general description. If a homeworld is chosen, its general description must be derived from its UPP. The character then gains background skills based on the homeworld's general description.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Each player determines the six basic attributes of his character, either by rolling dice or by use of a point system described later. The six basic attributes are Strength, Dexterity, Endurance, Intelligence, Education, and Social Standing.

**EXPERIENCE:** Each character begins accumulating experience at the age of 18, upon completing secondary education. The player then makes career choices for the character. Each career choice covers four years of training and/or experience. Each time a player makes a four year career choice, he may also select a secondary activity for the character. Careers and secondary activities provide skills for the character.

**MUSTERING OUT BENEFITS:** Once the character has finished all the terms he is going to, conduct mustering out as per the PLAYERS' MANUAL.

**DERIVED VALUES:** Once all changes to skills and attributes have been finalized, certain values are calculated based on them.

## BACKGROUND

The player chooses a gender for his character and provides the character with a name. Then the player determines the character's homeworld general description. If selecting a homeworld from known worlds, take the world's UPP and determine its general description using the REFEREE'S MANUAL. If generating the homeworld general description, refer to the PLAYERS' MANUAL and roll 2D6 for each characteristic and note the appropriate description on the character generation sheet. After the homeworld general description has been determined, allocate background skills based on that description.

## ATTRIBUTES

Attributes are generated by rolling 2D6 for each. If the referee desires, he may allow the player a total of 45 points to divide between his attributes. Remember, initially no attribute may be less than two or greater than twelve - the range which could be rolled on 2D6.

## EXPERIENCE

Player characters will have to use skills during the course of the game. These skills are obtained through their background, as explained above, and through a career. Players have a reasonably free hand in choosing a detailed career background. This background consists of formal education and/or one or more careers.

A character starts out at age 18 with minimal (background) skills. The character may then choose to further his education or enter an occupation (including the military). Backgrounds are lived through in four year terms. The character can do anything he pleases (with the referee's approval, of course), but he must do it in four year increments.

Each career entry listed on the following pages details the nature of the career and describes what skills are received

for the first term (and skills received for subsequent terms, any). A character may enter any career for which he meets pre-requisites, but must spend at least one four year term in the career before moving on. If a player so desires, he may start his character adventuring at age 18 with only the background skills.

## MILITARY CAREERS

Players may choose a military career for their character. Because of entry age requirements, no character will be accepted in the military if he has had three or more terms of college and/or a civilian career before enlisting. The only exception to this rule is that the military will accept a Doctor for service at any age.

If the character comes from a service academy or ROTC they are commissioned as officers, otherwise they enter the enlisted ranks. At the end of each term, the character rolls for promotion.

## RANK

**PROMOTION:** a player rolls versus Intelligence for promotion at the end of each career term. Graduates of a military academy subtract one from their die roll.

-If an officer makes a promotion roll, he is promoted to the next highest grade.

-If an enlisted man is promoted, he is made an NCO, or, if he is already an NCO, is promoted to the next highest NCO grade.

-Scouts do not have any ranks.

## CIVILIAN CAREERS

Civilian careers are more open than military careers. A character may readily switch between careers at the end of a four year term provided he meets the prerequisite for the new career. However, if the new career is one in which positions, the civilian equivalent of rank, are held, the character starts in the lowest position. At the end of each four year term, the character rolls for promotion.

## RANK

**PROMOTION:** a player rolls versus Intelligence for promotion at the end of each career term.

-The exception to this is the Noble character who must roll 12+ for a promotion DM+1 if Intelligence is greater than 9.

-Merchants and Law Enforcement characters do not start with a position. If the promotion roll succeeds, they are given a position and may immediately roll again versus Intelligence for a promotion. If they succeed, they will be advanced to the next highest position. Therefore it is possible for them to advance two places at the end of one term. However, the second roll is only taken if they gain a position. Doctors, Scientists, Batters, Hunter and Rogues do not have positions.

## SECONDARY ACTIVITIES

The career chosen by the player does not take up 100% of the character's time. Often a person's hobbies and pastimes can provide valuable additional skills. As a general rule, each character is allowed one "secondary activity" each term. This allows the player to take one level in any one skill from the Secondary Skill list. Some careers allow two secondary activities a term, while others allow none. The number of secondary activities per term is the number of skill levels received that term.

