XBOAT

No. 2

A Traveller[5] Zine

In This Issue:
- *Training Guilds*
- *Mining the Asteroids*

Xboat

No. 2

Welcome

Putting these issues together is fun... partly because I have plenty of material. But mainly, I have found the backers of this 'zine to be enthusiastic and thoughtful people. You are true fans of Traveller, and I appreciate your kind words and helpful suggestions. Due to your encouragement, this little fanzine becomes that much more useful for Traveller. Thank you.

This issue has a minor focus on belters. Originally, the "belter" was not a separate vocation; the Scout career was used as a catch-all for any exploration-based lifepath. The Belter career was introduced in the 1980s, and belter tasks even earlier in an issue of JTAS (Mining the Asteroids). In this issue, I have rebuilt the original flowcharts from Mining the Asteroids into a task-based flow.

When building Traveller[5], Marc realized that many Traveller careers tend to simply be expansions of a single skill. Rather than go that route, he generalized a dozen career archetypes. Skill specializations then allow a career to be tuned. For example, there is no "Medic" career, but there are Navy Medics, Citizen Medics, and so on.

Though there is no skill named "belter", there are Travellers who are essentially space prospectors. Therefore, I have added a Traveller[5]-friendly way to create belters, without being an actual career. I call it the Belter's Guild, and it's sort of like an education path.

Supporting articles also help fill out the belter's repertoire. The equipment and starship described in this issue are useful in any game, but specifically have belter notes added. Even the Contact! article has significance to asteroid mining.
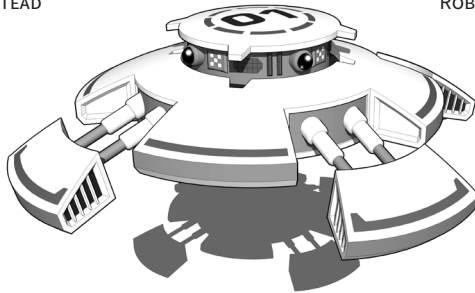
CHIEF ADVISOR
MARC MILLER

FEATURED AUTHOR
BILL LOWREY

EDITOR
ROBERT EAGLESTONE

ARTIST
IAN STEAD

ARTIST
ROBERT PEARCE

Amber Zone: Abyss Rift

Patron: Noble/Scholar
Required Skills: Pilot, Engineer, Sensors

Allan Makkensi-Gram (UPP 5B679B), a wealthy Noble and aspiring Scholar, is on the faculty of the University of Rhylanor, and is studying unique properties of energy waves and their interaction with jump space. His aide, Masha Liranshar, approaches the party with a proposition to join his crew as he investigates some anomalies in the Lanth subsector, using hand-modified prospecting sensors.

The players will each be paid Cr250/week to travel to Dinomn (Lanth 1912) which will take 3 weeks from Rhylanor in Allan's ship (NL-DS13). Once on Dinomn, the players will each be paid Cr1000/week to investigate whatever Allan finds. Allan, Masha and the players will jump out to various "empty" hexes, starting with Lanth 1813 and Lanth 1914, spend a few weeks surveying the area, and then jump back to Dinomn, Ghandi, or Rech to refuel. The players are not paid for time in port, but just for time spent jumping and investigating. Allan also offers a different deal: Cr 250 per week for each player, and they each get a 2% split of anything found.

Referee's Information

Allan took a position as a Scholar with the University after falling out of favor with his family 20 years ago. They decided that a career in academia would not be too much of an embarrassment, and facilitated a new career as a Scholar with a prestigious university.

Allan has a theory that some areas in Lanth subsector might be sources of these energy waves, and that might account for some strange reports from pilots in the region sensationally known as the "Abyss Rift". His ship has fuel for 4 parsecs of jump, and a Jump 3 capable drive. It has been fitted with his custom sensors (treat as belter's Analyzer/Sniffer sensors on extendable stalks).

No one really takes Allan seriously, so they have not delved deeply into the details of his work, but his theory will be quite controversial if it proves to be true. Allan's theory involves the emission and detection of psionic waves and energy, even in jump space, which has been thought to be impossible. This investigation is his attempt to prove himself right.

He previously had a crew lined up for this task, but they were alarmed by the reputation of this area, and abandoned him once it became clear what he was planning to do. Masha has convinced him to be candid with the next group to avoid being stranded.

Each day spent in jumpspace while in an empty hex in the Lanth Rift, roll a sensor task at Deep Space range.

1. Allan is a flake, but a harmless flake. He will waste his family's money

and continue this process until something else catches his attention, or the players decide to abandon him. He will pay, unless he is abandoned. If the players part on good terms, he will consider them for future work that advances whatever passion he is following at the time.

2. Allan seems like a flighty noble playing at research, but his theory is actually true. There is a strange type of radiation in the region, and his custom detectors and scanners can pick it up when the daily sensor roll is a success. The radiation can cause psionic effects on those with psionic potential, but it does not actually interfere with jump space.

The radiation is being emitted by a small, previously undiscovered black hole, and the space around the singularity is littered with space junk, out to AR range (S=7). Players that explore the junk are sure to find items of value. When Allan takes this discovery back to Rhylanor, it is very likely the Navy will classify all of his research.

The abandoned ships and misjumps are caused by the singularity, which disturbs the jump space surrounding the ships. The "strange phenomena" reported are caused by the radiation emitted that leaks into the distorted jump bubbles for ships that do not misjump.

3. As #2, but the emitter is actually a ship with an unknown defense field that acts as a jump damper with a much larger range (1000D) than previously known. On closer approach, the crew detects a drone emerging from the ship. If the players move closer, they might discover that the ship is an ancient (and decrepit) automated defense drone. If they get too close, it will attack them, but will not pursue them beyond Far Orbit range. If they manage to disable the drone without destroying it, it is possible the players could deduce a method to gain access to the ship without damaging it and triggering other automated defenses. The jump damper has caused the misjumps, and the strange radiation is a signature and side effect. It causes vague feelings of unease in anyone with psionic potential.

If word of this becomes public, the Navy will classify all of the research, the ship and the location. It might be possible to find a buyer with one of the defense oriented megacorporations, if this is researched discreetly.

