

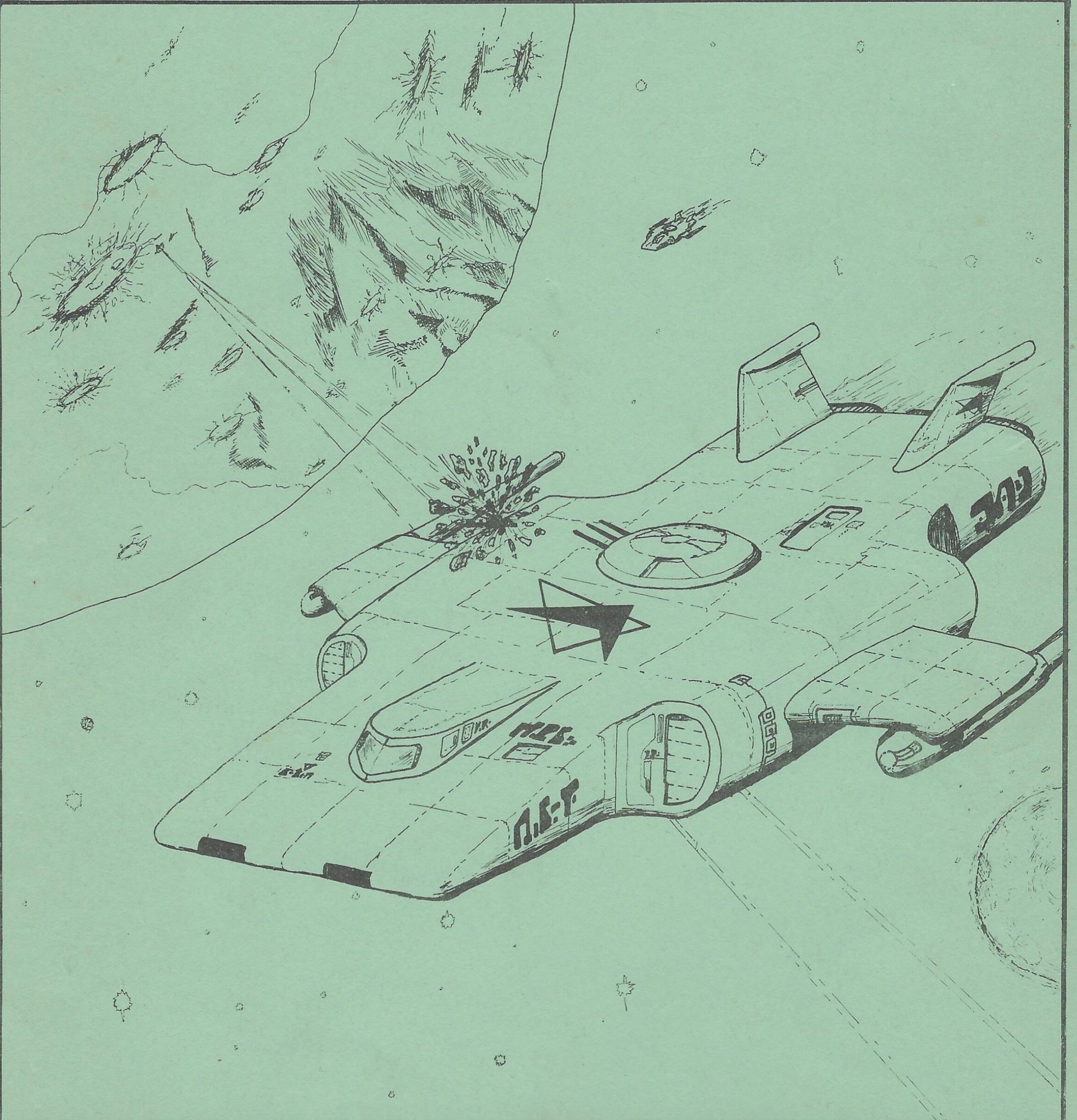


Alien Star

Traveller Magazine.

Issue 3

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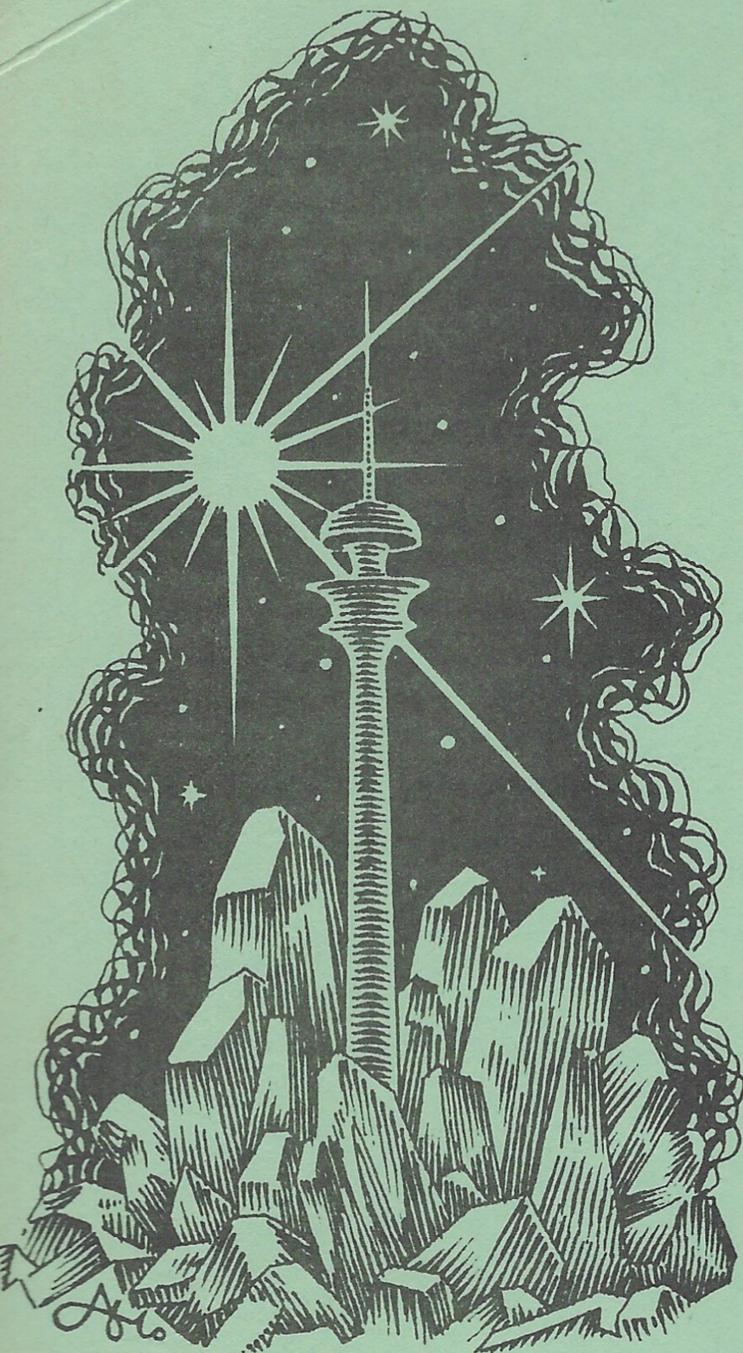


GIANT SOLO ADVENTURE

ALIEN STAR

ISSUE THREE

JUNE - JULY, 1981



EDITORIAL

When we launched Alien Star in February we were unsure whether there was a demand for a magazine for Traveller players in this corner of the galaxy. Now, four months later it seems we have had our answer. Issues one and two are sold out and our print run is expanding. Alien Star should keep going for many more eons to come.

We are still looking for material for publication in future issues of Alien Star. Yes, you sitting there thinking "Wouldn't it be an ace idea if I sent those great people at Alien Star an article". We are looking for anything remotely associated with Traveller- art, scenarios, ship plans, character classes, new equipment and weapons, reviews; in fact anything you like. We cannot promise to publish everything received but we'll try our best. Send it in!!!

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Subscriptions

We have had lots of enquiries about subscriptions for Alien Star, and have now got all the details:

Just send the required money either as a cheque or P.O. at 60p per issue to me (Robert McMahon). In other words £ 3.60 per year.

Overseas orders

Because of the increased postage for overseas countries please send 80p per copy by surface mail or £ 1.60 by airmail.

Advertisements

Because we are now selling such an incredibly large number of Alien Stars(2) the ad. costs have had to go up a bit:

Full page: £ 6.00
Half page: £ 3.00
Qtr. page: £ 1.50

Classified ads: 1p per word.

Addresses to write to: Robert McMahon, 16 Egdon Drive, Merley, Wimborne, Dorset, BH21
John Roberts, 19 Delph Road, Merley, Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 1RS

Acknowledgements:

Cover: Tim Moyse Back Cover: Alan Hunter
Articles: Robert McMahon, John Roberts.
Extras: Colin Macmillian, Alan Hunter, David Lloyd.
Stapling together & collating: Philip Churchyard, Lucky the cat.

Issue four

OUT IN AUGUST (maybe for Dragonmeet). Available from Robert McMahon, 16 Egdon Drive,

* Don't wait for the ad. in White Dwarf this time *
* because there won't be one. *

Merley, Wimborne, Dorset,
BH21 1TY.
Phone: Wimborne 883216.

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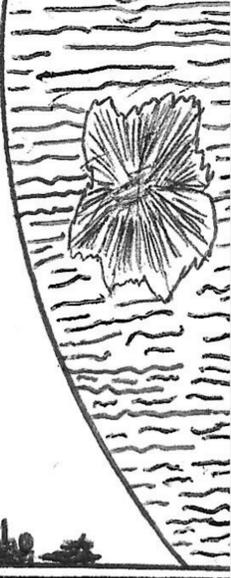
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO BE IN AS4 SO BUY IT AND FIND OUT!

=====

IF YOU DON'T BUY ALIEN STAR FOUR WE'LL SEND HIM ROUND:



Customized Small Craft



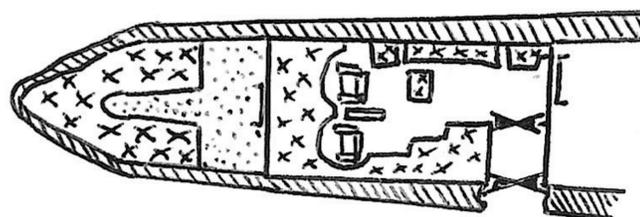
Since the publication of the new edition of High Guard, containing rules for design of small craft, I felt that the list of small craft given in book two is now a little restricted. In this article I intend to list four custom built space craft in common use for use in space situations. All are designed according to the High Guard rules.

Firemaric class heavy fighter:

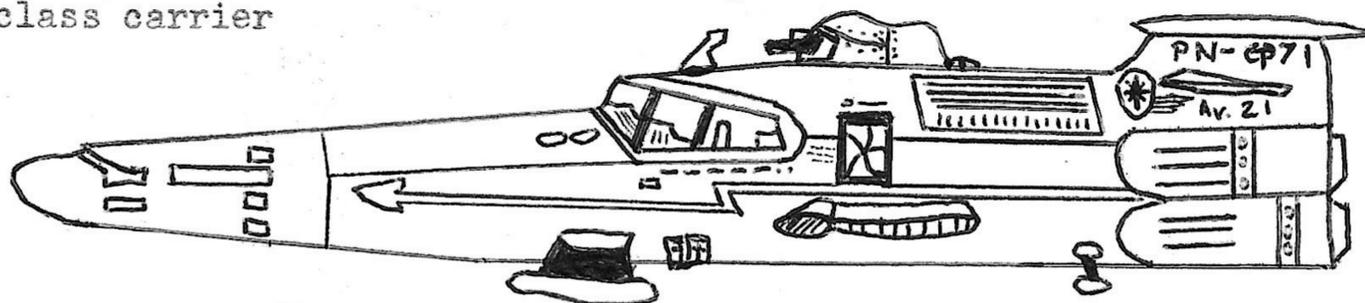
The Firemaric is a standard Imperial fighter assigned on board large capital ships and designed specifically for wartime use and unavailable commercially. Firemarics are often encountered around key Imperial installations, operating in squadrons of five.