## OBTAINING SKILLS

Players obtain skills initially in two ways: automatic skills and selected skills. Automatic skills are skills provided by the character's education and career. The character receives these automatically, usually during the first term of service in the career. They are listed with each applicable career. Selected skills are those which the player can choose for his character. All careers provide a certain number of selected skills per term. Not that most of these are Cascade skills. The selection of one of these means that one skill from that cascade category is obtained. The player can select the specific skill immediately, or at the end of the character generation process. All cascade skills must be defined before play begins. (Continued on Page 6)

**PRE-CAREER OPTIONS****COLLEGE**

**ENTRY:** Intelligence 6+ and Education 6+.

**SKILLS:** A total of three from the any one or combination of the following, two of which must be in the same skill:

- ▣ Academic
- ▣ Economic
- ▣ Interpersonal
- ▣ Technical

**HONORS:** 10+ DM+1 if INT 10+  
**SPECIAL:** May enter ROTC or NROTC. If chosen substitute Leader-1 for one of the above skills. Next term must be in Army if ROTC or Navy or Marines if NROTC. Enter as a O-1 (Army or Marine Lieutenant or Navy Ensign).

**FLIGHT SCHOOL**

**ENTRY:** Honors Graduate from Naval Academy or NROTC or serving in Navy and Dexterity is 9+.

**SKILLS:** All graduates receive the following:

- ▣ Navigation-1
- ▣ Pilot-1
- ▣ Ship's Boat-1

**SPECIAL:** This is a one year school after which the character will serve a shortened (3 year) term as a Naval Officer. If not previously an officer, rank will be Ensign (O-1).

**MEDICAL SCHOOL**

**ENTRY:** Graduate with honors or an Education of 10+ from College or any Academy.

**SKILLS:** All graduates receive the following:

- ▣ Admin-1
- ▣ Medical-3
- ▣ +1 Education

**HONORS:** 11+ DM+1 if EDU is 11+

**SPECIAL:** Honors graduate receive these additional skills:

- ▣ Medical-1
- ▣ Computer-1

Medical school graduates entering a Military Career or the Merchants are made officers with the initial rank of O-2.

**MERCHANT ACADEMY**

**ENTRY:** Homeworld- Early Stellar+

**SKILLS:** Select three from any one or combination of the following:

- ▣ Economic
- ▣ Gunnery
- ▣ Interpersonal
- ▣ Mechanical
- ▣ Medical
- ▣ Space
- ▣ Technical

**HONORS:** 9+ DM+1 if INT 9+

**SPECIAL:** Graduates of the Merchant Academy must serve with a Merchant Line (not Free Traders) for a minimum of two terms. Graduates are made Fourth Officers (O-1).

**MILITARY ACADEMY**

**ENTRY:** Social Standing 6+, Homeworld- Pre-Stellar+.

**SKILLS:** Select three from any one or combination of the following:

- ▣ Admin
- ▣ Computer
- ▣ Forward Observer
- ▣ Heavy Weapons
- ▣ Leader
- ▣ Tactics

**HONORS:** 9+ DM+1 if INT 9+

**SPECIAL:** Must serve one term in the Army. Initial rank will be Lieutenant (O-1)

**NAVAL ACADEMY**

**ENTRY:** Social Standing 8+, Homeworld- Pre-Stellar+.

**SKILLS:** Select three from any one or combination of the following:

- ▣ Leader
- ▣ Naval Architect
- ▣ Navigation
- ▣ Sensor Ops
- ▣ Ship's Tactics
- ▣ Space Tech

**HONORS:** 9+ DM+1 if INT 9+

**SPECIAL:** Must serve next term in the Navy. Initial rank will be Ensign (O-1).

**MILITARY CAREERS****NAVY**

**ENTRY:** Homeworld- Pre- Stellar+

**SKILLS:** First Term Naval personnel receive Vacc Suit-0. All terms select three

from any one or combination of the following:

- ▣ Forward Observer
- ▣ Gun Combat
- ▣ Hand Combat
- ▣ Mechanical
- ▣ Medical
- ▣ Space
- ▣ Space Combat
- ▣ Space Tech
- ▣ Technical

**SPECIAL:** Characters with INT and EDU of 9+ may apply for OCS. If so, they receive Leader-1 and are commissioned as Ensign (O-1). Then conduct the term normally.

