ISSUE
4
MAY
2007

Star FRONTIERSMAN

OPTIONS IN FTL TRAVEL
SCREE FRON – YAZIRIANS WITH A TWIST
CINEMATIC MARTIAL ARTS, STAR-FRONTIERS STYLE!
HELMETS AND SCATTERGUNS
A SEEDY FOUNTAIN BAR/CANTINA
THUGS, MOOKS, GOONS & MINIONS!
THE DIMINUTIVE YINNI WAITING TO BE DISCOVERED
AND LOTS MORE, READY TO USE!

Star Frontiersman

Issue 4: May 2007

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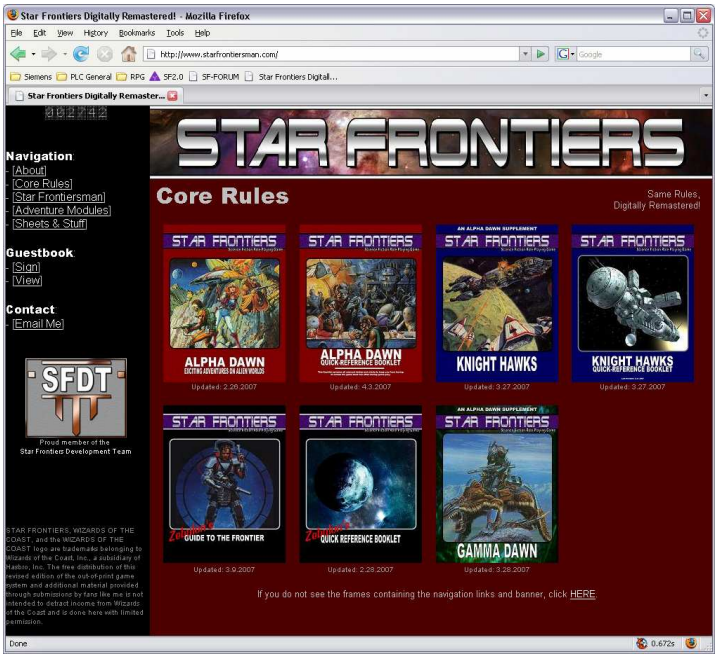

Stop in to show your love. If you are an experienced web programmer and want to lend a hand, it would be most welcome. I currently own the domain and am hosting it on an inexpensive server, and am pre-paid for a full year. I have a guestbook (sign in please!!) and a main frames page with a few pages full of links. I didn't purchase any SQL databases or any extra features... but I'd love to have a forum where we could all share ideas and to make it easier to submit stuff for the webzine. I can do a little html and even less java – but am willing to learn. Drop me an email if you're interested in helping out with the site: Bill_Logan@MyWay.com.

If you have a Star Frontiers fan site (I know there are lots out there) or have a Sci-Fi site in general that includes material that might be useful for this system, please give me a link (with a graphic/logo if you have one) so I can make a nice links page.

After the release of this issue – I'll make the old geocities site forward you to the new domain, but you don't have to wait – go ahead and change your bookmarks!

Bill Logan
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Last Revision: 05.04.2007

By Andrew Modro

FTL TRAVEL

Travel between star systems at speeds greater than light is a staple of science fiction. Without the ability to transcend the speed of light, travel between even the closest stars takes years. In a place like the Frontier, FTL (Faster-Than-Light travel) is absolutely essential.

The STAR FRONTIERS game treats FTL in a very abstract manner, especially in the Alpha Dawn rules. Knight Hawks attempts to add a bit of flavor, but also confuses the issue when compared to Alpha Dawn. The purpose of this article is to examine interstellar travel and to provide flavor options for Alpha Dawn and Knight Hawks games that can be used without altering the rules as presented.

THE VAST DEEP

Space is big -- ask any Douglas Adams fan how big it is for an entertaining answer. Light, the fastest thing in the cosmos, takes years to traverse the cold dark between the stars. Galaxies are tens or hundreds of thousands of light-years across, and lie millions of light-years apart. The observable universe itself is many billions of light-years wide.

Science tells us that nothing can travel faster than light. To travel from one star system to another would take many years. Even with incredibly powerful futuristic rockets, a slower-than-light ship would spend years accelerating ever closer but never completely up to the speed of light, then more years turning over and decelerating after the halfway mark. The "Inhibitor Universe" novels of Alastair Reynolds and Vernor Vinge's "A Deepness in the Sky" present excellent views of space opera in which light speed is never broken, and the consequences of that limitation.

But many are willing to believe that a way can be found to circumvent this cosmic "speed limit". Science fiction is full of faster-than-light travel of many wondrous varieties, from "warp speed" and "hyperspace" to "space folding", "wormholes" and "slipstream drive". Eventually we may discover a real-world method for getting around the limitation of light speed. In the meantime, we can dream.

The STAR FRONTIERS game touches on FTL only in brief. The Alpha Dawn rules only mention how fast FTL is, and do not describe how it is achieved. The Knight Hawks set does offer an explanation -- a unique method invoking the Void -- but does not sit easily with the Alpha Dawn explanation. This is more of an opportunity than a difficulty, however. Each GM is free to explain, in as much detail as she wishes, just how FTL is achieved in the Frontier.

FTL IN ALPHA DAWN

Alpha Dawn is quite specific about FTL. The rules state that travel between star systems takes one day for every light year of distance -- and that's all they say. What method are the starships using? Is it classic hyperspace? Space-time warping fields? Extra dimensional wormhole tunneling? Quantum foam sliding? We are not told. This leaves the door wide open for the GM's imagination and personal tastes. A few options are examined here.

HYPERSPACE

The most classic FTL method in all of science fiction, hyperspace invokes a set of dimensions lying "parallel" to our physical universe. In this different space, distances between locations are warped or condensed, allowing a ship to traverse great distances in the real universe while moving much less in hyperspace, much like a grand cosmic "shortcut".

Hyperspace traditionally touches all points in our physical universe, but access can be limited by such things as gravity wells around large bodies like stars or giant planets, or by the necessity for powerful "jump gates" containing machinery much too large for starships to carry in their hulls.

Many variants of the hyperspace concept exist. For example, in some hyperspace concepts, ships can roam freely within the extra dimensional space, while in others they are restricted to prescribed routes due to navigational hazards (gravity wells, fluctuating distortion rates, strange alien inhabitants...) In some variants, "hyperspace" is a kind of infinite void in which nothing exists outside the ship.

Examples of science fiction using hyperspace are too numerous to encompass. The most famous is, of course, Star Wars, in which ships can cross an entire spiral galaxy in mere days.

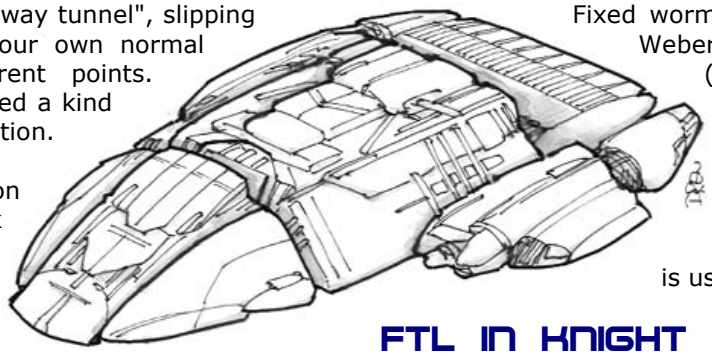
Using hyperspace with Alpha Dawn is simple. The "one day per light-year" rule becomes an average cruising speed for ships in hyperspace. Some ships could be much

faster, such as couriers and powerful small military warships. Some could be slower, such as heavy freighters or old junkers. Alpha Dawn games would likely use a version of hyperspace in which ships generally ply well-established routes. Deviating from these explored courses could be possible, but would require great computational power and a lot of courage.

SPACE FOLDING

This concept turns hyperspace on its ear. Instead of traveling through an extra dimensional space just as it would through normal space, a ship using folding tech breeches space-time to connect two distant points, making a temporary bridge with no real distance at all!

This concept is related to the idea of wormholes. Wormholes are a kind of "space subway tunnel", slipping through dimensions outside our own normal space to bridge two different points. Space folding can be considered a kind of controlled wormhole generation.



Examples of science fiction using space folding are Frank Herbert's "Dune" novels, in which powerful psionics bend space-time to jump great heighliners across interstellar distances, as well as the classic Americanized Japanese animation series "Robotech". The first series of "Robotech" even shows us what can happen when space folding goes wrong.

Alpha Dawn can also make use of space folding quite easily. The time of one day per light year becomes applied to the incredibly complex computations required to plot the "fold jump". No mere organic mind could possibly hope to complete the computations for a single light-year jump in less than a lifetime.

CATAPULT

A major twist on the hyperspace concept, a hypercatapult literally flings a ship through extra dimensional space on a carefully-plotted route. The ship cannot control its flight until it reaches the end of its journey and re-emerges into normal space.

The requirement for a stationary device to fling a ship across the light-years poses interesting restrictions beyond the normal hyperspace concept. What happens if a ship arrives at a point where there are no catapults to send it back? Can catapults be carried with ships and constructed on-site? Can catapults be "aimed" or are they linked in pairs? Can ships be "armed" with catapults that they can use to fling other ships away?

The use of catapults in Alpha Dawn games introduces an element of complex uncertainty that the core game does not normally include. GMs wishing to keep the game light and simple will probably not want to use this technology, but those looking for deeper flavor may wish to investigate all of the possibilities.

JUMP GATES

Or JUMP POINTS or FIXED WORMHOLES: These variants are notable more for the idea of a fixed and controllable "entry point" than for the actual method of FTL. In each variant, ships must journey to a set location to make use of the FTL technology.

Jump gates, such as those seen in "Babylon 5", and jump points, such as in the "Starfire" military space opera novels, offer fixed points of entry into hyperspace. Entry into hyperspace may (B5's more powerful ships) or may not (ships in the Starfire universe) be possible outside of these fixed points. Jump gates are actual constructions which tear open a hole into hyperspace, while jump points are natural rifts in space.

Fixed wormholes, such as those in David Weber's "Honor Harrington" novels (which also use "normal" hyperspace), provide fixed points of entry into instantaneous-transit wormhole "tubes". They resemble jump points, except transit through them is usually instantaneous.

FTL IN KNIGHT HAWKS

In contrast to Alpha Dawn, Knight Hawks presents a concrete and rather unique method of FTL. The basic concept revolves around the Void, an infinite gap of nothingness through which ships may move at incredible speeds. The difference in KH's FTL method lies in how the Void is accessed.

In KH, ships achieving one percent of light speed (0.01c, or 299,792.458 meters per second) cross over from the physical universe into the Void, where their effective speeds are multiplied because the distances between points are contracted. Slowing below this speed drops a ship back into normal space.

We are not told how this happens, however. KH tells us this is a "unique reality of space", and nothing more. While this is perfectly acceptable for a light, simple space opera, it won't take long before inquisitive characters -- and players -- begin poking their noses into the matter. As well, GMs can always use more options, and an examination of the situation provides many possibilities.

This section deals purely with Knight Hawks, the Void, and the "slip" that occurs at 1% of light speed, giving possible explanations for why the slip occurs and what can be done with it.

Editor's note: It always bothered me that in Alpha Dawn rules, any ship traveling at .01C was instantly transported to void-space. What about photons? They travel much faster, yet remain in this reality. This article is an excellent discussion on the topic, and I'm curious how YOU handle FTL in your campaigns. Send me an email and I'll post your methods in the Questions & Answers article in an upcoming issue.

STRANGE PHYSICS

This basic method utilizes the assumptions presented by KH and does not go beyond them. The "slip" is an unknown, almost totally unknowable event that will continue to baffle physicists forever. Ships reaching 1% of light speed slip into the Void, and that's that.

While this method offers little in the way of even technobabble, it is undoubtedly the easiest of all possible methods, and is still perfectly valid depending on the tone of your game.

VOID ENGINES

This method comes close to altering the game, but also provides a ready explanation for the effect as well as the ubiquitous overhaul requirement for ships traveling between star systems. Rather than a physical property of the universe, this method implies the use of a special, expensive and cantankerous piece of technology called a Void engine.

A Void engine bends and then breaks space-time, violating understood physics to shift a ship from "realspace" into the Void. It requires phenomenal power, meaning it can only be mounted on a starship of a certain size, and demands exquisite care in the form of overhauls. The strange realities of the Void require that a ship be traveling at least 1% of light speed before the Void engine can push the ship out of realspace and into the Void itself -- the exact reasoning can be left up to you as a GM, if you have a mind for technobabble.

Void engines are expensive beyond the ability of any normal PC to purchase. This enforces the STAR FRONTIERS trope of characters requiring passage from system to system instead of gallivanting about the Frontier on their own.

VOID RIFTS

Combining the "strange physics" explanation with the concept of "hyperspace lanes", this concept posits that certain lanes of space-time between stars are weak. Ships traveling along these lines can actually break through into the void if they push hard enough, but they are restricted to these paths. The physics of the Void still "kick out" any ship traveling less than 0.01c. Perhaps the Void is misnamed and isn't really empty at all.

GMs wishing to keep the simplicity of the basic KH explanation while adding a bit of modern believability can easily make use of this method.

COMBINING ALPHA DAWN AND KNIGHT HAWKS

The most common setup used in games that combine Alpha Dawn and Knight Hawks rules utilizes the KH explanation that almost all the time required for a voyage is spent accelerating and decelerating. This directly contradicts the AD explanation that voyage time is based on distance, however, because KH states that only a few seconds are spent in the Void and it would always take the same amount of time to accelerate to 1% of light speed for a given ship.

Reconciling these two contradictory setting elements requires some creative tap-dancing, but is not impossible.

WARPED TIME

The simplest reconciliation between the two is that while a Void jump takes only a few seconds for those aboard the ship, in normal space the jump takes the stated Alpha Dawn time of one day per light-year. This presents a great advantage in shipping time-sensitive things like wounded or perishable foodstuffs, but does nothing for those waiting in realspace for the ship to arrive.

BE PREPARED

In this variant the nightmarishly difficult calculations for a Void jump take days, even for the most powerful computers. Every light year adds many hours to the necessary calculation time for a safe jump. These calculations are begun well before the ship begins its acceleration and are usually completed just as the ship reaches "slip" velocity.

HOP, SKIP AND VOIDJUMP

In addition to the torturous hyper mathematics necessary to plot a Void jump route, it could be that a single Void jump isn't nearly long enough to take a ship from system to system. Each jump could cover as little as a light-year, and calculations for each jump would have to be made "on the fly". The ship would spend most of its time on the route in normal space, hanging between the stars and cruising, making calculations for its next hop through the Void.

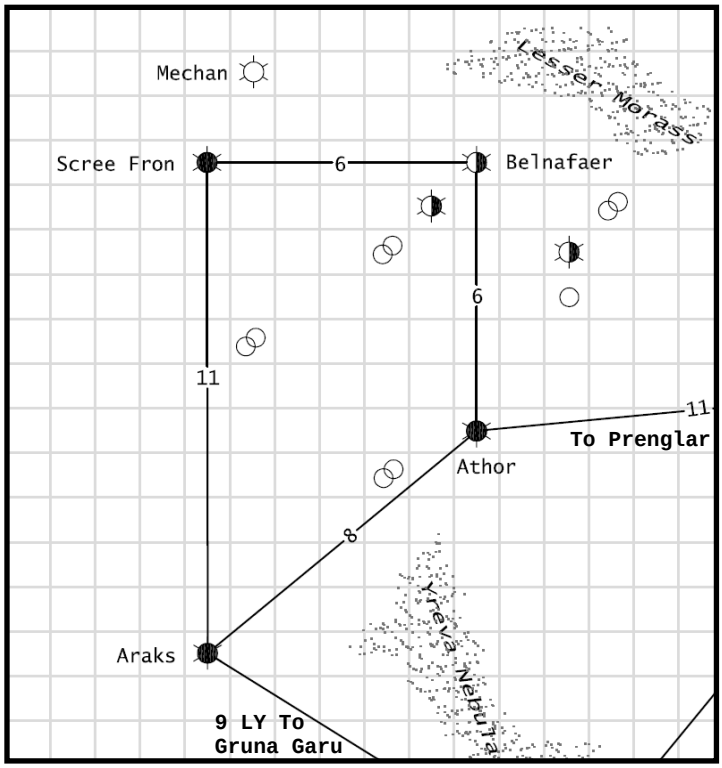
INSPIRATIONAL MATERIALS

The author recommends the following for those interested in various presentations of FTL travel in science fiction:

- *Babylon 5 (Jump gate hyperspace)*
- *Star Trek (Space-warping allowing FTL motion)*
- *Star Wars (Classic hyperspace, including laborious calculations)*
- *The "Honor Harrington" novels by David Weber (multi-layer hyperspace and wormhole tech)*
- *The "Starfire" military space opera novels by David Weber and Steve White (jump point-reliant hyperspace)*
- *Robotech (my introduction to the "space fold" idea)*
- *Angelmass, by Timothy Zahn (my introduction to the hyperspace catapult)*
- *The "Inhibitor Universe" novels by Alastair Reynolds (no FTL; an attempt to achieve FTL goes horribly wrong; cryosleep and time dilation ahoy!)*
- *A Deepness in the Sky, by Vernor Vinge (more non-FTL space opera)*
- *A Fire Upon the Deep, also by Vernor Vinge (an odd universe where FTL is possible only if one travels far enough away from the galactic core; technically the same universe as Deepness)*

STAR SYSTEMS

By Danger



SCREE FRON

Star Type ..... K7 Orange Main Sequence
Radius..... 6.53×10^5 km (0.94 Sol)
Mass ..... 1.80×10^{30} kg (0.90 Sol)
Temperature ..... 4,000K degrees Kelvin
Luminosity..... 1.51×10^{26} W (0.39 Sol)

HISTORY

The system that became known as Scree Fron was discovered in 94 PF by scouts operating out of Araks.

Due to past events with a prior colony (Athor), the Hierarchy on Hentz wished to do things differently this time when it came to spreading Yazirian colonies on other worlds. Instead of forced deportation of "undesirables", the newly found lands would be opened to the highest bidder.

While this decision was looked at with near horror by some of the old-guard members of the Hierarchy (who held to the traditional ways of conquest and colonialism), the more numerous and progressive thinking Church Elders saw a profitable way to increase the buffer between them and the rest of the "Unclean Planets of the Frontier who are inhabited by all manner of non-believers." This particular bit of insight on the mindset of the Church Elders and of the Hierarchy is not well known even in this day and age nearly 100 plus years past the founding of Scree Fron.

For the traditional commerce clans of the Yazirians, who never rated high in the traditional social order, this came as a sweet surprise and they began bidding in earnest on the new system using every tool in their kits to get every advantage they could. They saw that the best way for them to escape the hidebound path they were currently on was to leave the path entirely.

To the surprise of absolutely no one, the commerce clans cobbled together enough credits and enough owed favors from their plants in the Hierarchy to secure rights to the new system. And unlike those sent to Athor, these Yazirians left on good terms with blessings from the Hierarchy.

Thanks to the relatively benign conditions on the planet called Hakosoar, settlement of that planet proceeded quickly and without much trouble. Once they (the settlers of Hakosoar) got their bearings around 73 PF, they quickly began doing what they do best: commerce. Drawing upon their abilities to move between hostile parties, chiefly the planets of Hentz and Yast [See the article in Frontiersman #2 and #3 for details-WSN], the commerce clans used their ships, their acumen, and their credits to become the choice of many a merchant to move their goods through dangerous waters.

