

ALIENS



By Gali Sanchez & Michael Williams

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Introduction

To: All Star Team Personnel

From: Commander Malako

Re: Star Team Directive

Up to now, virtually all of our actions have taken place in the Wilderness Region. You should be familiar with the essentials of the systems here—the life forms, planetary climates (both natural and political), the important strategic sites. The nature of the Empire's wars and politics have forced us to look beyond our home and into the rest of the galaxy.

Up until now, intelligence reports from inside the empire have been sketchy and unreliable. However, we have uncovered a remarkable document that lends our previous information some validity, and also provides new insights into the worlds beneath the Imperial shadow.

According to the recorded ship's log of the *Eski Bettina*, light civilian vessel sailing out of Emniyet, the Xenophobes do exist—as rumored, as feared. They are in fact advancing, destroying the Imperial forces every time the two have met. A gigantic warship called the Death Orb (codenamed “Big Cheese”) is roaming the galaxy, carrying with it the power to destroy an entire planet.

To make matters more interesting, the log of the *Bettina* mentions planet systems well behind Imperial lines, where inhabitants maintain an active resistance against the Empire. Most of these rebels are unaware that either the Alliance or the Star Teams exist. Chances are that these aliens have encountered few of the races common in the Wilderness Region, with the obvious exception of Humans and Grolons (through the Empire), and the possible exceptions of Tarsans and Kleibors (from the time those races explored much of the galaxy). Perhaps we could aid these resistance fighters with our support. We certainly could benefit from theirs.

When all of these matters have taken into account, it is important that Star Team operations be expanded into other areas of the galaxy, and that such operations be expanded to include exploration as well as diplomatic missions, as well as the standard military and support missions.

Information for the Campaign Master

ALIENS is a source book. It is designed to give your STAR ACE® campaign more depth and flavor—more opportunities for fun. This book presents sixteen alien races (some familiar, some new), their physical descriptions, habitats, histories, outlooks, and common behaviors. Where it is relevant, the book provides descriptions of military tactics, vehicles, and other information to help “flesh out” various alien races. In most cases, it presents new characters for the STAR ACE story, as well as some insight into individual alien thought and character.

None of the information in this book is cast in cement.

Your ideas, additions, alterations, and omissions can only improve what is already good; nobody knows your campaign better than you do.

The Known Galaxy: A Brief Tour

The Map of the Known Galaxy (pp. 4-5) is divided into eight separate zones, each of which is politically, strategically, or physically different from the others. Naturally, the lifestyles and problems vary from zone to zone. A brief description of each separate zone follows below.

Wilderness Region. The Wilderness Region is key to any STAR ACE campaign; it serves as the center of Star Team activities. The *Star Team Wilderness Briefing Manual* describes the region, and the map from your original STAR ACE game shows its principal sites and location. This book, too contains material about various aliens from this particular section of the galaxy: the Crystal Clones, Crystal Folk, Kleibors, and Trakans.

Galactic Core. The Galactic Core is located in the central part of the galaxy. It contains the home planet of the Xenophobes and most of their expanding domain. There are really no other aliens in this particular sector; they have been destroyed and/or eaten by the Xenophobes.

Eventually, Star Teams may decide to enter this zone on some sort of recon mission, or simply to play havoc with whatever they find. But the likelihood of adventure in this particular sector is not very high.

Imperial Zone I. Imperial Zone I is heretofore unknown to the Star Teams. This zone contains the current front in the war between the Empire and the Xenophobes; visitors to this zone should expect to encounter either side. Both sides in this war, the Xenophobes and the Empire, consider the Star Teams to be hostile, and will fire on sight, shooting to kill. This zone is where the Star Teams recovered the *Eski Bettina*, and where the Death Orb is believed to be lurking.

The aliens in this zone who are not connected with the Empire or the Xenophobes are the Blinkers, Nautiloids, and Targa, any (if not all) of whom could become friendly with the visiting Star Teams, provided the Star Team members are careful in initial contacts.

Barbarian Humans inhabit the planet Zun. These Humans are much like the ancient Vikings from Earth in technology and weapons. They, too, can be friendly if approached properly.

Imperial Zone II. This zone represents the heart of the Empire. Cairn, the home of His Imperial Majesty Frederick Constantine II sits near the center of Imperial Zone II. Flying Star Team vessels through this zone is asking for trouble. It is the most heavily patrolled and protected area of the galaxy.

A great number of races are found in this zone. Humans can be found on Gon and Fyr, as well as Cairn. The inhabitants of Gon are as barbaric as those of Zun (see Imperial Zone I), while those on Fyr are more like the Humans on Cairn in technology.