**MARINES**

**ENTRY:**

Homeworld- Pre-Stellar+

**Skills:** First term Marines receive Vacc Suit-0, Combat Rifleman-1, and Large Blade-1. Select three from one or combination of the following:

- ▣ ATV
- ▣ Gun Combat
- ▣ Gunnery
- ▣ Hand Combat
- ▣ Mechanical
- ▣ Medical
- ▣ Special Combat
- ▣ Tactics
- ▣ Technical
- ▣ Vacc Suit
- ▣ Vehicle

**SPECIAL:** Characters with INT and EDU of 9+ may apply for OCS. If so, they receive Leader-1 and Handgun -1, and are commissioned as Lt (O-1). Then conduct term normally.

**ARMY**

**ENTRY:**

Homeworld- Pre-Stellar+

**SKILLS:** First Term Soldiers receive Combat Rifleman-1. Select three from one or combination of the following:

- ▣ ATV
- ▣ Gun Combat
- ▣ Hand Combat
- ▣ Mechanical
- ▣ Medical
- ▣ Special Combat
- ▣ Tactical
- ▣ Technical
- ▣ Vehicle

**SPECIAL:** Characters with INT and EDU of 9+ may apply for OCS. If so, they receive Leader-1 and SMG-1, and are commissioned as Lt (O-1). Then conduct term normally.

**SCOUTS****ENTRY:**

Homeworld- Early Stellar+

**SKILLS:** First term Scouts receive Vacc Suit - 0 and Pilot-1. Select three from one or combination of the following:

- ▣ Exploratory
- ▣ Gun Combat
- ▣ Mechanical
- ▣ Medical
- ▣ Space
- ▣ Space Tech
- ▣ Special Combat
- ▣ Technical
- ▣ Vehicle

**SPECIAL:** None.

**FLYERS****ENTRY:**

Homeworld- Thin+, Moderate Population+, Industrial+

**SKILLS:** First term Flyers receive Vacc Suit-0 and Aircraft-1. Select three from one or combination of the following:

- ▣ Gun Combat
- ▣ Hand Combat
- ▣ Mechanical
- ▣ Medical
- ▣ Space
- ▣ Survival
- ▣ Technical
- ▣ Vacc Suit
- ▣ Vehicle

**SPECIAL:** Characters with INT and EDU of 9+ may apply for OCS. If so, they receive Leader-1 and are commissioned as Pilot (O-1). Then conduct the term normally.

**SAILORS****ENTRY:**

Homeworld- Wet World+

**SKILLS:** First term Sailor receive Small WaterCraft-1. Select three from one or combination of the following:

- ▣ Gun Combat
- ▣ Mechanical
- ▣ Medical
- ▣ Navigation
- ▣ Special Combat
- ▣ Technical
- ▣ Vehicle

**SPECIAL:** Characters with INT and EDU of 9+ may apply for OCS. If so, they receive Leader-1 and Large Water-Craft-1, and are commissioned as Ensign (O-1). Then conduct the term normally.

**CIVILIAN CAREERS****BARBARIAN****ENTRY:**

Homeworld- Pre-Industrial

**SKILLS:** First term Barbarians receive Large Blade-1. Select three from one or combination of the following:

- ▣ Archaic Weapons
- ▣ Blade Combat
- ▣ Environ
- ▣ Gun Combat
- ▣ Hand Combat
- ▣ Interrogation
- ▣ Mechanical
- ▣ Medical
- ▣ Tactics

**SPECIAL:** Warriors receive Blade Combat-1, Chiefs receive Leader-1.

**BELTER****ENTRY:**

Homeworld- Early Stellar+

**SKILLS:** First term Belters receive Vacc Suit-1. Select two from one or combination of the following:

- ▣ Exploratory
- ▣ Gun Combat
- ▣ Hand Combat
- ▣ Mechanical
- ▣ Medical
- ▣ Prospecting
- ▣ Space
- ▣ Space Tech
- ▣ Technical
- ▣ Vehicle

**SPECIAL:** Belters in their third term receive Zero-G Environ-1. Belters may have two choices from Secondary Activities per term.