4. As #2, except Allan's theory is completely false. The singularity and space junk are the cause of the numerous misjumps in the region, not Allan's radiation. The radiation exists, and is detectible, but is not able to affect jumpspace and has no psionic effects.

5. As #1, except that Allan is almost out of money after being cut off by his family, and doesn't intend to pay the players. Masha knows the situation, and she is considering staging an "accident" that would leave her in control of the ship. She has official records ready to show that she is the new owner. What happens next and which side the players choose is up to the referee and the players.

6. As #2 or #3, except that Masha is a double agent, and has been keeping tabs on Allan for quite a while. Masha is aware of the psionic effects of the radiation, and will attempt to both gather as much information on Allan's research as possible, and ensure the Navy is not able to take advantage of the discoveries. Whether this includes a scenario similar to #5, or Masha attempts to sabotage the mission, is up to the referee.

Hangar 12
Edwards Far Trader

Edwards (A2-BS21). 200 tons (streamlined), 1G, Jump-2, TL-11, Model/1 computer. 24t fuel tankage plus up to 20t fuel in pods; fuel scoops and intakes (without purifiers). 55t cargo. Three crew in staterooms. Two hardpoints. No vehicles. AV 11. MCr 56.

Operations. One month standard; one jump-2 (20t fuel per parsec).

Summary. The Edwards Far Trader is a frontier ship in the Republic of Regina. It is a multi-purpose vessel that can work like a Free Trader or a Far Trader as needed. It is used for middle passage transport or mineral speculation in asteroid belts.
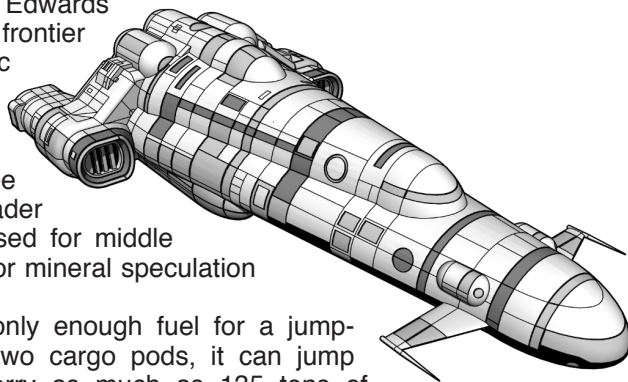
It is built with only enough fuel for a jump-1. However, with two cargo pods, it can jump overtonned and carry as much as 135 tons of cargo. With fuel pods, it can make jump-2 flights and still carry 55 tons of cargo. It carries no vehicles.

Crew. The ship requires one pilot-2, an astrogator, and an engineer-1. Gunners, a medic, and a steward might be useful at times.

Engineering. It has a Shaava type A1-gx jump drive, a Banshee Gravitics 15A maneuver drive, and an Af-1 Cold Sun power plant.

Hull. The Edwards is a Type A2 ship (table 1: Far Trader) with a 200 ton streamlined hull. This hull costs MCr14, and its armor value is equal to its TL (11).

Pods. One of its special features includes grapples that can carry two pods – typically fuel pods, although cargo pods do exist for this model. Pods displace 10 to 30 tons each.

Computer. A Model/1 is 1 ton and MCr 1.5.

Defenses. The ship has two hardpoints: defenses are selected and bought by the owner.

Drives. Being a Far Trader variant, the ship has a Jump-2 drive, a Power plant-2, and a Maneuver-2 drive. Indexing rating 2 performance against a 200 ton hull yields "B" drives for all three. The drives themselves are: Jump drive B, 15 tons, MCr15; Maneuver drive B, 3 tons, MCr6, Power Plant B, 7 tons, MCr7.

Fuel. Jump-2 and Power-2 requires 20% and 2% volume, respectively; however, there are only 24 tons of fuel onboard. This provides one jump-1

and a month of operations. The ship may store another 20 tons of fuel in pods to enable Jump-2.

Staterooms. This ship has ten staterooms total (50 tons; MCr5); typically at least three of these are used by crew.

Life Support. There is one ton dedicated to life support (1 ton, MCr1).

Grapples. Two grapples are mounted: one for each pod (2 tons, MCr2). Pods themselves have a matching grapple.

Bridge. The bridge displaces 10 tons: 4 tons basic plus 2 tons each for the pilot, astrogator, and engineer. Cost is MCr1.

Table showing tail numbers and construction information.

TAIL ID (MAADA)	BUILDING SHIPYARD	FIRST FLIGHT	CURRENT STATUS
A11-0226	GASHIDDA NO. 1	090-1896	IN SERVICE
A11-0230	MARS	141-1896	IN SERVICE
A11-0277	GASHIDDA NO. 1	262-1896	MISSING
A11-0290	ZAGADO	298-1896	IN SERVICE
A11-0302	COMMONAL	017-1898	CAPTURED
A11-0335	YARD 16 NO. 4	115-1897	MISSING
A11-0373	PROXIMA	-	ON ORDER

TAIL ID (EDWARDS)	BUILDING SHIPYARD	FIRST FLIGHT	CURRENT STATUS
EA2-0002	PROXIMA	045-1892	IN SERVICE
EA2-0005	PROXIMA	217-1895	LOST 1897

Only two of the Edwards variant are known to have been built. The Ciece (EA2-0002) is operated by the mercenary group "Rukno's Roughnecks" out of McKinney (2204 Spinward Marches). The Sepitaqu (EA2-0005) was lost in 1897, presumed destroyed. Both were built by Carl Edwards, whose family was kidnapped and taken to the Vargr Wilderness. He was killed attempting to rescue them.

Historical Note: The Edwards Far Trader is a variant of the venerable Maada class Far Trader, a ship originally used to carry passengers and cargo across the Third Imperium. It has Jump-1 capability, and comes with a hybrid LMS triple turret (MCr1 for the LMS, and 1 ton and MCr1 for the triple turret) and a dual sandcaster (MCr0.1 for the sandcaster, and 1 ton and MCr0.5 for the dual turret). It can carry 65 tons of cargo, and costs MCr50.

Adventure Hook: Edwards Far Traders have a hidden subroutine in the computer's astrogation routines, that shows the last known location of Edwards' family.