Hull Size :	20 tons, 280 cubic metres
Configuration :	Needle
Maneuver Drive :	6G high-accelerator thrust unit
Power Plant :	High capacity fusion plant giving factor 14
Fuel tankage :	2.8 tons
Computer model :	Standard model 2
Bridge :	4 tons of basic controls
Armour :	Heavy alloy plate giving armour factor 15
Agility :	4
Crew :	Two, pilot & gunner, both seated at the bridge
Armament :	One double turret equipped with a missile rack and fusion gun

FH-0106E21-F00000-05002-0 Mer30.61 20 tons
 Batteries bearing 1 1 Crew = 2
 Batteries 1 1 TL = 15
 Passengers=0. Low berths=0. Cargo=0. Fuel=2.8.
 EP=2.8. Agility=4. Troops=0.



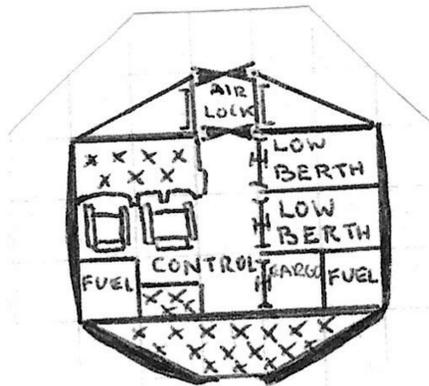
Firemaric fighter P.N.71 of ISS "Hunting Sword"
 Tygol class carrier



Rothfry class lifeboat

The standard lifeboat as described in book two was proved unsuitable for use in small starships such as type A free traders. As a result, if an emergency occurred and the ship had to be abandoned the passengers and crew had only vacc suits to escape in with limited air. Recently, in 1105, General shipyards of Regina designed a small ten ton lifeboat for use on small traders, named the Rothfry:

Hull size 10 tons
Maneuver 4G
Power plant 4
Fuel 1 ton
Controls Basic 4 tons, no computer
No armour or armament
2 emergency low berths- 4 man capacity
0.7 tons cargo bay
Flattened sphere configuration



CB-0604401-000000-00000-0

Available from Regina (TL 10) for 4.2 megacredits. Elsewhere for 5.25 mcr. The Rothfry is one of the cheapest spacecraft available and carried on many Starliners, especially the major merchant lines operating through Regina.

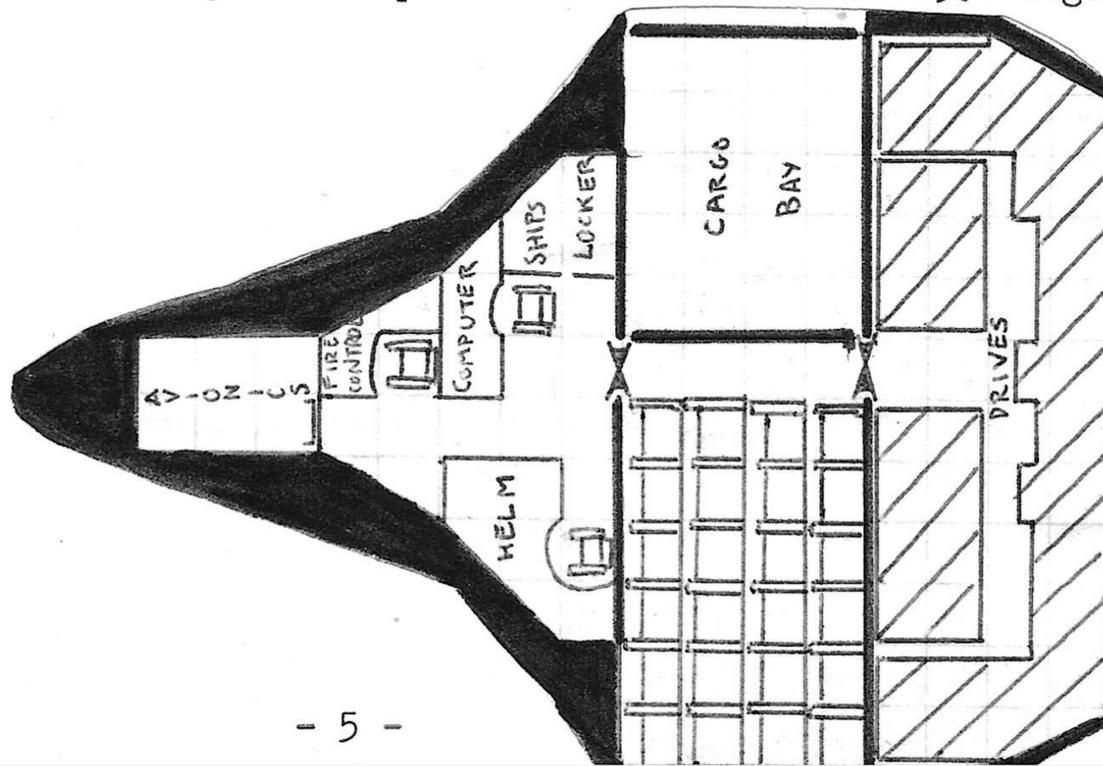
Terrox class combat shuttle

The Terrox class spacecraft is commonly used as a marine landing craft and, less frequently, as a general duties naval craft- patrol, customs and courier duty for example. As an Imperial craft the Terrox cannot be built at the normal 80% cost available for standard models, this is only available at Imperial naval yards, individuals would have to have it constructed at the base price at any TL14 yard.

Hull Size 80 tons
Maneuver 6G
Power plant 6
Agility 6
Armour 14
Fuel tank 4.8 tons
Bridge Basic 16 tons
Computer Model/1
Armament One double sandcaster/missile turret
Cargo bay 10 tons, for grav tank or living module
Troops 24 marines in standard couches
Crew 2, pilot and gunner
Configuration Cone

MS-0206612-E30000-00002-0

When used as a customs vessel, the Terrox is fitted with a crew living module in the cargo hold with five staterooms, the couches are removed and replaced by 8 low berths and 8 tons cargo. Base price to individuals is 69.6 megacredits.



Margorne class Mining Craft

Although the type J Seeker is the most common mining vessel used in belt mining, it is a little unsuitable to long periods of continuous activity within an asteroid belt. There was a need to produce a specialised mining vessel for use by the mining industries of many worlds. Consequently, in 1103 Margorne Engineering Incorporated, a small ship design company centered on Henoz put a new spacecraft design to perform as a specialised asteroid miner.

Hull Size 60 tons	3 small craft staterooms
Maneuver 2	Armour factor 3
Power 4	Crew: 2, pilot and gunner (gun is used as a rock cutting device but in emergency can be used for combat)
Agility 2	Passengers: Potential 4, assuming double occupancy
Fuel 2.4 tons	Cargo Bay: 20.2 tons used for transportation of ore samples
No computer installed	
1 single plasma gun turret	

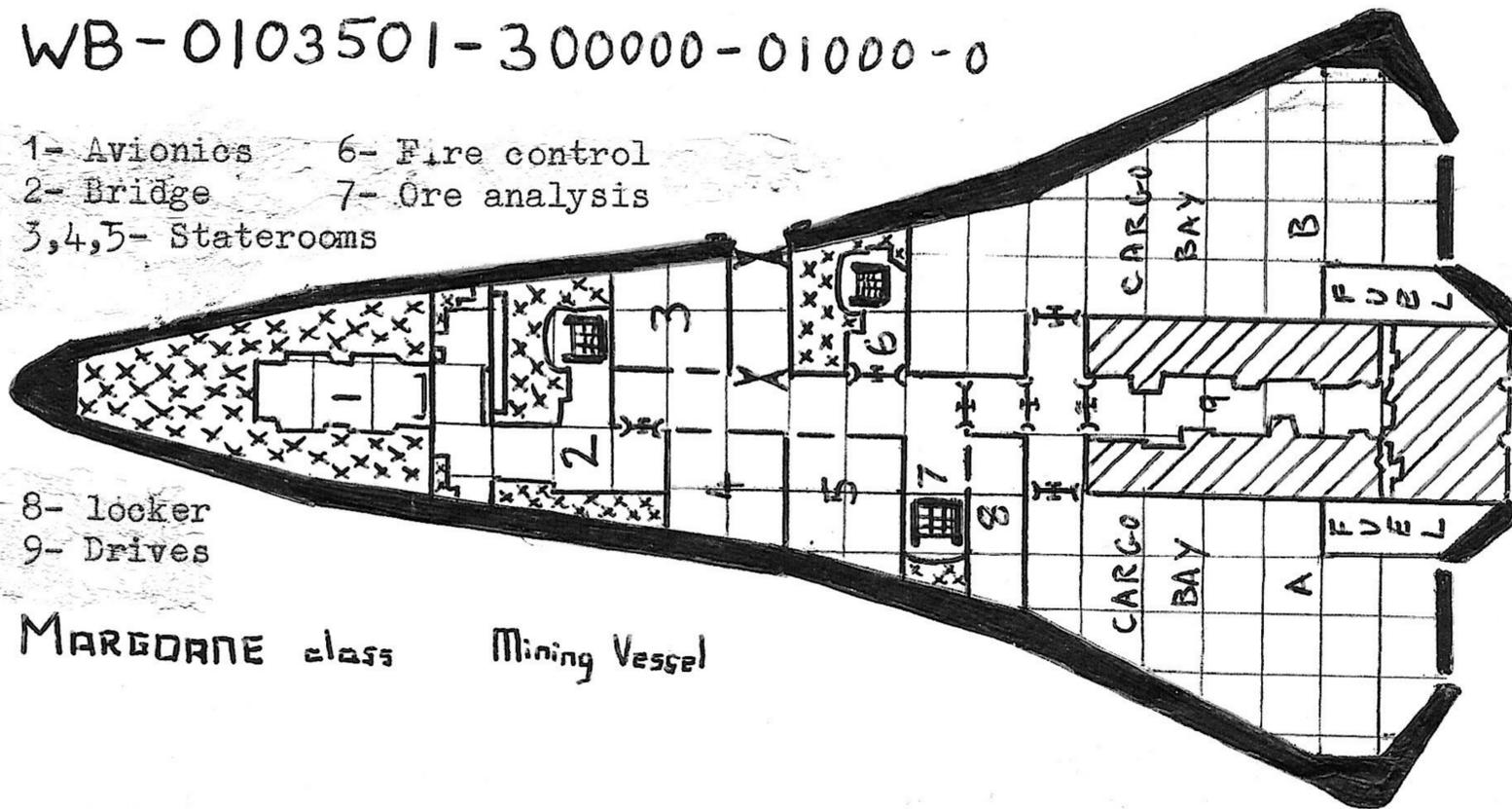
Total cost: 32,508,000 credits
at any A or B class starport

WB-0103501-300000-01000-0

1- Avionics 6- Fire control
2- Bridge 7- Ore analysis
3,4,5- Staterooms

8- locker
9- Drives

MARGORNE class Mining Vessel



The Margorne class has several advantages over the type J:

1. The Margorne is 40% smaller than the type J and highly maneuverable amongst asteroids.
2. The Margorne can be constructed at any A or B starport with a tech level greater than 9.
3. Cargo capacity is 20.2 tons, 5.2 tons higher than the type J.
4. More mining crew can be carried.
5. Armour is fitted for added safety.

However, it does have disadvantages:

1. The Margorne costs about 6 million credits more than the type J.
2. The Margorne has no jump drive, and is therefore unpopular amongst roving interstellar beltlers

FUNERAL

A Solo Adventure in the Orion Subsector for 2 - 5 Characters

THE CHARACTERS:

BY ROBERT MCMAHON

(1) Grag Rojokin -Imperial Interstellar Scout Service
- 5 terms

B58793 Pilot-4, Jack-of-all-trades-4, Air/raft-2, Engineering-1, Vacc suit-1.

Equipment: Vacc suit, long range communicator, carbine and 3 clips, foil,
Scoutship type SE "Rimward Fury": Hull 200, Jump C, Maneuver B, Power B,
80 tons fuel, 9 staterooms, One ATV. Computer 2bis, 2 hardpoints, one
double beam laser turret, 20 tons cargo.

High Guard Stats: SE-1301 Rimward Fury SE-22322S1-000000-20000-0 Mer 97.93 200 tons
Batteries bearing 1 Crew= 4
Batteries 1 TL= 12

Passengers= 7. Low berths= 0. Cargo= 20. Fuel= 80. EP= 4. Agility= 2. Troops= 0.
One ATV. Book two design.

(2) Firot Gelson -Imperial Marine Service
- 3 terms - final rank Captain

965A48 Cutlass-2, ATV-2, Revolver-2, Electronic-1.