Marshalling their profits from years of trade, the commerce clans of Scree Fron, who now were calling themselves the Greater Commerce Clans Protectorate (or GCCP), allied themselves with the up-an-coming mega corporation called Pan-Galactic in 35 PF and provided a helpful boost in shipping ability for the now famous mega-corp through the Yazirian Arm of the Frontier and beyond. The rest, as they say, is history

For nearly a hundred years, the GCCP distinguishes themselves for being one of the "backbone" associations that help hold the Frontier and Pan-Galactic together, but the stirrings of the Corporate Wars of the early 40's FY and the subsequent slide into combat between mega-corps forced a harsh review of current business models and the future didn't look good for GCCP. Taking the cue and superbly reading the trends, GCCP quietly formed the Universal

Households mega-corp in 77 FY and again, the rest is history.

THE PEOPLE

(An excerpt from The Greater Frontier Gazetteer; 5th Ed. By Lazlo Fee, Professor Emeritus, Zebulon University, Zebulon)

"Bloody marvelous people; by making a really good dishwasher, the UniHo [slang term for Universal Households] mega-corp has found its way into arguably every single dwelling in some way, shape, or form throughout the Frontier. Look, you might not need a weapon, you might not need a starship, and you might not need a crack mercenary group to protect you but I would damn well wager that you do need clothes, bed sheets, and way to make your toast. Universal Households can get you all these things and more, and that is their power." - Prof. Vim Darage on mega-corporations during a lecture on Frontier Economics in the 98-99 FY school year; Zebulon University.

There exists several levels of generalization about the species which make up the UPF; Humans are inquisitive and mostly hairless. Dralasites like old jokes, and so forth. Yazirians are known and respected for their combative prowess. Of that fact there is no doubt.

However, the Yazirians who have gone and developed the Universal Households mega-corp system of Scree Fron have channeled their natural aggressiveness into the realm of commerce. This interesting turn of natural ability has made Yazirians raised amongst their "credits-and-takeovers" peers in the schoolrooms on Hakosoar very cagey boardroom fighters indeed. Bottom line: a Yazirian from Scree Fron may not be feared as someone who would gut you with a knife if you make them mad, they would instead find a way to hurt you financially.

> Author's note: Frankly, I'd rather take my chances with the knife wielding type as at least the pain you receive there would be immediate. Thanks to my previous two marriages, I know all too well the slow, lingering ache from a nasty financial fight, but I digress.

In addition to their general business savvy, Yazirians from Hakosoar are also quite the fashion mavens. This makes sense as UniHo's Fashion Division, Kotiz Fashions Inc., stands as one of the premier garment making industries on the Frontier and Hakosoar/Hyyay is its' headquarters. Many a designer has become a household name after signing on with UniHo/Kotiz. Conversely, a designer leaving the Fashion Division in less than stellar terms may just find themselves cleaning out the septic lines from a Passenger Liner in orbit around Hentz. Universal Households has been known to make life very difficult for employees who break contract with them.

The focus on business has had an unintended effect of producing the most effective Yazirian diplomats yet available to be unleashed on the Frontier [*rivaled, of course only by the complex understanding of social conflict and interaction possessed by Vrusk diplomats – Editor*]. In fact, numerous Yazirians trained on Hakosoar who failed at business have found new life in the various diplomatic departments found throughout the Frontier. From Hentz to Minotaur and all points in between, a product of the business schools of Hakosoar will probably be found somewhere.

MILITARY

In order to avoid the potentiality of being called militarily weak, the brilliant minds of Hakosoar's ruling body have mandated that all Yazirians serve two year in the standing military. They are given standard military training found throughout the Frontier, whether they want it or not. They tend to specialize in the use of gyrojet weaponry. The few who make a career of militant life operate the training facility and comprise the bulk of the of officers of the standing army. Because of the growing population on Hakosoar, the standing military (some would call "militia") is quite sizeable and fairly effective, dissuading the onslaught categorization of Hakosoarian Yazirians as being militarily weak.

Additionally, the ruling bodies of Hakosoar have permitted a UPF base on Histran (see Places of Interest, below) to help establish an undeniably strong militant presence in their otherwise peaceful system.

IDENTIFYING A YAZIRIAN'S NATIONALITY

A quick and admittedly stereotypical way to get an idea where the Yazirian you are talking to received their education, watch how they talk.

A Yazirian from Hentz will talk to you like an equal until (or unless) they find out what it is you do. If you are their peer, then they shall still talk to you respectfully. If you are their "inferior," they will immediately take a superior-sounding tone with you. If you are their "superior," then they will immediately take a subordinate role in the conversation; keeping their head somewhat bowed and talking in short, quick sentences.

A Yazirian from Yast will talk to you in a very short and somewhat challenging way. No matter your position, or their position, the conversation is very utilitarian in its quality.

A Yazirian from Hakosoar is a smooth talker indeed. An accomplished Yazirian from Hakosoar will have you treating him to drinks in no time at all, and you'll be glad to do so! The side effect of this is that Yazirians from Scree Fron are slanderously labeled as confidence beings and tricksters by their detractors and the media has been known to lean upon this stereotype from time to time.

Yazirians from Gruna Garu usually talk in short, clipped sentences and are very similar to those from Athor/Yast in their mannerisms this way. However, you must listen to the jargon employed. Military like phrases and such have found their way into the vocabulary of Gruna Garu and are surprisingly hard to shake once adopted. Listen for such things as, "check," "roger that," and "affirmative," to be sprinkled about unconsciously by the Yazirian in question when talking.

PLACES OF INTEREST

What follows is a small list of the larger areas of interest in the Scree Fron system:

STUDIO 71

Studio 71 has the distinction of being home to a number of the Frontier's premier cooks, handybeings, and travel guides and they all can be seen on your handy tri-vid station all day, every day wherever you can get the signal. The studio itself is found in the sprawling complex that is the site of the Universal Households' Prime Home Network. Based a few hundred kilometers east of Hyyay, the PHN facilities can be reached easily via mag-rail services from Hyyay, or via air transportation. However, due to stiff competition from the Frontier Broadcast Services' hostile takeover attempt in 65 FY, any unannounced aircraft breaching PHN airspace will be met with extreme force in very short order, so call ahead! Tours of the PHN studios are given daily, and tickets to many of the broadcast shows can be picked up at PHN offices in Hyyay, but if you are planning on attending some of the more popular shows (like At Home with Ku'ee, and The Pepaba Show), then you may need to order several weeks in advance.

THE UNDERGROUND

The Underground is the name given to a broad area in west Hyyay which comes alive after dark. An untold number of clubs cater to all sorts of types and like the good capitalists that they are, these clubs don't ask too many questions; just be sure you've got the credits to spend as these clubs don't come cheap. If you want cheap, then hit the Skids by the spaceport. Security at these clubs ranges from nonexistent to severe and more than a few of these places are species specific. Despite (or because of) the notoriety of the area, these businesses generally thrive. For the best scene, take a trip to Dexy's or The Moon Room and rub shoulders with the beautiful beings of the Frontier.

OGNOSGO SPORTS COMPLEX

Practically a city unto itself, the Ognosgo complex offers a bewildering array of places to practice, participate or watch nearly any sport that can be found on the Frontier. Situated on the Moa Plain nearly a thousand kilometers west of Hyyay, the Complex, as it is referred to by the natives, is easily reachable by mag-rail from Hyyay, or can be a distinct destination all on its own due to it having its own small spaceport on site. The Complex is all about sport and it readily welcomes all who share that passion. On the seedier side of that last statement, the Complex also is home to numerous gambling dens (some legit, some not), bars, and the criminal element who thrives upon those who just can't help but bet a little bit more. It is rumored that one of the top bosses of the Syndicate runs the show at the Complex and that Star Law has been after her and her cronies for some time now, but to no avail.

PALMER SPACEFLEET BASE

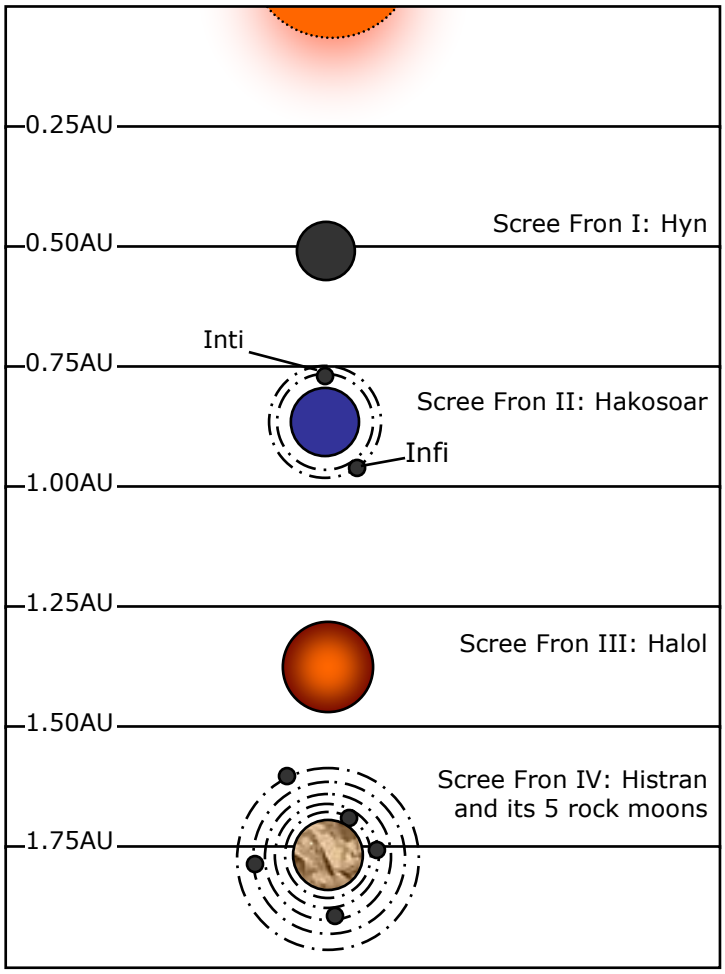
Located on Histran, Palmer Spacefleet Base is the eyes and the ears of the UPF on this end of the Frontier. Primarily interested in keeping an eye on the Mechanon, Palmer Base maintains a careful watch on the other approaches into Frontier territory as well. Home to the famous "Hawkeye" Surveillance Squadron of the 8th Fleet, the Hawkeyes keep a constant patrol in the 'black at all times. Rumor has it that there is an enormous electronic signal sensing array on Histran somewhere and enough stockpiled munitions on Histran and its surrounding moons to slag Mechan three times over. In addition to the rumors of things unseen, there is ample evidence of a more-than-usual number of personnel at the base due to the number of drunk and disorderly calls local authorities have to deal with around the Skids and at the Complex. Travelers' Advisory: Palmer Base, Histran, and its moons are UPF Spacefleet and Landfleet territory. No trespassers allowed.

Editor's Note: Between 32 and 26PF, thirty-two exploration vessels were lost trying to map the Lesser Morass. UPF Spacefleet has in recent years found and identified two of these: *PGC Harvestlander* was breached by material floating in the Morass and its crew evacuated but were lost, and *SCS Thor'adan* was found adrift with only its robotic inhabitants still functional – the Vrusk explorers all dead from some inexplicable ailment. Continued exploration of the Lesser Morass may yet yield further answers.

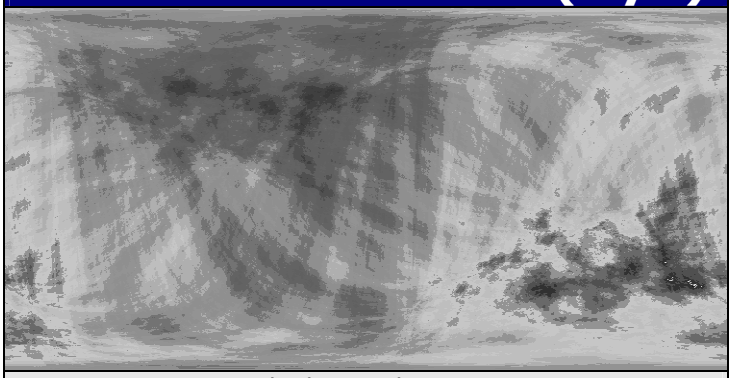
OTHER ITEMS OF NOTE

At this point in time (111 FY), a Vrusk is in control of the Universal Households mega-corp. This turn of events has made a number of Yazirians, particularly the older ones on Hakosoar, angry. To this end, they have formed a group called the Sonsa (Shadow) Directive to remove K'an Ku through any means necessary. Up until this point, the Sonsa Directive has been content to try and topple the mega-corp director through the usual means (ie. Propaganda, slander, and such), but it is feared that more direct and violent means may be needed to "pitch the bug out."

A division of PanGal is currently working with diplomats from Hakosoar on an agreement to find a route from Athor to Scree Fron. Initial scouting shows that the odd cluster of three binary star systems located within the Scree Fron/Araks/Athor/Belnafaer quadrangle will not interfere with navigational computers if a good route is found. It is rumored that the Hakosoarian diplomats are secretly seeking out intrepid explorers to accomplish this first – so they can sell the route to PanGal for a hefty fee that includes toll rights.

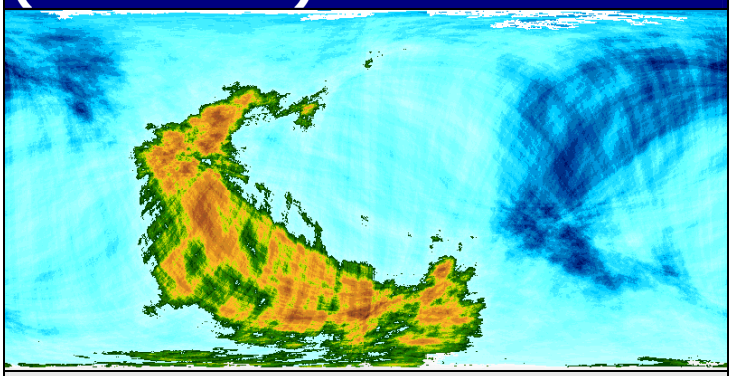


SCREE FRON I (Hyn)



Type	Rock Planetoid
Orbital Radius	7.93E+07 km (0.53 AU)
Year	149 Standard days
Gravity	0.48
Notes	Used as a dumping ground for expended munitions and broken equipment. There is a small outpost here, with UPF robots working on old broken equipment, occasionally repairing things and informing Palmer Spacefleet Base to perform a pick-up on its next tech-trash drop off.

SCREE FRON II (Hakosoar)



Type	Terrestrial (thin atmosphere)
Orbital Radius	1.26E+07 km (0.84 AU)
Year	295 Standard days
Gravity	0.94
Habitable World Data:	
Day	50 hours
Hyrdosphere	78.9% (2.3% Ice)
Atmosphere	Thin, breathable
Climate	-22°C to 58.5°C, Avg. 21°C
Trade	Various, (mostly Agricultural, Industrial)
Native Life	No sentient life found. Native life generally small and simple.
Government	Board of Directors; determined by popular vote among Corporate Division leaders.
Population	Light, 83% Yazirian

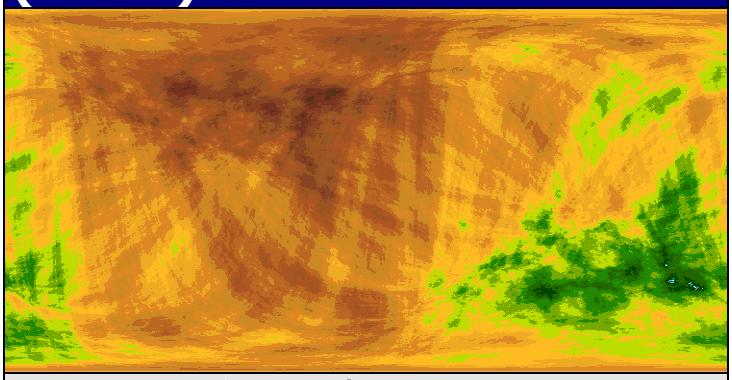
SCREE FRON IIa (Inti)

Home to the Merchant's School of Scree Fron; a school primarily devoted to developing spacers and merchantmen for various roles in any number of established merchant fleets around the Frontier. Stating that you received training at Scree Fron carries with it a certain amount of prestige.

SCREE FRON IIb (Infi)

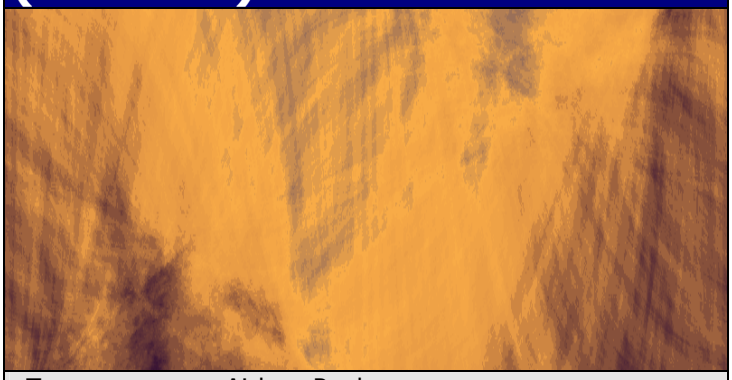
Currently being mined by subsidiaries of LeMan Inc, Highly supervised by UPF Security. There are rumors that LeMan, Inc uncovered the wreckage of an as yet unidentified starship while searching for iron ore. The CEO of LeMan, Raduu Radai, declined to comment but will not deny the accounts.

SCREE FRON III (Halol)



Type	Gas Dwarf
Orbital Radius	2E+08 km (1.335 AU)
Year	632.23 Standard days
Gravity	--
Notes	Never quite turned into a star, never quite cooled off. A project is underway by private investors to assemble hydrogen collectors in orbit around Halol.

SCREE FRON IV (Histran)



Type	Airless Rock
Orbital Radius	2.66E+08 km (1.78 AU)
Year	909 Standard days
Gravity	0.59
Habitable World Data:	
Day	25 hours
Hyrdosphere	0% (0% Ice)
Atmosphere	N/A
Climate	Exposed to the vacuum of space
Trade	N/A
Native Life	No native life possible.
Government	Militocracy
Population	Outpost, 85% Yazirian

Notes:

UPF maintains a military outpost here and launches patrol missions to keep watch on the Lesser Morass and on the Mechon System. This world is off limits to all but Spacefleet personnel.

SCREE FRON IVa – IVg

The many moons of Histran are of very little consequence. They hold very little in mineral content, possess no atmospheres or hydrospheres, and are patrolled diligently by UPF ships daily.

Tindor Yain, a female Scree Fron Yazirian, walks into the casino. She needs credits and she needs them now. She isn't there to gamble, however. She walks up to a high roller doing well at a table and starts working him. First it's a drink, a few compliments. Later, she feigns interest in his business ventures on Prenglar. By the end of the evening, she's thanking him for his generosity and walking to cash out her chips. She didn't steal them... not really. But somehow during the evening, she convinced the high roller it would be beneficial to give Tindor some credits. Later he'll wonder why in the hell he did that, but she'll be long gone.

As an optional rule, Referees may decide to allow Yazirians from Scree Fron to lose the Battle Rage score, and replace it with a special Fast Talk score. The Yazirians of this system specialize in the fine art of diplomacy, in all forms of etiquette and in all situations. This also makes them excellent confidence men – and sometimes they'll use it to pull the wool over someone's eyes.

Starting Scree Fron Yazirian characters have a 5% Fast Talk score. It may be improved by spending experience points, just like all other racial abilities. A character can attempt to roll equal to or under his score in several consecutive turns, but if he ever rolls 96-00 his victim becomes aware of what he's trying to do. When finally successful, the player describes to the Referee exactly what lie he's trying to force on the unwitting victim. The victim believes the lie – but exactly how that plays out is determined by the Referee on a case-by-case basis. Fast Talk isn't permanent. The victim will realize he's been conned. The victim makes a LOG check after successful use of this ability. If he succeeds, he'll realize the con in 1d10 minutes. If he fails, he won't realize the deception until 1d10 hours. If he rolls 96-00, he won't realize it for 1d10 days!