Hiring Hall

Courtesy of Robert H. Hudson Jr. (UPP 5767A9), Staffing Specialist, Regina Downport.

   Data Format. Each of these characters has data in three sections. The header line consists of the character's career, UPP, age, terms, cash available, and benefits.
   The second line contains a comma-separated list of skills and knowledges. Skill names are followed by a dash, then the skill level. Knowledges are in parentheses, and come after their parent skill.
   Last comes any additional benefits the character may have received during career resolution.

1. Rogue 8566AB, 54 yrs, 9 terms, MCr 2.54
   Advocate-1, Astrogator-6, Comms-2, Counsellor-2, Driver-0 (ACV-1), Engineer-4 (Power Systems-2), Gunner-0 (Turrets-1), Hostile Env-2, Medic-2, Navigation-2, Pilot-6 (Small Craft-1, Spacecraft BCS-1), Streetwise-1, Vacc Suit-9, Zero-G-5.

   Knighthood (one land grant), TAS Fellow, Type S Scout.

2. Agent 687BAB, 38 yrs, 5 terms, Cr 280,000, Knighthood (two land grants).
   Animals-0 (Rider-1), Comms-2, Engineer-0 (Maneuver Drive-1), Flyer-0 (Aeronautics-1, Flapper-1), Gunner-5 (Bay Weapons-1, Ortillery-1), Navy skill-2, Pilot-0 (Small Craft-1, Spacecraft ACS-1), Recon-1, Scout skill-1, Sensors-1, Stealth-3, Steward-1, Streetwise-1, Survival-1, Vacc Suit-1, Zero-G-4.

3. Scout AAA73B, 38 yrs, 5 terms, Cr 45,000
   Actor-1, Animals-0 (Trainer-2), Athlete-1, Comms-3, Engineer-5 (Jump Drive-1, Maneuver Drive-1), Flyer-0 (Aeronautics-1, Rotor-1), Hostile Env-1, Language (Gvegh)-4, Medic-2, Navigation-1, Psychology-1, Robotics-1, Seafarer-0 (Grav Boat-1), Survey-3, Survival-2, Trader-1, Vacc Suit-2

   Discoveries(4), Fame(4), Land Grants(4), Life Insurance, 1 Ship Share, TAS Fellow.

4. Spacer O2 (Sublieutenant) 6757B8, 30 yrs, 3 terms, Cr 50,000.
   Astrogator-1, Computer-2, Fighter-3 (BattleDress-1, Slug Throwers-1), Fleet Tactics-1, Gunner-3 (Bay Weapons-1, Spines-1), Sensors-1, Strategy-3.

5. Spacer O1 (Ensign) 85C7B5, 30 yrs, 3 terms, No cash, 1 High Psg. Astrogator-3, Computer-1, Fighter-2 (Blades-1, Slug Throwers-1), Fleet Tactics-2, Gunner-1 (Bay Weapons-1, Ortillery-1), Sensors-4

6. Merchant Second Officer 85D988, 42 yrs, 6 terms, Cr 100,000. Actor-1, Advocate-3, Astrogator-1, Broker-3, Comms-2, Computer-2, Driver-0 (Auto-1, Tracked-1), Electronics-1, Engineer-0 (Life Support-1, Power Systems-1), Fluidics-1, Major-1, Medic-6, Steward-3, Trader-2. 8 Ship Shares.

7. Spacer O3 (Lieutenant) 874779, 30 yrs, 3 terms, KCr70, 2 High Psg. Engineer-0 (Jump Drive-1), Fighter-4 (Beams-1, Unarmed-1), Fluidics-1, Gunner-2 (Bay Weapons-1, Spines-1), Mechanic-1, Photonics-1, Pilot-1 (Small Craft-1, Spacecraft ACS-1), Sensors-1.

8. Merchant Steward Apprentice 8C8397, 22 yrs, 1 term, Cr 25,000. Diplomat-1, Steward-3, Trader-2. 1 Ship Share.

NOTES
_____

Conversion to Classic Traveller: to quickly convert Traveller[5] characters to classic Traveller or related systems, divide skill and knowledge levels in half, ignoring fractions.

Land Grant: the character owns a World Hex on a non-mainworld.

Life Insurance: the character's personality can be recorded and stored at an authorized center. This recording may be reactivated and implanted into a clone body upon the certified death of the original character.

Ship Shares: one Share acquires 50 tons of any ship (thus, a 200-ton Free Trader requires 4 Ship Shares to acquire full control). Fewer than the required shares may be used, with the remainder financed and subject to monthly payments. Several characters with Ship Shares may pool their resources to acquire a ship, and they take ownership in proportion to their shares.

TAS Fellow: a four-year membership in the Travellers' Aid Society. The membership provides one week of accommodations and one High Passage per month (they accumulate if not taken). Accumulated benefits expire upon membership expiration.

Ship's Locker

Emergency Airlock

Valorian Industries

The VIC Emergency One-Time Airlock is for when you need to enter or exit a ship that been compromised by a pathogen or hull damage. In damage control mode, the airlock functions as both a hull patch and an emergency escape bubble. In search and rescue mode, the airlock functions as an emergency boarding port. Finally, in capture mode, it serves as a holding cell.
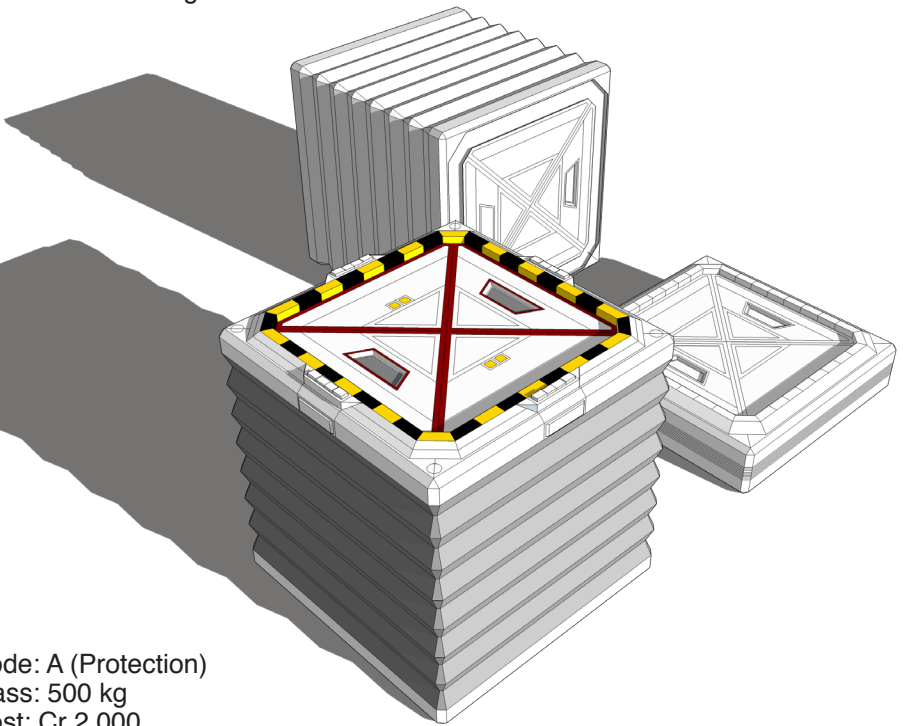
Code: A (Protection)
Mass: 500 kg
Cost: Cr 2,000
Protection Ratings:

EMCage: 11	Flashproof: 11	Radproof: 11
Soundproof: 11	Psishield: 11	Insulated: 11
Sealed: 11		

It is designed to be adaptable for easy integration with existing ship docking systems. When mated, the lock fixes two ships or intra-ship rooms in place. With an integrated air handling system that operates in

negative or positive pressure modes, the airlock then serves to maintain air pressurization differentials and directional airflow between the adjacent areas.

FEATURES

- Hollow crystaliron construction with expanding-foam insulated core and joints.
- Curved body designed to float in water on worlds with a standard atmosphere and hydrosphere.
- Radiation safe.
- Viewing transpex.
- Self-pressurizing.
- Doubles as a lifepod.
- One person at a time!
- Week-long air and power supply.
- Windows on the inner and outer lock doors.
- Emergency distress beacon (range 50,000 km).
- "Gun Port" useful to pass small items into and out of lock.
- Collapsible: 1 ton expanded, 0.1t in storage

It may be deployed in pressure or vacuum. When the airlock is no longer needed, its interior foam structure disintegrates, allowing it to collapse down to a 140 liter package — a tenth of a ton. Return it to your local class D starport (or better) for refurbishing. Its internal PowerCell can be recharged by any modern power source.

DESIGN NOTES
- Main function: enabler (or type: structure)
- Base TL: 11
- PowerCell: 7 to 10 days
- Density: 4.0 (hollow crystaliron)

Training through Guilds

Introduction. The standard character generation system is a process for building experienced characters with a history. It is a mini-game that trades off an amount of risk (in missions and aging) for rewards (rank and benefits). On the other side of the spectrum are quick characters which by referee fiat are granted a handful of skills relevant to a game. "Spear Carrier" NPCs fall into this category.

There is a third category: the quick, one-shot character, used in conventions, pick-up games, or in any casual setting. These characters need more development than "fiat skills", but less than full-blown chargen.

Traveller[5] and Xboat to the rescue. In a way, the education process has modeled this system for us already. All we need to do is take it and run with it.

Here's how it works. I have morphed the core education process into a way to generate characters quickly. I call this system "guilds" since there are guilds in Traveller (for example, the Traders' Guild).

The Process. Roll characteristics as usual, then choose among the guilds on the following page. Roll to pass any entrance requirements, and roll *twice* to gauge the character's success in the guild. For each success, roll to determine which pre-determined skillsets are learned. The character comes away with 12 skill levels of on-the-job training and is ready for adventure. The character has also aged 10 years: if human, the character is 28 years old.

Background. I got this idea when thinking in particular about Belters. "Belter" is not a skill -- the skills for belters are minerology, survey, mining/mole, planetology, broker, prospecting, and so on -- so most Belters are Scouts. But the skillset is more focused than a true career.

And that's the key: a guild is typically a subset of a known career. We already know a Trader's Guild exists. There must be guilds for many, if not most, of the Traveller careers. In fact, many of these guilds can be intuited from MegaTraveller and other Traveller rulesets.

Hence, a Belter's Guild provides Scout-based on-the-job-training (OJT) for working a local planetoid belt. A Hunter's Guild provides Scout-based OJT for working on inhabited world surfaces. A Foreign Legion is reasonably based on the Soldier career. And so on.

Another way to think of these guilds is as if they were "technical" schools, where the character learns useful skills, but doesn't receive a broad education.

Finally, the main benefit is quick chargen -- these characters can be genned up without iterating through a term loop: they're largely cookie-cutter characters.

Adding Guilds. As you can see, it is easy to make up additional guilds. Make up pre-requisites and process rolls, and list the possible skills. It may help to base a guild on an existing career path.

Example: Belter Guild.
No pre-requisites. No application necessary.
Pass/Fail Check: DEX or END.
Provides: Roll twice, or select the skillsets learned.
1. Comms-1, Sensors-2, Survey-3.
2. Survival-3, Zero-G-3.
3. Engineer-2(Power Plant-2), Vacc Suit-2.
4. Diplomat-2, Survey-4.
5. Computer-3, Gunner-1(Turrets-2).
6. Fighter-0(Beams-2), JOT-1, Pilot-1(ACS-1, Smallcraft-1).

Example: Hunter Guild.
Pre-Requisites: Skill in one firearm.
To Apply, Check: STR.
Pass/Fail Check: DEX or END.
Provides: Roll twice, or select the skillsets learned.
1. Animals-1(Trainer-2), Survival-3.
2. Fighter-2(Blades-2), Survey-2.
3. Admin-2, Computer-1, Survival-3.
4. Author-3, Languages(3).
5. Fighter-2(Beams-2), Forensics-2.
6. Hostile Env-2, Stealth-4.