Equipment: Protective suit, cloth armour, revolver and 50 rounds, cutlass, electronic
tool kit, short range communicator, combination mask

(3) Ghrainhura Ghra - Vargr Extents Army (Pandrin / Uthe)
- One term - final rank lieutenant

5B7926 Rifle-3, ATV-1

Equipment: Rifle and 6 clips, IR goggles, cloth armour, filter mask, respirator, blade.

(4) Aleem Vothmann - Imperial Merchant Service
- 2 terms, final rank Third Officer

7B7839 Laser carbine-2, Gunnery-1, Autopistol-1, Medical-1, Engineering-1.

Equipment: Ablative armour, laser carbine & power pack, LI goggles, medium range
communicator, medikit, combination mask.

(5) Hlkieugeratthe - Aslan, Other Service
- 3 terms

A7D587 Electronic-2, Bribery-2, Dewclaw (=Dagger)-1, Forgery-1, Mechanical-1.

Equipment: Mesh armour, autorifle, 4 clips, combination mask, mechanical tool kit.

Select characters from this list randomly according to how many people are taking
part. Its best not to have more than one character per player but two characters
per player is acceptable.

The All Terrain Vehicle

The ATV of the Rimward Fury is a standard ex-army 8 wheel version, as described in
Book Three and issue 3 of the Travellers' Journal. In addition to the normal fittings
an autolaser is mounted. Treat this as a laser rifle +1 to hit at medium, long and very
long, -1 at short and -4 at close. These DM's are in addition to the ones for the laser
rifle. If it hits it inflicts 6 dice of damage.

The ATV has fuel for 2000 hours. One shot of the autolaser takes away 10 minutes fuel
from the tank. No fuel is available on the planet but a recharge from the ship takes 8
hours.

Players Background

This adventure really started over 30 years ago. It was then that the father of Grag Rojokin, a certain Defrix Rojokin, was assigned on a survey mission to the star system F7-212 in the Orion subsector. It was to be the last time Grag ever saw his father for the exploration ship was lost without trace and no other information was released by the IISS about the system. The system has been called "Funeral" ever since by local Travellers.

Grag followed in his father's footsteps (no he didn't die) and entered the IISS. Now, 20 years on he has mustered out and been assigned the latest thing in scoutships- the Type SE (Escort Scout). About a month ago an amazing event occurred, Grag returned to his ship at starport and saw a small, hunch-backed figure departing. He tried to catch it but it disappeared into the startown of Khenia.

Returning to his scoutship Grag found a worn leather-bound book on the controls. Picking it up he stood back with astonishment as he read the faint but unmistakable title, "Imperial Grand Survey - F7-212 , 1076". Reading on, Grag became engrossed by the book, and although the bulk of it dealt with the two small airless planets on the edge of the system there was a brief, incomplete description about the exploration of the inner most world, the following facts were learned by Grag:

- * The UPP of the world was X585000-0
- * The refuelling system was destroyed by a mysterious explosion on the exploring scoutship (a modified Type C). The ship was thus unable to leave.
- * A disease swept the ship wiping out 90% of the crew. Six surviving members (including Defrix Rojokin) fled the ship and discovered a mysterious building on the peak of a high mountain. This was climbed and, to the crew's surprise was found to be solid gold.....

The record suddenly stopped there.

Grag lost no time, he recalled his fellow adventurers and set off to the star system of Funeral.

On arrival the system looked as it was described in the IGS report. The primary world was surrounded by a thick impenetrable belt of cloud and the landing was made on a wide plain on the equatorial belt. Fuel was running low and it was decided that the ATV would have to locate a fuel source in addition to the quest of finding the building (now named by the crew as the "Funeral Spire". A crew was chosen and the adventure began....

How to use this adventure

- (1) State destination hex.
- (2) Refer to the general description.
- (3) If the hex is not wanted to be entered then pay the time required for the previous hex and receive the random encounter for that hex. Once this has been done go back to (1).
- (4) If the hex is entered then pay the necessary time and take the special encounter for that hex. A blank hexgrid is provided with numbers provided for each hex. This should be used by the player(s) for mapping out the planet. Random encounters are also rolled for.
The hex scale used is one hex= 1200 km.

Drivers operate in shifts of eight hours each. The starship has 80 days supplies for each person and the amount carried in the ATV should be stated (remember that at least eight days supplies will be needed for the return voyage). 80 days = 1920 hours

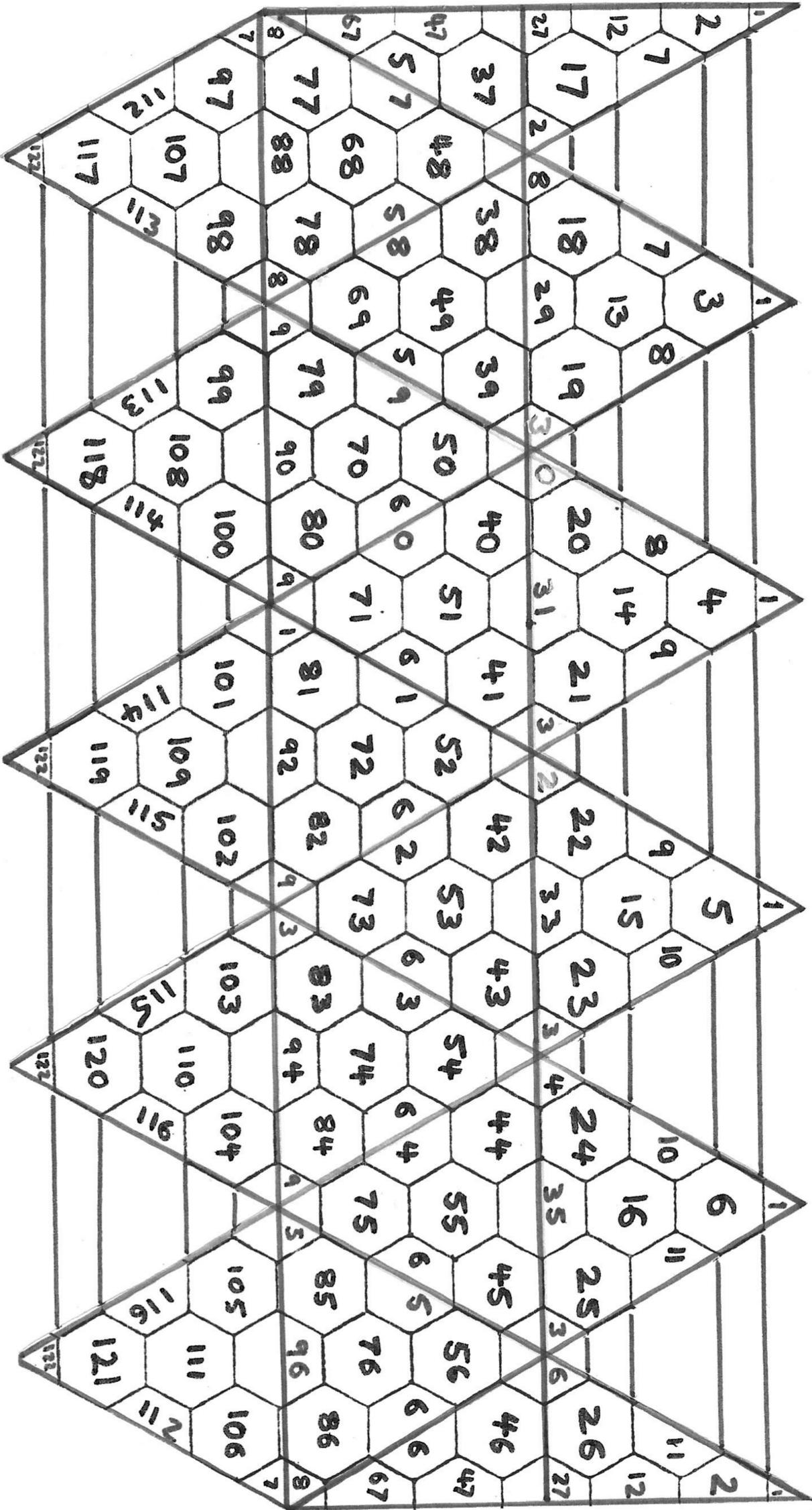
This adventure only requires basic Traveller to use, but the player(s) are expected to resolve encounters themselves in some situations using the Basic Traveller rules.

Good Luck.....

WORLD HEX GRID MAP

FUNERAL X585000-0 / 0309 Orion

1 Hex = 1200 km



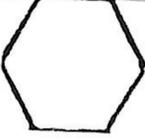
<u>Hex Grid Location</u>	<u>General Event Ref.</u>	<u>Hex Grid Location</u>	<u>General Event Ref.</u>
1	1	62	63
2	6	63	68
3	11	64	73
4	16	65	78
5	21	66	83
6	26	67	88
7	31	68	93
8	36	69	98
9	41	70	103
10	46	71	108
11	51	72	113 Planetfall.
12	56	73	118
13	61	74	4
14	66	75	9
15	71	76	14
16	76	77	19
17	81	78	24
18	86	79	29
19	91	80	34
20	96	81	39
21	101	82	44
22	106	83	49
23	116	84	54
24	121	85	59
25	2	86	64
26	7	87	69
27	12	88	74
28	17	89	79
29	22	90	84
30	27	91	89
31	32	92	94
32	37	93	99
33	42	94	104
34	47	95	109
35	52	96	114
36	57	97	119
37	62	98	5
38	67	99	10
39	72	100	15
40	77	101	20
41	82	102	25
42	87	103	30
43	92	104	35
44	97	105	40
45	102	106	45
46	107	107	50
47	112	108	55
48	117	109	60
49	122	110	65
50	3	111	70
51	8	112	75
52	13	113	80
53	18	114	85
54	23	115	90
55	28	116	95
56	33	117	100
57	38	118	105
58	43	119	110
59	48	120	115
60	53	121	120
61	58	122	111

<u>Gnl Event Ref</u>	<u>Terrain type</u>	<u>Special Event Ref</u>
1	Sea	1
2	Sea	6
3	Sea	11
4	Mountain	16
5	Sea	21
6	Sea	26
7	Sea	31
8	Forest	36
9	Plain	41
10	Sea	46
11	Sea	51
12	Plain	56
13	Plain	61
14	Sea	66
15	Sea	71
16	Sea	76
17	Rough	81
18	Rough	86
19	Sea	91
20	Sea	96
21	Sea	101
22	Forest	106
23	Mountain	111
24	Sea	116
25	Plain	121
26	Sea	2
27	Forest	7
28	Forest	12
29	Sea	17
30	Plain	22
31	Sea	27
32	Forest	32
33	Forest	37
34	Plain	42
35	Sea	47
36	Forest	52
37	Sea	57
38	Plain	62
39	Plain	67
40	Sea	72
41	Sea	77
42	Mountain	82
43	Rough	87
44	Rough	92
45	Sea	97
46	Sea	102
47	Rough	107
48	Sea	112
49	Rough	117
50	Sea	122
51	Sea	3
52	Forest	8
53	Forest	13
54	Plain	18
55	Sea	23
56	Sea	28
57	Forest	33
58	Plain	38
59	Plain	43
60	Sea	48
61	Sea	53

<u>Gnl Event Ref</u>	<u>Terrain type</u>	<u>Special Event Ref</u>
62	Rough	58
63	Rough	63
64	Sea	68
65	Sea	73
66	Forest	78
67	Rough	83
68	Mountain	88
69	Sea	93
70	Sea	98
71	Sea	103
72	Forest	108
73	Plain	113
74	Plain	118
75	Sea	4
76	Sea	9
77	Forest	14
78	Forest	19
79	Sea	24
80	Sea	29
81	Plain	34
82	Forest	39
83	Plain	44
84	Sea	49
85	Sea	54
86	Forest	59
87	Plain	64
88	Sea	69
89	Plain	74
90	Sea	79
91	Forest	84
92	Mountain	89
93	Plain	94
94	Plain	99
95	Sea	104
96	Forest	109
97	Plain	114
98	Sea	119
99	Rough	5
100	Sea	10
101	Sea	15
102	Forest	20
103	Sea	25
104	Plain	30
105	Sea	35
106	Sea	40
107	Plain	45
108	Plain	50
109	Plain	55
110	Sea	60
111	Sea	65
112	Plain	70
113	Plain	75
114	Plain	80
115	Sea	85
116	Rough	90
117	Rough	95
118	Rough	100
119	Sea	105
120	Sea	110
121	Plain	115
122	Mountain	120

Random Encounters

In addition to special encounters, every time a hex is entered roll for a random encounter. The table below shows the number of hours that the ATV must spend in the hex to cross it, the number to be thrown to get a random encounter and then the references that must be followed up overleaf to determine the effects of the encounter depending upon the die roll.