NEW RULES

CINEMATIC MARTIAL ARTS

By Bill Logan

In a Frontier where characters are often in danger, a quick pistol of some kind is usually the best line of defense. However, some systems forbid the carrying of such weaponry. On these more civilized worlds, of course, the criminals have little trouble getting the guns. So what's a law-abiding character to do for self defense?

MUNDANE MARTIAL ARTS

Martial Arts are not well represented in the Star Frontiers game. It's a single skill, representing three subskills that are little more than slight rules tweaks.

Normally, a character taking levels in Martial Arts can add his skill level to his punching score when dealing damage. He can take two attacks per turn. He can add 10% per skill level to his chance to hit... and gets a slight bonus to his chance to get an automatic knock out. If this is sufficient for your campaign, that's great. Many campaigns won't focus on the more discrete capabilities of the unarmed combatant. Some Referees won't permit the cinematic effects that any discussion of Martial Arts in Science Fiction seems to conjure up.

CINEMATIC MARTIAL ARTS

But Science Fiction is rife with depictions of the more elaborate Martial Artist. Movies such as The Matrix, Pitch Black, Babylon 5, just about anything with Jet Li, Star Wars, even Star Trek – all make use of more exotic forms of combat.

The Cinematic Martial Arts system is proposed here is optional. It doesn't *replace* the original skill. Instead, it adds a totally new skill called Cinematic Martial Arts. Check with your Referee regarding use of this system. It expands on and provides more options for a character dedicated to a discipline of self-defense... or a very capable offense. It makes such characters a little more able to kick butt – but balances it all by costing the character experience points that he could have used to make himself equally deadly with the use of other weapons.

A NAME

Any Martial Arts system that the Referee and players create using these guidelines should be given a name and a reason for existing. A brief history of the art is necessary to tie it in to the Frontier, along with an understanding of the manner in which it's passed on to others. The school or mentor that a character learns from is a part of his life, his core essence, and cannot be abstracted or go unmentioned. Players who take these skills for their characters are making a commitment that their art will have a place in the setting.

Of course, this is only a suggestion. If the Referee wants a Frontier where skills of this nature are commonplace, then he can ignore the need to give the fighting style such depth.

PREREQUISITES

Not just anyone can become a Martial Artist. It takes a certain amount of discipline and physical prowess to become anything more than the Martial Artist described in the Alpha Dawn rules. Therefore, obtaining Cinematic Martial Arts requires the following: LOG 50, DEX 60, and a Military PSA.

THE CINEMATIC MARTIAL ARTS SKILL

Unlike the mundane Martial Arts skill (which has no prerequisite), characters who take levels in the Cinematic Martial Arts skill enjoy several benefits. They have access to Cinematic Maneuvers (explained hereafter) and receive bonuses to hit, initiative, damage, number of attacks per turn, and can opt to perform a defensive action (called an "Unarmed Parry") at the expense of an attack. Finally, a character that has this skill can possess one or more Cinematic Maneuvers. These five subskills are summarized below:

Strike First – the physical and mental development of the Cinematic Martial Artist allows him to have a greater chance of gaining first strike in any combat turn. He is permitted to add his skill level to his Initiative Modifier.

Strike Hard – the Cinematic Martial Artist trains to increase the power of his blows. Even without the use of his Cinematic Maneuvers, he can increase the damage he causes with any successful strike. His base damage is 1d10 per strike, and he may add his skill level to the damage he causes. For example: Uricho is a level 4 Cinematic Martial Artist with a Punching Score of +3. When she punches, she causes 1d10+7 damage.

Strike Often – the discipline and experience gained through sparring and practicing forms allows a Cinematic Martial Artist to strike more often per turn. He may perform two attacks at first skill level, and gains an additional attack at skill level 4 and a fourth attack per turn at skill level 6.

Self Defense – a character who is using Cinematic Martial Arts can perform a special type of attack, called an Unarmed Parry. He uses his body to dodge or block an incoming attack. He can do this at the expense of one or more of his normal attacks (thus, if he has two attacks per turn, he could do one attack and one unarmed parry, two attacks, or two unarmed parries). To successfully perform an unarmed parry, simply make a normal attack roll. If successful, you can ignore an attack just made against you. You MUST declare the use of the unarmed parry at the beginning of the turn, such as "I will do one attack and one parry."

Cinematic Maneuvers – There are several special maneuvers described in the following section. A player may select one Cinematic Maneuver for each skill level he possesses in Cinematic Martial Arts. A special maneuver may be made instead of a normal attack. Each of the special maneuvers has its own rules which govern its use. For example, a level 4 Cinematic Martial Artist can have 4 Cinematic Maneuvers.

CINEMATIC MANEUVERS

- **Blind fighting**: This is the ability to fight (and perform other vision-related tasks) in total darkness. The character receives no penalty when fighting in the dark, as long as he is still able to hear his opponent. Once purchased, this maneuver is always in effect (it doesn't count as an attack)
- **Deadly Attack**: If a character possesses this maneuver and uses it on an opponent, it will cause 2d10 damage instead of 1d10, plus the normal bonuses of PS plus skill level.
- **Drop**: This attack causes victims to open one hand and drop something they are holding. If successful, the attacker names which hand is opened. If the attack succeeds quite well, the Referee may decree that both hands were opened and released. Anything held in a hand that has been opened by this attack is dropped.
- **Fleet of Foot**: The character's body is so well developed physically that he may add his skill level to his running movement rate (in meters). He can do this automatically, without sacrificing an attack or defense. Once purchased, this ability is always in effect.
- **Hold**: Any character can put another character into a hold, but characters who know this technique get the added advantage of doing damage

CINEMATIC MARTIAL ARTS

PREREQUISITES: A Cinematic Martial Artist must have a Logic score of at least 50 and a Dexterity score of at least 60. Since this level of devotion is a lifestyle as much as a hobby, he must have a Military Primary Skill Area (PSA).

CINEMATIC MARTIAL ARTS TABLE

Skill Level	Attacks Per Turn	Initiative Modifier	Unarmed Damage	#Cinematic Maneuvers
1	2	IM+1	1d10+PS+1	1
2	2	IM+2	1d10+PS+2	2
3	2	IM+3	1d10+PS+3	3
4	3	IM+4	1d10+PS+4	4
5	3	IM+5	1d10+PS+5	5
6	4	IM+6	1d10+PS+6	6

CINEMATIC MANEUVER TABLE

Maneuvers (each costs 5 experience points)
Blind Fighting
Deadly Attack
Drop
Fleet of Foot
Hold
Improved Landing
Insanely Cool Moves
Instant Defense
Instant Stand
Leap
Move By
Multiple Attacks
Multiple Defense
Paired Weapons
Power Attacks
Power Defense
Reverse Hold
Roll With The Impact
Stun
Surprise Action
Take Down
Throw
Weapon Form

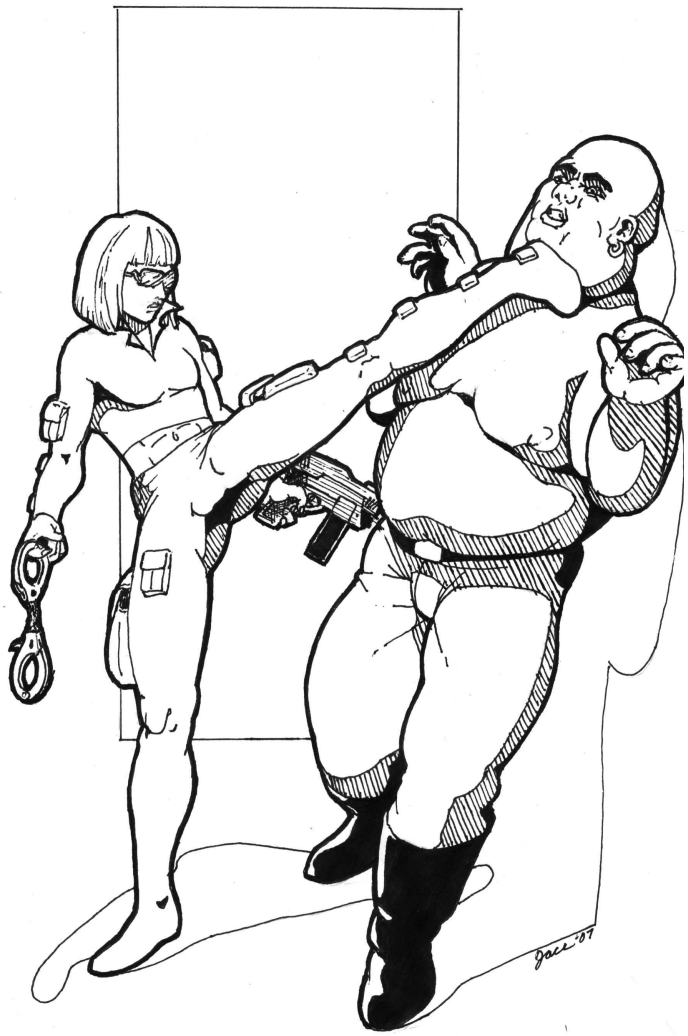
EXPERIENCE POINT TABLE

Skill Level	Sample Title	Skill Level Cost
1	Initiate	3
2	Novice	6
3	Adept	9
4	Expert	12
5	Master	15
6	Grand Master	18

Special Experience Point Rule: When purchasing a skill level, the "Skill Level Cost" column shows the cost for purchasing the actual skill level. The purchase of the Cinematic Maneuver costs an additional 5xp.

to the held enemy, if they choose. In most respects, this technique uses the same system for holds as described in the combat rules, but if the holding player chooses, he or she can cause damage to the opponent. The same skill check which puts the opponent in the hold also does normal hand-to-hand damage. On subsequent turns, the damage may be continued until the victim breaks free of the hold.

- **Improved Landing**: The character may subtract his skill level from the distance he has fallen or has been hurled, in meters, before taking damage. This does not count as an attack, it is considered always in effect once the character possesses this maneuver. Of course, an unconscious character doesn't receive the benefit of this maneuver.
- **Insanely Cool Moves**: The character uses up one of his attacks in order to perform acts of such an impressive nature that anyone who witnessed it (successful or otherwise) and lives to tell the tale will talk of what they just witnessed. This maneuver is foolish to use against a truly equal opponent – but against someone you're truly superior to – why not look cool while giving him a beating?
- **Instant Defense**: Characters with this ability are harder to surprise than others – they get to add 10 times their skill level to any Intuition check for determining surprise. This maneuver is considered always in effect. It doesn't count as an action.
- **Instant Stand**: Characters who are knocked to the ground, or are lying prone, can stand and move or attack without penalty as a single action. Once selected, this maneuver is always in effect and its use doesn't count as an attack.
- **Leap:** Characters who know this technique can leap into the air (a distance equal to half the tens digit of the character's Dexterity score, in meters), and cover twice that distance horizontally. This can be part of a move or part of an attack. Thus, a character with a 65 Dexterity can leap 3 meters straight up, and 6 meters horizontally. Use of this ability does count as an attack.
- **Move By**: The character can perform a full move action (covering a distance equal to the character's "Running" movement rate) and attack during it, without placing himself in jeopardy. He doesn't move into his opponent, he moves past him. The attack itself will carry no penalty.
- **Multiple Attacks**: Characters who take this special maneuver get an extra attack per turn that may not be used for an unarmed parry. No player may select this maneuver more than once for his character. Once selected, this maneuver is always in effect.
- **Multiple Defense**: Characters who have this maneuver get one additional attack per turn that may only be used for an unarmed parry. No player may select this maneuver more than once for his character. Once selected, this maneuver is always in effect.



- **Paired Weapons**: The character has studied the use of two weapons in an exotic form of combat where the two weapons act as an extension of his own body. When using these two melee weapons (and only while using both of the specified weapons) he ignores the penalties associated with using two weapons and using a weapon in his secondary hand. For example: a character might have learned the maneuver "paired knife fighting" – when fighting with a knife in both hands, he gets no multiple weapon/off-hand penalties. If he had a sword in one hand and a knife in the other, normal penalties would apply Once selected, this maneuver is always in effect.
- **Power Attack:** The character can increase his damage by decreasing his accuracy. For each penalty of 10% he accepts, he can increase his damage he causes by +2 if that attack succeeds.
- **Power Defense**: The character has practiced well enough with unarmed combat techniques against armed opponents that he is able to perform unarmed parries against clubs, maces, staves, even swords and knives, as effectively and with the use

of the exact same rules as he uses against unarmed attacks. Once selected, this maneuver is always in effect.

- **Reverse Hold**: If a character with this maneuver is held (either in the conventional manner or with the Hold Cinematic Maneuver) he may make a simple attack roll and reverse the hold, placing his opponent in a hold similar to the one in which he was just held. The opponent may make a Reaction Speed avoidance roll to avoid the reversal.
- **Roll with the Impact**: The character decides it's okay to take a blow from an opponent "Go ahead, hit me with your best shot!" The attack roll is performed as normal, but the character will subtract his level from the damage caused. For example: a level 6 Cinematic Martial Artist with this maneuver just simply ignores up to 6 points of damage from fists and feet. Against normal opponents, he's virtually immune to punches. Against other Cinematic Martial Artists, however, he'll still take damage just a bit fewer points of it. Note that this defense only works against unarmed attacks... unless the character also possesses Power Defense, above. Once selected, this maneuver is always in effect. Use of it does not count as an attack.
- **Stun**: Characters using this technique can take their victims out of the action almost immediately. A successful attack roll does no normal damage but causes the victim to make a Stamina avoidance roll. Failure of the roll dazes the victim - he loses one action (on this turn if he hasn't already acted; on the next if he has). If the victim succeeds in his roll, the attack was pretty useless. However, if the opponent fails the avoidance roll by with a roll of 96-00, he's unconscious for d100 turns.
- **Surprise Action**: Characters with this technique can act so quickly or make such a distracting noise (or both) that all foes within 2 meters are taken by surprise, even in the middle of a fight! The character uses this maneuver in place of a normal attack. All enemies within melee range must make Intuition avoidance rolls or lose one action (the next action that should have been available to the victim in normal combat order).
- **Take Down**: Successful use of this technique knocks opponents to the ground directly in front of your character instead of causing normal damage. The victim may make a Reaction Speed avoidance roll in order to avoid the effects of the take down.
- **Throw:** A character must have a victim in a hold before using this technique. A successful attack check allows the character with this technique to throw the held character up to 2 meters in any direction. Unless the victim falls onto something soft, he or she suffers normal unarmed combat damage and ends the turn lying prone.
- **Weapon Form**: the character's style of Martial Arts includes native use of a certain melee weapon (that must be specified). Whenever a character uses this weapon, he may receive all the normal benefits of fighting unarmed (can use "unarmed parries," Cinematic Maneuvers, and take advantage of his Initiative Modifier bonus, damage bonus(es), and number of attacks. This maneuver is considered always in effect. Players may select this Cinematic Maneuver multiple times, each time adding another melee weapon to his list of Weapon Forms.

DEVELOPING CINEMATIC MARTIAL ARTS

Whether you selected this skill as one of your starting level-1 skills or purchased it later, these guidelines should be followed.

This skill is a Military PSA skill and so uses the standard progression for military skills (3 experience points for level 1, 6 experience points for level 2, etc.). Since this skill cannot be purchased by characters who are not members of the Military PSA, it makes no sense to even mention the double-cost values as shown in the Alpha Dawn game.

The special Cinematic Maneuvers are a little more powerful than a standard skill level, however. Each skill level, a player may select one Cinematic Maneuver for his character. It costs 5 experience points to learn a maneuver. The selection of this maneuver is open – there are no prerequisites or restrictions. The maneuver need not be purchased immediately upon gaining the new level; if desired, no maneuvers need be purchased at all. Some players may wish to buy their skill all the way up to level 6, then buy all six of their maneuvers. That's their choice. Heck – some Players and Referees may be quite happy with the benefits provided by the skill level itself and opt not to use the Cinematic Maneuvers in their campaigns at all.

Author's Note: Note that some people may wonder why the skill levels cost the same as the traditional Martial Arts skill. This skill is superior to that skill. The cost being the same is for two reasons: 1) in the Alpha Dawn game, all Military PSA skills cost the same, and I didn't want to deviate from that standardization. 2) the added benefits are balanced not with experience point costs but with the fact that the skill has the ability score prerequisites and represents a level of achievement that truly talented people can gain even with identical training to those who fail to excel to the same level of achievement.

STARTING GEAR

By Bill Logan

All the players are assembled, and you're getting ready to roll up your characters. One of the players selects a technician character, complete with robotics and technician skills. Another player creates a field medic. The last creates a military specialist.

When it comes to starting equipment, the technician character really makes out. He begins play with a tech kit and a robcomkit, not to mention the normal rolled starting funds. The medic starts off with a medkit. So what does the military specialist start off with? An auto pistol and a night stick is about all he can afford. And he specializes in beam weapons! Funny thing is – the technician and the medic can both start off with the same weaponry. Fair? No.

This rule proposes to make a modification to the standard rules that state a character begins play with any tool kit required for the skills he possesses. It elaborates on the assumption, and makes it a bit fairer. Like all articles in the "New Rules" section of this magazine, its use is strictly optional.

MILITARY PSA

A character with a Military PSA should be able to start off with the tools of his trade, just as those in the less militant professions. The table below summarizes. Only equipment from the core Alpha Dawn game is shown in the table below. Referees may substitute equipment from their own campaign settings, as long as the equipment sums up to 500Cr:

MILITARY PSA TOOLKIT TABLE

Skill	Starting "Tool Kit" Options
Beam Weapons	*1) Electrostunner* *2) Sonic Stunner* *3) Albedo Suit*
Gyrojet Weapons	*1) Gyrojet Pistol and a Gyrojet Rifle* *2) Civilian Skeinsuit and Gyrojet Pistol* *3) Two Gyrojet Pistols and 10 spare Pistol Jetclips*
Melee Weapons	*1) Civilian Skeinsuit* *2) Albedo Suit* *3) Military Skeinsuit, Electric Sword, Shock Gloves*
Projectile Weapons	*1) Auto Pistol and Auto Rifle* *2) Military Skeinsuit and Auto Pistol* *3) Military Skeinsuit and Needler Pistol*
Thrown Weapons	*1) Civilian Skeinsuit* *2) Albedo Suit* *3) Military Skeinsuit, 10 knives, 5 doze grenades, 5 smoke grenades*
Demolitions	*1) Military Skeinsuit, 6 Variable Timers, 3kg Tornadium D19, and 2 fragmentation grenades*
Martial Arts	*1) Civilian Skeinsuit* *2) Albedo Suit*

TECHNOLOGICAL PSA

Two of the three skills in the Technological PSA already begin play with standard tool kits. That hasn't changed in this rules option. The last skill, Computers, is more difficult.

Computers are far more expensive than 500Cr, and there exists no core Alpha Dawn piece of computer equipment that a computer specialist could use that falls under the "tool kit" cost. Therefore, a small step away from the core Alpha Dawn equipment list is required.

TECHNOLOGICAL PSA TOOLKIT TABLE

Skill	Starting "Tool Kit" Options
Computers	*Basic Portable Computer (see below)*
Robotics	*Robcomkit*
Technician	*Techkit*

BASIC PORTABLE COMPUTER

The Basic Portable Computer is a limited computer system. It's portable, and allows collection of data (names, addresses, comments, etc.) as well as providing a link (via chronocom networks) to send and receive text and voice messages. It has integrated timekeeping, alarm scheduling, and calendar programs, and can act as a dedicated simple word processor, spreadsheet, and database with surprisingly adequate query capability. It is a very capable computer, but is limited in capacity. It has the equivalent of ½ Function Point, weighs 1kg, and fits in a shoulder-bag with all of its accessories. It can be replaced for 500Cr on most civilized Frontier worlds.

BIOSOCIAL PSA

As with the technological skills, two of the three Biosocial skills already have starting tool kits. The psychosocial skill, however, provides a little trouble. Since the skill deals with people instead of with equipment, this leads to an interesting solution: henchmen. The following table provides a list of the tool kits provided by each of the Biosocial skills.