Example: Traders' Guild.
No pre-requisites.
To Apply, Check: INT or EDU.
Pass/Fail Check: STR or INT.
Provides: Roll twice, or select the skillsets learned.
1. Admin-3, Trader-3.
2. Broker-3, Pilot-1(ACS-1, Smallcraft-1).
3. Driver-1(Wheeled-2), Flyer-1(Grav-2).
4. Languages(3), Medic-3
5. Astrogator-2, Comms-1, Steward-3.
6. Driver-0(Grav-2), Pilot-2(ACS-2).

Example: Foreign Legion.
No pre-requisites. No application necessary.
Pass/Fail Check: STR, DEX, or INT.
Provides: Roll twice, or select the skillsets learned.
1. Admin-2, Fighter-2(Beams-2).
2. Heavy Wpns-0(Launcher-2), Leader-2, Tactics-2.
3. Liaison-3, Stealth-3.
4. Gambler-3, Survival-3.
5. Fighter-2(Unarmed-2), Vacc Suit-2.
6. Flyer-1(Grav-2), Liaison-3.

Bestiary
Regina Spiny Crawler

Multipoda Echinata Reginaak Smithbornii

Cargo Item: Akrinbaa tree nut. 50 per ton, Cr 1,000 per ton inside the Regina subsector; Cr 5,000 per ton outside the subsector.

Background: Discovered by Scholar Doctor T.T. Smithborne DLS (UPP 677998, Doctor of Library Sciences). Dr. Smithborne was transporting a crate of Akrinbaa tree nuts from Regina to his home laboratory on Treece. Unknown to him, a Spiny Crawler had woven several egg sacs into some of these fruit (2D < 5 per fruit).

Description: After a few (1D) days in jump, the sacs began maturing, disgorging 2D x 2 crawlers apiece. This insectoid is usually 5 cm long, has eighteen legs, a half-carapace, and a covering of tiny spines. The spines carry minute amounts of a compound which paralyzes Regina biota (including adult Amindii). In Terran-based life forms, this compound causes unpredictable symptoms, ranging from mild itching to resetting (or confounding) reproductive cycles.

The effect wears off after 1D hours. The bite and its effects softens Amindii tissues and pores for egg implantation, but of course human skin is already soft; therefore, there is a chance that a new egg sac implantation occurs. With a knife, a Medic can perform a difficult ad hoc surgery to remove the sac. The patient takes damage based on the knife's damage rating.

Stories of 5 kilogram crawlers have been dismissed as rumors.

LENGTH:	5 CM
SPEED:	2 KM/HR
REACTIONS:	A8 F8
WEAPON:	SPINES
ARMOR:	2
STRENGTH:	5
ENDURANCE:	4
STRUCTURE:	N-TBS-LM-MN-N
MASS	20 GRAMS

Artificial Persons
Huscarloid (HRS-47-G)

Henlan-Ra Security Robotics Division
Ken Patterson, chief engineer (UPP 673AA7)

"Those robots sure have nice calves."
– Aramais Lee, Imperial Admiral (ret), 1110.

UPP: A8844R, MCr 1.1
140 liters
280 kg
Armor: AV 28
Senses:
    Vision: 16
    Hearing: 16
    Smell: 16
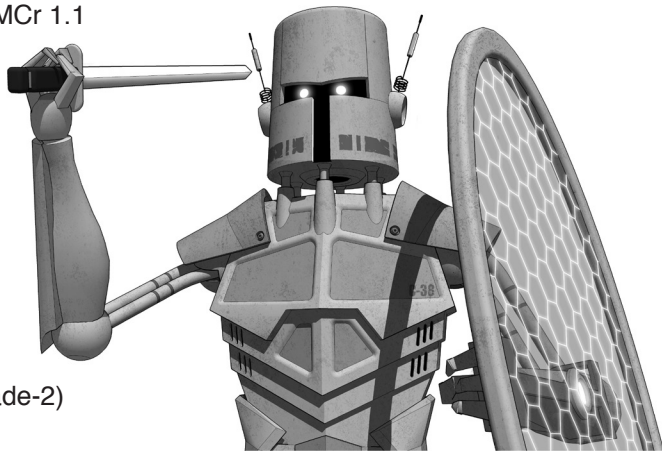   Touch: 8
    Aware: 12
    Percept: 12
Skills:
    Grav Flyer-2
    Fighter-3(Blade-2)
    <Hobby>-1

The Huscarloid is a humaniform combat-ready robot, designed for working alongside drop troops, marines, and mechanized infantry. It carries a broad range of standard senses, including vision, hearing, smell, awareness, and perception. It has a rudimentary sense of touch, blunted by its sturdy construction. A comm interface allows it to communicate covertly.

Its combat readiness includes the integral equivalent of combat armor. The armor is typically decorated according to its assigned unit. For example, Imperial marine units are black and white; Ilelish sector units are silver and white; Solomani armored cavalry units are silver (and tend to look a bit like medieval knights). A stealth-coated model has an actvie camouflage capability. Finally, a gunmetal grey version conveys a sense of raw power.

The robot has standard hands, and can hold human weapons. Weponry is customized according to mission: the marine model is often seen with a gauss gun and cutlass; the knight often has an ACR, monomolecular sword, and a starship-armor-grade shield; the stealth model carries energy weapons; the metal variety might have any kind of weapon, including a shoulder-mounted PGMP.

Lifters allow it to hover and fly at a slow speed (10 kph).

Security Option. This version is available to non-military customers. It includes overrides and safety codes. It is designed mainly for nobles and agents.

Flyer Option. This option has enhanced gravitics and a gimballed frame that can swivel into an open-air gravitic flyer platform for the noble. This allows an escape path for owners who often find themselves in harm's way. This option adds KCr 300 to the price. Maximum speed: 100 kph.