	PLAIN 12 hours (8+) Open terrain with flat prairies and clear vistas.	1,2 : Goto 1 3 : Goto 9 4 : Goto 3	5 : Goto 4 6 : Goto 7
	ROUGH 32 hours (7+) Broken terrain littered with boulders and deep valleys.	1 : Goto 9 2 : Goto 7 3 : Goto 1	4 : Goto 6 5 : Goto 4 6 : Goto 3
	MOUNTAIN 56 hours (9+) High elevation terrain with lofty peaks and craggy valleys.	1 : Goto 4 2 : Goto 7 3 : Goto 10	4 : Goto 7 5 : Goto 1 6 : Goto 2
	FOREST 24 hours (6+) Huge coniferous forest of widely spaced trees averaging 250 metres each.	1,2 : Goto 5	3,4 : Goto 1 5 : Goto 7 6 : Goto 9
	SEA 240 hours (9+) Clear ocean with gentle currents.	1,2 Goto 7 3 Goto 4	4 : Goto 1 5 : Goto 8 6 : Goto 4

=====

Structural Damage

The ATV has a structural strength of 200. This represents the strength of the ATV's hull and engines. If it falls low then the ATV travels at a slower speed and is more vulnerable to attack:

<u>Strength</u>	<u>Movement</u>	<u>Armour</u>
121-200	Full	Cloth
76-120	Double cost	Mesh
26-75	Triple cost	Jack
1-25	Immobile	Jack
0	Destroyed (irreparable)	Nil

Structural damage may be repaired by individuals with mechanical skill. During these repairs the vehicle must be stationary and a mechanical tool kit available. This has spares for up to 100 points repair. Roll two dice per individual (with mech skill) per hour spent on repairs, DM: +Mechanical. On 9+ one point of structural damage is repaired.

Scoutship Fuel

Once the ATV has sighted sea then it must return AT ONCE to the scoutship. The scoutship will then take off, fly to that location, skim the fuel and land in a clear adjacent hex (ie, the one that the water was sighted from. Landings in forest rough and mountain terrain are permitted.

- (1) AN ANIMAL IS ENCOUNTERED BY THE GROUP. For this animal encounters (supplement 2) will be useful. If you do not have this book use the rules in book 3 and follow the encounter up from there, range is as in book one.
- =====
- (2) A DEEP CHASM SPLITS THE MOUNTAIN, Blocking the route. If you want to try and find a route down goto 11 otherwise turn back.
- =====
- (3) A GREAT ANIMAL IS SEEN LOOMING AHEAD. Roll one die, on 1-2 goto 12, on 3-4 goto 14, on 5-6 goto 16.
- =====
- (4) IN THE DISTANCE A SMALL SPHERICAL OBJECT CAN BE SEEN DRIFTING IN THE SKY. Roll one die, on 1 goto 13, on 2-6 goto 15.
- =====
- (5) THICK FOILAGE BLOCKS THE PATH AHEAD. If travelling in an ATV you must return to the previous hex. If travelling by foot the hex takes 300 hours to traverse instead of the normal 240 hours.
- =====
- (6) THE GROUND BECOMES VERY ROCKY AND UNEVEN. Speed is halved, throw 9+ (+ATV skill) to avoid being stuck. You must spend 2D hours getting the ATV out of the ground.
- =====
- (7) A VIOLENT STORM ERUPTS, movement takes three times as long as normal.
- =====
- (8) A GIANT HEAD REARS OUT OF THE SEA IN FRONT OF YOU (Range DM -1). It then rears up revealing a giant body:
- 1 Swimming Eater 120,000kg 140/50 Mesh 5D Claws+3 A7 F5 S2
- Each round throw one die: on 6 it goes for the gunner, on 1-5 it goes for the ATV and will cause structural damage if it hits.
- =====
- (9) 2D FIGURES APPEAR AHEAD RIDING LARGE 200kg ANIMALS SIMILAR TO THE BUSH RUNNERS AS IN THE "BEST OF THE JOURNAL". On 1-3 goto 17. On 4-6 goto 19.
- =====
- (10) A ROCK FALL BLOCKS THE PATH AHEAD. Clearing it will take 6D hours. If you wish to try and force your way over goto 18.
- =====
- (11) On 10+ you find a way down otherwise you must either try again or return to the previous hex. Both possibilities add 6 hours onto time spent travelling.
- =====
- (12) The animal has the following stats:
- 1 Carnivore 16000kg 42/23 Jack 2D+2 Teeth+2 A3 F0 S3
- On a 4-6 the animal goes for the gunner of the ATV, otherwise the ATV is the target.
- =====
- (13) The globe approaches you up to a distance of 1000 metres above. When it is directly overhead a small object is dropped onto the ATV. On a 10+ it hits inflicting 8D structural damage. The ATV then bursts into flame and on 8+ (roll for each character) 1D damage is taken from burns. If the shot misses then a return shot at a DM of -4 is possible. One shot only. If the globe is hit (it has no armour) then goto 20.
- =====
- (14) The animal has the following stats:
- 1 Grazer 36000kg 56/36 Mesh 6D Hooves+1 F5 A6 S1
- The animal will always go for structural damage.
- =====
- (15) The object follows the ATV at a great distance for 2D hours then departs out of sight.
- =====

(16) The animal has the following stats:

† Hunter 24000kg 46/12 cloth 3D horns+4 A5 F9 S3

On a 6 the animal will go for the gunner otherwise it will go for the ATV to inflict structural damage. (Roll once per round).

=====

(17) The riders turn and ride off.

=====

(18) Roll two dice; DM's for ATV skill. If the number comes out at 10+ then the ATV successfully negotiates the rockfall, otherwise the ATV has an accident and takes 3D of structural damage and repairs that last for 10D hours.

=====

(19) The figures approach to medium range. You may either attack (goto 21) or try to communicate (goto 22).

=====

(20) In a mass of flames the globe explodes and falls to the ground.

=====

(21) The figures are each classed as barbarians (see supplement four: Citizens) They have mesh armour, swords (for use at short and close), military crossbows (for use at medium). They will attempt to advance two bands each turn. During the fight they screech in high-pitched tones and handle their weapons expertly (skill-3)

=====

(22) Roll two dice; DM's for liaison skill. On 8+ they appear friendly and talk but cannot understand their language. On 5-7 they turn and flee. On 4- they attack, goto 21.

=====



I'VE COME TO JOIN THE SCOUTS!

SPECIAL EVENT REFERENCE TABLE

- 1 No encounter
- 2 No encounter
- 3 No encounter
- 4 No encounter
- 5 Ahead of you there is what appears to be an artificially made pathway, overgrown by vegetation. Closer inspection reveals a surface made of solotar, an advanced surfacing material available at TL11 onwards. The majority of this surface has now been eroded away or overgrown and the track cannot be followed any longer.
- 6 No encounter
- 7 No encounter
- 8 No encounter
- 9 No encounter
- 10 The whole area is shrouded by a thick fog and movement is halved.
- 11 No encounter
- 12 No encounter
- 13 No encounter
- 14 No encounter
- 15 No encounter
- 16 A shattered 200 ton starship hull is seen, though nothing else can be found.
- 17 No encounter
- 18 No encounter
- 19 No encounter
- 20 A red light can be seen hovering overhead, motionless.
- 21 No encounter
- 22 No encounter
- 23 No encounter
- 24 No encounter
- 25 No encounter
- 26 No encounter
- 27 No encounter
- 28 No encounter
- 29 No encounter
- 30 No encounter
- 31 No encounter
- 32 No encounter
- 33 No encounter
- 34 No encounter
- 35 No encounter
- 36 A man-made road is stumbled across, long since overgrown by plants and mostly eroded by the elements it is still recognisable at this point.
- 37 No encounter
- 38 No encounter
- 39 No encounter
- 40 No encounter
- 41 A Green Light is hovering overhead, motionless.
- 42 No encounter
- 43 No encounter
- 44 Ahead of you is a large (800 Ton) saucer-shaped starship. This can be examined and it is soon established that it is the scoutship "Brilliant Sun" of the IISS. Strangely, no sign of the crew exists and the jump drive and power plant are no longer in the drive room.
- 45 No encounter
- 46 No encounter
- 47 No encounter
- 48 No encounter
- 49 No encounter
- 50 A massive 4km diameter crater is stumbled upon, surrounding this crater are lumps of charred and misformed metal parts.
- 51 No encounter
- 52 As the ATV travels through the wood it suddenly begins to slow down, this continues until the vehicle is total stuck. Although the driver attempts to reverse he is unable. Select a team to go out and check the vehicle. Then go to 52a, directly after 65.

- 53 No encounter
54 " "
55 " "
56 " "
57 " "
58 " "
59 A clearing is entered, in the middle of it is a large (5metres) needle structure constructed of iron, shining and well-polished. It has five sides and on each of them is a drawing. These are of races: Aslan, Humaniti, Hivers, Centaurs, Vargr.
60 No encounter
61 " "
62 " "
63 " "
64 " "
65 " "
52a Now you have decided whose going out you can procede with the encounter. The reason why the vehicle has stopped is clear, thin webs have been constructed throughout the forest here and the ATV has become entangled. As you prepare to untangle the vehicle movement is heard and behind you are two immense spiders:
2 Carrion-eaters 400kg Jack 2D teeth+1 AO FO S2. 22/15
They are initially at short range and will close further if possible.
66 No encounter
67 The driver can see in front of him vast ruins covering a wide area. Examining them closer shows that they are VERY old and eventually a small plaque is found which reads "New Flanders, founded 3210". Exploration takes 6 hours.
68 No encounter
69 " "
70 " "
71 " "
72 " "
73 " "
74 " "
75 " "
76 " "
77 " "
78 A human skull is seen positioned ona large boulder.
79 No encounter
80 " "
81 " "
82 " "
83 An IISS All terrain vehicle is found,rusted and abandoned. The date on its control panel is 1054.
84 Ahead, in a clearing is a large collection of huts and buildings. Two dirigibles are tied to the ~~roof~~ of one building and many people are moving about the town. You can leave if you wish or approach.If you approach goto 84a directly after 98.
85 No encounter
86 " "
87 The ATV is shook several times by seismic quakes as it passes through this hex. Minor structural damage is taken (1D).
88 No encounter
89 " "
90 " "
91 " "
92 " "
93 " "
94 " "
95 " "
96 " "
97 " "
98 " "
84a On 6+ (+Liaison skill) the inhabitants are friendly and although unable to communicate in the same language let the adventurers take up to 2000 hours food with them. If they are not friendly they drive the adventurers out.