BIOSOCIAL PSA TOOLKIT TABLE

Skill	Starting "Tool Kit" Options
Environmental	*Envirokit*
Medic	*Medkit*
Psychosocial	*1) One bodyguard (prepaid for 12 days) with level 1 in one of the following skills: Beam Weapons, Martial Arts, or Melee Weapons.* *2) Two bodyguards (prepaid for 12 days) with Level 1 Projectile Weapons skills.*

SPECIES/GENDER ABILITY MODIFIERS

By C. J. Williams

Be warned. This article explores waters that have caused disturbance on many occasions. That being said, and this being a public magazine, the Star Frontiersman cannot be held responsible for views expressed in this article.

It's no secret that there are differences between the genders of the Human race both physical and mental. These differences are spoken about often. Science has shown that over all, women are a bit smarter than men in general understanding of the things around them. Likewise, though there are very strong women out there, women are generally not as strong, physically, as men (I speak of how much they are able to lift, pull or push). Technically, we could give modifiers (bonuses and penalties) to both genders up and down the ability list. Women clearly have higher bodily dexterity, men are better at hard logic (something many woman will admit), men have stronger leadership skills, but women have more likeable personalities over all. But to list modifiers for each and every one of these for both genders would be impractical. So several questions arise about how we can accomplish recognizing the differences to the satisfaction of everyone.

It can be noted that it is not that women's getting a negative modifier to strength in other gaming systems irritates women that calls to mind the word "sexist", it's that there's nothing that gives them a bonus in another area, or gives men a negative modifier in an area to balance out the equation, thus demonstrating extreme sexism. Women are equal to men, not in every way (sometimes better, sometimes not as good), but in that the differences balance out, which women have fought hard to prove for a very long time.

So, in the interest of fairness, it was considered giving both genders either 1) bonuses to one ability for Females and a different one for Males, or 2) penalties in the converse. That would help, but then this proves a disadvantage or advantage to Dralasites not having those gender modifiers, depending on which is used. Applying a bonus and a penalty to each of both genders solves this, but is a little too much in the stat modifier area. So then both a bonus and a penalty need to be applied to just one gender. On that matter, women might not like the adjustments going to them, because the adjustments are always shoved off on the women. However, when you apply the bonus to men, a woman of a stronger opinion might think "that should have been applied to us in the converse so that we go above normal in a stat, men always get to go above normal". Additionally, the Human male was used as the base of all the stats to begin with. In the end, this actually makes the Human Male look very bland. These things being so, rest assured these have not just been shoved off on women, but gives women the opportunity to rise above the norm with the bonus. That brings us to the following.

Human females are most known for having "women's intuition". This meshes with the fact that women always seem to know things that men are just clueless about no matter how coldly logical a man is. Thus, the human females get +5 to Intuition and -5 to Strength. That covers the most obvious differences between the sexes and gives women a leg up in intelligence over men and recognizes their inherent limit in physical strength in comparison.

Now we have to consider whether gender affects the alien races. Dralasites have no clear distinctions between male and female. In fact, each Dralasite experiences being male, female, and androgynous during different stages in their life, so they get no adjustments. Vrusks, also, could be unadjusted as they seem to be depicted as having little difference between Vrusk genders in the AD rules. Now with Yazirians one would think that the males should get the adjustments to offset the Human females getting them, but when they are given such modifiers, then we really off-balance the Yazarian male in comparison to the other races, because we can't reduce their deficiency in strength or stamina for their small stature, so we would end up increasing one of the other bonuses. Therefore, since Female Yazirians are larger than male Yazirians, we can give them a Strength modifier (which might earn the plaudits and appreciation of women and become an attractive solution to the above difference if it seems unpalatable) and a penalty to Dexterity for their size.

With that being said, below is what is hoped to be a fair and balanced Racial Gender Ability Modifier Table below:

Species/Gender	STR	STA	INT	LOG	DEX	RS	PER	LDR
Dralasite	+5	+5	+0	+0	+0	+0	-5	-5
Human Female*	-5	+0	+5	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0
Human Male*	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0
Vrusk	-5	-5	+0	+0	+5	+5	+0	+0
Yazirian Female	-5	-10	+5	+5	+0	+5	+0	+0
Yazirian Male	-10	-10	+5	+5	+5	+5	+0	+0

* Human characters, both male and female, still get +5 to any one ability score. These points apply to only one ability, not to both abilities in a pair.

It is the hope and intention that this table presents a proper recognition of sexual differences without insult. Please address any comments or complaints about this article to "C. J. Williams" care of Bill_Logan@MyWay.com.

EQUIPMENT

DEFENSIVE EQUIPMENT

By Bill Logan

UNPOWERED HELMETS

The Star Frontiers game has no helmets. I'm not sure why, but I guess professional adventurers and explorers having exciting adventures on alien worlds fear getting their hair matted down.

Helmets have an important role in the military – but science fiction has many more uses for headgear. A great deal of equipment in the Miscellaneous section of the Alpha Dawn game can be integrated into a helmet, with heads-up displays and intelligent circuitry.

UNIVERSAL COMBAT HELMET

The basic combat helmet is simple in design and effective protection against light shrapnel and projectiles. Unlike some earlier helmets – these helmets are not camouflaged but polished and white, designed to deflect a glancing beam weapon.

Combat helmets come in sizes and shapes for all four of the major races. This helmet has a universal fit, with inserts and chin straps designed to accommodate each of the four core species. All simple combat helmets (including this Universal one) costs 50Cr and weighs nothing when worn. They weigh 1kg when stored.

In game terms, a helmet doesn't do much in the core Alpha Dawn rules. If using the hit location rules from Star Frontiersman Issue #2, characters wearing helmets could ignore the stun and unconsciousness effect of getting hit for certain thresholds of damage.

Referees may allow called shots to the head (with a substantial penalty, -20 for example) to cause double damage unless protected by a helmet. Alternatively, referees may immunize characters against the automatic knock-out that occurs when an opponent rolls 01-02 to hit while so protected (see the Alpha Dawn remastered book, page 16).

POWERED HELMETS

All powered helmets are energized by a 20-SEU PowerClip, but can be connected to a 50-SEU Power BeltPack or 100-SEU Power BackPack with a 1.5 meter power cord. When deactivated, there is no power drain on the power source, but none of the helmet's functions will work (though it will still act like an unpowered helmet). When powered, the helmet drains 1 SEU per day.

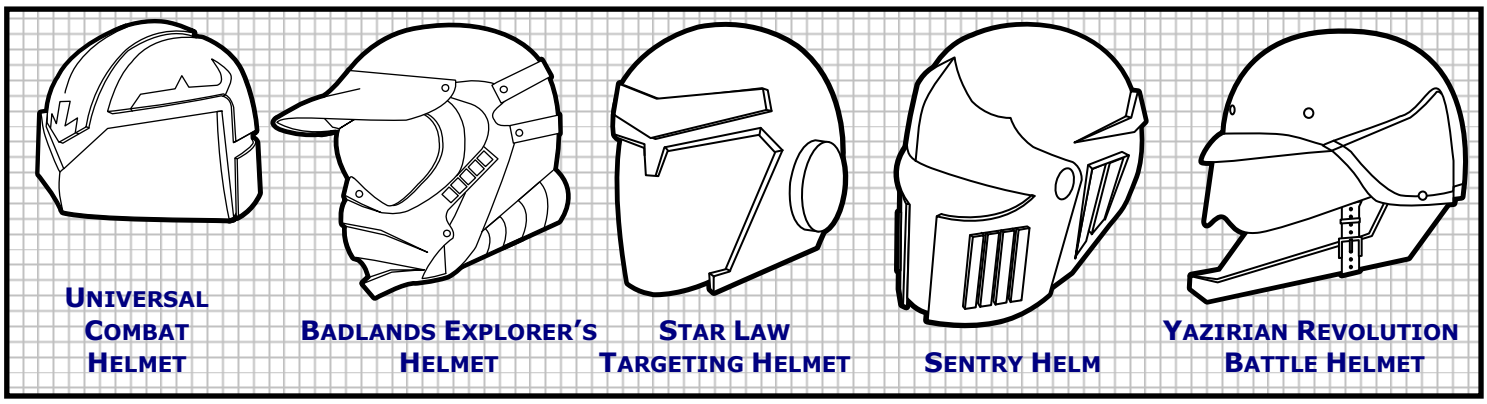
BADLANDS EXPLORER'S HELMET

When your character is hired to explore the dangerous wastes of a desert world, or seek out new resources in a mine on a jungle planet, or find a secret treasure lost on a swamp world... having the right tool for the right job is always helpful.

The Badlands Explorer's Helmet is just that tool. The helmet is quite costly, and owning one is a boasting point for experienced explorers. It costs 1,500Cr and weighs 1kg even while worn.

Badland Explorer's Helmet Integrated Functions:

- *Integrated Chronocom, 5km range*
  (with HUD galactic standard time and date at the top in the middle of view)
- *Integrated Compass*
  (with HUD direction shown under the time)
- *Integrated Gas Mask*
  (self-regenerating dual-filters, allowing one to be functioning while the other regenerates, estimated to last for up to 5 years)
- *Integrated Polyvox*
  (activated by buttons on side, can store up to four languages in addition to PanGal)
- *Integrated Sungoggles*
  (automatically tints when needed, but not fast enough to protect the wearer from being flash-blinded by intense sudden lights)
- *Integrated Toxy-Rad Guage*
  (with HUD toxin readings listed on the left of side of the viewing area, toxins in red text are dangerous, otherwise text is in green)



STAR LAW TARGETING HELMET

Star Law is everywhere, and they have vehicles and weapons and uniforms. When you're cruising down the busy streets of Port Loren and a Star Law hovercyclist motions to pull you over, he's probably wearing a Star Law Targeting Helmet.

It is illegal for anyone to own one of these. They are made specifically for Star Law by WarTech Industries. Purchase of these helmets is extremely costly because one must secure its purchase through illicit means. Normally, the visor is dark tinted and the helmet white, the arrow decor in navy blue. This helmet costs 1,200Cr and weighs 1kg. Note that the Yazirian version's facial visor doesn't cover the wearer's face completely (it allows for the muzzle to extend).

Star Law Targeting Helmet Integrated Functions:

- *Connects to any beam weapon via wireless connection to a transceiver that mounts on the tip of the weapon itself. A heads-up display shows number of shots remaining in the weapon in the lower left corner of view, next to a small "SEU" symbol.*
- *Crosshairs are placed on HUD to indicate target placement/aim management whenever the weapon is drawn from its holster. There is a slight lag to weapon movement, but the crosshairs improve aim by +10, and halves penalties associated with range.*
- *Integrated two-channel Chronocom (one channel can be used to make normal chronocom calls, the other is only tuned to a special Star Law frequency), 5km range. Time is shown on a heads-up display in the lower right corner.*

SENTRY HELM

Bodyguards can't always stand next to their charge and flex their muscles. They can't always wear long overcoats and sporty sungoggles. In the very diverse Frontier, sometimes bodyguards have to look intimidating and look uniform... and that's something the golden Senty Helm does well.

Based on ancient Vrusk helms still on display in some historical museums, the Sentry Helm can be purchased to accommodate any of the core races, though the Dralasite version is shorter and the Yazirian version has an extended frontal piece designed to go over the muzzle. It completely hides the face of the wearer. Add a long civilian skeinsuit made to look like a cloak, and hand your guards pole-arms or electric swords and put them outside your door... these guards look scary.

Although plumes of various natures are based more on medieval human history, the Sentry Helm can be ordered with various plumages. Additionally, to accommodate ancient Dralasite customs dating back thousands of years, the Sentry Helm can be purchased with replica beast horns from a catalog of many known animals. These options won't change the cost of the helmet, but adds to any order's delivery time.

The Sentry Helm costs 800Cr when purchased alone, but is typically sold in a bundle of 8 for 5,000Cr (quite a discount). It weighs 1kg.

Sentry Helm Integrated Functions:

- *Integrated IR Goggles to see in the dark when an infiltrator removes building power.*
- *Integrated Gas Mask to instantly immunize the guard from doze grenades and other airborne toxins. Filters don't automatically regenerate, and have a life expectancy of only 2 years.*
- *Integrated voice modulator, to deepen the guard's voice and add a slight echo – all to add an intimidating sound and a uniformity to the voices of the guards. The voice modulator adds +10% to intimidation rolls for those first encountering it, but after the first time, characters aren't really affected by that anymore.*
- *Integrated communication device with 5km range that works the same as a chronocom but without timekeeping functionality. The voice modulator does not work over the chronocom.*

YAZIRIAN REVOLUTION HELMET

During the wars which secured the independence of Yast from Hentz, both sides of the heated battles often word this helmet. It has the appearance of an unpowered helmet, but is quite powered. It will not fit properly on a Human or Vrusk, though a Dralasite can shape his head to fit nearly any helmet.

When ordering, a clan's symbols and colors must be specified. The helmet comes complete with these symbols and colors laser-etched, so carbon scoring and ablated chips won't make these symbols of family pride fade.

The helmet costs 600Cr and weighs 2kg because of the added integrated hardware.

Yazirian Revolution Helmet Integrated Equipment:

- *Integrated Sungoggles (automatically tints extremely rapidly when needed to prevent the flash-blindness that Yazirians get when hit with bright lights.)*
- *Integrated Locator System (allows field generals to use specialized hand-held display systems to coordinate battles on-screen. Although this hand-held unit is no longer sold, some can still be found in the Frontier (and clever computer specialists can create programs to use this special Locator System).*
- *Integrated Radiophone with 1,000km range, can be set to one of 12 frequency channels.*

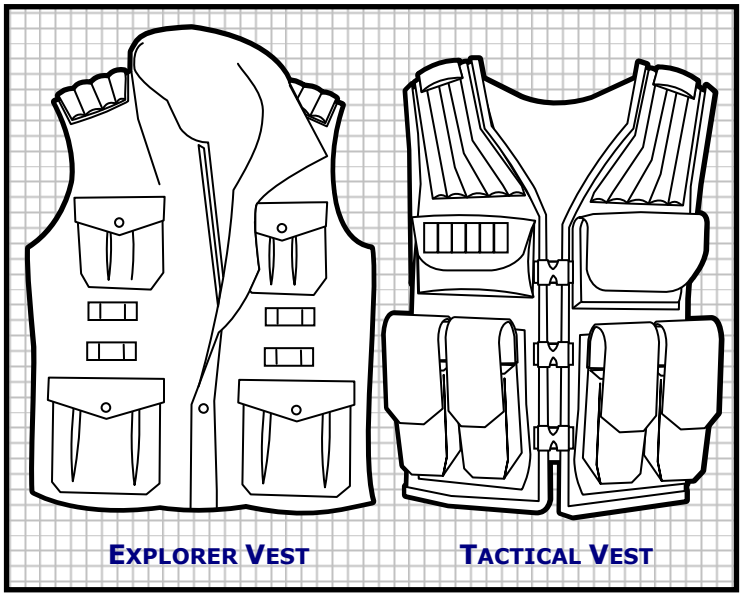
MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT

By Bill Logan

EXPLORER VEST

Characters in the Star Frontiers games spend a lot of time adventuring. When they adventure, they often find themselves burdened down with travel gear: toxy-rad guages, toolkits, solvaway canisters, first-aid packs, spare ammunition, survival rations, etc. They often find themselves encumbered and their movement rates suffer.

The Explorer Vest (by UniHo) is designed to help the intrepid adventurer tote about his various pieces of gear. It is built of rugged material (though offers no damage protection) and is water resistant.



A character wearing an Explorer Vest can treat his Strength score as if it were 5 points higher when determining encumbrance effects. This effectively allows 5 more kilograms of gear to be worn without affecting movement.

An Explorer Vest itself has a negligible weight (its mass is quite evenly distributed, though when stored it is considered to weigh 0.5kg). It costs a mere 50Cr, and can be ordered in white, black, khaki, and grey. It can be adjusted to accommodate any of the four core Frontier races (even the Yazirian's wings).

TACTICAL VEST

Sometimes it's not adventure on a character's mind; sometimes they're out for payback. Other times they're deployed on a purely militant mission: bounty hunting, big game hunting, assassination (surely your characters aren't into contract killing?), or mercenary special missions. When this is the case, the Tactical Vest is a decent option.

The Tactical Vest is designed to hold:
- *eight ammunition magazines*
- *four grenades*
- *two variable timers*
- *one kilogram of Tornadium D-19*

And look dangerous while doing it. All of these items, when properly placed in the vest compartments, weigh nothing to the character wearing carrying them. It also has several straps designed to hang off the bottom of the vest, to act as rigging onto which pistol-sized weapon holsters can be attached.

The back of the vest includes five SEU PowerClips in a network of heavy-duty canvas rigging, all wired together with integrated power routing and buffering to form the equivalent of a standard 100-SEU Power Backpack. 1.5m power cords can be pulled and locked in place (festooned) and will retract when pulled and released. Up to four devices can be powered in this manner. Unlike a standard Power Backpack, these five 20-SEU PowerClips can be replaced independently (though not by the vest's wearer while being worn, and quickly enough to be done effectively during combat).

The Tactical Vest is built of an extremely durable ballistic material. If worn alone, treat it as a 25 point skeinsuit. Skeinsuits cannot be layered, so if worn over another skeinsuit, both of the protective layers will take the same damage. For example: a character is shot for 34 points of damage. He takes only 17 points, and both his skeinsuit and his tactical vest take 17. If worn over an albedo suit, it nullifies the protective nature of that suit.

The Tactical Vest is not inexpensive. It is not often worn by large armies because of this. Mercenaries and adventurers comprise the bulk of the vest's sales. The vest can be adjusted to fit any of the four core Frontier races (even accommodates a Yazirian's wings), and can be purchased in black, white, khaki, hunter green, and in several types of camouflage. It weighs 2kg and costs 750Cr.

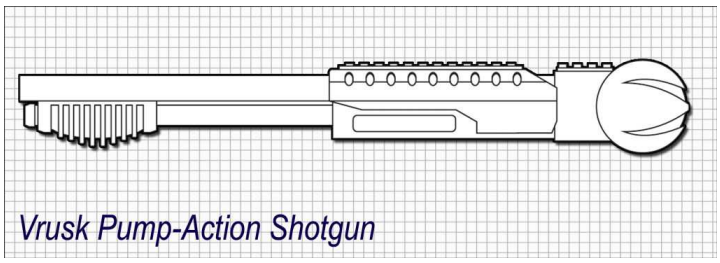
SCATTERGUNS

by M. Jason Parent

It's believed that both vrusk and humans brought scatterguns to the frontier, but every race is known to use them now. In fact, the scattergun is such an appealing design that some other weapons have been modified to work in a manner similar to the conventional ballistic scattergun (such as the Humma Rafflur M-4).

Scatterguns are at heart a very simple projectile weapon, similar in design to autorifles. However, instead of firing a single slug from each casing, a scattergun fires a cluster of 8 to 12 pieces of 'shot' or 'flechettes'. Humans called their modern scatterguns shotguns, but the general term of scattergun is used in most instances on the Frontier for these weapons, particularly for the military automatic scatterguns.

Scatterguns are popular hunting weapons because they provide somewhat better accuracy than a typical projectile firearm because of the number of projectiles launched at the target. In military roles, they are seen as anti-personnel support weapons, typically used by lower-tech militaries and in house-to-house fighting environments where the shorter range and increased effective rate of fire can be a double benefit. Skeinsuits and Inertia Screens absorb half the damage from scatterguns. There are three base models of scatterguns seen on the Frontier.