**BUREAUCRAT****ENTRY:**

Homeworld- Low Law+ and Mod Population+

**SKILLS:** Select two from one or combination of the following:

- ▣ Academic
- ▣ Computer
- ▣ Economic
- ▣ Gun Combat
- ▣ Hand Combat
- ▣ Interrogation
- ▣ Recruiting
- ▣ Vehicle

**SPECIAL:** Bureaucrats may have two choices from Secondary Activities per term.

**DIPLOMAT****ENTRY:**

Homeworld- Low Law+ and Industrial+

**SKILLS:** First term Diplomat receive Liaison-1. Select two from one or combination of the following:

- ▣ Academic
- ▣ Blade Combat
- ▣ Economic
- ▣ Gun Combat
- ▣ Interrogation
- ▣ Recruiting
- ▣ Technical
- ▣ Vacc Suit
- ▣ Vehicle

**SPECIAL:** Diplomats receive two choices from Secondary Activities per term.

**DOCTOR**

**ENTRY:** Grad of Med School or Med-3 from service.

Homeworld- Industrial+

**SKILLS:** Select three from one or combination of the following:

- ▣ Academic
- ▣ Blade Combat
- ▣ Mechanical
- ▣ Medical
- ▣ Science
- ▣ Technical

**SPECIAL:** Unless the character has served as a Doctor in the Military or Merchants, the first term is spent in Internship which gives one extra skill but no choice from Secondary Activities. Doctors who subsequently join the Military are commissioned as seen under Med School.

**HUNTER****ENTRY:**

Homeworld-Atmosphere Thin+

**SKILLS:** First term Hunter receive Hunting-1. Select two from one or combination of the following:

- ▣ Academic
- ▣ Economic
- ▣ Environ
- ▣ Exploratory
- ▣ Gun Combat
- ▣ Hand Combat
- ▣ Mechanical
- ▣ Medical
- ▣ Technical
- ▣ Vehicle

**SPECIAL:** Hunters get two choices from Secondary Activities per term.

## LAW ENFORCER

**ENTRY:** Cannot have had any term as a Rogue or Pirate.

Homeworld- Industrial+

**SKILLS:** First term Law Enforcers receive Streetwise-1. Select three from one or combination of the following:

- Economic
- Environ
- Forensic
- Gun Combat
- Hand Combat
- Interrogation
- Tactics
- Technical
- Vehicle

**SPECIAL:** Detectives receive Interrog-1; Chiefs Admin-1; and Commissioners Liaison-1.

## MERCHANT

**Entry:**

Homeworld- Early Stellar+

**SKILLS:** First term Merchants receive Vacc Suit-1. Select three from one or combination of the following:

- Academic
- Economic
- Exploratory
- Gun Combat
- Hand Combat
- Mechanical
- Medical
- Space
- Space Combat
- Space Tech
- Technical
- Vehicle

**SPECIAL:** Characters with an INT and EDU of 7+ may apply for 4th Officer(O-1), if so, they receive Economic-1 then conduct the term normally.

## NOBLE

**ENTRY:** Social Standing A+ Homeworld- Pre-Stellar+

**SKILLS:** Select two from one or combination of the following:

- Academic
- Environ
- Gun Combat
- Hand Combat
- Science
- Space
- Space Tech
- Technical
- Vehicle

**SPECIAL:** Upon entry into Nobility, the character is automatically advanced to SS B- Knight. Nobles may have two choices from Secondary Activities per term.

## PIRATE

**ENTRY:**

Homeworld- Early Stellar+

**SKILLS:** First term Pirates receive Vacc Suit-0 and Brawling-1. Select three from one or combination of the following:

- Gun Combat
  - Gunnery
  - Hand Combat
  - Mechanical
  - Ship's Tactics
  - Space
  - Special Combat
  - Technical
  - Vice
  - Zero-G Environ
- SPECIAL:** None.

## ROGUE

**ENTRY:**

Homeworld- Industrial+

**SKILLS:** First term Rogues receive Streetwise-1. Select two from one or combination of the following:

- Demolitions
- Gun Combat
- Hand Combat
- Medical
- Tactics
- Technical
- Vehicle
- Vice

**SPECIAL:** Rogues may have two choices from Secondary Activities per term.

## SCIENTIST

**ENTRY:** College Graduate or prior career and EDU 8+. Must have any science at level 2+.

Homeworld- Pre-Stellar+  
**SKILLS:** First term scientist receive Technical-1. Select three from one or combination of the following:

- Academic
- Environ
- Gun Combat
- Hand Combat
- Mechanical
- Science
- Space Tech
- Technical
- Vehicle

**Special:** None.

## SECONDARY ACTIVITIES

- Academic
- Inborn
- Interpersonal
- Mental
- Physical
- Vice
- (Default Skill)

## Skill list Changes

The following are changes and additions made to the master skill list found on Pages 28 and 29 of the PLAYERS' MANUAL. These changes are necessary to allow a character in any service to get all skills normally available to a character in that service.