TABLETOP FIGURES

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- 105 Hero with sword and pistol
- 106 Adventurer with rifle
- 107 Thug with club
- 108 Thug with knife
- 109 Thug with pistol
- 110 Civilian
- 111 Civilianess
- 112 Adventurer in light armour
- 113 Adventurer with 2 pistols
- 115 Adventurer with Grenade Launcher
- 114 Adventurer with Laser rifle
- 116 Law officer in riot gear
- 117 Law officer dog handler
- 118 Guard dog
- 119
- 120
- 200 Starship crewman
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- 202 Space Scout
- 203 Spacesuited figure
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- 206 Spacesuited figure with rifle

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- 300 with Bolt rifle
 - 301 with Heavy Bolt rifle
 - 302 Black Guard Elite trooper
 - 303 Black Guard commander
 - 304 Officer
 - 305 Senior officer
 - 306 WITH GRENADE LAUNCHER
 - 307 with conversion beam projector
 - 308 with rapid fire support Bolt gun
 - 309 in Power armour (10p)
 - 310 in Dreadnought Battle armour (40p)
 - 311 IMPERIAL ASSAULT DROID (25p)
- ### REDEMPTIONIST REBELS
- 400 with Force sword & pistol
 - 401 with Laser rifle
 - 402 Warrior Lord IN POWER ARMOUR & PLASMA GUN
 - 403 with Flame thrower
 - 404 with Missile Launcher
 - 405 WITH AUTO LASER
 - 406 with Heavy Laser
 - 407 Warrior Lord with power axe (IN POWER ARMOUR) 10p

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- 99 No encounter
- 100 No encounter
- 101 " "
- 102 " "
- 103 " "
- 104 " "
- 105 " "
- 106 A large stone building is ahead of you. Further investigation (1 hour) shows it to be abandoned and very old. No sign of the builders' identity can be found.
- 107 No encounter
- 108 A red light hovers overhead for about half an hour then vanishes.
- 109 No encounter
- 110 No encounter
- 111 No encounter
- 112 No encounter
- 113 The foundations of buildings are seen, protruding from the ground. They cover a wide area and appear to be constructed from a smooth, artificial material.
- 114 No encounter
- 115 A small white building can be seen in the distance. It is an advanced base of non-Imperial design. The inside is set out neatly although no power is left from the power unit. The initials "S.F.I.S.S" can be found on several internal items of the base.
- 116 No encounter
- 117 No encounter
- 118 No encounter
- 119 No encounter
- 120 See overleaf
- 121 No encounter
- 122 No encounter

=====

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=====

THE GOLDEN CITADEL:

While travelling through the mountains a golden glint catches the driver's eye. The ATV Halts and the crew stops to take a closer look at the sight. A great spire of gold is on top of the mountain, enclosed by a bright glow. An unusual silence has fallen upon the area.

The journey up the mountain takes two hours, the ATV must be left behind here. Upon reaching the summit the surroundings are shown below:

=====

A large wooden chest is placed in front of the spire with a small silver plaque on it. The scene is one of complete tranquility, the floor is of smooth white stone and the surrounding stone columns are made from a contrasting black. The five races mentioned earlier are pictured on the sides of the spire.

=====

One square of the area on the diagram is equivalent to one combat range band (bk 1).

=====

Select the characters who approach the spire and move them according to the book one combat movement rules (no diagonal moves).

=====

The plaque is a holographic image and shows many inscriptions in all languages depending on where it is read from. The one that you can understand reads:

" Behind you lies doom and despair,
Ahead lies golden riches.

Open the great chest of secrets,
To find the greatest of all."

=====

If you decide not to open the chest, turn the page otherwise read on:

=====

As the chest is opened a brilliant light is emitted briefly and a loud moaning sound can be heard around. Inside is a small box about 20cm x 10cm x 5cm with strange signs on it that are unreadable by you. Suddenly your attention switches to movement behind you. Turning round you see each of the stone columns replaced by large (2m) figures clad in suits of armour carrying glowing whips.

Each figure should be treated as follows:

Mesh armour; 12 hits to destroy; Speed: 1 band per turn; Weapon: energy whip

They will, move towards the nearest character at all times and never suffer loss of morale.

The energy whips: These weapons only operate within the energy field of the spire and are useless if used outside.

Close	Short
-2	+1

Nil&

Jack	Mesh	Cloth	Reflec	Ablat	Battle	
+3	+1	0	-2	-1	-2	2D-1 damage.

Let the battle commence.....

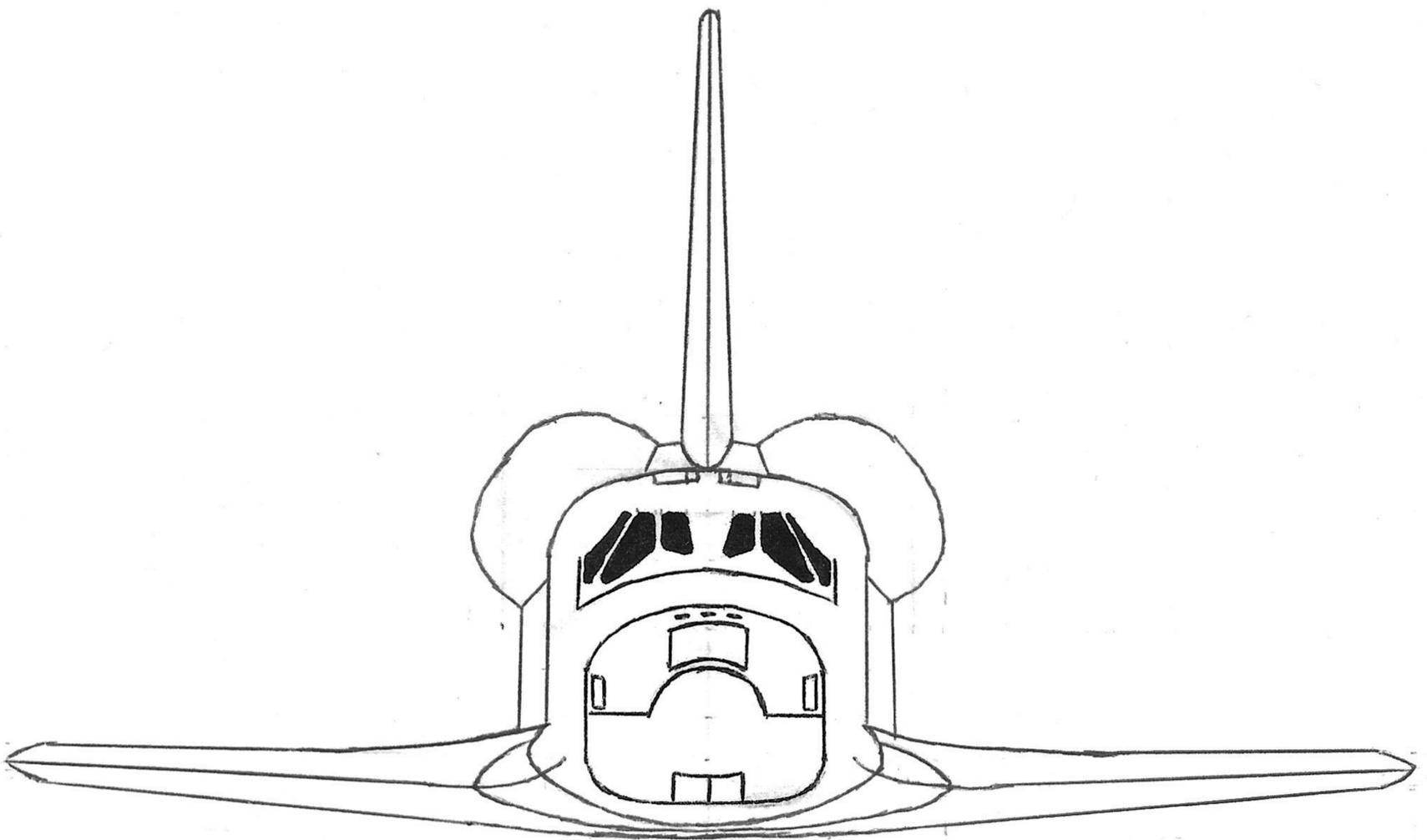
=====

If you survive this and manage to leave the spire you will see it begin to deteriorate into a charred post and the white stonework begins to crack.

=====

Keep the box, it will come in useful for the next stage of this adventure in the not too distant future.

***** ALIEN STAR *****



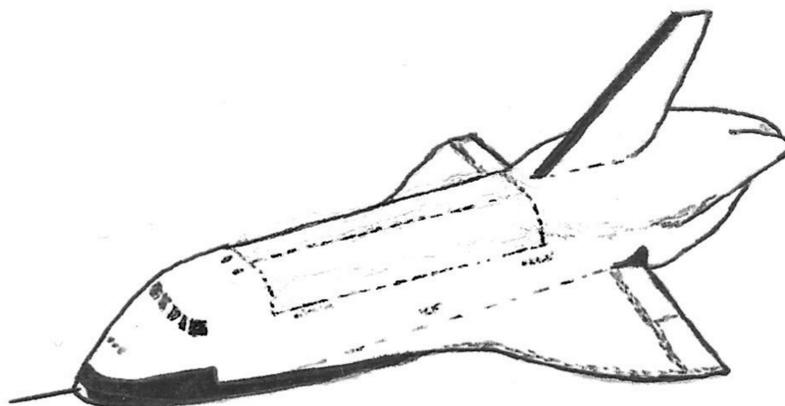
SPACE SHUTTLE

by John Roberts

The launch of 'Columbia', America's first Space Shuttle, the subsequent fifty-three hour flight and the perfect touchdown in California hopefully heralds the start of a second era in space, this being of exploitation and not exploration. The Shuttle will provide a reliable, regular and relatively cheap method of taking payloads of over thirty tonnes into orbit. The possibilities that a craft such as this opens seem vast. Scientists, many European and hopefully some British, see the Space Shuttle as an opportunity to develop new vaccines, alloys and many other useful materials in a zero-G environment. Geologists and ecologists can use it as a high vantage point from which they can look down upon the globe beneath, whilst astronomers will look in the other direction hoping to find planets orbiting distant suns, and probe deeper into the cosmos in the search for clues to its creation. The military also can use the Shuttle's spacious cargo bay for many things, helping towards a securer future for NATO and her friends.

Columbia brings the universe of Traveller one step closer to the here and now. For the first time man can confidently and efficiently step off Terra, our galactic cradle, and into space. We may not yet be able to reach the stars, but our time will come. There's a big, wide universe sitting out there just waiting for us to come and say hello.

In this article I plan to 'Travellerize' the Space Shuttle, that is, describe her in a way meaningful to Traveller players. I will also provide some scenarios in which to use the ship. I can't recommend including these in a long-term campaign, but they do prove to be interesting to play as a short fill-in game. However, Referees should be able to plunder this article for campaign ideas.



SPECIFICATIONS

These details have been worked out from drawings of the orbiter and its fuel tanks in the main, but these are supplemented by various other facts drawn from magazines and television programmes. Where I can find no source of information I have used pure speculation. If any reader knows of inaccuracies in this article please do not hesitate to write to me as we will be all too happy to make corrections in future issues.

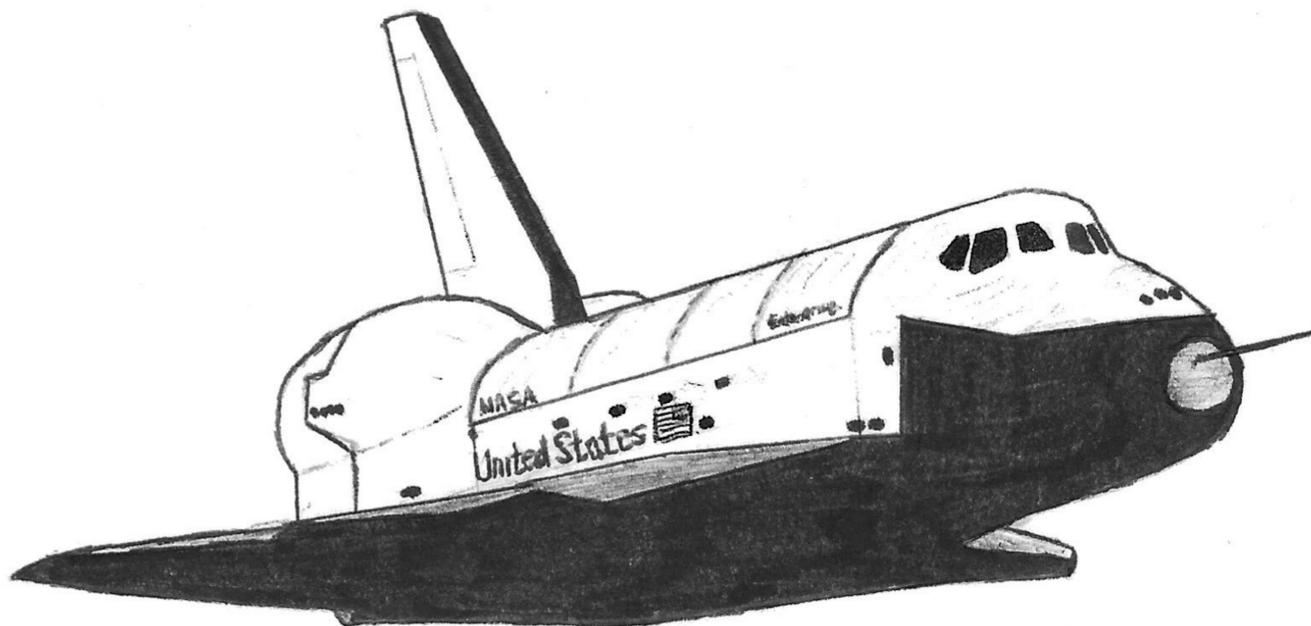
The Shuttle Orbiter is 36 metres long from nose to the tail, and has a wingspan of 23 metres. In Traveller notation I estimate her tonnage (dependant on volume) to be 102 tons. Thus it can be seen that the Orbiter is slightly larger than the Shuttle found in the Traveller universe (this being 95 tons). The Orbiter's payload capacity is about 22 tons however against 80 tons for the Traveller Shuttle.

