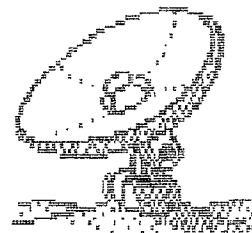
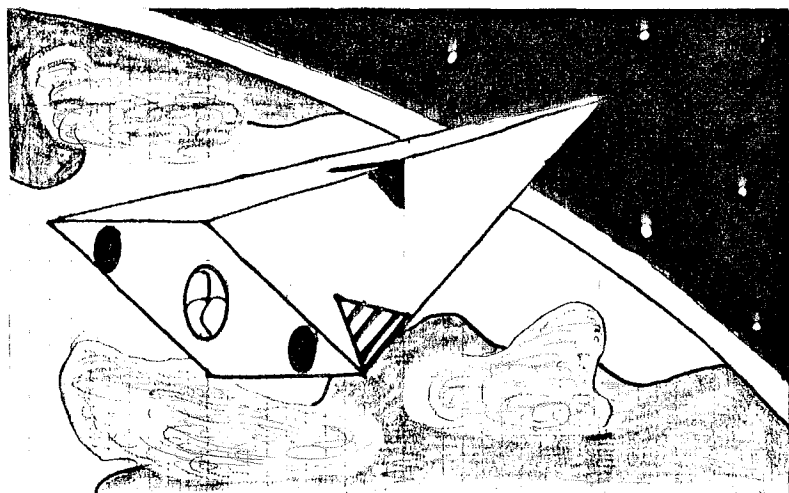


# Tidewater Traveller TIMES



## MEGATRAVELLER HAS ARRIVED



### MEGATRAVELLER

The long awaited release from Game Designers' Workshop has finally arrived in the stores. The full set of MEGATRAVELLER, which includes all three books arrived in the area gaming stores on the 9th of December. The PLAYERS' MANUAL had been released in November, but the BOXED SET which also includes the REFEREE'S MANUAL and IMPERIAL ENCYCLOPEDIA, both of which may be purchased separately, is now available. For those of you who waited, your waiting is over. This issue of the TIMES will look at MEGATRAVELLER in several ways. First, there is a description of a open game played using MEGATRAVELLER rules. Also, all games conducted by Mark Gelinis now use these rules. Then, there is a review of the newly released portions of MEGATRAVELLER in the Quick Reviews section. And finally there is another sheet of Errata in GEO'S VARIANTS. Anyone who does not receive the VARIANTS may obtain a copy of this sheet by sending a SASE to the Editor in care of the TIMES.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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### TIDEWATER TRAVELLER TIMES

The Tidewater Traveller TIMES is the official newsletter of the Tidewater Traveller Club. Submissions of artwork or articles are accepted subject to Editorial approval. Submitted items cannot be returned unless a SASE is included with the items. Subscriptions may be obtained by non-members for \$3.00 for a six month subscription.

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### EVENT HORIZON CURRENT AND FUTURE RELEASES

**FROM THE WORKSHOP:** As anticipated, the complete set of MEGATRAVELLER arrived in the stores in plenty of time for Christmas. For more information on MEGATRAVELLER, see the lead article of this month's TIMES. Also arriving in the stores in time for Christmas, although I did not get my copy until after Christmas, is MISSION ARCTURUS for 2300. There is a review of this module in the Quick Review section of this issue. COLONIAL ATLAS, also for 2300, contains descriptions of all of Earth's colonies, is scheduled for release February 1st. For TWILIGHT:2000, there is URBAN GUERRILLA, scheduled for release on the 8th of January, and the SMALL ARMS GUIDE, scheduled for release in March. January is also the release date for CHALLENGE ISSUE 31 which will contain articles for all of the Workshop's role-playing games. Other items of interest are COMBINED ARMS, for COMMAND DECISION, CHIEFTAN, an ASSAULT series module, and the revised rules and scenario book for JOHNNY REB. One last item of interest to MEGATRAVELLER referees, the REFEREE'S COMPANION, a companion volume to the REFEREE'S MANUAL, which will contain large scale combat, mercenary tickets, more information on missiles, etc. is tentatively scheduled for release in the fall. If you would like to see this at ORIGINS, like I would, write and let them know!

**FROM THE DIGEST GROUP:** EARLY ADVENTURES should be in the stores shortly. It was scheduled for release just before the end of the year, but may have been delayed by the nasty weather they have been having in the midwest. TRAVELLERS' DIGEST ISSUE 11 should be following it by a few weeks. 101 VEHICLES is still on track for release in the first quarter of 1988, with STARSHIP OPERATORS' MANUAL on track for release at ORIGINS 88. Sources indicate that the Digest Group may be releasing an "Air and Sea" module. This module would contain such items as an expanded generations system for Sailors and Flyers, rules for air and sea vehicle generation, and possibly rules for air and sea combat. Since the Digest Group developed the vehicle design system for MEGATRAVELLER, they would be a logical choice for the production of this type of module. As a Wet Navy person, I would look forward to such a release, especially if it contained details on submersibles. Well, that about wraps up this month's report. Now that the Christmas season is past, we will probably see a slowdown of releases until after ORIGINS 88. Remember, all dates mentioned in this article are tentative, and the arrival date in area stores runs about two weeks after the release date. Also, it is important that you write to the companies producing the games to let them know what you want. Game companies are more likely to release a product if they know that people are out here who will purchase it.

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## CAMPAIGN REPORT



The first part of December was rather slow with gaming activity curtailed somewhat by gamers leaving the area for the holidays and other events to keep refs busy. Activity looks to be picking up again as of this report, and should produce a large section next month.

**DARK RIVER I**-No gaming this month.

**BALCONY BOYS**-No gaming this month.

**STAR OF EPSILON INDI**- When we last saw our intrepid adventurers, they were growing concerned about not being able to contact Hillary. Cyril and Ed, the Hiver, go to the apartment of Mariel Stevens with whom Hillary was supposed to have been staying. After getting no response to their summons at the door, they break in to find Mariel tied up and that Hillary was kidnapped by one of the Baron's henchmen. The pair race back to the Starport, and upon boarding the Star, discover that the Baron's Yacht, the Ypsilanti, is rapidly approaching the jump point. A rapid departure is engaged upon, but before they get into range of it, the Baron's ship jumps.

They learn from starport that the Ypsilanti was bound for Carlyle, and head there themselves, but miss catching him by a few hours. At Karpaty, the Baron's next destination, and homeworld, they arrive ahead of the Baron, and wait planetside for his return. When he returned to his "estate", the penthouse of a local building, the crew of the Star rented an air/van, invaded the "estate", and extracted Hillary. No one on either side was killed in the assault, but Ed was seriously wounded. Ed was immediately taken to a hospital where he was tended by a Virushi surgeon and started on the road to recovery. The Chief, in the meantime found a large packing crate and rented a grav truck, the van having been damaged in the assault and abandoned. Then the Chief crated up Ed while Cyril took Hillary into town to disguise her. With a new hair color, make-up, and a high fashion outfit, Hillary slips with Cyril through the starport past the Baron's waiting thugs.

Back on the ship, Ed is given a Hiver specific medical slow drug to accelerate the healing process. It was fortunate that Karpaty had a office of Star Pattern Lines on world.