Voughon & Saarik Protocol Robot

Voughon & Saarik Robotics
David Peterson, chief engineer (UPP 859788)

UPP: 888C8R, KCr 858
72 liters, 144 kg
Senses:
    Vision: 16
    Hearing: 16
    Smell: 16
    Perception: 16
Skills:
    Advocate-3
    Counsellor-3
    Diplomat-3
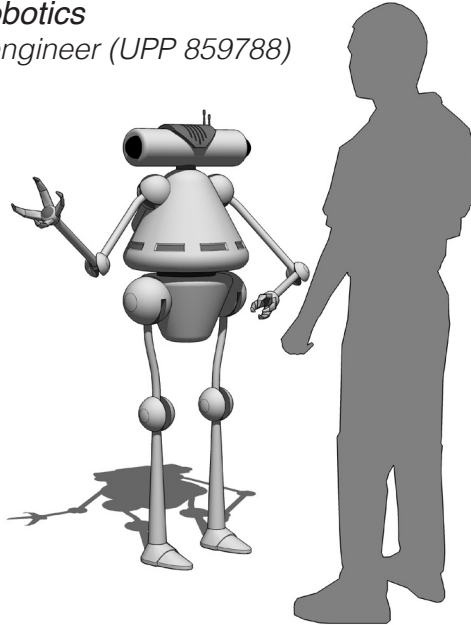   Gambler-2
    Liaison-3
    <Language-11>
    <Language-10>
    <Hobby-3>

In cosmopolitan space, misunderstandings can lead to bad trades, broken treaties, lost opportunities, even violence. Protocol robots are designed to help sophonts communicate well. They are typically able to argue in courts, give advice, conduct formal negotiations, and smooth inter-cultural relations. They typically speak Anglic, plus two other languages.

The standard Protocol Robot of the Republic of Regina is a humanoid frame with a flexible internal skeleton. Its premium organic clone brain gives it a large skill inventory and a very high intelligence.

The Protocol Robot comes with a number of useful options, including a sonic emitter, floodlight, networking circuits, and a satellite tracking system. Its frame is vacuum proof. A long-life powercell powers it for up to two weeks before requiring a recharge. Finally, this robot has a wafer jack for temporary skill augmentation.

Asteroid Mining

The mineral resources of Charted Space are perhaps most available in the asteroid belts. As shattered remnants of worlds, their inner cores lie open. These cores are inaccessible on ordinary planets. Mining these belts, however, depends on locating specific chunks of valuable ore and then tracking them until they can be exploited. Oberlindes and other corporations invest large amounts of experience and credits into these ventures. But the prospecting – the very first step in the process – can be performed by almost anyone. And big mining companies, including Oberlindes, encourage independent prospecting because it lessens organizational burdens, minimizes risk, and helps keep overhead down.

Prospecting involves taking samples of asteroids and analyzing them for valuable elements. This sort of prospecting is difficult, often unrewarding, and risky.

The following pages explain a mini-game for asteroid mining that can be played as a solo activity, or with a referee as a backdrop for a game. If this is played solitaire, generate an appropriate group of characters with a ship. If played as part of a campaign, the referee determines the starting asteroid belt, and moves in and out of the mini-game as circumstances warrant.

A prospecting expedition has four phases: fitting out, applying for a license, prospecting, and (potentially) finding and selling a strike.

LIFE SUPPORT TABLE

Supplies	Vol (tons)	Credits	People/Year
Std Life Support	1	1,000,000	1
Long-Term Life Support	2	2,000,000	3

Fitting Out. The team must have a ship and extra life support (water, food, air, and related machinery). If possible, they should have a year's worth of life support.

The ship itself should undergo annual maintenance as usual (1% of the ship's cost). This service includes the inspection of mining equipment.

APPLICATION TABLE

Type	Fee	Skill Check	Delay
Standard	1D x Cr1,000	(2D) ≤ EDU + Admin	1 week
Appealed	1D x Cr1,000	(2D) ≤ EDU + Advocate	1 week
Sponsored	10%*	(2D) ≤ SOC + Liaison	3 weeks
Bribe	Cr5,000**	(2D) ≤ 9 + Streetwise	2 weeks
Unlicenced	Free	None	1 week

* A patron will take 10% of the value of a strike, if any is found.
** DM+1 per extra Cr1,000.

Apply for a License. Most applications start with a Standard application to the local government for a belt prospecting license. Upon failure, some groups seek an appeal, while others might look for a patron. Finally, some groups take a shortcut, and either attempt to bribe an official, or even risk prospecting without a license. Fees are nonrefundable.

PROSPECTING TABLE

Zone	Location	Risk	Prospecting
1	Rumored Rich Area	(2D) ≤ 11 + Pilot	(2D) ≤ 3
2-3	Charted Zone	(2D) ≤ 10 + Pilot	(2D) = 2
4	Trojan Points	(2D) ≤ 9 + Astrogator	(2D) = 2
5	Belt Fringe	(3D) ≤ DEX + Pilot	(2D) ≤ 3
6	R&R	R&R Table	None

Prospecting. Prospecting is done in four different zones within the system. The Charted Zone is part of the belt known to have productive rocks. Trojan Points are clusters of asteroids outside the main orbit that are often difficult to approach. The Belt Fringe is an unexplored part of the main belt where orbital paths are not charted. Rumored Rich Areas are parts of the main belt rumored to be untapped troves of valuable ore.

The type of license determines the initial zone. A Standard License allows the group to pick the Charted Zone, Trojan Points, or Belt Fringe Appealed, Patron-Sponsored, and Bribed Licenses roll 1D. On 1-2, prospecting starts in the Charted Zone; on 3-4, in the Trojan Points; on 5-6, in the Belt Fringe. Unlicensed prospecting starts in the Belt Fringe.

Prospecting in a zone takes one week. In any zone, the group typically makes two rolls: first, a Risk roll to avoid danger. On success, they may elect to move to either adjacent zone in the following week. On failure, the team has a threat and follows the rules for Danger below. They automatically move to the R&R zone in the following week. Next, if the team's ship is not in R&R, the Prospecting roll determines if the team makes a strike. On success, the team has made a find and rolls on the Strike table. Note that a roll with two sixes always fails, and a roll with two ones always succeeds.

Refueling. When the ship's fuel is exhausted, the expedition breaks to refuel. Refueling from the starport takes one week, and costs Cr100 per ton of fuel. Refueling from a Gas Giant takes two weeks. This can be rushed with a Risk roll of (2D) ≤ 10 + Pilot. After refueling, the expedition returns to the same zone it left.

R&R is spent at prospector settlements in the belt. These are centered around entertainment establishments of a rowdy character. R&R always takes a week, unless characters get held over waiting for each other. Roll on the table below each time the characters go on R&R.