Normal crew for the Orbiter will be 4 astronauts although for scientific missions this can be increased to 7. In an emergency the Orbiter could return 10 people to Earth.

It is hard to talk about hull armour and computers on the Shuttle Orbiters. What factor is given by ceramic tiles? Being heat resistant I suppose that they would offer some protection against lasers. All we can say about the on-board computers is that they are the best available (model 2), and that they do not have fibre optic back-up systems.

The drives on board the Shuttle Orbiter are non-standard in the Traveller universe. When sitting on the launch pad the craft could be described as having L-Hyd tanks, although the central tank could also be L-Ox and the booster rockets are solid in nature. The main tank has a mass of about 193 tons whilst each booster is about 24 tons.

A fact that was often quoted about the Shuttle launch was that after 2 minutes it had reached an altitude of 28 miles. From this we can work out that the average acceleration over that period was about 6.2 m per second per second. This means that in launch configuration, not allowing for air resistance, the Shuttle is capable of maneuver 1.63 (If your confused by the last part of this calculation do not forget that a ship with maneuver 1 is incapable of taking off from the Earth's surface and could only hover.). I find this figure surprisingly low and it tempted me to do another calculation. Whereas the Shuttle reached 28 miles after 2 minutes, a ship such as the Traveller Class Fast Yacht (see Alien Star issue 2) with maneuver 6 would be at an altitude of about 220 miles, this being with the passengers feeling no discomfort.



When the craft has obtained orbit any major maneuvers are carried out using two main engines at the rear (the two smaller nozzels of the five at the back). I can give no details on their performance. I can give no data for the small thrusters either. These are concerned with minor adjustments in the crafts attitude. For the scenarios to come in this article I have been forced to make reasonable guesses at the figures for the two sets of engines.

THE ORBITAL WAR 1989-1992

During the mid-1980s tensions between East and West had intensified. On several occasions disagreements over places such as Eastern Europe, The Gulf and South America had caused the Superpowers to go onto a war-footing, but neither had the courage or the foolishness to unleash the apocalypse.

The sophistication of space technology made a new battlefield available. From 1982 the Americans, using the world's most advanced spacecraft—the Space Shuttle, had been launching spy satellites at a great rate and the Russians began to feel their position being threatened. In reply a great space militarization programme was ordered from the Kremlin. Using a new generation of rockets, as powerful as the Saturn 5s that put man on the Moon, a large prefabricated space station called Mat (Russian for Mother. The correct pronunciation is like mart but with a longer 'a') was put into orbit. The major purpose of Mat was not research but it was to provide a servicing and refuelling base for the new Krasnaya Zvezda (Red Star) class of attack satellites. The base was served by the Russian answer to the Space Shuttle, the Dvijenije (Traffic) transportation vessels—inferior craft to the Shuttle but militarily orientated. Mat was fully operational in 1989 and was to play a central role in what was to be known as the Orbital War.

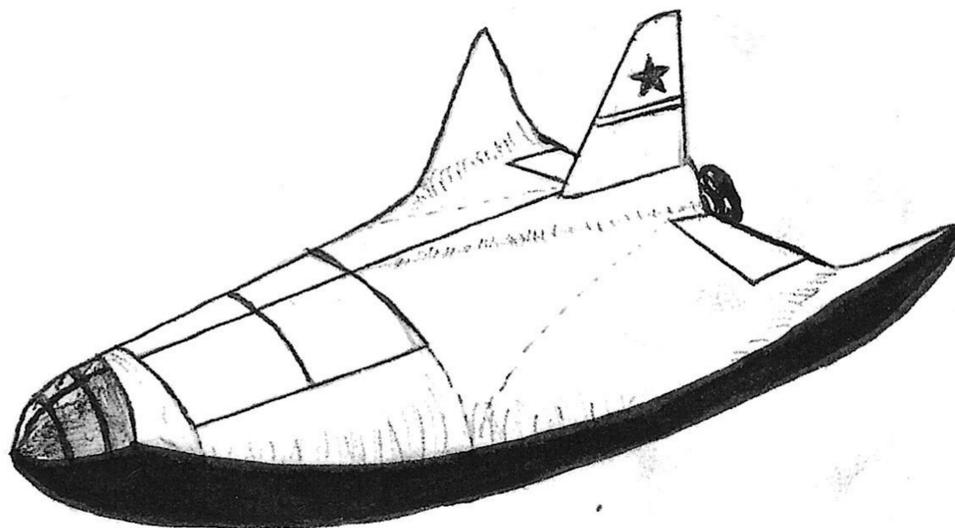
SPECIFICATIONS FOR RUSSIAN SPACE VEHICLES OF THE LATE 1980s

The Dvijenije Transportation Vessels

As soon as the Russians saw that the American Space Shuttle was a success they realised that without a craft of this type their space effort would lag severely behind. The original plan was to build a craft similar in size and performance to the American Orbiter. However the programme ran into similar problems to those encountered by the NASA team. The reusable engines proved unreliable and the ceramic tiles were found to disintegrate under extremes of temperature and pressure. Demands from the Kremlin caused the final result to be a very much scaled down Orbiter.

The Dvijenije (Traffic) is 34 tons in mass (Traveller notation), and is launched in a similar way to the Shuttle. The Dvijenije however, only having one on-board engine, needs only a small central tank. Like the Shuttle it has two booster rockets. After launch one clever feature of the design is that the main orbital maneuvering engines job is done by the main on-board engine. The craft has small thrusters similar to the Shuttle that make minor adjustments.

The problems encountered with the tiles caused the Russians to resort to the ablative heatshield used for capsules. This could only be replaced 10 times before damage was caused to the craft so the Dvijenije is now limited in the number of re-entries it is capable of achieving. In the atmosphere the vessel has proved to be somewhat unstable and there have been two accidents.



The Dvijenije has a cargo bay of 8 tons, capable of taking one of three types of 'payload' into orbit. Carrying the cargo unit she can transport satellites or supplies to the Russian space station Mat. In the personnel configuration 10 cosmonauts can be carried (this number not including the two pilots). There is also an attack

palate mounting a laser. However, this laser is in a fixed mount, so whilst it is being fired the craft must cease maneuvering, making it an easier target.

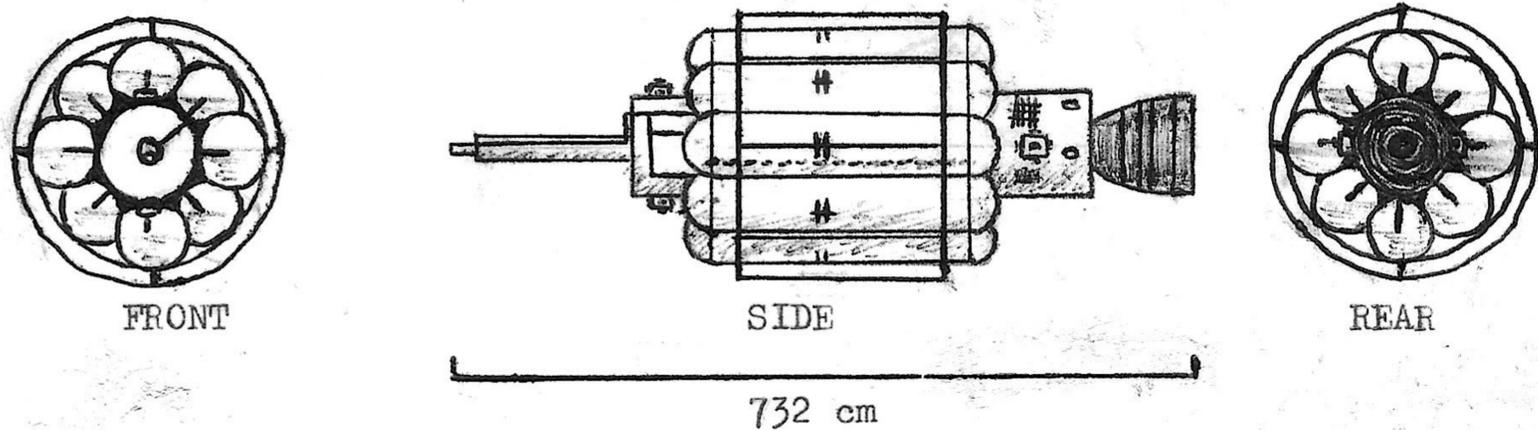
As the Dvijiye could not be re-used after about 10 missions for maximum usage it has to stay in space for as long as possible. Since Mat was placed in orbit in 1988 several Dvijiye have been based at the station, only returning to Earth when personnel or cargo need to be taken. Mat has the capability to change the palates in the Dvijiye.

The Krasnaya Zvezda Attack Satellites

From the early 1970s both Superpowers had put Hunter-Killer satellites into orbit and from that moment on craft of both sides started to have mysterious accidents. Over the years the number of mishaps increased until Russia and America both realized that the other side was systematically bumping-off their satellites as fast as they were doing it to their opponents. However, by 1981 the Russians had gained a definite lead in this undercover war due to their superior laser technology. The Space Shuttle gave the Americans the chance to counter-attack, but the weapons were not available. It was not until 1987 that a laser of any reasonable size was usable by the USA.

By this time the Russians had left the old, crude style of Hunter-Killer satellites behind and were launching the new class of Krasnaya Zvezda (Red Star) attack satellites. These were an integral part of the Mat project and they were formidable craft. A large rocket motor gave the K.Z. a degree of mobility to the craft that had not been attainable until then. The satellite was capable of returning under its own power to Mat for refuelling and damage repair.

A KRASNAYA ZVEZDA ATTACK SATELLITE



What put the Krasnaya Zvezda a cut above the rest was her laser, emitting in the blue and infra-red bands. The beam was the tightest and most powerful ever to be put in orbit and was designed with the idea in mind that it may one day have to be used against the American Space Shuttle, which was well protected behind its layers of heat absorbing tiles. With this possible combat a threat the K.Z. had a reflectorized surface and armour built in along with redundancy features. Power for the craft came from radio-active decay within a small reactor vessel, this being linked to several very efficient thermocouples.

When the Krasnaya Zvezda attack satellites were in service the Russians stepped-up their campaign of destroying American spy satellites. It was the effectiveness of these assaults that was to be a precipitating factor for the Orbital War.

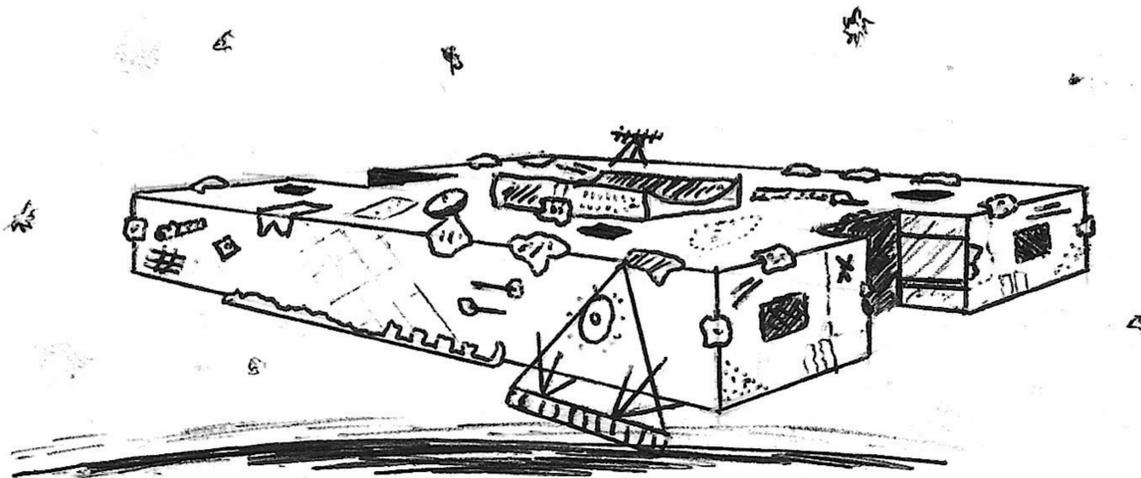
*****ALIEN*STAR*****

The Mat Military Space Station

The Krasnaya Zvezda attack satellites were capable of a great degree of mobility, but this required the use of much fuel and complex engines that required regular inspection and repair. The project would also benefit from having a control base in space. For the Russians the Mat (Mother) military space station answered these needs in all respects.