The next day, the Star makes a lieurely exit from the system bound for Opar, trying to avoid suspicion but put as much distance between them and the Baron as possible.

From Opar the Star travels to Rith, Rann, and then Akiirkii. Inbound to Akiirkii, one of the passengers suspects that Linda, who really is Hillary in disguise, is really the Marchioness Minslow. The crew vigorously deny this knowing all along that he is right, and preventing him from obtaining a fingerprint.

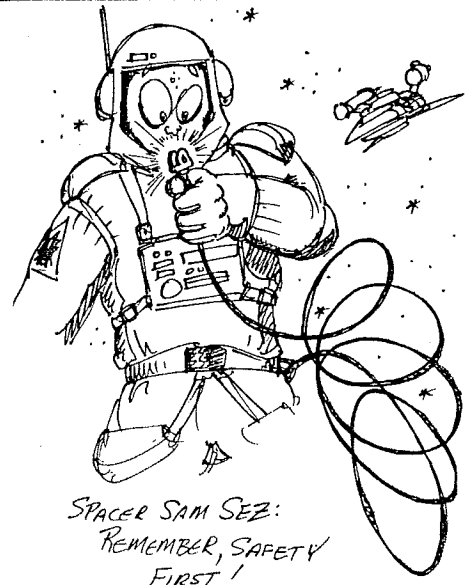
At Akiirkii, the Star is put into the yards for its annual overhaul. In the meantime, the crew holes up in the Travellers Aid Society Hotel and celebrates that ancient Terran Holiday, Christmas, and then observes the Imperial Holiday as they usher in 1113. Ed is fascinated with these human customs, and then finds he can not resist his racial tendency toward manipulation, and makes life difficult for the Baron here at the subsector capital.

During this time Ed has become obsessed with the mysterious artifact and its beautiful contents. On Akiirkii, he finds Professor Feldstien of the Imperial University who is able to translate the ancient text on the cylinder. Determined to learn more about the object and its contents, Ed desires to head to Bellerophon to speak to the author of a book on ancient archeology that he obtained. Determined to help his friend, the Chief agrees to his quest, and Cyril consents only because it will get him far away from the Harlequin Subsector and Uncle Harry's legacy.

From Akiirkii, they jump to Kesirisu, and then Phireene. At Phireene, they pick up collapsable tanks and decide to jump as quickly as possible toward Bellerophon, and eventually Terra. This will entail a loss of revenue, but they are willing to take the loss to reach their destination in about half the time. From Phireene they jump to Beatus, and are accompanied by Professor Feldstien who is interested in pursuing this artifact, and Janine, a former passenger who has become romantically inclined toward Cyril. From Beatus, they will make their first jump to deep space. Can Chief keep the jump drives in running order? Will the Star become lost in deep space? Stay tuned next time and find out.

**FAST TIMES**-No gaming this month.

**PERILS IN POLAND**-(A TWILIGHT-2000 game refereed by Bruce Gelinus in Georgia) After a few encounters with both Russian and Polish troops, the group make their way to the south of the small Polish village of Swieca. There they are wintering over with a couple of crazy Englishmen whom they helped fight off marauders. The two new members of the merry band (Continued on Page 5)



SPACER SAM SEZ:  
REMEMBER, SAFETY  
FIRST!

## ⊕ FORWARD OBSERVER ⊕

AN EDITORIAL BY MARK GELINAS

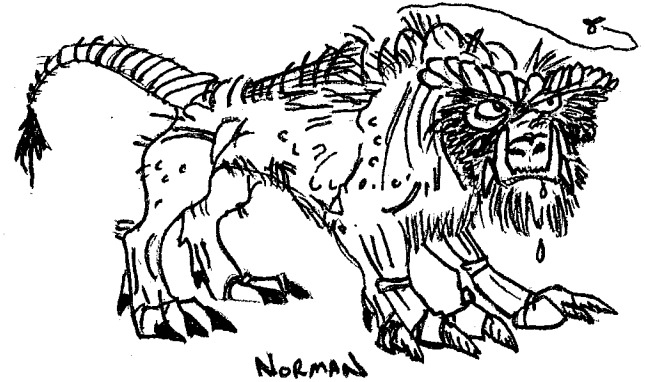
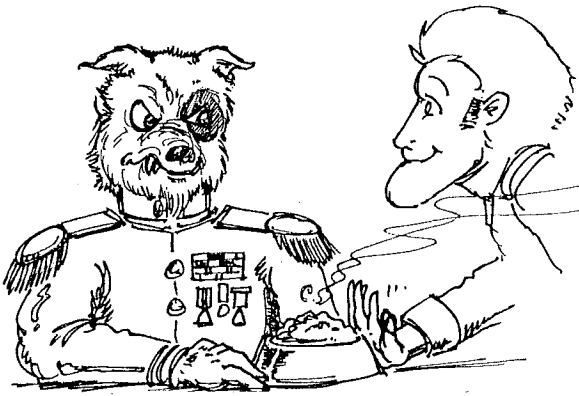
### ARE YOU A ROLL PLAYER? PART II CREATIVE ROLE-PLAYING

In this column last month, we examined the causes of roll playing, an affliction that frequently infects players of role-playing games. Such causes included the seekers of a "combat simulation", the "hack and slash" mentality, the bane of television, and egocentricity. This month we will examine ways to be a creative role-player.

The first of these methods is to let the referee be a picture maker. It is the referee's job to create a mental picture for the players, and a good referee will strive to do so to some extent, possibly using play aids such as minatures to help. Yet a lot of what he is trying to do is in a verbal format, and if you as a player are busy talking with other players or kibitzers, or running off to play video games when it is not "your" turn, you will miss some of what the referee is trying to do. Often this will cause a referee to forget trying to give background descriptions and concentrate on action, action, action instead. Thus the game has lost some color and depth. Allow your referee to describe the scene, I think that you will find yourself becoming more involved with the game.

The second method is getting to know your character. Most characters when generated are little more than a set of statistics and skills on a sheet. To make this character more real, it is necessary to go beyond that. Create a background for your character, not only will this let you know more about your character, it may also give the referee some ideas for scenarios that involve your character. Then give your character some personality. If you do nothing more than answer the basic questions of who, what, when, where, how, and most importantly why about your character, you have gone a long way toward fleshing him out. Then too, it has been suggested that you can always base your character on someone you have known. The similarity does not have to be exact, and after all, you will be the only one who knows who the character is based on and how close the personalities are. Another way of establishing personality and direction for your character is to set some goals for that character. Goals can be both short range, such as obtaining some certain device, or long range, such as finding a certain person, place or thing. Goals for characters can also give the referee ideas for sidelines or even the main thrust in a campaign. Essentially, the better that you know your character, the easier it will be to play your character's role. If you are having difficulty giving your character a background, personality, or goals ask your referee who is usually glad to help.