Vrusk Pump-Action Shotgun

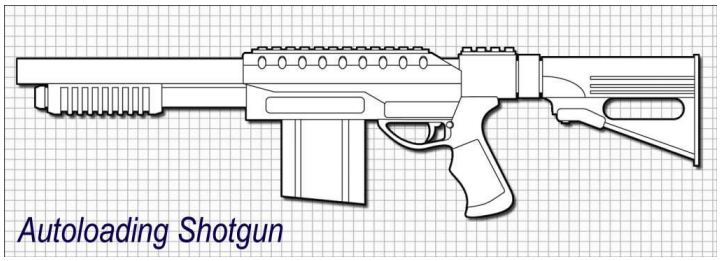
PUMP ACTION SCATTERGUN

The most common civilian model is the pump action scattergun. This model does not automatically load a round into the chamber after a round has been fired, but instead requires that the user 'pump' the weapon (slide the fore-

grip back and then forward again) to load another round into the chamber.

Pump action scatterguns do not use a conventional magazine, but instead hold their rounds internally. Because of this, the weapon must be reloaded manually instead of changing magazines. A character can load up to half his Initiative Modifier worth of rounds into a scattergun in one round. These scatterguns are typically used as personal defense weapons by frontier settlers, and as hunting firearms.

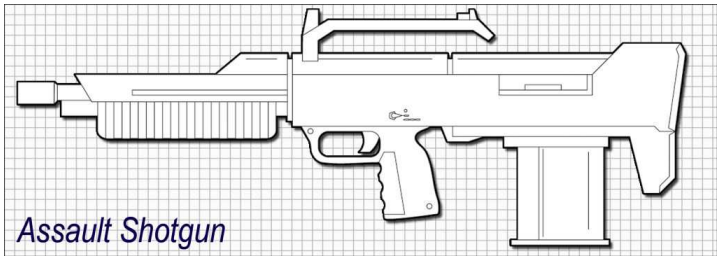
Pump Action Scattergun
Cost: 200Cr
Weight: 3 kg
Damage: 2d10
Ammo: 5 shots
Rate: 2
Defense: Inertia
Range: 5/15/40/75/150
Ammo Cost: 10Cr (20 loose Shotshells)
Skill: Projectile Weapons


Autoloading Shotgun

AUTOLOADING SCATTERGUN

An upgrade in usability from the pump action system is a scattergun that automatically loads the next round into the chamber after each shot. These scatterguns are typically used as longarms by police, security and military forces, although some are also used for hunting and home defense.

Autoloading Scattergun
Cost: 400Cr
Weight: 4 kg
Damage: 2d10
Ammo: 10 shots
Rate: 3
Defense: Inertia
Range: 5/15/40/75/150
Ammo Cost: 10Cr (10-shot Scattergun Shotclip)
Skill: Projectile Weapons


Assault Shotgun

ASSAULT SCATTERGUN

The assault scattergun is the merger of the technologies of an autorifle with the design of a scattergun. Although able to operate as an autoloading scattergun, the assault scattergun can also fire bursts of shots, spreading projectiles over a large area and shredding any soft cover in the area. Assault scatterguns are only usually seen in the hands of military forces and some raiders and pirates.

Assault Scattergun
Cost: 600Cr
Weight: 5 kg
Damage: 2d10/5d10
Ammo: 10 shots (2 bursts)
Rate: 3(1)
Defense: Inertia
Range: 5/15/40/75/150
Ammo Cost: 10Cr (10-shot Scattergun Shotclip)
Skill: Projectile Weapons

SCATTERGUN AMMUNITION

A box of 10 scattergun rounds, loose for manually loading into pump action scatterguns. The rounds are interchangeable with autoloading and assault scatterguns, but do not include a magazine.

SCATTERGUN SHOTCLIP

A shotclip is a plastic, spring-loaded rack of 10 scattergun rounds. Because scatterguns fire a cluster of small pieces of shot or flechettes, attacking with a scattergun is very similar to using a burst attack with an autoweapon. Each 'shot' from a scattergun contains 10 projectiles. A shot can be aimed at up to five adjacent characters in an area up to 5 meters wide, or at just one character. Only one die roll is needed to hit all the characters aimed at. Because of the number of projectiles fired, the shooter gains a +10 bonus on the hit chance. If the shot is aimed at one character it causes 2d10 points of damage. If it is aimed at more than one character, it causes 2d10 points of damage plus 1d10 for each additional target. These points are divided as evenly as possible among all the targets. Any leftover points of damage are lost.

EXAMPLE: Dai Hulad, the yazirian gangster, fires his scattergun at a group of four Star Law Vice officers charging toward him. All four are hit, so the player rolls 5d10 for damage (2d10 for the first target, +3d10 for three additional targets). The result is 29 points of damage. These are divided evenly among the officers, resulting in 7 points of damage to each. The extra damage point is lost.

Area of Effect. Assault Scatterguns are even more effective against groups – being able to fire up to five shots at a time, similar to the burst attack of an autoweapon. Each burst from an assault scattergun contains 5 shots, or 50 projectiles. A scattergun burst can be aimed at up to ten adjacent characters in an area up to twenty meters wide, or at just one character. Only one die roll is needed to hit all the characters aimed at. Because of the number of projectiles fired, the shooter gains a +20 bonus on the hit chance, and any benefits of soft cover are lost. If the burst is aimed at one character it causes 5d10 points of damage. If it is aimed at more than one character, it causes 5d10 points of damage plus 2d10 for every additional target. These points are divided as evenly as possible among all the targets. Any leftover points of damage are lost.

BEHIND THE SCENES - The math behind the shot and burst mechanics is based on those of the burst fire weapons from the Alpha Dawn set. A shotgun will fire roughly 10 pieces of 'shot' with every attack, therefore being basically as effective as an autoweapon. However, these individual shots are less potent than a regular bullet, and they cannot be aimed into a spray as effectively as an autoweapon can be, thus reducing both the base damage and the maximum number of targets as well as the fire zone of the weapon. On the other hand, the automatic scattergun's numbers are almost identical to those of an autoweapon burst. Assault shotguns generally have a much lower rate of fire than a typical assault weapon, so we reduced the number of shots in a burst from 10 to 5, thus halving the normal bonuses for firing a burst.

SNIPER RIFLE

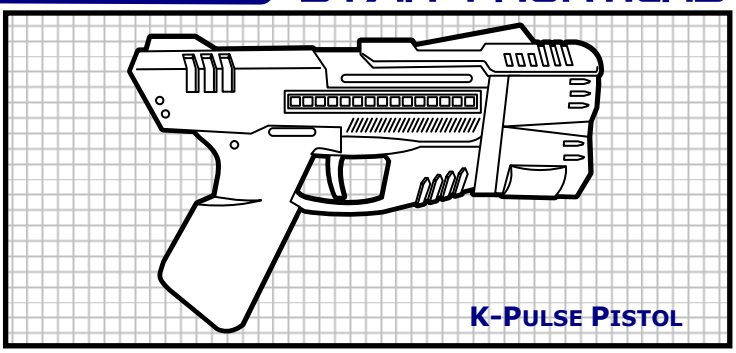
By Bill Logan

Characters wishing to take care of their enemies from a safe enough distance are limited in their options in Star Frontiers. There are heavy weapons, but these have their own limitations and annoyances. What they need is a sniper rifle.

Sniper Rifles have an extremely long range. They are often made of non-reflective material – often coated in a flat black paint. Their targeting scopes include electronic range determination and targeting guidance (which halves the penalties associated with range). They have folding bipod struts that can be extended in order to steady the aim of the shooter. They are death from a distance: in the hands of a highly trained military expert – the damage can be enough to kill a man, even from a single shot.

Semi-Automatic Sniper Rifle
Cost: 1,200Cr
Weight: 5 kg
Damage: 1d10*
Ammo: 20 bullets
Rate: 3
Defense: Inertia
Range: 20/100/250/500/1km
Ammo Cost: 5 Cr (standard Rifle Bulletclip)
Skill: Projectile Weapons

* Characters of Military PSA may multiply their Projectile Weapons skill level times the damage rolled, but only if he takes two turns doing nothing but aiming.



K-PULSE PISTOL

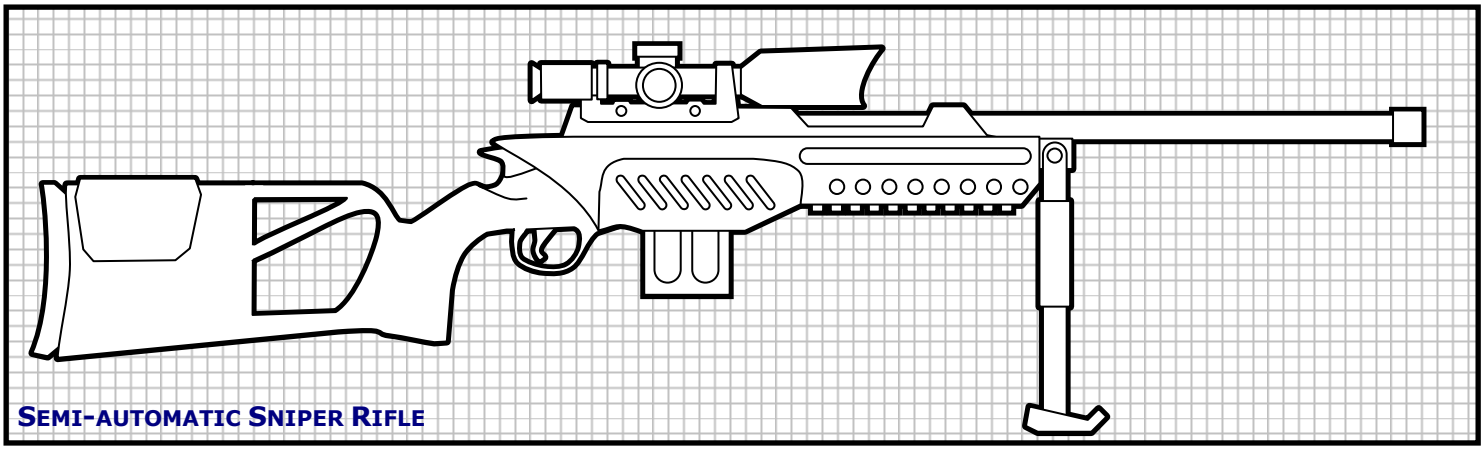
K-PULSE PISTOL

By Bill Logan

WarTech has outdone themselves again. The Kinetic Pulse Pistol (or *K-Pulse*) was recently released into the Frontier, with a decent price tag and an impressive niche. It's an energy weapon that causes inertia damage. Energy defenses are so very effective that beam weapon specialists often find themselves having to waste large amounts of ammunition to get past them. This pistol allows a quick way around them.

The pulse pistol fires a conical-shaped blast of kinetic force (shaped sonic energy – like the blade of a sonic knife). It is very destructive, causing 3d10 points of Inertia damage per shot. The weapon may be fired up to three times per turn. Each time the weapon is fired, 2 SEU are drained from its PowerClip. Of course, it can be attached to a power backpack or beltpack with a power cord as well. Sonic screens, albedo suits, and albedo screens are all ineffective protection, though Inertia screens and skeinsuits protect as normal.

K-Pulse Pistol
Cost: 250Cr
Weight: 2 kg
Damage: 3d10
Ammo: 20 SEU PowerClip
SEU: each shot drains 2 SEU
Rate: 3
Defense: Inertia
Range: 5/10/20/40/80
Ammo Cost: 100 Cr PowerClip
Skill: Beam Weapons



SEMI-AUTOMATIC SNIPER RIFLE

ROBOT PROGRAMS

By Madin Jackson

MEDICAL

The robot can perform and function as a medic. The medical robot may diagnose ailments, heal wounds, control infections, neutralize poisons, cure diseases, wake up unconscious individuals and prevent tissue deterioration, as though it were a medic of equal level. The maximum Success Rate a robot with the medical program can have is 80%.

As with player character medics, a robot with the medical program gains a 20% increase to patient care, if in a hospital or sickbay and if the patient is an animal or unfamiliar alien, a 20% decrease is incurred. The maximum Success Rate a robot can have, even with bonuses, is still 80%.

A Medical Robot is still required to have and use a medkit, but may be designed to use the medkit in two ways: it may use it normally, like a player character or it can have the medkit built into two of the robot's limbs. A Medical Robot who was designed with a built-in medkit must increase its weight by 10% and increase the cost of the limbs by the cost of the medkit, plus 15%.

TECHNICIAN

A robot that has the technician program installed can operate and repair a set number of machines and vehicles, as well as deactivate and disable security systems and locks. The robot can operate and repair a number of vehicles equal to its level, times the point cost of the program. Once a robot with the technician program has been given the design notes and schematics of the vehicle, it may operate and repair it. The maximum Success Rate a skill can have is 80%.

A robot with the robotics program is still required to have and use a techkit, but may be designed to use the techkit in two ways: it may use it normally, like a player character or it can have the techkit built into two or more pairs of robot limbs. A robot that was designed with a built-in techkit must increase its weight by 10% and increase the cost of the limbs by the cost of the techkit, plus 15%.

ROBOTICS

Certain robots can repair and reprogram other robots. The maximum number of robots designs that can be repaired is equal to the robot's level times the point cost of the robotics program. The robot has the schematics and design notes of its own model, automatically, so it may repair itself. The maximum Success Rate a robot with the robotics program can have is 80%.

A robot with the robotics program is still required to have and use a robocomkit, but may be designed to use the robocomkit in two ways: it may use it normally, like a player character or it can have the robocomkit built into two or more pairs of robot limbs. A robot that was designed with a built-in robocomkit must increase its weight by 10% and increase the cost of the limbs by the cost of the robocomkit, plus 15%.

Most robots have their technical notes and schematics stored on the robot itself. When that information is fed to a robot with the robotics program, that robot can begin repairing that design of robot.

NEW ROBOT PROGRAMS TABLE

Robot Design		Cost (Cr)
Special Programs		
- Medical	(min level 4)	50,000
- Technician	(min level 4)	35,000
- Robotics	(min level 4)	40,000

STANDARD ROBOTS

By Madin Jackson

The Alpha Dawn rules book has several "standard" robots for characters to purchase. What follows is a small list of additional robot types to drop into your game setting.

MEDICAL ROBOTS

Medical Robots typically have standard bodies, though some have anthropomorphic bodies and the medical program. They are limited to levels 4 to 6. Medical robots serve as paramedics, nurses and even doctors. Military Medical Robots also have the attack/defense program and are typically armed.

RECONNAISSANCE ROBOTS

Reconnaissance Robots have standard bodies. They have the attack/defense, computer link and security lock programs, as well as being equipped with a holo screen and several, other items of surveillance. Many Reconnaissance Robots are also equipped with an alternative form of movement. They are limited to Levels 2 to 4.

REPAIR ROBOTS

Repair Robots have standard bodies, though some have been know to have heavy duty bodies. They may be programmed with the robotics program and/ or the technician program. They may operate and repair any robots or vehicles they are programmed with. They are limited to levels 4 to 6.

MODIFIED ROBOT TYPE MOVEMENT TABLE

Robot Type	Movement Rate
Cybot, heavy duty, service, brain	30 meters/turn
Maintenance, repair	60 meters/turn
Security, medical	90 meters/turn
Combat, warbot, reconnaissance	120 meters/turn

NEOTECH HWK-2B "HAWKEYE" MEDICAL BOT

Level	Level 4 can converse and receive orders verbally
Type	Medical Bot
Body Type	Standard Body
Parabattery	Type 1
Move Mode	Two Mechanical Legs
Move Rate	10m/turn normal, 90m/turn max.
Limbs	Two Mechanical Arms with built-in medkit
IM/RS	+6/60
Stamina	100
Attack	70
Damage	by weapon or 2d10 punching
Programs	Medical, Security Lock, Attack/Defense
Equipment	Medkit, Chronocom, Compass, IR Goggles, Magnigoggles, Radiophone, Toxy-Rad Guage, Albedo Screen, 50 SEU Beltpack, 100 SEU Backpack, Laser Rifle

Mission:
Protect units/personnel, Repair units/personnel

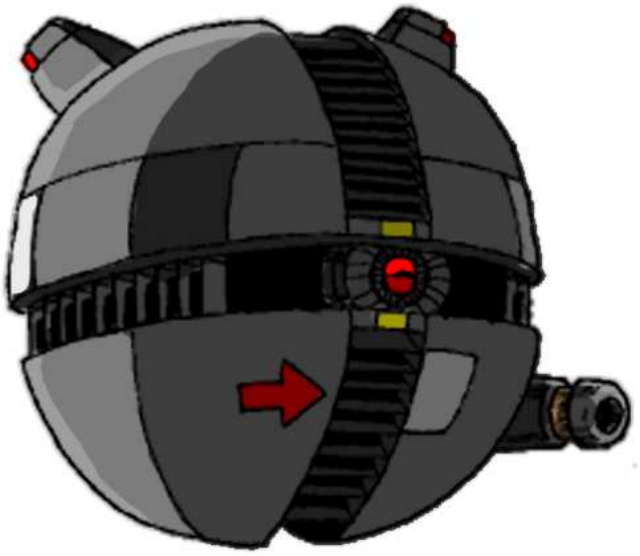
Functions:

Protect:
defend units it is assigned to. Units are identified by visual and insignia representation. Will protect and aid any unit it knows as a comrade and any unit with a predefined insignia that it is allied with. Identified threats to units will be eliminated, through any means necessary.

Repair:
Repair wounded and dying units it is assigned to. Units identified by visual and insignia representation or non-combatants will be healed by the robot.

Notes:
The "Hawkeye" medical bot is able to prioritize his dual missions quite well. During the battle, he may switch his priority from "Protect" to "Repair" and back again several times. His built-in sensors will assess the tide of battle and evaluate the apparent danger of units within his sensory range and his programming will help him logically prioritize.

However, the robot can also communicate verbally and can take suggestions from competent personnel. Who it deems competent is another matter.



WARTECH BEE-MKII RECONNAISSANCE ROBOT

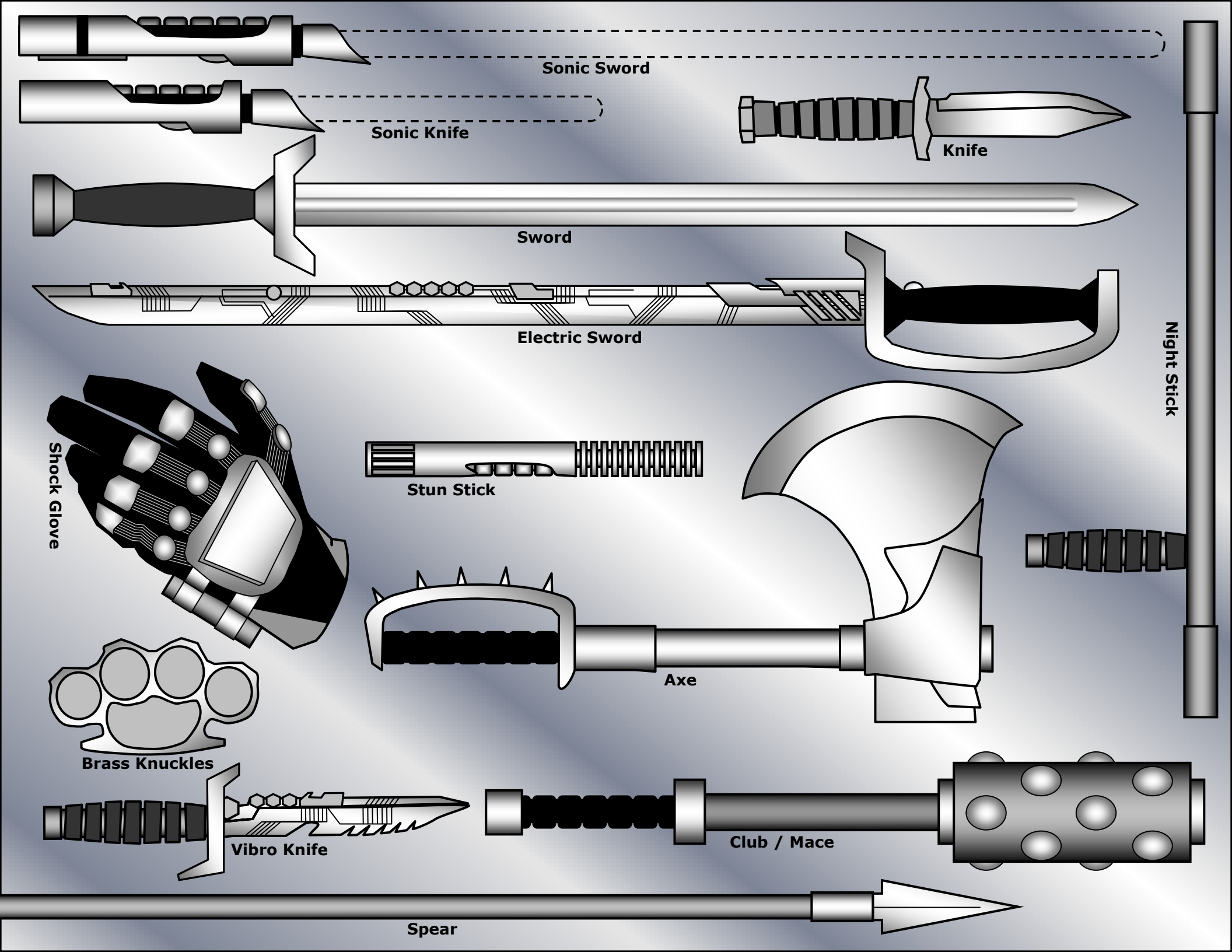
Level	Level 2 cannot converse verbally
Type	Reconnaissance Robot
Body Type	Standard Body
Parabattery	Type 1
Move Mode	Hover
Move Rate	10m/turn normal, 120m/turn max.
Limbs	Two retractable arms
IM/RS	+5/50
Stamina	100
Attack	50
Damage	by weapon (arms are insufficient for punching)
Programs	Security Lock, Attack/Defense
Equipment	Chronocom, Compass, IR Goggles, Magnigoggles, Radiophone, Videocom, Holo Screen, 50 SEU Beltpack, 100 SEU Backpack, integrated laser rifle.