If playing as part of a campaign, the referee can use these events to branch into ta scenario, putting the expedition "on hold" until the matter is resolved. Players can wait, or simply leave a crew member in rehab, jail, or hospital and resume the expedition, picking them up on the next R&R. If banned, they do nothing on their ship for those weeks.

R&R TABLE

2D	EVENT
2	A random crew member becomes addicted to a local drink. Rehab for 2D weeks at a cost of Cr4,000 per week.
3	A random crew member is jailed for 1D weeks, or fined 1D x Cr1,000.
4	Scuffle: Each crew member rolls (3D) ≤ STR + Unarmed, and receives 2D hits on failure. Banned from R&R for 2D weeks.
5	Gambling: each crew rolls (2D) ≤ DEX + Gambling for a stake of 1D x Cr1,000. A win pays triple.
6-8	Uneventful.
9	Rumor leads to a Rumored Rich Area and gives DM-1 on the next week's Strike roll.
10	Brawl: Each crew member rolls (3D) ≤ STR + Unarmed, and receives 3D hits on failure. Banned from R&R for 4D weeks.
11	All crew members are jailed for 1D weeks, or fined 1D x Cr1,000 each.
12	A random crew member falls in love, marries, and leaves the expedition. Other crew members much each pay Cr100 for wedding gifts.

On-the-Job Training. Belt mining requires the constant use of specific skills. For every 50 weeks spent actually prospecting, pick a column from the Scouts career and roll 1D to receive one level of skill.

Danger. On a failed Risk check, roll 2D, DM-2 if the ship was inspected in the last year, and consult the Mishap table:

MISHAP TABLE

RESULT	EVENT
0-1	Close call.
2	Ship damaged, requiring 1D weeks at a shipyard. No cost.
3	Ship damaged, requiring 2D weeks at a shipyard. No cost.
4	Ship damaged requiring 3D weeks at a shipyard. Cost is 1D x Cr1,000.
5	Each crew takes 2D damage (2D ≤ END + Vacc to avoid).
6	Another ship or crew harmed. Gain an Enemy.
7	Ship badly damaged, requiring 3D weeks at a shipyard. Cost is 1D x Cr10,000.
8	Each crew takes 3D damage (2D ≤ END + Vacc to avoid).
9	Ship badly damaged, requiring 4D weeks at a shipyard. Cost is 1% of ship retail cost.
10	Each crew takes 4D damage (2D ≤ END + Vacc to avoid).
11	Ship collides with another ship. Repairs require 5D weeks at a shipyard and cost 25% of ship retail cost. Gain Enemy at referee's discretion.
12	One crew member dies. Expedition ends.

Characters who are seriously wounded (two characteristics at zero) must be transferred to a hospital taking 1D weeks at Cr10,000 per week.

Inspections Cutter / License Check. If the team is prospecting without a license and visits a shipyard or hospital, roll 2D ≤ 8 + Artist (or Author) for an inspections cutter to accept a forged license. On success, the expedition may continue. On failure, the ship is confiscated, and the expedition ends.

Strike! A strike is a find with probable value. To determine the type of strike, roll 2D and consult the Strike Table, below.

2D	STRIKE TYPE
2-6	Metals, such as gold, silver, titanium, cobalt, platinum, or iridium.
7-9	Special materials, such as gems, rare earths, radioactives, or even fossils.
10	Artifacts.
11-12	Salvage.

Metals. Roll (2D) < 7+Broker to estimate value. On success, roll one die: this is the exponent of the value of the find (1=tens of credits, 2=hundreds, 3=thousands, 4=ten thousands, 5=hundred thousands, 6=millions). On failure, the character has no idea how much it is worth.

The players may choose to continue or end the expedition based on this.

Special Materials. Roll (2D) < 7+Chemistry to estimate the value, and proceed as for metals.

Artifacts. An asteroid has been found with artifacts from an alien civilization! Roll (3D) < EDU+Archeology to estimate value, and proceed as for metals. In a campaign, the referee determines the nature of such artifacts and characters may elect to keep them or sell them. If they sell them, this ends the expedition.

Salvage. A derelict ship of a random standard type has been found; the characters may attempt to rehabilitate the ship and keep it, or they may return it to the starport and sell it for salvage. Roll 3D + Broker. The result is the percentage of the original price of the ship the crew receives. This ends the expedition.

Selling Off Strikes. Upon ending an expedition, the strike is sold. Information on the strike is transmitted to three local mining companies. The characters may go to some or all of the companies and ask for bids. Because the companies are jealous rivals, each will make a bid, but will reduce its offer for each additional bid the expedition seeks.

A mining company bids by rolling a black die and a white die. The black die is the exponent of ten, and the white die is a multiplier. If the characters already estimated the value of their strike, the exponent has already been rolled. If not, roll it now. The white die is then rolled for the multiplier (1-6)+Broker skill, -1 if unlicensed. Possible bids therefore range from Cr10 to Cr6,000,000, assuming a proper license is held and no Broker skill is involved.

Decaying Bids. A bid is reduced by one on the exponent die for each

additional bid sought. Therefore, if the exponent die is a 4 and Company #1 rolls a 6 on the multiplier die, they offer Cr60,000. If a second bid is sought, this offer drops to Cr6,000. A third bid drops the original offer to Cr600.

The mining companies pay upon verification of the claim, which takes two weeks.

After selling off a strike, and perhaps paying off a patron, the expedition is at an end. A new expedition may be organized, if desired.
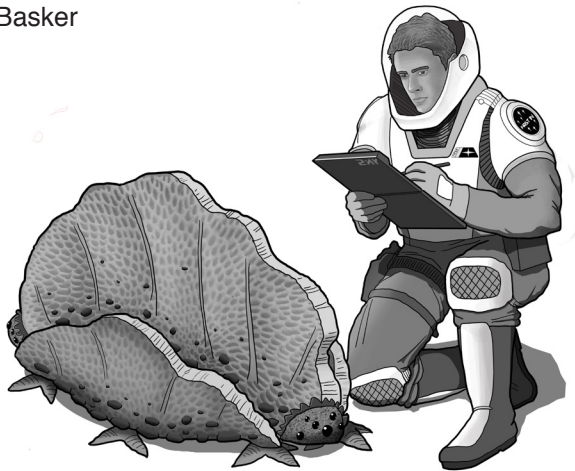
Contact! Dimidia

Ecological Niche: Basker
Size: 5
Mass: 66 kg

CHARACTERISTICS
1D Strength
1D Grace
2D Stamina
2D Intelligence
2D Instinct
2D Caste

SENSES
Touch 10
Perception 20
Awareness 20

Dimidia are extremophiles living on small planetoids in a low orbit around the gas giant Kiirkaala. Looking like a hard fungus, they absorb radiation from the gas giant for energy. They cannot hear, see, or speak. They communicate by touch, and by manipulating electromagnetic fields. They can detect both energy fields and life forces. They are nearly immobile, usually content to live their entire lives in the soil where they sprouted. Their roots are motile, allowing a very slow migration to a more favorable environment.