Mat was taken into space in pieces and assembled in space to become the largest man-made object ever to be placed in orbit. She had a complement of 17 crew, 5 being involved in satellite monitoring duty, 6 doing repair and other work on the K.Z.s and Dvijeniyes, and 6 being crew for the Dvijeniyes attached to the station. Due to lack of room a rota was worked out to allow everyone to sleep for 8 hours each day whilst needing only 6 zero-G hammocks.

Fuel for the craft relying on the Mat was delivered by robot rockets. Different palates were available for the Dvijeniyes. Mat was the first real space station.



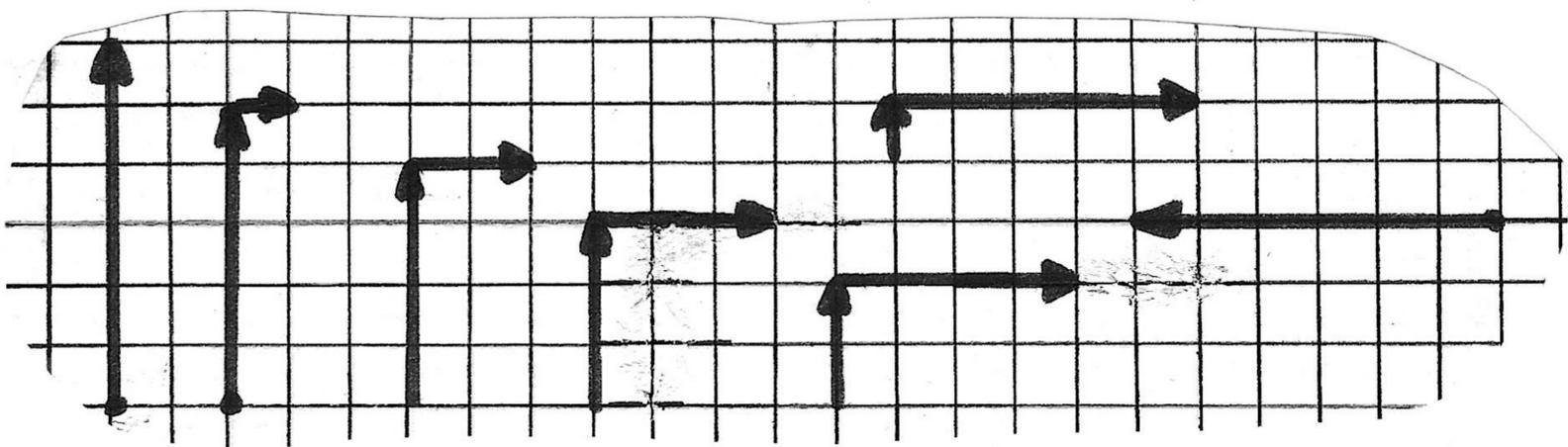
By 1989 the situation for the Americans was critical. They had almost no military satellites left in low orbits. Hence their surveillance of the USSR had fallen dramatically and it was a severe worry. There seemed only one solution. A laser palate was fitted to the Shuttles and so began a counter-attack that was to become known as the Orbital War.

The Scenarios

Attack on Atlantis

In 1990 the Space Shuttle Atlantis was on a E.O.S.N.F. (Enemy Observation Satellite Neutralization Mission). She had just destroyed a LowBird over the Indian Ocean when four K.Z.s appeared on the scene.

For this scenario some squared paper is useful. The Shuttle Atlantis must hold off the Russian craft for eleven turns before it can begin emergency re-entry. Craft maneuver in the following way. Let us take the example of a craft with maneuver 6. Maneuver numbers in this are not the same as those in conventional Traveller. This craft is capable of 6 acceleration units. This means that it can carry out the following vectors in various directions.



The total number of sides covered by acceleration vectors can be a maximum of 6, numbers under this being allowed. Next turn the craft retains the vector of its last move, adding onto it another if it so wishes. This maneuver system owes a lot to Book 2: Starships. It is however simpler, and can easily be used for conventional Traveller space battles. I remember with fond memories our Scoutship holding-off and destroying a Corsair over a gas giant. Its amazing what missiles can do to a ship of that size!

For this scenario give Atlantis a maneuver rating of 4 and the K.Z.s 5.

Combat: There are 3 ranges. Short is from 1 to 3 square sides away. Note here that craft cannot share the same point, and kamikaze raids are not allowed. They spoil the game for the Americans. Medium range is 4 to 11 sides away, whilst long is from 12 to 20. The shuttle needs 8+ to hit, -1 at medium and -3 at long. The Krasnaya Zvezda needs 6+ to hit, -3 at medium and -6 at long. When a craft is firing it may not add to its vector.

The turn sequence is alternate, moving first and then firing. Highest roll on 1D starts the game.

If a hit is scored roll 2D. For the shuttle: 2=fuel explosion, ship destroyed. 3-6=engine hits, -1 off maneuver rating. 7=turret damage, -1 to hit. 8=turret wreck. Cannot fire for the rest of the game. 9-11=tile shatter, one sixth chance of shuttle burning up on re-entry. 12=explosive decompression, crew killed.

For a K.Z. roll 1D. 1-3=engine damage, -1 on maneuver rating. 4=engine destroyed, craft becoming incapable of changing its vector. 5=weapon damage, -1 on firing. 6=fuel explosion, craft destroyed.

Decide randomly where the K.Z.s appear. Roll for each separately, 1-to the left, 2,3-infront, 4-right, 5-6-behind. They are each 20 + 2D squares away. They have an initial vector of 5 towards the shuttle. The shuttle is stationary. After 11 turns it will make re-entry and wins if it reaches the ground. Otherwise the Russians win.

Can you save Atlantis? Do you care? Have you read this far? When you have done this scenario you can throw as many shuttles against K.Z.s as you want, but any number over 15,000 shuttles is getting a leetle silly. As I have said the theory behind this game is convertable to conventional Traveller space combats.

The craft mentioned in this article are typical of what may be found around ye olde backward TL 7 planets. The discriptions given in this article can provide a basis on which a ref can build.

*****ALIEN*STAR*****

Letters

Dear Alien Star,

I've just finished reading your magazine, of which I bought both issues! Here are my comments on the magazine as a whole.

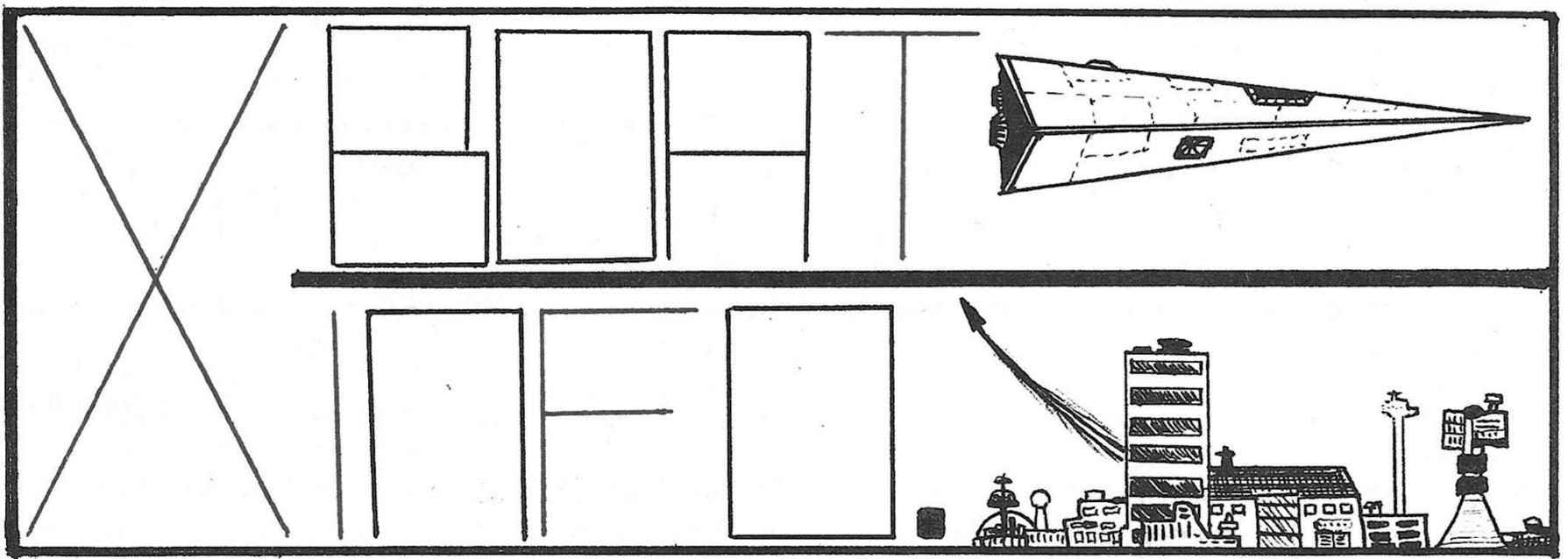
1. I think that having a page for letters is a good idea (especially if you print mine) and the same goes for monsters.
2. A feedback wouldn't go amiss.
3. Your news page is far-out.
4. A little too much detail on the Twilights Peak for players to read? (look at White Dwarf 24 and compare.Eds.)
5. I myself had alot of difficulty trying to work out my own spaceship designs from Book 5 and am still. Has anyone got any hints or is anyone in the same situation? HELP!!!!!!(watch the skies in AS4.Eds.)
6. Great! No unreadable Letraset. (we don't use the stuff.Eds.)
7. 2 adventures OK. 3 is a bit excessive. (anyone out there agree?)
8. Overall a very good mag!

Whynot open a Lucky the cat fan club, with autographed photos for its members?

John Dunnet, London.

If you've got anything to say about Traveller, Alien Star or life in general write in and voice your opinion. You will be reaching fellow players all over Britain and abroad. Do you agree with whats been said in these letters? What do you think of AS3? How can we improve AS? We'd like to hear your comments on the adventures we've published. How about accounts of them?

If you've got something to say write to either John Roberts or Robert McMahon at the addresses given. Don't just sit there. Do something!



Following last issue's enormous X-boat info feature, this issue has shrunk quite a bit, but this should be the average for future issues. If you want to write a review of anything to do with Traveller that hasn't been done yet in issues one and two just send it to me and I'll try to put it in the next issue.

Double Adventure 2: Across the Bright Face / Mission on Mithril

This is the second offering from GDW in the Double Adventure series and is presented in the same format as was Shadows/Annic Nova, the two scenarios being printed back to back. Both adventures are based around the idea of having the players make their way across the surface of a planet, meeting the problems posed by the complex and detailed random encounter and event tables.

In "Across the Bright Face" the players find themselves stranded on Dinom, in subsector Lanth and also revolt. They must make their way off-planet, avoiding their pursuers. Due to having a strange orbit (explained fully in the book) one pole of the planet is always turned to the sun, whilst the other is in permanent darkness. The Bright Face is what the players must cross, this not being a very hospitable place with much molten metal around.

I found this adventure interesting and believable. Although the ideas behind it are simple they fit together well. Information on geiger counters, instant print cameras (with flash attachment), attache cases, radio receiver/recorder/transmitters, reflectorized tarpaulins and return mirrors is included. All in all "Across the Bright Face" is a good adventure.

"Mission on Mithril" is not so good. As it stands it seems to be pointless and it requires quite a bit of work by the ref to give it a cutting edge. The players have to trek across Mithril/Sword to check out some enigmas left after the planetary survey. As in Bright Face the major part of the action comes from random event tables which work quite well. However, when the party gets to the places of interest after for thousands of miles these locations are extremely boring. In my opinion the ref has got to make sure a bit of action takes place to keep the players on their toes.

Special equipment mentioned in "Mission on Mithril" includes cable, atmosphere testers, laser pistols and medical kits. This adventure provides a reasonable basis but I think it needs a bit more work to bring it to its full potential.