Mission:
Reconnaissance

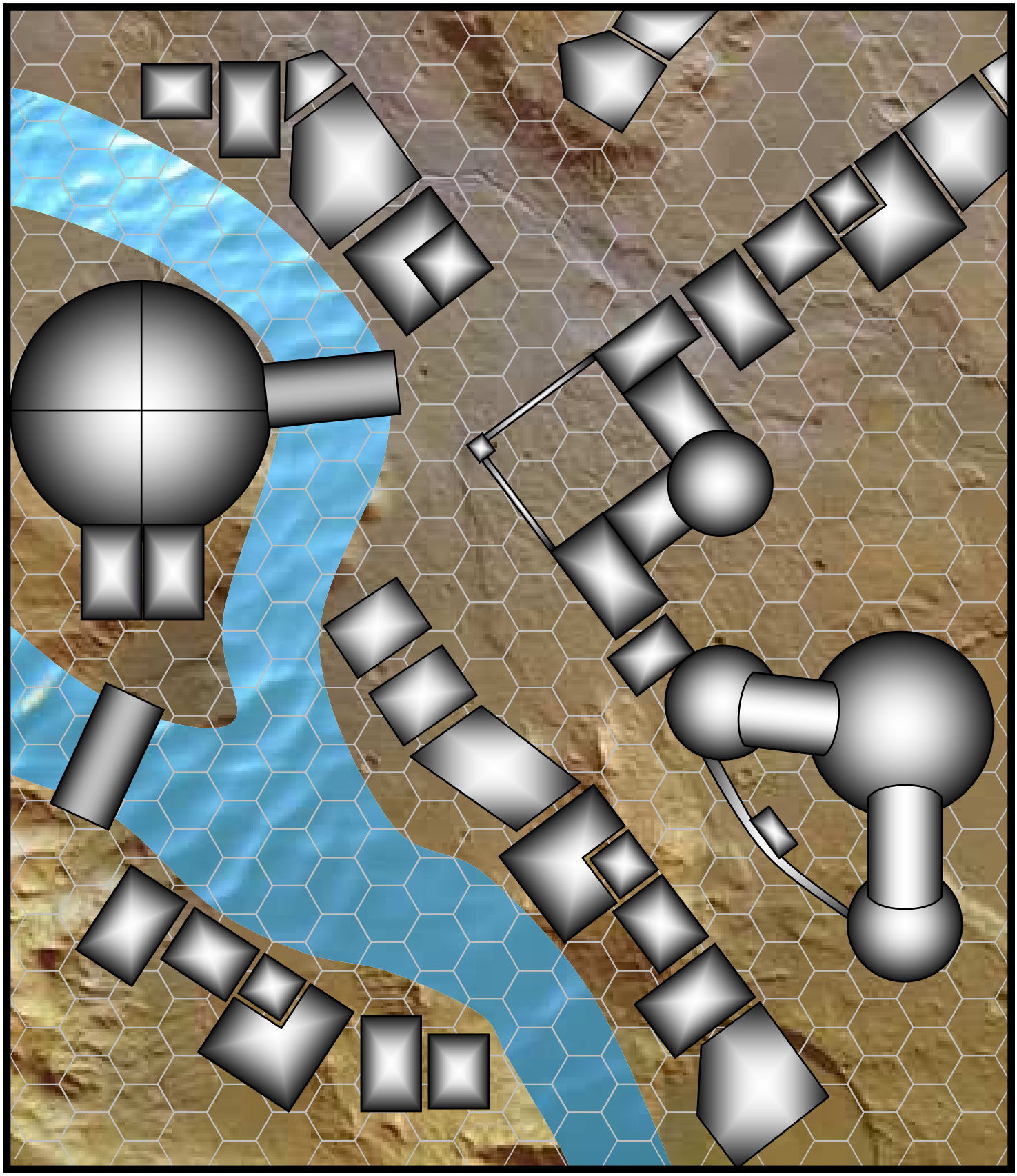
Functions:

Reconnaissance:
Conducts a general examination or survey of a region, usually followed by a detailed survey for military information.

Notes:
Although equipped with a laser rifle, if attacked, the reconnaissance robot will try to get away if possible. The recon data it carries is of value to the military unit that deployed it, and it will protect that data to accomplish its mission.

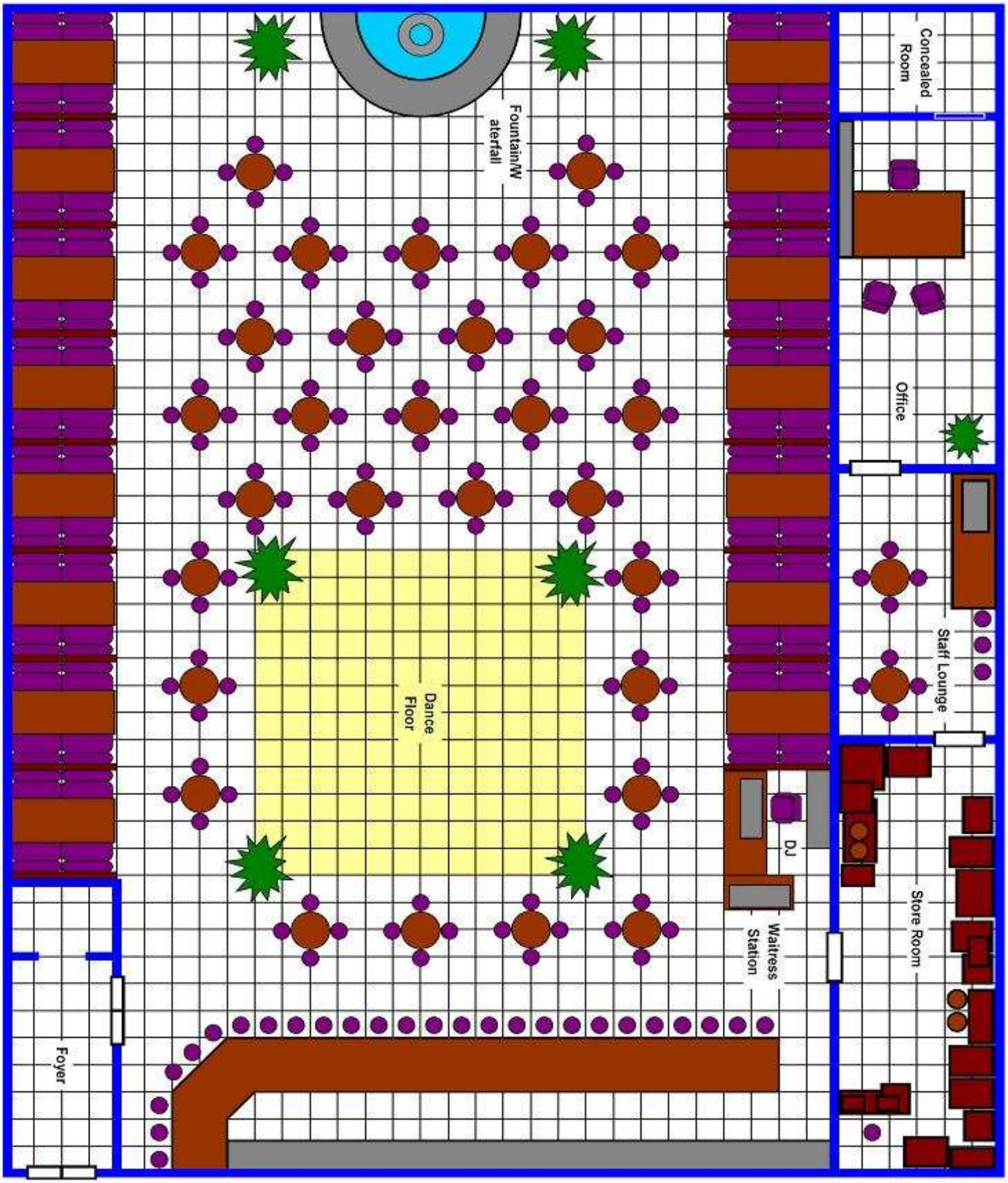

Sonic Sword
Sonic Knife
Knife
Sword
Electric Sword
Night Stick
Shock Glove
Stun Stick
Axe
Brass Knuckles
Vibro Knife
Club / Mace
Spear

LOCATIONS



FOUNTAIN BAR

By Scott Iles, who isn't Goblinardo (sorry!)



Scale: 1 square equals .5 meters

OUTPOST REFINERY

By Bill Logan

The first map in the Locations article is a remote refinery on a distant world. It can be used as-is, or can be modified to be used as a cross-section of a small town or unusual outpost. It consists of a few main technical buildings and a several support buildings and warehouses. Use it multiple times, having the player's characters approach from a different angle.

Each hex on the Outpost Refinery map spans a distance of 5 meters.

The Outpost Refinery might be found on a moon where atmospheric conditions aren't sufficient for a colony, yet whose mineral resources are so prevalent that they cannot be ignored.

This could be a dumping ground for broken technology. In a Frontier where programs are hard wired into circuitboards, troubleshooting often includes swapping modular subroutine cards while searching for a fault. When a facility gains a large number of broken components, they might sell the parts for scrap. The parts are then sent to a facility similar in appearance to the Outpost Refinery map, where robotic technicians spend all their time repairing parts with parts from other... um... parts.

Or it could be an abandoned mining outpost on a world where the residents suddenly disappeared – and the characters are hired to figure out why. Perhaps they dug deep and unearthed some horrific creature or race of creatures that have devoured the entire colony. Or perhaps they unleashed a vile plague, a cancer, into the air that they have all fallen victim to. Maybe it even evades the sensors of the group's environmentalist, and the characters have been infected too, and have only a day to figure out a cure before they too fall victim to its deadly effects.

Or finally, this may be a military outpost (perhaps even the very one located on the rock world of Histran (Scree Fron, see Star Systems, this issue). The roadways are where you might see personnel carriers and equipment transports ferrying manpower and technology from barrack to base and back. The buildings might include munitions storage, technology centers, research and development labs, and strategy briefing rooms, not to mention all the bureaucratic offices that such a military outpost seems to generate.

FOUNTAIN BAR

By Goblinardo

This is a generic hangout that can be used anywhere. The fountain/waterfall at the back of the room can be either natural or artificial, depending on the setting. Because of the natural "white noise" produced by the fountain, the booths closest to the fountain are highly sought by those not wishing their private conversations to be overheard. A hierarchy has evolved here, so that a person's importance in the local underworld can be judged based on the position of their booth – the closer to the fountain, the more important the being.

A spotlight illuminates the area just inside the doorway leading to the foyer. This allows those already on the bar a look at anyone coming in, while remaining hidden in the relative darkness. The dance floor area is fairly well-lit, contrasting with the booths and tables that are only dimly illuminated, further protecting the anonymity of the patrons.

The DJ's station, along the north wall, looks out onto the dance floor, and an electrostunner taped to the underside of the desk helps ensure that any altercations breaking out on the dance floor are quickly quelled.

The small room adjacent to the foyer can be a cloakroom or an admission booth, depending on the setting.

The store room is full of boxes, crates and kegs, as would be expected in any bar. The pile of boxes in the south-east corner conceals a watch post manned by a guard with a clear line of sight from the door to the bar to the door in the west wall.

The next room is a staff lounge, used mainly by the bouncers and any other toughs employed by the owner. Card games are in almost continual play at one if not both of the tables.

The Office is plush and richly decorated. A panel of monitors on the south wall allows the owner to observe anywhere in the bar through a series of closed circuit cameras. The concealed door in the back wall opens into a secret room which may contain all manner of interesting objects, or even a stairway to a hidden underground area.

THUGS, MOOKS, AND GOONS

By Bill Logan

Rinnar stepped into the diner, expecting trouble. He already spent the better part of the day defending himself against the minions of Dr. Givvins, whom he had angered one time too many. Rinnar wasn't too worried, though... the mooks that Givvins sent after him were no match for a strong hand and a quick blaster... and were often bribable.

Minions play a strong role in role-playing games, but are not discussed effectively within the pages of Star Frontiers. Mooks, Goons, Thugs... whatever you call them: they're *minions* and using them in-game comes with some very specific guidelines.

MINION GUIDELINES

1 Loyal to Credits.
A minion is paid for his services, and most likely lacks the conviction to carry out his boss' plans. As long as he is being paid, he'll do what's asked of him. It's a simple rule to live by, and it can be exploited by clever players with some extra credits to spare. But how much is a good bribe?

According to the NPC Wages rules in the Alpha Dawn game, most minions are going to be paid around 20-40 Credits per day, assuming they have low-level skill (see guideline 5). A bribe that comes equal to or less than this will probably be ignored.

Bribing a minion with an amount equal to ten times their daily pay might result in their knowledge that you have a lot of money... and if you're dead, you'll not be needing it anymore...

A bribe of 100-200 Credits might be enough to get an unloyal minion to let you get away for now, but there will be no promises that if he sees you again later that he won't put a bullet in your head!

2 Afraid of their Boss.
If a minion fails his employer, it often ends up in death for the minion. This means that the minion will have to be more afraid of the characters than they are of their employer if the characters want to be able to bribe them to walk away (see guideline 1). It also means that any loyalty they lack is made up for by fear... so don't count on their loyalty to Credits in every case. A clever player will intimidate the mooks by a show of force, then offer a bribe... "I could kill you, but bullets are expensive and I'm not in the mood... what's it gonna cost me to keep me from wasting ammo by shooting holes in your head?"

3 Pack Mentality
Minions are bolstered by the proximity of other minions. They don't practice tactics and lack the proper training required to coordinate covering their allies while those allies reload... but they do operate best in numbers. A smart boss would never send a single minion to accomplish anything; they know the minion's life expectancy is shorter that way.

Alone, they lack much courage at all. When a group of minions enters a battle, they will fight normally. Once their numbers have been reduced to less than half of what they started with, the rest will want to run away.

So when your characters encounters minions, look around for more. They're not smart enough to hide, but they just might be standing back and thumbing the safety off their weapon.

4 Non-uniformity
Minions don't *look* like minions. They don't generally wear uniforms or red shirts or carry the same gear. Normally, they are hired because they're willing to do what others won't (see guideline 8) – for the right price.

Players can use this to their advantage. It doesn't require much of a disguise to pretend you're some enemy's thug. Just wear cheap clothes and hide your best weapons (see guideline 9). Since they're non-uniform, you won't need to take out a minion to take his uniform or badge. Since they're expendable (see guideline 6), they're used to seeing new faces. Infiltration is easy when a boss uses minions.

5 If they were better, they'd do something else.
Minions don't have much in the way of skill. They're probably unable to operate a computer. They're more likely to shoot at a robot than try to reprogram it. They don't know how to bandage their own wounds. Bottom line: if they had any sellable skill, they wouldn't be risking their lives for low pay.

This means their ability scores are probably below average. Assume an average of 40 instead of 45 for all scores. Minions shouldn't have more than a level 1 skill in the weapon they're using. In fact, many will have no formal skill at all.

6 They are expendable

Minions know that their jobs could be automated by robots with more accuracy and durability than they possess. They know that if they die, their employer won't even blink... he'll just send someone to the streets to find more minions. Minions are very expendable.

Characters can take advantage of this, especially if they're in a situation where they can effectively communicate with the minion. Knowing they're expendable means they may be willing to listen to any persuasive discussion that might result in them acquiring money (see guideline 1) by some other means. Of course, remember their fear of their employer – it does factor in.

7 They don't really want to die

Their morale is low, their skills are poor, they know they could be replaced and that nobody cares about them. With all this self pity and lack of self-image, you'd think they all have a death wish. Not so.

Minions tend to lay there and make noise when they're hurt. They lose the will to fight once they have their own blood leaking down their dirty shirts. Few minions will wish to fight on once they've received half their STA in injuries. Since most attributes average around 40 for minions (see guideline 5), taking more than 20 points of damage is usually enough for a minion to drop out of a fight... running or limping or crawling away, often leaving their weapons behind.

It may be tempting to dispatch any mooks who lay there writhing and screaming... don't. Other minions tend to grow more and more afraid as their numbers dwindle (see guideline 3) and hearing evidence of that over the din of a fight is quite effective.

8 Morally Dysfunctional

If they were morally capable, minions wouldn't kill people for money. Remember – these people often don't even know the cause for which they fight (see guideline 10). They probably know they're going to hell – and fear their employer more than the afterlife.

Players can take advantage of this. If running from thugs, head into a church or public place of higher wealth. They're probably not very capable of getting around in such a place effectively. Don't head into seedy taverns and slum districts – the goons will have the advantage. Remember that not all forms of bribery need be financial – to the morally dysfunctional minion, a promise of all manner of pleasures and comforts might be sufficient (an all-day pass for a night of debauchery at Dashara's Pleasure Palace? A bottle of liquor? A tip on a race that's going on down the street?)

9 They have the cheapest gear

Minions aren't paid that well – not in the grander scheme of things. For the little pay they receive, they tend to waste on frivolities (alcohol, gentleman's clubs, gambling, etc.).

When the players rifle through the gear of the minions after dispatching them, they shouldn't find too much that would be helpful. Ammunition will be in short supply – maybe even empty. Weapons will be in disrepair and inferior to those the characters already have. Defenses are completely absent. It's doubtful that they'll even have more than 2d10 Credits in their wallets.

10 They don't know much.

Players can try to have their characters interrogate a minion. They really can. But other than who pays them their Credits – they probably won't know much.

Since they die so quickly and are loyal to the coin and not the cause, minions are intentionally left in the dark by intelligent bosses. Still, some of them will know where a base is hidden, or might know a code number to open the secure door of a skimmer they've been given to run the characters over. When questioning the minion, remember all the other guidelines. If they are afraid of their employer, they probably will be afraid to talk. If they think there's nothing in it for them, the will probably not talk.