The third method for improved role-playing is to play your character and not yourself. It is true that since you are doing the playing, some of your personality, mannerisms, etc. will leak across to your character, and some characters are very similar to their players. Nevertheless, you can give your character some unique characteristics. Try to think like the character you have developed would think. The better that you have developed his personality, the easier this will be. When your character (Continued on Page 5)



GNS

NEWSLINE:  
2300

## IMPERIAL FORCES ALERTED

**TERRA/SOL: 322-1116:** In a move that has the population confused, General Yoshiru, head of the Terran Home Guard, placed all forces on alert recently. During this alert, Imperial Military installations have been closed, leaves and furloughs have been cancelled, and reserve forces have been placed on alert. In a similar move, the Imperial Rim Fleet has been concentrated. There has been no explanation for these actions from any source. Some sources speculate that these moves are in preparation to fend off an attack from Solomani forces. Others speculate that such actions are in response to rumors of troubles at the Core.

## BARON FINDS DISFAVOR

**AKIIRKII/HARLEQUIN: 024-1113:** Baron Harro of Karpaty was called before the Council of Peers today to answer for himself against some allegations of misconduct. Although several letters were received accusing the Baron of high justice crimes, including kidnapping another noble, and possible coercion, no hard evidence was presented to convict the Baron. After his "day in court" the Baron told reporters that this sort of muckraking has been directed against him for some time now, and that, due to the seriousness of these charges, he would be hiring some troubleshooters to locate the perpetrators.

## STARTOWN FIRE DESTROYS HOTEL

**LYFAFF/TRAILBREAK: 166-1112-** A fire last night destroyed the Hastor Hotel located on the edge of startown. The night staff escaped without harm, and it is believed that all guest also escaped, but typical of startown hotels, accurate records were not kept of guests. Fire investigators at the scene are searching for signs of arson, investigating the possibility of insurance fraud. No other buildings in the closely packed neighborhood were damaged by the fire. Unofficial sources claim that the fire was set by cultists to prevent their secret activities from being uncovered. At any rate, no one seems to be sorry that this mysterious hotel is gone.

## FAST STRIKES AGAIN!

**JIOGI/AQUARIA: 240:1110:** A small band of FAST terrorist attacked the Way Station at Jogi today. One of the X-Boat tenders was damaged and seventeen people were killed in the assault including all five FAST terrorists. Jogi has been a favorite target of FAST terrorist since the movement began for two primary reasons. First, it is the nexus of communication throughout the Aquarian Empire, and, second, it represents the tie between the Core Worlds and the Frontier Worlds which FAST seeks to liberate. Found in the wreckage of the FAST vessel was a decapitated body with a sign declaring "Thus end all Imperial moles". The body has not been identified, and it is not known whether the person was working for the Empire or not.

## URI STILL ON AQUARIA

**AQUARIA/AQUARIA: 240:1110:** The banished Prince Uri, in defiance to his father's Imperial Order, remains on Aquaria. With the ten of the sixty days given to him to be beyond the border expired, Uri does not seem to be concerned, and has been regularly partying with his friends. Nobles have not been publicly seen with Uri, but it is rumored that many visit him secretly. Rumors of an imperial overthrow abound as everyone continues to count days.

## CHESAPEAKE PREPARES TO LEAVE

**RED SPECK: DECEMBER 29, 2300:** The U.S.S. Chesapeake, a research vessel supported by the NARL, is preparing to leave Red Speck on an exploratory mission in and around the American Arm of space. Professor Qumbly, NARL spokesman, indicates that the League is still hiring persons to crew the Chesapeake, and, even though they have a number of scientists already, they would consider any highly qualified scientist who applied. Interested parties should contact the professor at TELEX 555-2324. Departure is set for January 5, 2301.

## AIRFILM ACCIDENT KILLS 10

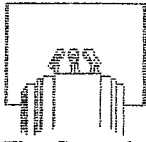
**BETA CANUM: NOVEMBER 20, 2300:** A freak airfilm accident killed the engineer and nine passengers today on the French Continent's airfilm line. The airfilm train left the roadbed and crashed into a stand of trees, demolishing the engine and severely damaging several of the cars. A large number of other passengers were taken to a nearby hospital and treated for injuries and several remain in critical condition. The cause of the accident is unknown, but investigators are examining the charge of possible misconduct on the part of the engineer. French airfilm authorities are assuring passengers that the line is completely safe for travel, and that full airfilm operations should resume in the morning. British and German lines are continuing to operate on their regular schedules.

## EMPEROR COMMENDS DEFENDERS

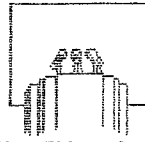
**EARTH: NOVEMBER 11, 2300:** Ruffin I, Emperor of the French Empire, today commended the defenders of the French Arm of space. Speaking before an audience gathered at the Arche de Triomphe in Paris, the Emperor spoke about victories and losses in the current war with the Kafers. He concentrated primarily on the actions of French forces and fleets, but did acknowledge the actions of forces and fleets of other nations. Ruffin commented for some time about the fighting currently happening on Aurore. He noted that the French colony there has almost completely eliminated the Kafer menace, and thanked the Tanstaafi colony for their assistance in the battle of Thunder Valley. No mention was made about the colony of Novoa Kiev which is currently overrun by Kafers, and whose colonist are waging a desperate guerilla war against them. In the conclusion of his speech, the Emperor stated that "it is the duty of every French citizen to do his part for the defense of the Empire". He also stated that industry was to be tasked with increasing the production of wartime material. Since the war started with the destruction of the French sponsored research station orbiting Arcturus, there seemed to be little, if any, opposition to the Emperor's plans.

## SURVIVORS RETURN TO MURPHYVILLE

**AURORE: DECEMBER 30, 2300:** The survivors of what they have called the Murphyville Massacre, returned to their ruined village today to start the long process of rebuilding. Located east of Miller in the Tanstaafi colony, life in Murphyville was disrupted, as was most life on Aurore, by the Kafer invasion. Caught behind the primary Kafer landings, this rural community was attacked by a Kafer detachment whose craft had strayed from the primary landings. Although they were too small to be caught in the initial orbital bombardment, the events of the Massacre, and the losses suffered on their, decimated the population, including Murphy, for whom the town is named. The first task was to bury their dead.



## MEETING REPORT NOVEMBER 1987



The December meeting of the Charter Chapter of the Tidewater Traveller Club was postponed until December 30th due to circumstances beyond our control. Attending the meeting were the Spokesman, the Second, the Treasurer, the Chapter Representative, and Mike Griffith. The meeting was opened and the report from the last meeting was read.

### OLD BUSINESS

A report was made that the Club has received its tax number from the IRS, and can now open an account with the bank. The bank would not let us as a non-profit club open one without a number.

A discussion was held concerning dues and the TIMES.

### NEW BUSINESS

GEOCON VI was discussed and plans were made for it. See Bulletins and Announcements for details.

An inquiry was made on the progress of new Club cards. An attempt will be made to produce these before the Council Meeting on the 4th of January.

A report was made on the progress of the Peninsula Chapter.

It has been decided that a copy of any inserts produced by individual Chapters for inclusion in the TIMES shall be placed on file with the TIMES office and made available at cost for any members who desire a copy of the same.

After this, the meeting was closed.

## COUNCIL MEETING

A meeting of the Council of the Tidewater Traveller Club was held on the 7th of December. Attending were the Spokesman, the Second, and the Representative of the Charter Chapter.