-Add Naval Architect to SCIENCE.

-Add Recon to SPECIAL COMBAT.

-Under SPACE COMBAT, change

TACTICS to FLEET TACTICS.

-Add Recruiting to INTERPERSONAL.

(Continued from Page 3)

## MUSTERING OUT

Characters receive mustering out benefits in the normal manner. Refer to the PLAYERS' MANUAL for details.

## DERIVED VALUES

Some values are derived from the characters attributes.

-Experience: this is a measure of the total number of skills and skill levels that the character can have. A character who wants a number of skills but has a low Intelligence and/or Education can increase these through the selection of MENTAL as a Secondary Activity.

-Determination: a measure of how determined a character is to continue performing given tasks, especially when the task fails.

-Age: a measure of how old the character is. Characters which are 34 and older must make the normal aging rolls described on page 15 of the PLAYERS' MANUAL.

-Life force: a measure of the basic vitality of the character and how much wounding he can withstand.

## TABLE OF RANKS

### ENLISTED

	NAVY	ARMY/MARINES	FLYER	SAILOR
1	Spacehand	Private	Airman	Seaman
2	P03	Corporal	Sgt.	P03
3	P02	Sgt.	Staff Sgt.	P02
4	P01	Staff Sgt.	Tech Sgt.	P01
5	CP0	Gunny Sgt.	Master Sgt.	CP0
6	SCP0	Sgt. Major	First Sgt.	SCP0

### OFFICER

	NAVY	ARMY/MARINES	FLYER	SAILOR
1	Ensign	Lt	Pilot	Ensign
2	Lt	Capt	Flight Ldr	Lt
3	Lt Cdr	Maj/Foe Cdr	Sqdn Ldr	Lt Cdr
4	Cdr	Lt Col	Staff Major	Cdr
5	Capt	Col	Grp Ldr	Capt
6	Adm	Gen/Brigadier	Air Marshal	Adm

## TABLE OF POSITIONS

	LAW ENF	DIPLO	BUREAU	NOBLE
1	Cpl	3rd Secy	Clerk	B Knight
2	Sgt.	2nd Secy	Supvr	C Baron
3	Lt	1st Secy	Asst Mgr	D Marquis
4	Det	Counselor	Mgr	E Count
5	Chief	Minister	Executive	F Duke
6	Commisnr	Ambass	Director	-

### MERCHANT PIRATE BARBARIAN

1	4th Officer	Henohman	Brave
2	3rd Officer	Corporal	Warrior
3	2nd Officer	Sergeant	Leader
4	1st Officer	Lieutenant	Chieftain
5	Captain	Leader	Chief
6	Owner	-	Elder

# CHARACTER GENERATION WORKSHEET

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_

2. Gender \_\_\_\_\_

3. Homeworld UPP \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. Homeworld General Description

Starport \_\_\_\_\_

Size \_\_\_\_\_

Atmosphere \_\_\_\_\_

Hydrographics \_\_\_\_\_

Population \_\_\_\_\_

Law Level \_\_\_\_\_

Tech Level \_\_\_\_\_

## 5. Background Skills

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**6. Basic Attributes** (Roll 2D6 for each. If total is less than 42, may add points to bring total up to 42. Alternately, allocate a total of 45 points; no attribute may be less than 2 or greater than 12. Aging and/or other activities may raise or lower certain attributes.)

Attribute	Roll	Adj	Final
Strength (STR)	_____	_____	_____
Dexterity (DEX)	_____	_____	_____
Endurance (END)	_____	_____	_____
Intelligence (INT)	_____	_____	_____
Education (EDU)	_____	_____	_____
Social Standing (SS)	_____	_____	_____

Roll:Roll/Allocation Adj:Adjustment

## 7. Careers

1st Term \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Term \_\_\_\_\_

3rd Term \_\_\_\_\_

4th Term \_\_\_\_\_

5th Term \_\_\_\_\_

6th Term \_\_\_\_\_

7th Term \_\_\_\_\_

8th Term \_\_\_\_\_

## 8. Final Rank/Position \_\_\_\_\_

## 9. Skills

Skill Name	Level
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

## 10. Experience \_\_\_\_\_

Experience = INT + EDU

## 11. Determination \_\_\_\_\_

Determination = (END + INT)/5  
Drop Fractions

## 12. Age \_\_\_\_\_

Age = 18 + (Terms x 4)

## 13. Life Force \_\_\_\_\_ Hits / \_\_\_\_\_

Add STR + DEX + END then consult  
PLAYERS' MANUAL page 66.