THUG, MOOK, OR GOON			
STR/STA	*40/40*	PS	*+2*
DEX/RS	*40/40*	IM	*+4*
INT/LOG	*40/40*	RANGED	*20*
PER/LDR	*40/40*	MELEE	*20*
SPECIAL ABILITIES: *By Race, don't forget ability score modifiers.*			
SKILLS: *(Military PSA)* *One weapon skill at level 1 (base chance to hit 25%)*			
EQUIPMENT: *Cheapest version of whatever weapon in which they're skilled, one full magazine of ammunition, 2d10 Credits.*			
NOTES: *Lacking the will to fight, a minion will be out of the battle after taking half his STA in damage (20 points). If more than half the number of minions who started the fight are gone, the rest will want to flee.*			

RANDOM MINION NAMES

When you have your players encounter a bunch of mooks, who wants to name them? I don't. There are many random name generators available all over the web, but who wants to go web surfing in the middle of a heated battle? What follows is a list of 100 names – simply roll percentile dice and use one. Some are silly – but come on, they're mooks!

RANDOM MINION NAME TABLE

d100	Name	d100	Name
1	Bimlem	51	Packer
2	Bindun	52	Pagwar
3	Boffo	53	Pesat
4	Brils	54	Phete
5	Buras	55	Phidsak
6	Byrid	56	Quikit
7	Catar	57	Raddo
8	Chaff	58	Ragroth
9	Chenton	59	Rant
10	Chryn	60	Retick
11	Chups	61	Rickard
12	Cikban	62	Rith
13	Cinds	63	Rocher
14	Clum	64	Rosl
15	Crodusk	65	Runk
16	Donack	66	Rymd
17	Dozer	67	Schatowe
18	Drednal	68	Schert
19	Drent	69	Secath
20	Drit	70	Shez
21	Dyrik	71	Shilt
22	Feghl	72	Shyqs
23	Fothos	73	Sif
24	Goltwos	74	Siggard
25	Hannat	75	Sladon
26	Hog	76	Smuz
27	Hyqus	77	Snirk
28	Jamach	78	Sockque
29	Lavar	79	Sonds
30	Lendsam	80	Sulrad
31	Lessard	81	Sylden
32	Liddom	82	Sylphin
33	Lith	83	Sytinn
34	Loddo	84	Theb
35	Loru	85	Thellum
36	Loss	86	Thrik
37	Lozar	87	Thryfe
38	Lulridge	88	Tornys
39	Lutt	89	Tova
40	Mansel	90	Triddel
41	Milfo	91	Tunsia
42	Nasroth	92	Tyck
43	Nelit	93	Werbel
44	Nem	94	Whament
45	Nichckach	95	Whot
46	Nig	96	Ysntai
47	Nolloque	97	Zhild
48	Non	98	Ziqiss
49	Norc	99	Zoder
50	Numir	100	Zorner

Editor's note: Mook isn't really a word, but I looked it up on www.urbandictionary.com and the popular consensus seems to be as follows (and this is a quote – don't blame me for the slang!!):

MOOK
A term coined by Douglas Rushkoff in an episode of PBS's "Frontline" entitled "The Merchants of Cool." Mooks are archetypal young males(teens-early 20s) who act like moronic boneheads. They are self centered simpletons who live a drunken frat-boy lifestyle (or are frat-boys). Examples can be found anytime someone watches "Jackass." Rushkoff claimed that the media glorifies this ideal and stifles natural self expression, however, some people might argue teenage boys have always acted like morons(its actually a long-standing stereotype). Nonetheless, standardized conformist dumbass-culture behind a veneer of exuberance is a scary notion indeed.

Opposite of Mooks are Midriffs; oxymoronic innocent "skanks" who are modeled after Britney Spears.

Although everyone likes to blame Jackass, anyone on that show is a model "Mook."

MINION COWARDICE

As has been stated, a minion will generally be out of the fight when he is reduced to half his maximum STA score. But what does he do? Does he drop his weapon and run? Hide and cower? Pee his pants? Here's a little table you can roll on for fun...

d10	When a Minion is reduced to half STA he will...
1	Drop his weapon and run away
2	Scream and fire his weapon in the air
3	Drop to his knees and beg to be spared
4	Run away (with his weapons)
5	Lay down and scream, holding his injuries
6	Pass out from the pain
7	Writhe in his own vomit in agony
8	Cower in fear
9	Pee his pants
10	Fight on, desperate to win

MINION TACTICS

Minions don't tend to be careful with their ammunition, and they don't have a ton of it. A common mistake of most minions is to shoot as often as possible as quickly as possible... thus a smart player can take cover for a couple of turns and then stand up and shoot easily. Most minions won't have a second magazine on hand. Once their weapon is empty, they will try to close on your character and beat him up... or run away to get more guns!

ARCHETYPES

By Bill Logan and Andrew Modro

HUMAN XENOMEDICAL SPECIALIST

Most medical professionals specialize in their own species, but not you. You wanted a real challenge. Vrusk, Yazirian, or Dralasite, your patients almost always come from Humanity's allied species, which makes you a valuable addition to any team.

SURGEON EXTRAORDINAIRE

Concept: *The other surgeons stand there scratching their thinning heads, staring at the patient bleeding to death in front of them. If the patient were Human, they'd be elbow-deep in the red stuff patching together his wounded heart... but... where is all the red stuff?*

As they stare at the Dralasite and ponder on how to help him, they see you pull up to the operating room entrance in your expensive skimmer. You step out, and walk in confidently. Non-humans may die when Humans have to operate on them, but not when you're around. You smirk at the other surgeons as you scrub up, already figuring a way to save the patient's life in time for you to get back to watch the end of the Grothball match.

Your intimate knowledge of nonhuman physiology allows you to operate on almost any wound or malady with the surety and swiftness of working on a human patient. You are widely sought throughout the Frontier wherever the species mingle and are sure to receive offers from various groups and corporations seeking to entice you into joining expeditions. Your knowledge of alien psychology not only allows you to reassure your patients, but also gives you a leg up in dealing with those who want to bargain for your skills.

A surgeon extraordinaire isn't above doing things for free. He's motivated often by ego, and can be criticized for having a "god" complex. After all, how many times does he have to hold someone life in his hand and decide whether they live or die before everyone else acknowledges how powerful he is? Doing extraordinary things for favors is a good way to ensure the admiration of people. A surgeon extraordinaire will keep a tab on all people he does free stuff for, and will call on those debts as needed.

HUMAN XENOMEDICAL SPECIALIST			
STR/STA	40/40	PS	+2
DEX/RS	50/40	IM	+4
INT/LOG	60/65	RANGED	25
PER/LDR	55/55	MELEE	25

SPECIAL ABILITIES:
None

SKILLS: *(Biosocial PSA)*
Psychosocial 1, Medical 1

EQUIPMENT:
Standard Equipment Pack, Medkit, Stunstick, 25Cr

Development: You should concentrate on improving your Medical skill, of course. Perhaps pick up a weapon skill for self-defense. You may even consider taking on a robotics skill at a later date in order to help give you a chance of understanding truly unusual alien races that may have integrated robotic components (cybernetics) to their bodies. Anything that would give your character a chance to show off and earn respect.

Goals: Open your own practice or found a group/order dedicated to xenomedicine, with you and your ego as dual chairpersons.

FLORENCE KNIGHT HAWK

Concept: *You travel the less traveled routes, keeping to the outlaying rimworlds and truly frontier outposts and civilizations. You make friends everywhere you go, touching the lives of those you meet and inspiring them that the Frontier isn't that bad... there is still good in it.*

Suffering is universal, and a kind word and gentle hands can benefit any sentient being. You seek to use your knowledge to alleviate pain and suffering wherever you go, no matter what species your patients might be. Using both medicine and psychology you can put almost anyone at ease, and your abilities are valuable throughout the worlds of the Frontier, especially off the main trade routes where fancy doctors may not be available.

Development: You should pretty evenly divide focus between Medical and Psychosocial. Learn to use nonlethal weapons for self-defense only if you must... because even though there IS good in the Frontier, sometimes that good is the prey of those that seek to do harm (you're an optimistic realistic). You prefer not to kill, so you should use stunners and doze effects whenever possible.

Concentrate on increasing your Leadership and Personality scores. One of your largest strengths will be your ability inspire others through your examples and excellence.

Goals: continue traveling, encourage others like yourself. You won't stop until there is nothing left in you to give. Sometimes it's healing you give, sometimes it's protection. You've even been known to champion a cause or two in your day. Your goal is to keep going until you inspire enough people to do the same.

HYPOCRITICAL HIPPOCRATES

Concept: You have the skill to bring healing to the people of the Frontier, but you like to get something out of it in return. Your knowledge of alien physiology and psychology allows you to fix many problems, but it also allows you to develop and use illegal procedures and drugs. Most of the time you're in a kind of gray area between "right" and "wrong" where things aren't so clear-cut, but you do try to avoid outright murder and corruption. A little smuggling here, a few backalley operations there -- it's not really hurting anybody, right? You're giving them what they want.

Development: A little more Medical than Psychosocial, unless you'd prefer to be able to slip out of trouble really well, in which case invert it. You really should pick up a weapon skill just in case things heat up, because in your line of work they often do. Of all the versions of the Human Xenomedical Specialist, you're the one most likely to get shot.

Goals: Make money, stay out of trouble with the law. NOTE: This isn't necessarily a "bad guy" archetype. It is a bit more anti-heroic than normal, though. Think Jayne Cobb and Simon Tam from Firefly put together.)

EDGES AND FLAWS

If you're using the optional Edge & Flaw system provided at the back of the Alpha Dawn remastered book, here are a couple ideas:

Vrusk Expertise: (or Dralasite, or Yazirian) This Edge gives you a flat bonus of 25% whenever you invoke it when dealing with a member of the species you claim expertise on. Save it to pull off an amazingly accurate diagnosis or very complex surgery.

Debt Collector: You are less concerned about ego than some others of your profession. Your character does favors for other surgeons (works on a patient but lets him take credit for it, gives diagnosis to help him identify something difficult, etc.) or for certain people (inexpensive or even free medical treatment, prescriptions, etc.). Whenever you need a favor or money, you invoke this advantage and role-play that collection. It results in some form of aid or support from the person whose debt you're collecting (not to exceed a value of 1d10x100Cr).

Impossible Ego: This is a flaw that gives your character an ego that is so grand that it annoys those around him. It comes with a certain overconfidence, which a Referee can invoke to force the player to do something that he probably shouldn't try.

Extravagant Lifestyle: There's a reason your character chose this profession. You live life like a trend setter, buying things that most people only dream of. You often overspend, though, just so you can brag about how much something cost. You will always pay at least 10% more for anything, just to buy the best. A Referee can invoke this flaw to force you to buy something you can barely afford if you as a player show any interest in obtaining it, even if you have to go into debt to get it.

Inspire Hope: You inspire people just by being you. Your cause is a noble one, and your temperament is so wonderful that people can be inspired to act. Invoke this edge whenever you need to inspire someone... you'll receive a +25 to your LDR or PER check to convince them to do what is right.

Undeniable Cause: People can't deny that your cause is a righteous one. When you have a need, you're don't find yourself having trouble getting people to give. You can invoke this edge to have someone invest in your cause, giving you 1d10x100 Credits worth of aid.

Determined: You are so determined that you can invoke this edge to keep acting when you should be unconscious. It allows you to re-roll a consciousness roll you just failed, giving you a chance to keep going despite being hit with doze grenades, electrostunners, sonic stunners, or even critical hits. Any roll that causes you to make a STA avoidance roll to remain conscious can be rerolled if you invoke this edge.

Trouble Magnet: Because you're willing to champion people's causes and help the downtrodden... you very often find yourself being dragged into their messes. Although you approach this with confidence and benevolence, your Referee may invoke this flaw to force you into a mess that might distract you from whatever mission you're currently on. It'll be your responsibility to meet everyone's needs... you can sleep later.

YAZIRIAN PRIEST

Even out on the Frontier, people need guidance. You bring spiritual comfort and enlightenment to those in need, and you know how to take care of yourself and others, a valuable skill for when words aren't enough.

Editor's Note: Priesthoods are not detailed at all in Star Frontiers. It would be nice to see a supplement, one for each of the core races, detailing more culturally depictive elements such as religion and various legends.

WANDERING HOLY SOUL

Concept: The cloistered and regimented lifestyle just wasn't for you, so you left the seminary and began to wander. Perhaps you were seeking the Divine, or maybe you were seeking yourself. Your skills allow you to help others when needed, letting you make a living -- enough money to keep yourself fed and clothed and let you move from one system to another whenever the wanderlust strikes you. When you find what you're looking for, you'll know it, but in the meantime, you keep your eyes and ears open.

Development: Boosting your Medicine and Psychosocial will make you more valuable as a healer. Adding in other skills will broaden your portfolio and make you valuable in different ways, such as Computer or a weapon skill. Remember that increasing your character's Psychosocial might help you understand people and give you insight, but is your character really going to be using his persuasion much?

Intuition is a good ability score to work on improving first. Secondly you should consider Dexterity and Reaction Speed... since you're not one to concentrate on the ability kill others, being able to avoid getting killed yourself might be helpful.

It would be a good idea to get some defenses right away. You'll favor screens over suits. Suits defend yourself, while screens defend you and someone you're shielding.

Goals: Keep moving and searching, and eventually you'll find that mysterious "something". NOTE: think Kwai Chang Caine from "Kung Fu", minus the badass martial arts. Those can be added in later if the player wants.

Editor's note: The Wandering Holy Soul is well-suited to development of a cinematic martial arts style (in this issue), if your campaign allows for such acts of prowess.

YAZIRIAN PRIEST			
STR/STA	*35/45*	PS	*+2*
DEX/RS	*45/45*	IM	*+5*
INT/LOG	*55/55*	RANGED	*28*
PER/LDR	*60/60*	MELEE	*28*

SPECIAL ABILITIES:
None

SKILLS: *(Biosocial PSA)*
Psychosocial 1, Medical 1

EQUIPMENT:
Standard Equipment Pack, holy book and symbol (given freely by cloister), 150Cr (or an Electrosword)

FATHERLY REDEEMER

Concept: Having completed your training, you want to bring the serenity you have found to others. The Frontier is a wild and dangerous place, and many souls could use some peace of mind. Armed with your faith and the ability to heal the body as well as the soul, you have left the seminary and your home to help others pick themselves up out of the dust.

You don't try to convert them, but if they want you to, you're happy to tell them what you have learned. A few have already heard more behind your words than just parables, reaffirming your belief in your mission.

You travel the Frontier, leaving a wake of redeemed souls to give credit to your faith and your strength of will.

Development: focus mainly on Psychosocial, as your Medical is more first aid than anything else. Self-defense skills are useful for battling "evil", and pickup skills like Computer or Robotics can come into play at surprising times.

Goals: Stay true to your path and bring some light to the wild Frontier.

RIGHTEOUS DEFENDER

Concept: *You have tracked the man here. The cries of the little yazirian girl still ringing in your mind from your memory of when she related her tale to you. You know she was telling the truth – your training at the seminary helped equip you to understand people. What you don't understand is evil, and that's what's waiting for you on the other side of this door.*

The man in that apartment has done unspeakable atrocities. The girl told of others still kept in his groping clutches, and of what awaited them. You pull out your electric sword and flip the switch, closing your eyes as the electricity runs through its length. The slight vibration is not electricity – it is righteous indignation, the very fire that fuels the just. You kick in the door, speaking a prayer of forgiveness... not for him, but for what you are about to do.

Your order stresses the need to defend the right against the darkness. Your youthful enthusiasm for your mission has led you out into the Frontier before you have fully mastered your order's teachings -- perhaps as part of your training, or perhaps against it. Your ability to heal and persuade are part of your order's teaching to try nonviolent solutions first, but if that doesn't work, you're ready to battle for what you know is right. You are always ready to answer a cry for aid.

Development: pick up Martial Arts, Melee Weapons or a ranged weapon skill as soon as possible to reflect your progress in your order's martial disciplines. Increase Psychosocial to represent your charismatic ability to persuade and calm. Increase your Medical if you wish to represent a more healing-focused defender of the people.

Adding to your raw STA can keep you alive longer, and don't forget Battle Rage... although you probably call it divine wrath instead.

Goals: continue learning your order's path and defend against evil and villainy!

EDGES AND FLAWS

If you're using the optional Edge & Flaw system provided at the back of the Alpha Dawn remastered book, here are a couple ideas:

Knows Evil: You spent some of your life prior to entering your seminal studies living on the wrong side of the law. Your life wasn't a grey area between right and wrong: it was just wrong. Because of your life as a sinner, you're able to sense it much of the time. Whenever you're needing to know if someone is harboring great evil in his soul, you can invoke this edge. The Referee will determine how much evil you sense in his essence and let you know. Possible results are: None, Low, Significant, Major, Greater, and Total (a scale of 1 to 6, just like skills, and most people rate around 2).

Great Smite: If you truly enter a fight with a righteous cause, you feel very confident because you believe your actions are blessed by your divine being. This can bring adrenaline rushes that bring you to heightened levels of strength. Invoke this edge while using a melee weapon after saying a brief prayer, and you'll receive a bonus of +25 to your effective Strength (which should help your Melee Weapons score and your Punching Score). You must be convinced you're battling evil to do this.

Parry Hurled Weapons: Your enhanced training and discipline has given you the ability to deflect hurled spears, fired arrows, thrown knives, and just about any other archaic or melee weapon that relies on throwing. You simply invoke this edge and treat the previously rolled attack roll as if it were a miss. You must be able to face your enemy and see the attack coming. This is especially appropriate for the Wandering Holy Soul.

Beacon in the Night: The weak and the weary see you as a bastion of hope. You often find yourself mired in their needs and causes, having to protect the downtrodden whether it's convenient to you or not. Of course, you consider this to be the continued trials of your divine path. Whenever the Referee wants to complicate a mission, he can invoke this flaw and have innocent lives that need protected and healed suddenly in the way of your mission's successful completion.

Hunted by Evil: You have battled evil in one form or another all your life. Along the way, you've picked up a powerful enemy who is determined to cause you great suffering. His conviction and beliefs seem just as strong as yours, and although he is diametrically opposed to you in terms of a moral compass, he is very much your equal. You have even been in his presence a few times, and talked your talks of good and evil, and the philosophies of your meetings are rivaled only by the fallout of your battles. Some day one of you will have to defeat the other, but you're not sure that's how your divine being wants it to play out. You are both there to test one another, two titans on opposite sides of a great war not of blood and bones but of powers and principalities. Whenever the Referee wants ton include your evil counterpart in an adventure (as a main enemy or just as a complication to your existing plot) he invokes this flaw.

Haunted by the Past: Your character wasn't always walking in this righteous light – at one point in his past he was very much in the dark. During that time in his life, he had family and friends and people he cared about. He left all of that to clean the blight from his spirit at the seminary. Now, as he travels the Frontier, he occasionally encounters remnants of his past that need him, or that are a reminder of his fragile soul. The Referee can invoke this flaw whenever he wants to bring such components into the game to complication a character's mission.

CHARACTER RACES

YINNI

By Bill Logan

PHYSICAL STRUCTURE

These small sentient creatures are basically bipedal (they can walk on two legs, and have two arms) but also have a pair of batlike wings protruding from their shoulders.

The Yinni's bodies are very small. From the top of their heads to the bottom of their feet seldom measures greater than 30cm (males only). Their wingspans are always double their height (around 60cm). They have rigid exo-skeletons that are covered with a thin dermal layer, giving the false impression of softness while protecting their inner organs well. Their forearms and lower bodies are covered with a layer of fine fur.

The eyes of the Yinni are quite unusual. They protrude on muscular nodes, normally facing forward to give a predator's uni-directional stare. However, these eyes can move around on their nodes, looking to the side and almost directly behind them. They are very difficult to sneak up on because of this.