### OLD BUSINESS

A letter from Jan Warner of Campaign Headquarters of Norfolk to the Club was read. The letter expressed thanks for the Clubs participation at SCI-CON and hope for future assistance.

### NEW BUSINESS

The change in the TIMES format was discussed.

It was resolved to stimulate the Peninsula Chapter to make sure that they hold a meeting and get a Representative before the next Council Meeting.

It was resolved to stimulate the formation of a Norfolk Chapter of the Club.

Ways to recruit for the Peninsula Chapter were discussed.

With certain members leaving the area, the prospect of a Dam Neck Chapter has dimmed.

A regular game at Norfolk CHQ was discussed. It was decided that when it starts, it should be on a weeknight, and eventually be the responsibility of the Norfolk Chapter.

It was resolved that Bruce Gelinis in Georgia should be contacted about starting a Chapter there. With two Honorary Members in that area and a regular campaign, this should not be difficult.

It was resolved that the Peninsula Chapter should have an Open Game in January.

After this the meeting was closed.



## ROLL CALL



This month's ROLL CALL lists the membership of the Charter Chapter. An asterisk denotes the member is temporarily inactive.

Gard, Walter  
Gelinis, Kate- Chapter Representative  
Gelinis, Mark- Club Spokesman  
Griffith, Mike  
Hayes, Mark\*  
Haynes, Mel  
Maddow, Scott  
Scialdone, Josh  
Turnitsa, Chuck  
Umphress, Joe- Club Second

Better to eat a blade of grass in peace, than a mound of hay with strife and conflict.

K'KREE PROVERB



## BULLETINS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PLAYER EXCLUSION



In order to be able to maintain order in games, the referee has the right to expell from the game any player whose behavior is not conducive to good order and discipline. Continued unruly behavior or the part of a Club member could result in dismissal from the Club.

### NEW ADDRESSES

Honorary Member Gerry Hartman is now attending a naval school in California. His current address is: A-130-0029 Class 88040 FLEASWTRACENPAC, San Diego, CA 92147. Ken McKittrick is now out of the Navy and is at RD 2 Box 807, West Monroe, NY 13167.

### SPACER SAM SEZ

The cartoon "Spacer Sam Sez" will become a regular feature of the times. Spacer Sam is intended to point out the humorous and offer silly things that characters sometimes do during a game. It is mostly intended to amuse, but may prevent some grief to your character sometime. Submissions for Spacer Sam sayings and even drawings will be accepted, subject to standard submission policy.

### NEWSLINE:2300

NEWSLINE:2300 is a new feature of the TIMES intended to provide a forum for presenting background information and news pertinent to 2300 campaigns. If you have a 2300 campaign and would like to submit a news item, send your news article to the TIMES. All articles are subject to standard submission policy.

### NEW FORMAT

Starting with the last issue, the TIMES has gone to a new format. The center two pages are primarily intended for the Charter Chapter of the Club, but, until such time as certain changes can be implemented, it is useful to the majority of our readers. What would eventually like to see is each chapter providing its own insert with such things as their Meeting Report, Roll Call, and Chapter Specific Bulletins. That would make the TIMES applicable to all members, but unique to each Chapter as well. The honorary members and inactive members who receive the TIMES would receive the material from the Charter Chapter. These are only some ideas that I have. Let me know your feelings on these matters. Feedback is important to the effective growth of both the Club and the TIMES.

### MEETINGS

The January meeting of the Charter Chapter of the Tidewater Traveller Club will be held at Campaign Headquarters in Norfolk on Monday, January 18, at 7:00 pm. Members of the Peninsula Chapter should contact John Martin for a meeting time and place.

### GEOCON VI

GEOCON VI will be held on the 9th and 10th of January at the residence of the Spokesman. There is a \$5.00 admission fee, payable at the door which will be used for some refreshments; the remainder being placed into the Club account. Two persons, who will be dedicated to helping clean up Sunday afternoon will be given free admission. We will provide space to sleep if you are from the Peninsula, but you must bring your own bedding. It is a good idea to bring food money as well. All persons attending must abide by the house rules, printed below, flagrant violaters will be asked to leave. Participants may start arriving about 10:00 Saturday morning. We will be playing MEGATRAVELLER starting at 6:00 pm Saturday and TRAVELLER:2300 starting 1:00 pm on Sunday. The open times can be used for bull session, board games, and building characters. There will be a midnight movie on Saturday. Come on out and bring a prospective member or someone who is interested in these games. For more information, contact Mark or Kate Gelinis at 428-4636.

## GEOCON HOUSE RULES

- 1). No drugs allowed. Many of the attendees are military personee and we are not tolerant of drug abuse.
- 2). No alcohol allowed.
- 3). Food is not to be consumed while seated on living room furniture.
- 4). Smoking is only allowed out on the patio.
- 5). Keep the noise down after 11:00 pm.
- 6). The VCR and/or TV will remain off between 1:00 and 11:00 pm.
- 7). There are many delicate and hand-crafted items in the house. Look as much as you like, but obtain permission before touching.
- 8). The Master Bedroom is off limits.
- 9). Clean up after yourself.
- 10). Keep food away from electrical equipment.
- 11). We have only one bathroom (head, latrine, etc.); lingering on the throne or in the shower may cause others discomfort.
- 12). In general, treat the house and occupants with respect.



## QUICK REVIEWS



### MISSION ARCTURUS

REVIEW BY MARK GELINAS AND SCOTT MADDOX

MISSION ARCTURUS is a module for TRAVELLER:2300 and was written by William H. Keith, Jr. and Lester W. Smith. The overall impression with this 48 page module is that of neatness. The main body of the text is set in boxes in the center of the page with margins left open for information which the referee may reference frequently. The chapters are laid out in logical progression and significant sections are cross referenced. The adventure of the module deals with the return to Station Arcture by human forces attempting to recapture it from the Kafers. Although the module is linear in nature, there is room for referee modifications, and for player divergence. Included in the adventure are the corrected armor rules for those who have not purchased the Aurora Sourcebook, and important revelations about Kafer psychology. Our only misgivings about the module was the \$8.00 price, but we assume other prices will also increase. Overall it is an excellent module, and is highly recommended as a sequel to KAfer DAWN, but may be played by itself.

### MEGATRAVELLER

REVIEWS BY MARK GELINAS  
REFEREE'S MANUAL

The REFEREE'S MANUAL for MEGATRAVELLER provides the referee with everything he needs for creation and administration of most types of adventures. Included are rules for the task system, system creation, animal creation, encounters, trade and commerce, vehicle building and other such items. The animal creation, task system, and system creation are similar to previously published materials. Trade and commerce is extrapolated from MERCHANT PRINCE but expanded with materials from the JOURNAL. The section on vehicle building is drawn from STRIKER and HIGH GUARD, and allows the creation of everything from a simple motorcycle to a million ton starship. The creation process is simpler than that of STRIKER allowing the referee to develop a ground, grav, or space craft rather quickly. Air and sea vehicles will be dealt with later. Missile design was left out, and I would like to have seen some standard tac missiles included. The starship combat system, derived from HIGH GUARD, is quite deadly for small craft. For craft less than 1000 tons displacement, I recommend using the vehicle combat rules from the PLAYERS' MANUAL, which lists penetration and damage for starship weaponry. There are some errors in the book, but a referee can work through them; an Errata is included in the VARIANTS. Overall, the REFEREE'S MANUAL does an excellent job providing the referee with a source of information that he needs.

### IMPERIAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

The IMPERIAL ENCYCLOPEDIA for MEGATRAVELLER has library data and equipment lists for MEGATRAVELLER. Included is a timeline showing a number of significant events in various dating systems. The library data is divided into two sections, one for everyone, and one for referees only. The equipment sections, regular and combat, list equipment with tech level, volume, mass, and price. Not included are the hostile environment suits listed in the PLAYERS' MANUAL. These may be found in GRAND SURVEY by Digest Group Publications. Of the MEGATRAVELLER books, this has the least errors, but breaks the least new ground; an Errata is in the VARIANTS. This outstanding publication is highly recommended for players and referees.

### BOXED SET

The BOXED SET of MEGATRAVELLER contains the PLAYERS' MANUAL, REFEREE'S MANUAL, IMPERIAL ENCYCLOPEDIA, a Spinward Marches map, and dice. Since I have reviewed the books, I will review the game as a whole starting with two general comments: 1) MEGATRAVELLER is here, but don't put away STRIKER or MERCENARY yet. 2) Some conversions to the new system seem to have gone only half way. You can still use STRIKER to create weapons not included in the REFEREE'S MANUAL: remember a cubic meter is a kiloliter. MERCENARY is still useful for tickets and the abstract large scale combat system. An example of half way conversions is in animal generation, which makes allowance for HITS as opposed to dice for damage, but does not define armor in new terms rather than general terms of the original set. MEGATRAVELLER is the current edition of TRAVELLER; eventually it will replace previous material, but most such material is useful with little or no conversion. It is an excellent edition and recommended for all TRAVELLER players and referees. Players may only want the PLAYERS' MANUAL; but those who want all three books would do well to purchase the boxed set.

FORWARD OBSERVER (CONT.) speaks to other characters or NPC's, act out your character's speech, don't just say "well I tell him such and such". Adapt some speech patterns and mannerisms for your character and use them; talking to the player or referee who represents the person to whom your character is speaking as your character would talk. Encourage others to address you as their character would address your character. Do this and you will have a richer role-playing experience.

The final method for improved role-playing is exercising your imagination. This can be done during a game by creating mental pictures of what is transpiring. Exercising your imagination at other times is also very useful. One of the best ways to do such is to read. As you read, your brain is given a work-out in that it must translate the words read into images of what the author is trying to express. This differs from visual media which has already created the images for you. Reading not only broadens your horizons, but also can give you ideas which may be translated into gaming terms. Another exercise of imagination is writing. This can be done by either creating a mental picture of something or looking at an actual picture or object and then describing it in your own words. Another option is writing narratives. Any such writing can be for your own benefit, or if you like, shared with others. Regardless of what you do with the end product, writing can make you a better player or referee. These two examples are by no means the only way to exercise your imagination. Just thinking of other methods can be an exercise unto itself.

These methods are just a few of the many that may be used to make you a better role-player. Role-playing can be compared to a good science fiction movie or novel, where there is both action and character development. The action end is primarily the responsibility of the referee, but both referee and player can get involved in character development. Try it and see your role-playing improve while roll playing tendencies disappear.

CAMPAIGN REPORT (CONT.)—are Albert, formerly of the 22nd SAS, and Edward, formerly of the 1st Queen's Own Royal Engineers. The group plans to spend some time in the area, creating hate and discontent among the local enemies and oppressors. Future plans include trying to blow up a dam that the Russians have gotten back into working order to apply electric power around Polish State Road 37. They eventually plan to get to the free city of Sycow. Stay tuned for further adventures of Captain Jack and his merry band as they try to survive in Poland.

### SCI-CON 9 GAME REPORT

BLACKBIRD FALLING—The group of U.S.A.F Security was sent to try to recover a downed pilot and the intelligence gathered by his recon flight. After several encounters with Russian motorized infantry in this Northern Iran area, the group got a lead on the whereabouts of the pilot. As they proceeded to search for him, they were captured by the same band of marauders who held the pilot. In the ensuing escape, the pilot and some members of the security group were killed, but the rest of the group escaped with the intelligence and a few light wounds.

THRILLSEEKERS—The THRILLSEEKERS, a company of troubleshooters working during the Long Night period of Imperial History, were hired to clear out a band of marauders terrorizing a planet. The population of the planet, which had already suffered a total loss of government and technology, was divided into scattered bands. The marauders were serving as cadre for two of the bands in an effort to gain control over the starport and eventually the whole planet. The THRILLSEEKERS were successful in their task, although they suffered the loss of a member. The casualty occurred during final clean-up operations in which the last group of marauders had to be cleared out of the strongest structure in the city, the ruins of the now cold fusion power plant. Unknownst to the THRILLSEEKERS, their success allowed the liaison of the group who hired the agency, who also happened to be second in command of the same group, to accomplish a coup and become the leader. Ultimately, the tide of darkness was stayed in some small measure.

MURPHY'S COMPLAINT—The pastoral life at Murphy's Ranch and the adjacent village of Murphyville was disrupted when the city of Miller was gifted with a Kafer nuclear warhead. The following day, a Kafer recon group attacked the settlement while trying to reach the main body of the Kafer invasion of Tanstaafi. When the Kafer Crawler started shelling the village with its plasma gun, the men decided to attack the Kafers using "RAT PATROL" tactics. This succeeded in getting three persons killed and two vehicles destroyed. The survivors killed the remaining Kafers and returned to the ranch where the dependents had gathered. We hope to continue this adventure as the survivors try to get past the Kafer lines to Tanstaafi City in MURPHY'S ESCAPE.



# COMING EVENTS



**GEOCON VI- JANUARY 9-10-** Yes, it has finally arrived.

Because of recent and conflicting events, it will only be two days this time. Main events will include MEGATRAVELLER Saturday and TRAVELLER-2300 Sunday. See bulletins for more details.

**JANUARY CLUB MEETING- JANUARY 18-** The

January meeting of the Charter Chapter of the Tidewater Traveller Club will be at 7:00 pm at CHQ in Norfolk.

### CLASSIFIED ADS

Classified ad space is available in the TIMES for the low rate of 50 cents for 25 words or less for one month's publication.

Diplomacy is to do and say  
The nastiest thing in the nicest way.

Isaac Goldberg *THE REFLEX*

When dining with a ruler, listen with your ears  
and not your tongue.