## 14. Mustering Out Benefits

CR \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## SO YOU WANT TO BE AN ALIEN?

BY JOHN CRIDER  
PART VII

### THE LIGHTNING BOLT EFFECT

You've seen them. The players who think that since gaming is done with the imagination, anything is possible. They have characters with low intelligence come up with all the bright ideas, characters with low endurance carry loads twice their weight for hours on end, and characters with a low social status always calling on his rich uncle for credits.

Whenever I see this I immediately want to blame the player for not staying in character. But if this continues, it is the referee who is ultimately at fault for not controlling the player.

What? Controlling the players? Isn't that against the idea of letting players choose their own actions, have some control of their character's destiny?

Calm down and think about it. Our real world has limitations that cannot be changed, and therefore we must work around these restrictions in order to do what we want. In fact, some things cannot be done. Yet we are free to choose our own paths in life, but do so knowing that some ways are easy and some ways are dangerous. If we do things dangerously long enough, we will most likely be hurt or killed eventually.

So should the world in a gaming environment be. Don't spoil your players by saving their characters from impossible situations all the time. Make them think, use caution and achieve the mission objectives. The game will be better once your player realize this.

There are limitations imposed on the gaming universe, and it is the referee's job to enforce these "laws of nature". First, know your universe and laws of nature. Enforce them and ensure your characters know them, too. Discuss the natural laws with them when there appears to be a misunderstanding.

Second, define the game rules to the players. Describe which rules are used and which do not apply. Do not accept characters generated in another universe, for much of the other universe will automatically come with the character. Ensure the players know what the statistics of their character mean and how they are used. Enforce character statistics and remind players of their character's limitations by asking their statistics when they try to do something too hard. Be polite, but don't compromise if the situation doesn't warrant it. If it's impossible, don't let it be done.

It sounds cruel, but some new players will try to do some crazy things without thinking about the mortality of their characters. The other players should try to warn the novice about doing something dangerous. Restricting "certain death" to a "close call" will sometimes scare the novice into thinking out the consequences of his actions before acting. If that doesn't work, then just let the dice take care of the situation. If the player's character dies, then he will definitely know that his characters will not live forever.

Old players are not immune to forgetting about mortality. Some players like to live through so many "exciting" situations, that they forget to protect their characters and underestimate the "easy" situations. If a group has a tendency to get more reckless, then let them be "shaken up" once in awhile. Also in order to keep interest up, make the obstacles in the adventure worthy of the group in the adventure, and vice versa, make sure the group remains worthy of the adventure.

During play of an adventure, a lot of table talk occurs, most of which is necessary. As referee, you need to monitor what the players are saying to each other and interrupt as required to preserve a realistic and honest game. Advice for new players, both from players and referees, helps to develop their skills and move the adventure along. But the referee is the leader and must ensure that the players do not try to run each other's characters. This is extremely important when a group gets split up. Having to watch the other group go through a problem while having to sit back is sometimes too much for players to bear, especially when they can see a trap the other players don't.

If a player tries to do something that will avoid trouble that the character doesn't know about, ask the player's reason for doing it and limit the action if the player cannot justify it. Sometimes the hardest temptation to resist is to ignore information that the character does not know about, especially if it will lead the character into trouble.

Some players will try to take away the referee's control of the universe. This is normally done in subtle ways, such as

stating act is an old tradition for the character's people (when, in fact, it is a convenient way to sidestep an obstacle). If this is done without an okay from the referee, then he must immediately do one of the following:

Tell the player that the tradition does not exist, and make the player respond to the situation.

Let the player think that he "got away" with the trick this time, but make up a situation which will teach him a lesson some later time.

Or just let the player run your game for you.

In order to maintain credibility in your universe, if you do have to get your characters back in line, don't use the famous "lightning bolt". There are better tools at hand in your universe. Pickpockets in cities, harassing rodents in forests, snakes in deserts, and equipment malfunctions on starships are but a few. Make it more difficult on those who make it more difficult on you. The overall job as a referee is to create a universe that will present a challenge, and that is realistic and vivid. Oh, yes, and fun, too. Do what works for you, but remember, the best games are the ones with rules fully understood and fairly kept.