The hands and feet are webbed – but not for aquatic living. They help the Yinni make fast direction changes while in flight, grasping at the onrushing wind and shoving it to the side to facilitate a rapid roll or pitch change. They are very effective flyers.

The wings have a very non-dextrous pair of hand-like digits, giving a limited ability to hold or grip things with the wings themselves. When not in the air, the Yinni fold their wings around themselves and clasp their digits like a human might fold his own hands together. The end result appears as if the Yinni is wearing a heavy leather cloak.

The skin color ranges from pale grey to rich brown, and the hair is typically a few shades darker. The wings are the same color as the flesh at the shoulder and even down to their wing digits, but fade to near black at the ends of the wing structure.

SENSES

The vision of the Yinni is not far, but the field of peripheral perception is amazing. They are able to see forward and to the sides equally well, with independent focusing capability with each eye. They can't see directly behind them, however, and have trouble differentiating between greens and browns.

Yinni have two featherlike wispy antennae (similar to a moth) protruding from their dermal-covered chitinous heads. These are actually how the species smells its surroundings, and it's quite effective if short of range.

SPEECH

The vocal components to the Yinni are located more on the sides of its head rather than in the throat. It breathes air through a chamber on either side of its neck, which makes a hollow sound like blowing over the holes of a wooden pan flute. The vocal organs have muscles to help control the opening (much like blowing into a different hole in a pan flute). The mouth moves to give shape to the sound effects.

The entire effect is very melodious but difficult to understand. They can approximate most speeches, and can accomplish PanGal, but all of this is with difficulty. Players playing a Yinni should speak in simple words unless conversing with other Yinni.

SOCIETY AND CUSTOMS

The Yinni are a primitive people. Their society is built around a Queen, which is catered to by a hive of workers and soldiers. There are also domestic and royal castes. Queens maintain various levels of peace, trade, and feud, and the politics of their species are somewhat complex.

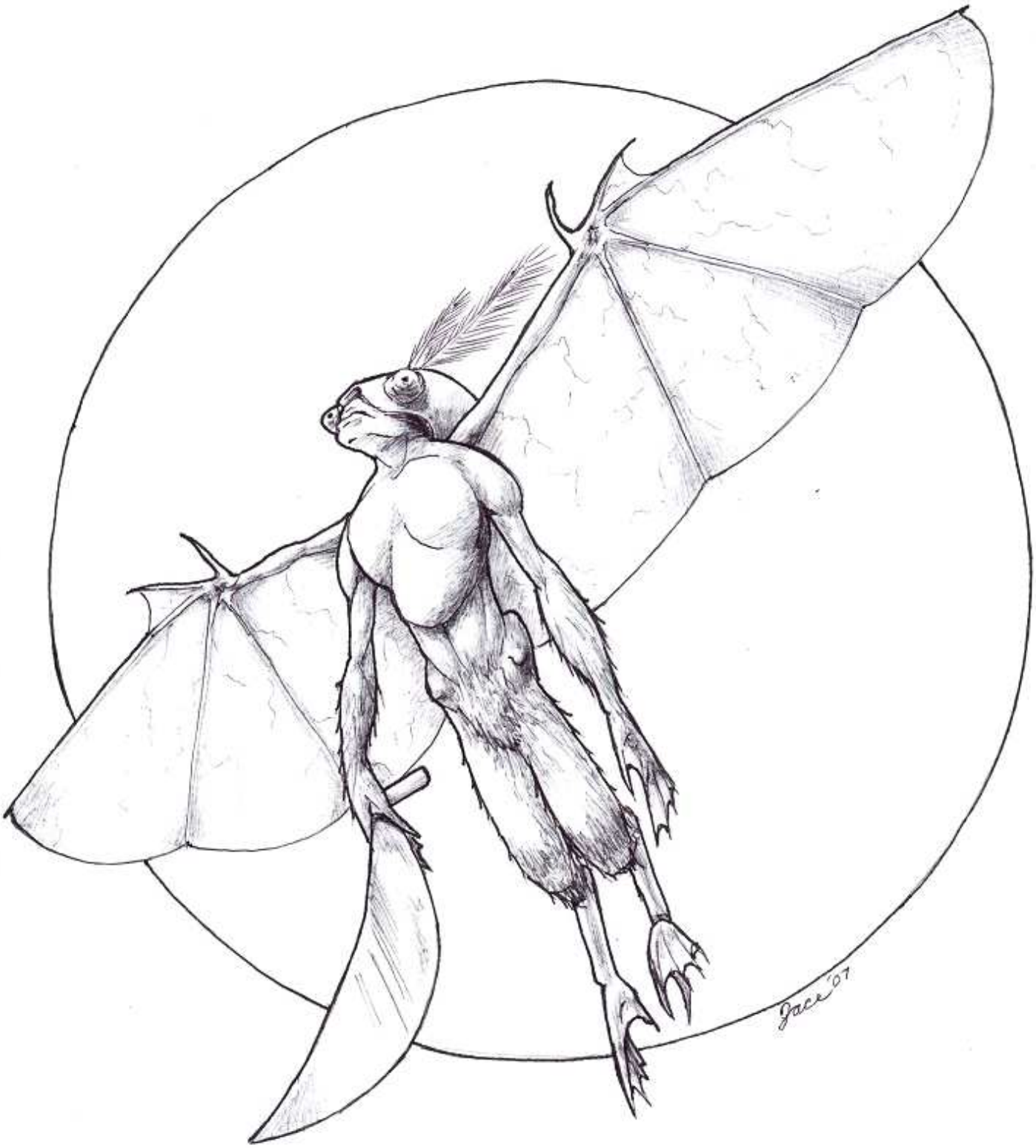
Only the queens can reproduce, and they require their royal castelings to facilitate this biological function. They are fertilized by a royal caste of servitors who spend their entire lives living with the queen and being pampered. When the queen is finally pregnant, she gives birth to a few dozen eggs, each of which is cared for by one of these royal castes.

The Yinni are comprised of a system of castes. There are four basic castes: domestic, worker, soldier, and royal. Caste is immediately recognizable at birth by looking at markings and shapes of the head dermal plate. This seems random, but there is a series of genetic patterns that can be followed.

Domestic castelings take care of the domicile. They feed the young, raise them and train them in the duties of their caste. They are simple folks, and have modifiers of -10 to Leadership and +10 to Personality (on top of the other modifiers inherent to their species). Domestics are considered the lowest members of the hierarchy.

Worker castelings take care of creating, building, repairing, and engineering. They are surprisingly versatile. The domiciles of the Yinni can range from simple hexagonal structures to complex networks of double helix shapes. Workers who create well are treated well. Worker castelings have modifiers of +10 to Logic and -10 to Intuition, as they are thinkers and not feelers. This is in addition to other modifiers inherent to the species.

Soldier castelings are the most durable of the lot, possessing a doubled-over layer of sub-dermal chitin. They are very well protected against both the elements and their enemies. Soldiers are treated harshly and are **ex-**



pected to become tough, capable, and serious. Few of them ever develop a sense of humor, and they're normally very intense and severe of both purpose and action. They are beings of action, not beings of thought. Soldiers have modifiers of +10 to Strength and Stamina but a -10 to Intuition and Logic. These are in addition to all other modifiers inherent to this species.

Royal castelings have violet markings on their skin and around their eye nodes. They are given the luxury of fertilizing the queen whenever she's ready. They give their lives in service to the queen, and are treated well because of it. They are often used as diplomats who must keep the others in line, each having a domain over which they govern. They are thinkers and planners, able to coordinate everyday life and negotiate trade and commerce. The Royal castelings receive modifiers of +10 to Leadership and a -10 to Personality. This is in addition to other modifiers inherent to the species.

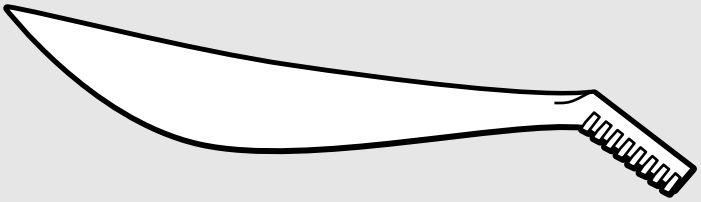
Queen is a special case. She grows to twice the size of the others, and lacks wings. She's the only female and

won't give birth to another female until it is her last egg to fertilize. She'll know when she's given her last, and when a new queen is coming. When she gives birth to the new queen, it's a day of celebration and mourning as she will not last the rest of the day before she breathes her last and therefore abdicates to the infant queen.

If a queen is killed prior to birthing her last egg, the caste is ended and dishonored, its members wandering out into the wilderness to accept their own fates, alone or in small groups, dishonored and without hope.

Despite the fact that they come from a primitive culture, the Yinni are quite intelligent. In fact, their workers are probably brighter than the minds of some civilized modern races in the Frontier. Given exposure to technology, a Yinni character need not adhere to the primitive roots from which he came.

A Yinni character who has lost his caste because of a slain queen is a very likely candidate for a player character. He has no reason to remain behind in the world from which he was born. He can embrace technology and learn to understand it. Given enough time and effort (and money) he may even be able to invent or pay for the construction of technology suited for his size: miniature beam weapons and stun weapons, electro-helibode blades, tiny suits of ballistic material designed to protect like a skeinsuit, etc. Such pieces of technology would cost up to ten times what a normal piece of equipment would cost because it would be custom.



The favored weapon of the Yinni soldier caste is the helibode blade – an oddly shaped sword. Its blade is given a shape and edge that makes it ideal for hurling. As it flies through the air it is quite deadly. When the hurl reaches its apex, it hovers for a moment then begins to fall like helicopter-like seedlings from some trees. Once in its descent, the blade is twirling differently and may be caught by a swooping soldier in flight. Even when not thrown, it is quite deadly when used in their hands.

In a pitched battle between rivaling domiciles, these blades can be seen spiraling down in great numbers, so metal ringlets are placed in the handles of the blades so that they make different noises specific to a single domicile. This way a soldier can differentiate between blades while they fall by their sound alone. A soldier would never catch and use an enemy's helibode, not even to save their own lives.

In game terms, the weapon is treated as a knife (1d10 damage, thrown range 5/10/15/20/25) that can be caught in the turn directly following the throw but not thereafter.

ATTITUDES

The Yinni haven't encountered the other sentient races yet. They are out there, waiting to be discovered by an intrepid group of explorers.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Flight. A Yinni can fly at very fast speeds (80 meters per turn when going full speed). They are excellent flyers – able to glide as effectively as fly, and able to make nearly any directional change desired while in full speed. They fly at half speed if carrying more mass than their STR scores divided by 5, and cannot fly if carrying more mass than their STR scores divided by 3. Thus, a character with a 30 STR can fly full speed unless carrying more than 6kg, and cannot fly at all if hauling more than 10kg.

Discriminatory Scent. The wispy antennae can smell things quite well – just not at a great range. They provide a discriminatory sense to the species (just like sight is discriminatory for humans). Even in total dark they can rely on their scent to identify specific individuals, follow the trail left behind by someone's specific scent, or identify trace elements that would go unnoticed by others. These things are only possible within 2 meters, however.

Note: although these weights and speeds of the Yinni's movement rates and carrying capacities are not possible by physics, these beings are not of this world and their physics are both alien and unique grand exceptions to currently-understood laws of physics.

YINNI CHARACTERS

Characteristics	
Average Size	25cm (wingspan 50cm)
Average Mass	2.2kg male,
Average Lifespan	25 years male
Reproductive System	sexual, larviparous
Body Temperature	21 degrees Celsius

Ability Scores	All	Domestic Caste	Worker Caste	Soldier Caste	Royal Caste
STR/STA	-20	--	--	+10/+10	--
DEX/RS	+10	--	--	--	--
INT/LOG	+5	--	-10/+10	-10/-10	--
PER/LDR	+5	+10/-10	--	--	-10/+10

Movement	
Walking	5 meters per turn on foot 20 meters per turn flying
Running	20 meters per turn on foot 80 meters per turn flying
Hourly	1 kilometers per hour on foot 5 kilometers per hour flying

Special Abilities	
Flight	Can fly without tiring. Can carry up to STR/5 at full speed. Half speed until carrying STR/3. Past STR/3, they cannot fly but can walk.
Scent	Can identify people and things by scent alone. Can track by scent. This ability only works within 2 meters of the odor or thing.

ADVENTURE!

DEATH IMPLANT

By C.J. Williams

Your group of adventurers are employees of a corporate conglomerate who discover that their fellow employees have begun suffering from a serious and deadly disease related to cybernetic implants. As they investigate, they discover that it is a galaxy-wide issue, on the verge of an epidemic level. It is even among other companies as well.

As their investigating intensifies, they discover their own company's plot to undermine economic stability by effecting cyborg tech which has become fundamental to the galactic economy, thereby positioning themselves for control of the galaxy's credits.

Meantime, the company has discovered that these employees have caught on and become more and more intent on leading them off the path until the only choice left is to take them out of the picture. Your players' characters must now fend for their lives against corporate assassins bent on their destruction.

Editor's Note: A corporate structure capable of this level of nefarious activity would undoubtedly possess an Assassin Bot from Issue #3 of the Star Frontiersman!

MYSTERY OF STARSHINE

By C.J. Williams

Starshine is a world of myth and mystery that has been lost to time. Some believe that Starshine never existed. Others believe that it is merely a remnant tale of Sundown. But word has been spreading in the underground that a secret underworld organization has been looking for it and Star Law wants to find it first to avert what nefarious plans this organization has for Starshine.

Your group of characters have been hired by Star Law to uncover this organization and find out what it wants with Starshine, but most important to find Starshine before the organization does.

In the midst of the investigation, your group is attacked by operatives of the organization. When they chase down the operatives, they discover clues to the organization and its possible connection to an underworld crime boss.

Editor's Suggestion: the Thugs, Mooks, & Goons in this issue would represent the agents of the underworld crime boss well. The crime boss himself could be named but never met personally – and can continue to be a thorn in the side of the characters for countless adventures to come! Surely if the characters thwart his/her/its plans this time, the characters will get a price on their heads!

THE USURPER

By C.J. Williams

Your characters are mercenaries funded by a group of private organizations to overthrow a tech tycoon who has positioned himself to take control as ruler of the Frontier through corporate overthrows, contracts, and blackmail. He is just moments away from completing his plans at a legal and non-military seizure of the UPF by proxy and corrupt political connections.

The group of characters must infiltrate his compound and eliminate him or see an influential media mogul become a fascist dictator of all UPF space. His ruthless business practices bespeak how he would rule with an iron fist and unfeeling disregard for needy.

In chasing him down, your group uncovers files indicating a despicable plan to spread disease throughout worlds in order to gain a greater share of the wealth in the Frontier.

TEMPLE RAIDERS

By C.J. Williams

Your group of adventurers assist a tomb raiding archeologist to uncover an ancient temple left behind by a race who have a connection with the Tetrarchs. A race believed to be long extinct, until a strange creature within the temple indicates the existence of an underground society.

This alien leads your adventurers through the temple and down through catacombs where they encounter strange and dangerous creatures who seem to leave them alone, if only in the company of the alien.

There your adventurers meet with the leader of the race and seek to make a trade for their unique technologies and evidence of their existence. With that, the leader informs them that they must never leave the temple again or else they will die. Thus begins a feverish and seemingly unending attempt to escape this temple of horrors and the xenophobic alien culture.

Editor's Suggestion: (I like this one and will certainly use it in an adventure) The ship that brought your characters to the archeological site would have been destroyed to ensure your inability to leave. There is no subspace radio among the tech of the society. How to escape? Will the aliens be hospitable to you? Or will some action, intentional or otherwise, incur their wrath and cause you to be hunted with prejudice? Perhaps after a few days, the characters hear of others who have come to the world (but not on an archeological mission – on a strip mining mission: Pirates!) The Pirates might be the only way off this accursed place!

THE GREAT HUNT

By Bill Logan (art submitted by B.Kelleher)

The Irochol mining colony has been in business for ten years. It's a Streel venture that of late has received a lot of attention because they successfully mined uranium in the asteroids of Athor – something nobody else has been able to accomplish. About two days ago, their subspace signal went dead and all communication has halted. Right before the silence, the foreman was heard to say "What the hell is THAT!?" before the sound of a weapon being fired ended all communication.

The characters are hired by Streel to go investigate. They are given passage to the asteroid upon which the mining camp is located. They are given last-known map data (admittedly two years old and completely wrong) and have been briefed that the only defenses they have on site is a single weapons locker containing minimal ammunition – to ward off pirates who hassle them. Streel is currently under suspicion that it's pirates behind it all... they're wrong.

When the characters are dropped off (the ship will return for them in 2 days), they immediately find that the atmogenerators are broken down. They have to fix it in order to survive 2 days – or their suits (provided by Streel) will run out of breathable air.

While scavenging to gather equipment needed to facilitate repairs, the characters split up and find themselves each hunted by an odd lizard-like creature. The creature has never before been seen, and is oddly shaped – almost like s cross between a sathar and a lizard. They carry semi-modern weaponry, and have defensive screens. They seem able to exist in the vacuum of space without any atmosphere.

The creatures are called Rooksha, and are an alien species who hunt for sport and pleasure. Their society is built around the idea of the hunt. Their test of maturing into adulthood is to be dropped off on some foreign world and told to bring back as many ears as they can.

But in their section of space, the beings they hunt are hardly sentient. The Rooksha have misjumped and wound up stuck in a crashed ship in the Frontier area of space. There were more of them but they jettisoned in different directions. The escape pod that landed on this asteroid carried with it a few Rooksha just reaching the age of maturity...

The characters will have to defend themselves against the Rooksha while trying to get the atmogenerator fixed. Once they do, they'll find that the mining crew of the Irochol expedition are mostly all dead, though four workers are hiding in an air duct where they've trapped a couple days worth of oxygen and are hoping to wait out the creatures.

From the wreckage of the Rooksha ship, the characters find telemetry that can lead them to where the other escape launches headed... leading them on a series of adventures to hunt down some of the greatest hunters the Frontier has ever known!

CLASSIFIEDS

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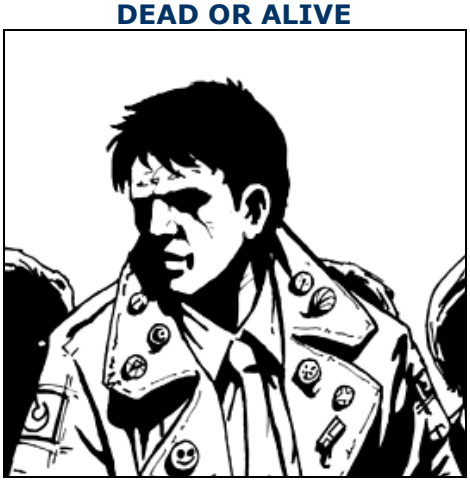
DEAD OR ALIVE



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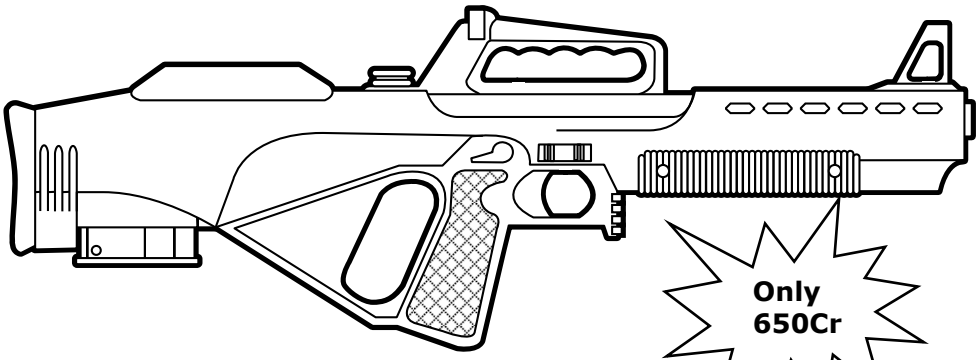

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