The central pages of the book are given over to a description of the Horronon Tracked ATV, for use in vacuum, that features heavily in both adventures. My only criticism of this is the combat system. This tends to implicate that if you put enough energy into the weapon you are guaranteed of a hit, this seems very basic to me. I recommend either having the possibility of damaging the weapon when using large amounts of power or putting an upper energy limit on the weapon. Another criticism I have is that there are no rules for the ATV's pulse gun firing on characters.

Although there are several loopholes in the book they can be plugged by any ref worth his salt. Double Adventure 2 is not earth shattering in its brilliance but it is worth getting. It's from GDW and is widely available throughout the UK.

Game Designers' Workshop

£ 2.50

John Roberts.

Asteroid

This is a boardgame not especially intended as a Traveller game, but it should be of interest to most Traveller players and boardgamers in general. It is one of the Series 120 range of games, packaged in a "Traveller" sized box. A set of 120 die-cut counters, 8 geomorphic map boards and a twenty four page rule book make up the game which costs £ 4.50.

The game is based around the following plot: A computer in control of an asteroid mining station has gone mad and is now on a collision course with earth. In order to save the world from total destruction, a band of intrepid adventurers sets off to switch off the computer and activate self-destruct.

The board represents the interior of the asteroid base with a squared grid showing rooms, corridors and ventilation shafts. The boards are arranged by the computer player who places a variety of robots on it (unknown to the character player). This means that many different tactics can be employed - the board is not exhausted after a few plays unlike many boardgames.

The rules, although long, work well and are very simple once read through. A game is supposed to take two hours or less to play, but it has taken three frequently when I've played. Nevertheless the game is exciting and reasonably fast flowing. Another aspect of this game's flexibility is the selection of characters. Each character has a separate listing and the character player must select the band of adventurers to be used.

I am unsure about how the game is balanced. Out of the six or so games that I played against various persons and only once did the computer player win (me of course). Whether or not this shows an unfair advantage to the character player I cannot say, I would like to hear from other Asteroid players on this subject if anyone can summon the incredible effort and expense required to reply.

Overall, I would recommend this game to anyone wishing to play a reasonably simple and light-hearted game.

Games Designers' Workshop

£ 4.50

Robert McMahon

The Darthanon Queen

This is an "approved for use with Traveller" adventure presented in normal Judges Guild format, whether or not this is a compliment is left to the reader of this article. The booklet is A4 sized with 32 pages, there is no card cover and the paper is not as good as in the standard Traveller books but, it is presented in a readable, clear fashion.

The adventure has three separate scenarios centered around a type M merchant starship, "The Darthanon Queen". A passenger profile and deck plans are given, although the profile gives no details of equipment carried and the deck plans are virtually identical to those presented in the JG Traveller supplement, "Starships and Spacecraft". Very little imagination is shown in the design and the way in which the plans are printed means that a proper battle can not be fought using all decks at once.

The three scenarios are quite good in concept and could possibly work well with different deck plans. As they stand however they are let down by the poor deck plans which produce very boring combat actions.

For the price of £ 2.50 I would rather buy a different adventure book or design my own, this book will add little to a campaign that most referees could not do themselves.

Judges Guild

£ 2.50

Robert McMahon

Dark Star

This is a Traveller contact "microzine" to help Traveller players & clubs. For further details send a stamped addressed envelope to:

T.D. Graver,
69 Lakeside Road,
London W14 ODZ.

Alien Star will not be publishing any contacts sent to us, as we said in issue two. Instead we will be passing them on to Dark Star.

Games Day

Marc Miller will be there!!! So will Alien Star!!!! For those who don't know already Games Day will be a two-day event held on September 26th-27th at the Royal Horticultural Hall, which is somewhere in London.

Dragonmeet

August 8th, Chelsea Town Hall, King's Road, London. Yes, Alien Star will be here too, may be even issue four.

The TSR Games Fair

Although this convention is being run by TSR, there will be three organised Traveller games as well as plenty of opportunities to play other games, even D&D. Full details are in WD24 or are available from TSR Hobbies (UK) Ltd., The Mill, Rathmore Road, Cambridge, CB1 4AD. The whole thing will take place on three days July 10th, 11th and 12th at Reading University. All this and Alien Star again!

* * * * *

Letters

Dear Alien Star,

I like the idea and concept of Alien Star alot, especially as it's well presented.

The Imperium hit I liked alot, a small impromptu adventure, simple and realistic. Star Trader was also good; it was high time that the Merchant service should have been updated and expanded.

My only hesitation about Alien Star was "The Archimedes Project"; yet another ship class, with descriptions and plans. The situations were also a bit reminiscent of Darthanon Queen. Could I plead (on behalf of the other Trav GM's who won't be bothered to write in) for more adventures on planets/asteroids or space cities, but not on starships. All the official and approved Trav publications seem infatuated with starships!

Anyway, I really hope you keep on putting "Alien Star" out.

Yours,

Dan Lloyd, Cranbrook, Kent.

Dear Alien Star,

I originally bought two copies of Alien Star No. 1, one for myself and one for an American friend who is heavily into Traveller. I've deliberately delayed writing so I could get his comments, and I quote, "Alien Star magazine looks interesting, and I'll comment on the two adventures. 'The Imperium Hit'. You characters are blood thirsty. This seems the perfect situation for a 'Mission Impossible' (t.v. series) type of action. The plans being whisked away without anyone noticing it. 'The Archimedes Project' is a new spaceship design along with the now mandatory creature on the loose scenario. (O.K. We're getting the message. Eds.) I'd agree with the explanation for the loss of the Survey ships. One doesn't use Survey ships for cannon fodder even if there is friction between the services. Standard warships are far more efficient for combat. The comments on the Fourth Frontier War I've seen (spread through different Traveller comments) indicate a short not expensive war.."end quote.

In No.3 I liked the 'Traveller Class Fast Yacht'. Well written, even if it was as I suspected 'tongue-in-cheek' style. I'm sure there are a few readers out there counting their credits wondering if they can afford one. I certainly can't. The 'Night Spiral', another well written and thorough adventure, well worth playing. 'X-Boat Information'. Good column, much appreciated by me.

Cheers for now, keep up the fine standards, you've my support.

Colin MacMillan, Bristol.

Trillion Credit Squadron, Traveller Adventure 5

This is a 48 page adventure for use with Traveller and is unlike any other adventure yet published in one detail - it is not for player characters and does not use the principle of role-playing. Instead, players assume the roles of starfleet commanders and fight starship battles on a grand scale. The basic Traveller rules are not needed for this adventure, the only required book being Book Five, High Guard (the second edition) dealing with interstellar warfare.

The rules consist of three separate levels. Firstly, there is the Billion Credit Squadron. For this the player has one billion credits to design a fighting starfleet. Several possibilities are presented by using parameters. These include the tech level of the force, the minimum jump and manoeuvre, the refuelling requirements and the maximum pilot allowance. The latter is an ingenious idea - because the flight section of the navy is an elite, few individuals are qualified to fly starships and, come to that, fighters. Thus fleets have only a limited number of pilots, for example, many billion credit squadrons have only ten pilots available to them and some trillion credit squadrons only have 100 pilots. This reduces the overall number of starships, particularly smaller fighter types, which leads to a more streamlined, simpler battle when the separate fleets meet for the great battle. The Billion Credit Fleet scenario gives a good introduction to anyone new to High Guard design and combat, the fleets tend to be small sized and easy to handle.

The Trillion Credit Squadron is a different matter altogether, the fleet here has one thousand times more cash to spend than in the Billion Credit Squadron so the battles will be BIG with a capital B, I and G. These fleets will be able to enter several tournaments being organised in the next few years and should be a challenge to players' tactical and architectural ability.

The final part of Trillion Credit Squadron is the Islands Cluster Campaign, an interstellar war between scattered worlds using High Guard rules combined with an excellent set of campaign rules. Special rules are included to simulate the effects of time-lag warfare with fleet commanders having to communicate with slow courier ships and being forced to act with initiative and daring. Rules are also given for such finer details as revenue, production time, time-lag, refitting and repairs, maintenance, communication, refuelling, tactical intelligence, and surrender terms.

Additionally, two subsector are included with full details, history and astrography of them. The subsectors themselves are named the New Islands and the Old Islands, situated not too far from the Spinward Marches and although pretty isolated (Jump-6) looks like a good campaign setting, particularly for spies or mercenaries or even navy pilots looking for a bit of action. These subsectors are very different to the normal Imperial ones having been settled by Solomani Generation Colony ships from Terra and are largely inhabited by Solomani - the Solomani time scale is used too which, although difficult to work out Imperial campaigns from it adds atmosphere.

This booklet is not currently available from Games Workshop but when it is released it will probably retail for £ 2.50 and is a must for the interstellar warmonger (Dave Fletcher, tee-hee). This adventure is an excellent campaign background for those sick of the Spinward Marches and also excellent material for a postal campaign. I may soon be running a postal campaign using this booklet. All you need is a copy of Trillion Credit Squadron and the Second Edition of High Guard. This last bit is important as there are two editions available, the second edition is recognisable by the 1980 copyright and is now available from GW for £ 2.95.

Fighting Ships, Supplement 9

News has been received of the forthcoming publication of this supplement, 23rd July in the U.S. and quite a bit later here in the U.K. It contains full High Guard Stats, details and an external drawing of each. The main emphasis is on larger fleet ships and this supplement will come in very useful for resolving starship encounters with the Navy or for use with the Trillion Credit Squadron. Sounds good, I look to seeing it released.

ARMOURY

by John Roberts.

ORBITAL MINES

There are many planets within the Imperium that are interdicted to the average citizen. On these planets are the military bases and research stations so vital to the economy and the security of the Imperium. It is imperative that secrecy at these locations is fully maintained and the information that they hold does not fall into the wrong hands.

For a long time the burden of these routine security duties has fallen upon the Navy. For them it is an expensive business. Sometimes several ships are required to protect a planet, and this type of mission ties up craft and manpower that could be of great use in other areas. Navy scientists working near the centre of the Imperium, near Capital, have now come up with a weapons system to alleviate the Navy's problem. They have built the Orbital Mine.

The idea behind the weapon is a simple one. The Orbital Mine is in fact an automatic missile base. When a spaceship approaches a planet fitted with the system the sensors, onboard the platform in high orbit, detect its presence and activate a remote warning unit if the ship has not got the correct Imperial transponder functioning on it. Details about these transponders are on the Imperial Secrets Listings which are not available to the general public. Each planet's defense system has a different transponder code. The weapons platform is small in size and cannot be picked out from the background traces of rocks etc. so to protect its secret position a remote warning device is used. This informs the offending ship that it is about to enter an interdicted zone whilst displaying incorrect transponder information. If the ship continues on its route towards the planet it is informed that it is likely to be attacked by the automatic defense system if it proceeds any further.

When the infringing vessel gets within the preset planetary no-go zone the weapons platform is finally activated. Each unit has 12 missiles onboard, being capable of launching them at the rate of one every five minutes. These missiles home in on their targets and can accelerate at 8G. 4800 Kg of fuel are carried on the missile. (see bk.2, p 17, 2nd para from btm).

Each missile of this type costs 10,000 Cr each. The weapons platform prices 1,350,000 Cr whilst the remote warning unit is 985,000 Cr. T1 C.

The detection ranges for the systems sensors are 2 million miles. It is normal practise to set the no-go area as within 1 million miles of the planet. There is a manual over-ride on the weapon controllable from a ground station.

The Imperial Navy is very pleased with the new equipment. By placing 5 or 6 of these units in orbit around a planet most unwanted visitors can be kept away. The Orbital Mine is capable of holding off all but a full scale military assault.

*****ALIEN STAR*****

I've got a couple of points to make about the Armoury at this stage. The first is that the column is not just for new types of gun. It's for any new piece of equipment you can think of. Take the example of wire-cutters in No.1. The Armoury is for anything from tin-openers to complex weapon systems as described above.

My second point is why haven't YOU written to the Armoury yet? No ideas, eh? To start you off, why not design a vehicle? Describe it in detail, and maybe even draw it. How about a luxury ground car, a bullet-proof grav vehicle or an ATV bulk carrier? I'll publish the best ideas. Call it a mini competition. There will be the normal free issues for successful entries, and the title of 'Alien Star, vehicle designer of the year, 1106' for the glorious winner.



Hunter