As a quick reference, I put together my "Ten Commandments" for referees. It pretty much describes how I view the referee's job. Use it as you like, change or add to it, but I think you will find that the concepts are pretty true, no matter what game system you use. Here they are:

1. Thou shalt not let players give characters information not gained by the character lest the character become omniscient.
2. Thou shalt not let characters act out of character lest the character's statistics be mistaken for a napkin.
3. Thou shalt discipline argumentative or mischievous players lest the players forget who is running the game.
4. Thou shalt not let alcohol or other drugs to be consumed during gaming lest your campaign turn into a big "pub crawl" for the players.
5. Thou shalt answer all player questions about common knowledge items as the character perceives the answer lest the character know more than he rightfully should.
6. Thou shalt reward good deeds and bad deeds fairly lest players lose interest.
7. Thou shalt not use pregenerated adventures without changing at least three major facts or locations lest the players know more about the scenario than thou.
8. Thou shalt try to add personal touches to all major non-player characters lest the universe grow boring.
9. Thou shalt not let the dice run the game lest the direction of the adventure become random and without purpose.
10. Thou shalt run the adventure as realistically and justly as possible while maintaining focus on the goal lest the universe become incoherent and fall apart.

If you have read all the parts of this series, then you can see parts of the previous articles in these guides. They are to help provide a reminder of what a referee is trying to accomplish in the first place -- create an environment where people can come together and have some fun where the real world doesn't exist. To that end, I can only hope that this series of articles has given you some ideas for use or discussion, hopefully both. Remember that the referee must take charge of his world to be truly effective. Happy gaming.

---

SPACE HAIKU  
BY GEO

CLOSE ORBIT

Beyond atmosphere  
The world below holding on  
With tenuous grasp.



**FORWARD OBSERVER (Cont.)**

Skills are chosen, but systems using this method usually limit skills that are available to those that could normally be obtained in a chosen career path. Some systems allow for skill selection outside of the career path, but either at a higher point cost or limited to what could reasonably be obtained outside one's normal career.

This method often regulates the amount of skill points available by length of service. This overcomes the disadvantage of sameness between the novice and the veteran.

While this method of character generation has the strengths of the previous two, it also has some of the weaknesses. There will be those players who are just not satisfied with the statistics that are rolled. Also in the skill selection, the mundane skills can still be neglected, although some systems include some of them in their careers. A unique disadvantage to this method, if terms are used, is that a player can give the character a unusually large number of terms in order to gain more skills. Most systems compensate for this by regulating the total number of terms which can be served, or providing some disadvantage for aging.

Overall, though, the "realistic" method of character generation is the best. It has the strengths of previous methods while minimizing the weaknesses. Furthermore, the referee can work with the players to further minimize the weaknesses.

**ADS and ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

**DARK RIVER: A SECTOR DIVIDED**

An MGE production of a complete sector for MEGATRAVELLER. To get a copy, Send \$5.00 to Mark Gelinis, Box 39163 Northbridge Station, Charleston, SC 29407-5035.

**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 39163 Northbridge Station, Charleston, SC 29407-5035.

**NOTICE**

Coverage of TWILIGHT:2000, 2300 AD, and SPACE 1889 has been limited recently due to lack of articles. The Editors main game is MEGATRAVELLER, so he writes mostly for that.

**ARTWORK WANTED**

The TIMES now offers payment for art. Each issue requires a piece of cover art and a Spacer Sam Sez. For information on style, want, and price, send a SASE to the TIMES, c/o Mark Gelinis, Box 39163 Northbridge Station, Charleston, SC 29407-5035.

**OUR REGULAR FEATURES**

Because the Variant took so much space, some of the TIMES regular features did not appear this issue. Some, if not most, should appear again next issue, however, I have another special variant planned. Therefore I can't tell at this time how many will return. This issue also saw the conclusion of Crider's Alien series. Hopefully, he will have another series for us to enjoy soon.

**NEXT ISSUE**

**FORWARD OBSERVER:** How much can Traveller change and still be Traveller?

**GEO'S VARIANTS:** Using the TWILIGHT:2000 combat system for TRAVELLER. Will include TWILIGHT:2000 stats for TRAVELLER weapons.

**TERROR OF THE EARTH: A CADILLACS AND DINOSAURS** mini-scenario.

And much more . . . . .