VARGR PROVERB  
TRANSLATED BY WILDFANG BLACK



French tribble

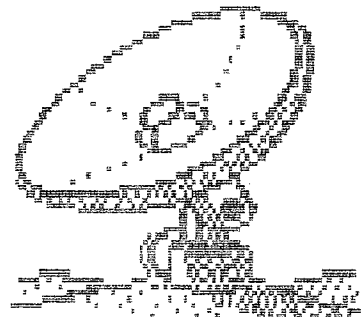


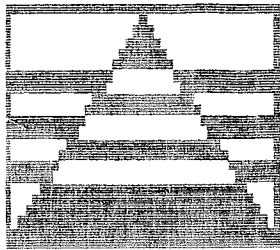
# FEB '88



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 TTC CNCL MEETS	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12 LINC OLN'S B-DAY	13
14 ST. VAL'S DAY	15 CLUB MEET 7PM	16	17	18	19	20
21	22 WASH' TON'S B-DAY	23	24	25	26	27
28	29					

"AD ASTRA"  
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# GEO'S VARIANTS

## ISSUE 7

This month's edition of the Variants contains another subsector of the Dark River Sector. Refer to Issue 4 of the VARIANTS for more background information on the sector. Also included are some vehicles developed from the MEGATRAVELLER vehicle design system. The major feature of this month's issue is an errata for the remainder of MEGATRAVELLER. Additional copies of this errata may be obtained by requesting it from the TIMES. All requests for errata must be accompanied by a SASE. This issue of VARIANTS is a special double sized issue.

### LOAD LIFTER

**CraftID:** Load Lifter, TL 9, Cr7696  
**Hull:** 224/561, Disp=.25, Config=0USL, Armor=4D, Unloaded=1ton, Loaded=2tons  
**Power:** 6/12, Fuel Cell=.09Mw, Duration=1/3  
**Loco:** 10/20, 2 Legs Road=134kph OffRoad=80kph  
**Commo:** Radio=Very Distant  
**Sensors:** Headlight, Light Amplification  
**Off/Def:** Hardpoints=1  
**Control:** Panel=Electrical x 2  
**Accomm:** Crew=1 (Operator=1), Seats=Cramped x 1  
**Other:** Heavy Robotic Arms x 2 (Controlled by Operator), Cargo=1 Ton (Carried by Arms)  
 Fuel=.01kliters, Objsize=Small, EMLevel=Moderate

The load lifter is a vehicle used on worlds where grav vehicles have yet to become prevalent. Since at that tech level, robots are also not always practical, this vehicle allows finer control of load moving tasks than is possible with a forklift, yet at a reasonable cost. The armor only represents the strength of chassis material. With an open frame vehicle, any hits on vehicle components should be applied directly to that component without the benefit of armor. (Yes this vehicle was inspired by the movie ALIENS, but now made possible with the addition of legs as a means of locomotion in MEGATRAVELLER)

### COMBAT WALKER

**CraftID:** Combat Walker, TL 9, Cr335,971  
**Hull:** 450/1125, Disp=.5, Config=4USL, Armor=16D, Unloaded=4.6tons, Loaded=5.6tons  
**Power:** 13/26, Fuel Cell x 2=.18Mw, Duration=27/81 (3/24 in Vacuum)  
**Loco:** 133/266, 2 Legs Road=82kph OffRoad=65kph  
**Commo:** Radio=Regional, Maser=Distant  
**Sensors:** Headlight, All Weather Radar=Distant, Ladar=Distant, 2nd Generation Laser Sensors  
 Passive I.R., Advanced Image Enhancement, Environment Sensor, Radiation Sensor=Very Distant, Video Recorder  
 ActObjScan=Form, ActObjPin=Form  
 PasEngScan=Form  
**Off/Def:** Hardpoints=1, Weapons listed below  
**Control:** Computer=0 x 1, Panel=Computer Linked x 2,  
 Special=HeadsUp Display, Environ=Basic Environ, Basic LS, Extended LS  
**Accomm:** Crew=1 (Operator=1), Seats=Cramped x 1  
**Other:** Heavy Robotic Arms x 2 (Controlled by Operator), Cargo=1 Ton (Carried by Arms)  
 Fuel=.533kliters (Can be divided between hydrogen and oxygen for vacuum use)  
 Objsize=Small, EMLevel=Faint, EMM masking, Controls have ECP.

WEAPON	LOCATION	AMMO	ROUNDS	PEN/AT	MAX RNG	DMG	AUTO	TGT	DGR	SP	SIG	RCL
Laser Rifle-9	Right Arm	Beam	Unlimited	9/2	Distant	3	0	0	M	0		
4Cm Ram AGL-9	Left Arm	HE	100	9	Distant	6	2	15	M	0		
		HEAP	100	28	Distant	8	2	15	M	0		
		Flech	100	2	Distant	2	2	90	M	0		
Tac Missile Tubes	Right Arm	Wire	2	14	Distant(2)	12	0	20	H	0		
		Homing	2	14	Distant(4)	12	0	20	H	0		

The Combat Walker is a logical extension of the Load Lifter. It is somewhat larger than the Load Lifter but better armored. It fills the gap between infantry and armor on worlds where battle dress is not yet available. The Walker can withstand most small arm fire and can survive a few hits from grenades. Although armed with a variety of weapons, only one may be fired at a time. The weapons table list the maximum number of rounds that a weapon can carry. These may be all of one type or mixed. In the case of the grenade launcher, the order in which mixed rounds are loaded should be noted as this will be the order in which they can be used. Although intended for use during periods of eight hours or less, the Combat Walker can support its operator for the duration of the power plant. Tac missiles cost Cr 200.