Scout Andrew "Andy" Cowley (UPP A67B84) made first contact with the Dimidia. He had piloted the Survey Scout *Nindalu* to Kiirkaala. His crew was executing a routine survey of its moons, when an electrical storm blinded its sensors. The ship then collided with one of the Dimidia planetoids, injuring some of the crew and some of the Dimidia there. Communications were established via a string of unlikely coincidences. Occasional trips are planned each year for scout contact teams.

Ship's Locker

Survey Scanner MP
Henlan-Ra, Outfitter's Division
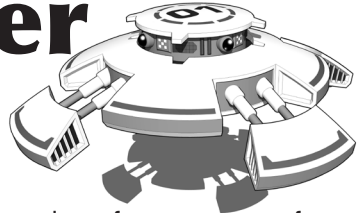
The Survey Scanner MP is a short-ranged surface scanner for determining the elemental and mineral composition of atmospheres or world surfaces. Since it is a sensor, its primary characteristics come from the starship sensor list. In particular, it is a smaller version of the starship analyzer/sniffer, which processes samples and determines their compositions. This is useful when landing in areas with hazardous chemicals or radiation. It is also related to the primary task of the belt prospector ("Belter"), who analyzes mineral samples taken from asteroids to determine relative value.

Typically, the ship's sensors are used to identify locations of interest. Then, a prospector with his survey scanner visits the most promising locations. The scanner has handy connection points for fastening onto any vacc suit. There is also a lifter-equipped drone variant that can be put in "follow me" mode to one or more prospectors.

Profile: Disk
Density: 3 (Lite Metal)
Construction: 0.8
Dimensions:
    L=60cm,
    W=60cm,
    H=14cm
Volume: 9 Liters
Mass: 21 kg
Durability: 3
Range: 1 km
Power: Size 3 PowerCell
Signature: passive sensor
Cost: Cr1,000
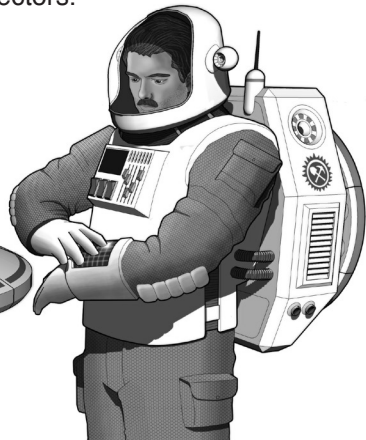
Survey Scanner Man-Portable
TL 12, Size 4 (backpack-sized), Range 2, 10 kg, Cr 1,000
Range=2 (about 50 meters). A saucer-shaped Analyzer/Sniffer, used for testing and analyzing air, dirt, or rock samples.

A variant, the Mineral Scanner MP, is specialized for asteroid analysis. The scanner enhances the user's Survey and Broker skills, when prospecting for minerals.

The Mineral Scanner may also be used as an atmosphere and soil tester at one greater difficulty level; the Survey Scanner may similarly be used as an asteroid tester at one greater difficulty level.

The drone variant costs Cr 2,000.

Type	TL	Kg	Rng	Bur.	Dmg	Cr
Snub Pistol	8	0.7	2	-3	3D	270
Autopistol	6	1.4	3	+2	3D	330
Gauss Pistol	13	0.7	2	0	4D	600
Gauss Pistol	16	0.5	2	-2	5D	840
Carbine	6	3	4	-2	2D	440
Rifle	6	4	5	-1	3D	550
Dart Rifle	7	2.4	4	-1	3D (Tranq)	495
Gauss Rifle	13	3.6	5	-1	6D	1,100
Gauss Rifle	16	2.5	5	-4	7D	1,400
Shotgun	5	4	2	-1	3D	330
SMG	6	2.4	2	0	4D	2,970
Assault Rifle	8	3.2	4	-1	5D	825
Accelerator Rifle	10	2.4	5	-1	5D	1,650
ACR-10	10	2.9	3	-3	4D	1,500
Laser Pistol	11	0.8	1	-1	4D	600
Laser Carbine	10	3.6	4	-1	5D	2,400
Laser Rifle	10	5	5	0	6D	3,000
PGMP-12	12	27	3	+2	9D	30,000
PGMP-13	13	20	5	-1	9D	12,000
FGMP-15	15	25	3	+1	12D	99,000
Fusion Rifle	16	5	4	0	8D	25,000
Neural Pistol	17	1.8	1	+1	(Psi 4)	1,600
Telescopic Sights	6	0.8	-	-	-	200
Electronic Sights	9	1.5	-	-	-	2,000
Silencer	6	0.6	-	-	-	200
Power Pack, C	8	3	-	-	-	1,000
Power Pack, R	9	4	-	-	-	1,500
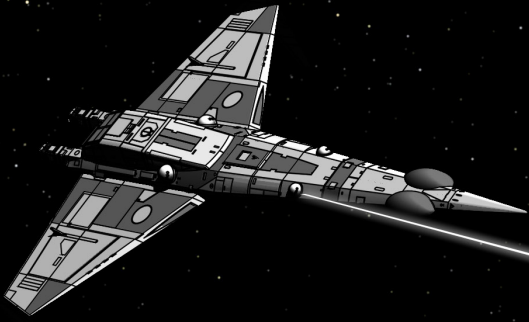
A science fiction fanzine for the Far Future

TRAVELLER

Powered by Traveller⁵