**QUICK REVIEWS****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.

**TWILIGHT:2000****BANKOK**

Loren K. Wiseman \$12.00  
Players Use ✓✓✓ Referee Use ✓✓✓✓  
Artwork ✓✓✓ Content ✓✓✓✓  
Overall ✓✓✓1/2

A sourcebook for use with TWILIGHT:2000 2nd Edition rules and MERC:2000. It discusses the city and surrounding area.

**INFANTRY WEAPONS OF THE WORLD**

Loren K. Wiseman \$12.00  
Players Use ✓✓✓ Referee Use ✓✓✓✓  
Artwork ✓✓✓✓ Content ✓✓✓✓  
Overall ✓✓✓✓

Complete 2nd Edition statistics for a large variety of small arms and includes black powder weapons and some projected weapons as well.

**2300 AD****USS HAMPTON**

SEEKER GAMING SYSTEMS \$11.95  
Players Use ✓✓✓ Referee Use ✓✓✓✓  
Artwork ✓✓✓ Content ✓✓✓✓  
Overall ✓✓✓1/2

These are deck plans in 25mm scale for a small warship for use with 2300 AD.

**MEGATRAVELLER****The Megatraveller JOURNAL #1**

DGP \$5.95  
Players Use ✓✓✓ Referee Use ✓✓✓  
Artwork ✓✓✓ Content ✓✓✓  
Overall ✓✓✓

A new publication from Digest Group Publications. This magazine is dedicated solely to MEGATRAVELLER with an emphasis on the Domain of Deneb. The first issue contains a fold out map of the entire Domain.

**GENERAL****CHALLENGE #48**

GAME DESIGNERS' WORKSHOP \$3.50  
Players Use ✓✓✓ Referee Use ✓✓✓  
Artwork ✓✓✓ Content ✓✓✓✓  
Overall ✓✓✓1/2

This issue contains the first of a new series of adventures for MEGATRAVELLER. Most of GDW's other games are represented.

**CHALLENGE #49**

GAME DESIGNERS' WORKSHOP \$3.50  
Players Use ✓✓✓ Referee Use ✓✓✓✓  
Artwork ✓✓✓✓ Content ✓✓✓✓  
Overall ✓✓✓✓

This issue contains a complete sector for use with MEGATRAVELLER. This is CHALLENGE'S Locations issue.



# COMING EVENTS

**ORIGINS- JULY 4TH WEEKEND-** Held in Baltimore, Maryland this year. The best gaming convention of the year. The Editor 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:** DARK CONSPIRACY, a game of modern horror, should appear in June. This game is based on the successful TWILIGHT:2000 2nd Edition rules. Also in June, a DARK CONSPIRACY novel, "A Gathering Evil", written by Mike Stackpoole, will be released. For the TWILIGHT series of games, the NATO COMBAT VEHICLE GUIDE is scheduled for May release.

CHALLENGE 49 has been sent to subscribers and should be in stores soon. It 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:** Digest Group has been putting a lot of time into the production of their own role playing game, A.I. Look for a major promotion of this game at ORIGINS. In the meantime, they still are producing MEGATRAVELLER supplements, and will continue to do so even after they release their own game. DGP is now located at 515 Willow, Woodburn, Oregon 97071.

**SEEKER:** Producer of deck plans for MEGATRAVELLER. Seeker also produces deck plans 2300 AD ships, recently releasing a warship. Also available is a consumer guide containing equipment. In the works are some adventures in GATEWAY Sector. 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 discuss the future of the Shattered Imperium.

**PARAGON SOFTWARE:** This company now has four titles related to GDW games. The first is ZHODANI CONSPIRACY, based on the MEGATRAVELLER system. Another is based on the SPACE 1889 system. They have recently released SEARCH FOR THE ANCIENTS, again for MEGATRAVELLER, and a game based on TWILIGHT:2000. Look for them in your nearest software store.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## NEW ADDRESS FOR THE TIMES

TERRA TRAVELLER TIMES  
C/O Mark Gelinas  
Box 39163 Northbridge Station  
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## TERRA TRAVELLER TIMES

The TIMES is a newsletter supporting GDW's role playing games with an emphasis on MEGATRAVELLER. 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.

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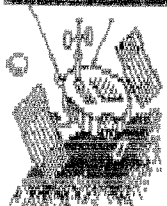
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## BACK ISSUES

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

Ad space per issue costs as follows: 1/8 page- \$1.00, 1/4 page- \$2.00; 1/2 page- \$4.00; and full page- \$8.00.



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