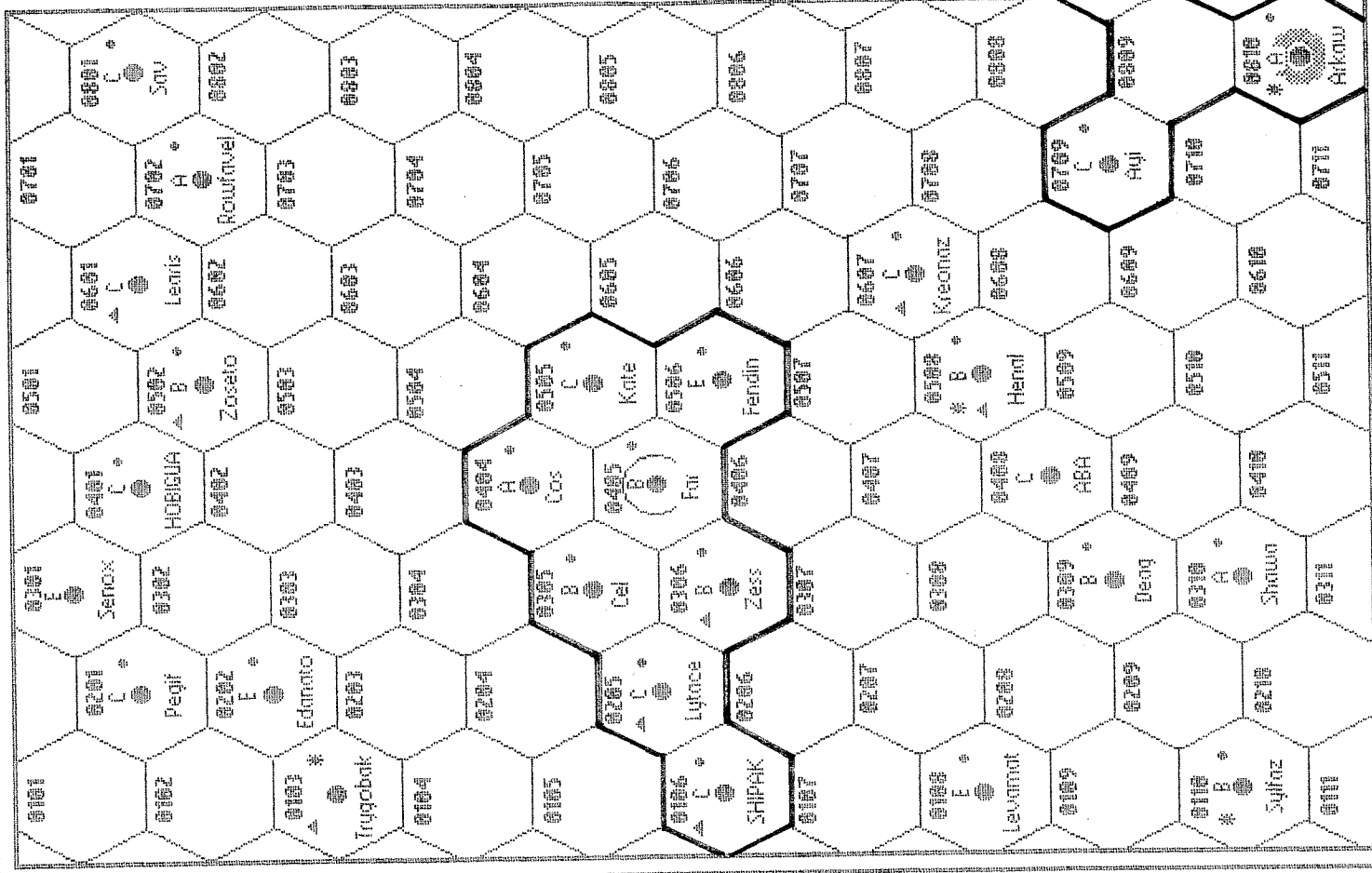
# SUBSECTOR MAP GRID

Subsector Name: Blue Star



HEX NAME	UPP	A BS	TRADE MODS	I C	G C
103 TRYGOBAK	B-556865-5	IN N, S	NA, I, HI		
106 SHIPAK	C-100988-A	CD S	NA, NI, P		
108 LEVAMAT	E-43368A-4	IN N	NI		
110 SYLFAZ	B-43469C-7	IN N	NI, FL		
201 PEGIF	C-8E1556-6	IN S	NI, LO		
202 EDANATO	E-434730-3	IN S	NI, LO		
205 LYTACE	C-794327-7	CD S	NI, LO		
301 SENOX	E-435741-5	IN S	NI, LO		
305 CEL	B-434100-B	CD S	P, DW		
306 ZESS	B-5508BF-6	CD S	NI, LO		
309 DEAG	B-557210-9	IN S	NI, LO		
310 SHAWA	A-310014-A	IN S	FL, HI		
401 HOBIGUA	C-8B2AAB-A	IN S	NI, FL		
404 COS	A-8B2557-F	CD S	NI, LO		
405 FAR	B-435100-A	CD S	I, HI		
408 ABA	C-678976-8	IN S	NI, FL		
502 ZOSETO	B-434742-B	IN S	NI		
505 KATE	C-8B2550-8	CD S	NI, LO		
506 FENDIN	E-43468B-4	CD S	NI, AS, LO		
508 HENAL	B-434103-C	IN S	NI, LO		
601 LEARIS	C-000148-B	IN S	NI, LO		
607 KREONAZ	C-673333-9	IN S	NI, FL		
702 ROWFAVEL	A-8B3568-E	IN S	NI, VA		
709 AYI	C-100430-8	AD	NI, LO, VA		
801 SAV	C-100322-9	IN S	NI, FL, LO R		
810 ARKAW	A-9C5002-D	AD N			

Blue Star Subsector  
 Subsector E of Dark River Sector. It contains 26 worlds, the Celan Domain and part of the Arkaw Colonial Domain. Its highest TL is F at Cos; highest population is 60 billion at Hobigua. Named for plethora of spectral class B stars. Abbreviations: CD- Celan Domain, AD-Arkaw Colonial Domain. Subsector Computer Graphics by John Martin. ERRATA: Planets with high populations, (trade mod HI) should be labeled in large letters on the map of the Shilleleagh subsector.







## MEGATRAVELLER ERRATA

The following errors have been found in MEGATRAVELLER. This list is by no means exhaustive, and may be superceded by an official GDW errata. Corrections are primarily based on source documents as listed in MEGATRAVELLER.

General note: this document does not propose to correct any typos that may appear in the book, the correction for those are generally self evident. Most of these corrections and the ones from last month were discussed with Joe Fugate, Sr. of Digest Group Publications, one of the editors of MEGATRAVELLER. A number of corrections to me by him. Two overall corrections: William H. Kieth, Jr. is not credited for artwork in the PLAYERS' MANUAL or REFEREE'S MANUAL, but he has worked in both; on most maps, the world Regina is illustrated in Jewell subsector rather than in Regina subsector where it belongs.

### PLAYERS' MANUAL

These are some additional recommendations and corrections for the PLAYERS' MANUAL.

Page 29: Since Zero-G Environ has replaced Zero-G Weapons, recommend having Accelerator Rifle covered under Rifleman skills (as Rifle);

Snub Pistols are already covered under Handgun skill.

Page 44: College graduates with NOTC can enter Navy or Marines; with OTC they can only enter the Army.

Pages 50-51: The way the Mercenary Advanced Character Generation system is written, characters cannot get Combat Rifleman skill. Under the original system given in BOOK 4: MERCENARY, Combat Rifleman was a cascade skill of Gun Combat. In MEGATRAVELLER, it is not, but the system was not corrected for the change in skills. Recommend giving Combat Rifleman instead of Gun Combat for Basic Training, and changing one Gun Combat under each MOS table to Special Combat, which has Combat Rifleman as a cascade skill.

Page 78: Grenade Launcher Table: the values for HE and HEAP grenades are reversed.

### REFEREE'S MANUAL

Page 22: WORLD SIZE: The titles Minimum and Maximum should be shifted to the right one column.

Page 22: WORLD LAW LEVEL: Law Level 6: the second "firearms" should be changed to read "shotguns".

Page 23: TECHNOLOGY LEVEL: TL 8: should be listed as Early Stellar.

Page 23: WORLD PHYSICAL DATA: Code Hydrographics: UWP 1 is a Dry World not a Desert World.

Page 35: ANIMAL WEIGHT EFFECTS: Hits: is a two number figure separated by a "/", the formula for the second number can be found hiding under the column "Wound" which should not be there; "Wound Modifier" covers this aspect.

Page 50: FREIGHT AND CARGO: Lot Size: Major Cargo is 10x10, Minor Cargo is 10x5, the description lists the "x" as a "+".

Page 50: FREIGHT AND CARGO: DM's: Paragraph 5 should read "If the goods are freight (carried for a fee of Cr1000 a ton) and their identity does not matter, ignore further steps." The book substituted "cargo" for "freight".

Page 50: TRADE CLASSIFICATIONS: FI requires an atmosphere of A+ and a Hydrographics of 1+ (shift values for FI to the right one column).

Page 51: Recommend using Table 9f for worlds which have no trade modifiers, such as Rabwhar in the Spinward Marches.

Page 62: VEHICLE CHASSIS TABLE: UCP: the UCP for 6.75 Kilolitres of volume should be .500 not .050.

Page 62: VEHICLE CHASSIS TABLE: Price: the price of Small Craft Hulls is in KiloCredits instead of MegaCredits as listed.

Page 63: CONFIGURATION AND STREAMLINING: The Price Mod for Air-Frame Streamlining is x5, the Price Mod for Irregular Configuration is x.5.

Page 63: PLANETOID CONFIGURATIONS: Armor Values: replace the word "mass" with "mod".

Page 63: OPEN VEHICLE: Change second paragraph to read "If the vehicle is chassis displacement UCP of .2 or less, it cannot be enclosed...."; change paragraph 3 to read, "If chassis displacement UCP is greater than .2, ....".

Page 64: POWER PLANTS: Power out put is for 1 Kiter of power plant; Volume is the minimum volume possible for the power plant.

Page 64: FUEL CELLS: Eliminate the word "Fuel" over Price, the Price is for the Fuel Cell. Liters/Hour is the fuel consumption of the Fuel Cell.

Page 65: MANEUVER DRIVE: Maneuver Drive Units: not listed for TL 7 maneuver drives, probably because these depend on thrust and will be considered in an "Air and Sea" module. For now, recommend adding the following line: TL 7, One thruster unit, 75 Megawatts, 13.5Kliters, 27.0 tons, Cr150000. The maximum maneuver obtainable at TL 7 is 2; at TL8 is 5.

Page 69: MISCELLANEOUS DEVICES: Recommend adding Map Box and Battle Computer (Pages 61 and 53 respectively of IMPERIAL ENCYCLOPEDIA) as these may assist in communications.

Page 72: BAYS: Bays only use 10 hardpoints not 100.

Page 72: 50 TON BAYS: This table scrambles values for the Plasma Gun, Fusion Gun and Repulsor. The correct values are as follow: Plasma Gun, MCr 5, first available at TL 10 with a value of 4 and increases by one for each subsequent TL; Fusion Gun, MCr 8, first available at TL 12 with a value of 7 and increases by one for each subsequent TL; Repulsor, MCr 6, all other information is correct.

Pages 75-77: AMMUNITION TABLES: Mention CBM ammunition but no further information is provided. Recommend using the following information until further information is provided. CBM: Danger Space: 4x Danger Space of a HE round of the same Bore Size and TL; Contact Penetration: TL7: 6 TL8+: Same as a 4cm HEAP Howitzer round for that TL; Fragmentation Penetration: one-half of Contact Penetration; Damage: Same as 4cm HEAP Howitzer round for that TL; CBM Hit DM's: the following bore sizes provide the associated hit DM: 10cm: +1, 12cm: +1, 14cm: +2, 16cm: +3, 18cm: +4, 20cm: +6, 22cm: +8, 24cm: +10, 30cm +12. For all targets in the danger space, roll once for a Contact Hit and once for a Fragmentation Hit. A target receives a Contact Hit on 11+, DM+ CBM DM. A target receives a Fragmentation Hit on 10+; DM+ CBM DM. Because of the abundance of submunitions exploding in the danger space, all Fragmentation Hits have the same amount of penetration as described above. Remember, DM's can cause outstanding success, causing additional damage.

Page 80: NUCLEAR DAMPERS: Price is in MCr.

Page 81: COMPUTERS: Price is in MCr.

Page 82: CREW POSITIONS: The position with an ACCESS of NONE is probably for vehicles of Displacement UCP of .2 or less and represents volume required for the seat and leg room of a person riding on a vehicle such as a motorcycle.

Page 82: ENGINEERING CREW: L=Locomotion CP.

Page 82: MAINTENANCE CREW: H=Hull CP, A=Hull Displacement/100.

Page 84: HULL DAMAGE POINTS: The volume in the formulas given should be volume in LITERS not KILOLITERS. BOOK 8: ROBOTS uses volume in liters to calculate damage points. Allowing a conversion factor of 3 from TRAVELLER to MEGATRAVELLER, the formulas in MEGATRAVELLER are the same as those found in ROBOTS (which was written by the same design team that produced the Vehicle Design System for MEGATRAVELLER). If volume in Kiloliters is used the following are some examples of the disastrous results: Robots of all sizes could only take 1 Hit before their chassis was rendered inoperative; a body pistol hit with 8+ exceptional success would render the hull of an air/raft, constructed with bonded superdense steel, totally inoperative (and actually come close to destroying the vehicle); a solid hit (one greater than the number required to hit) with a TL 8 starship beam laser, within effective range (thereby inflicting all 500 HITS), would totally destroy the hull of a Scout Ship.

Buildings have 500/1000 damage points per SQUARE METER (see page 93 of the PLAYERS' MANUAL), and most buildings are made of less sturdy stuff than vehicles. It is true that using liters as a basis for damage points instead of kiloliters, damage point values for larger vehicles will range into the thousands for larger vehicles, but consider that unless a vehicle suffers a catastrophic hit, then the hull is usually still intact to some degree. Most vehicles are rendered inoperative by destroying its functional systems (power plant, locomotion, weapons, crew, etc.) rather than destroying the hull.

A robot with a URF size 5 chassis (100 liters: human torso size) could take 6 hits before the chassis would be rendered inoperative, and 16 additional hits before the chassis was destroyed. While this is about 2-4 times what an average human can take, remember that metal is tougher than flesh, a zero penetration result will usually do some damage to the chassis, and the chassis takes some damage regardless of what other system is hit.

I have written a considerable bit on this particular clarification for several reasons. First and foremost is the fact that if the damage values listed in the IMPERIAL ENCYCLOPEDIA (which seem to be calculating damage values using kiloliters) are used, then the balance of play has been seriously thrown askew. The secondary reason that I have written so much is that because this can seriously effect play, I felt I

should justify my conclusions. The final reason is that you as a reader and MEGATRAVELLER player and/or referee could follow my reasoning and draw your own conclusions.

### IMPERIAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Pages 76-85: STARSHIPS, SPACECRAFT, AND VEHICLES: As mentioned in the previous discussion, all damage point values are off by a factor of 1,000 (there are 1,000 liters in 1 kiloliter). A quick fix is to add a "K" after each damage point value noting that these are thousands of damage points. A better fix would be to recalculate each value. As this could be a considerable task, recommend that this be done only for vehicles that you as a referee use prior to the game in which they will be used.

Page 92: JUMPSPACE: after "2 to 5=" insert "7" before "days".

Page 93: REFUELLING: Starport Refuelling: Prices listed are for a ton of fuel displacement. Prices for a kiloliter of starship fuel are as follows: unrefined, Cr7.4; refined, Cr37.04.

### SPINWARD MARCHES MAP

General Note: The Asian incursions which are illustrated in the trailing-rimward subsectors (lower right hand corner) occur about 1123, some 4 years after the completion of the Spinward Marches Library Data (SMART). Therefore SMART entries which list any of the effected worlds as being under Imperial control (most notably Glisten) are correct at the time of the completion of SMART.