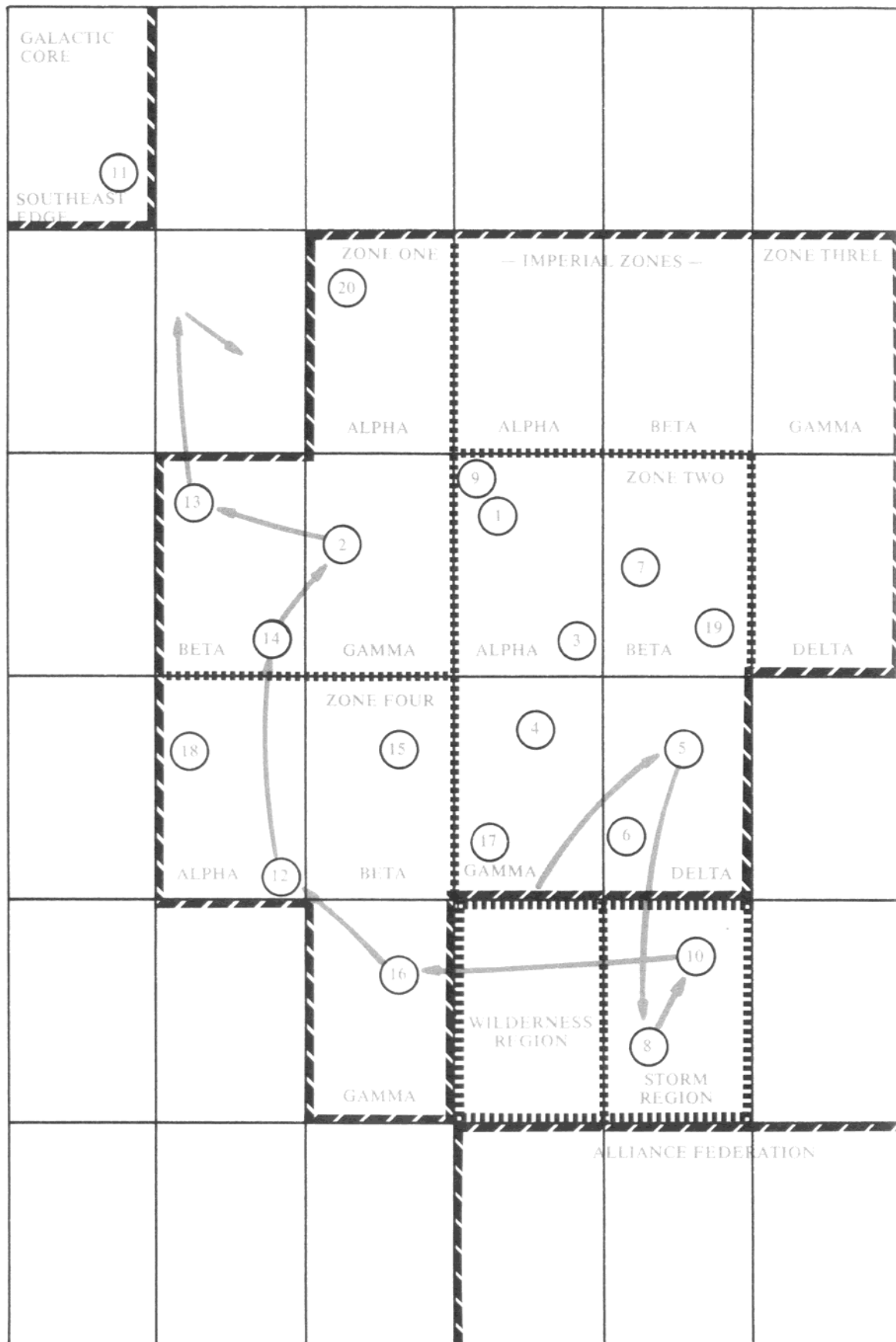
1. ALGON (Crassites) B2
2. BAJAHA (Blinkers) F2
3. CAIRN (Humans) O8
4. FAL'EL (Crassites) C5
5. FIFT (Gorlons) E5
6. FLARN (Gorlonas) J1
7. FYR (Humans) H2
8. GAZZI (Humanoles) J3
9. GON (Human barbarians) A1
10. KAKCHAK (Demoreans) D6
11. MUNG (Xenophobes) M7
12. NURM (Ferm) P9
13. PIATRA (Targa) C3
14. SEPA BLUE (Nautiloids) N7
15. SHERP (Human barbarians) Eo
16. SKALL (Hawkmen) G6
17. SRILTH (Gorlons) K2
18. THALASSA (Humans) F2
19. WARMF (Crassites) M7
20. ZUN (Human barbarians) C3

The map on this page represents the Imperial Area of the STAR ACE® universe. Each rectangle on this map is an expanse of space the size of the Wilderness Region. It can be used with the blank Region Map on the facing page to pinpoint the exact location of each planetary system mentioned in this book.

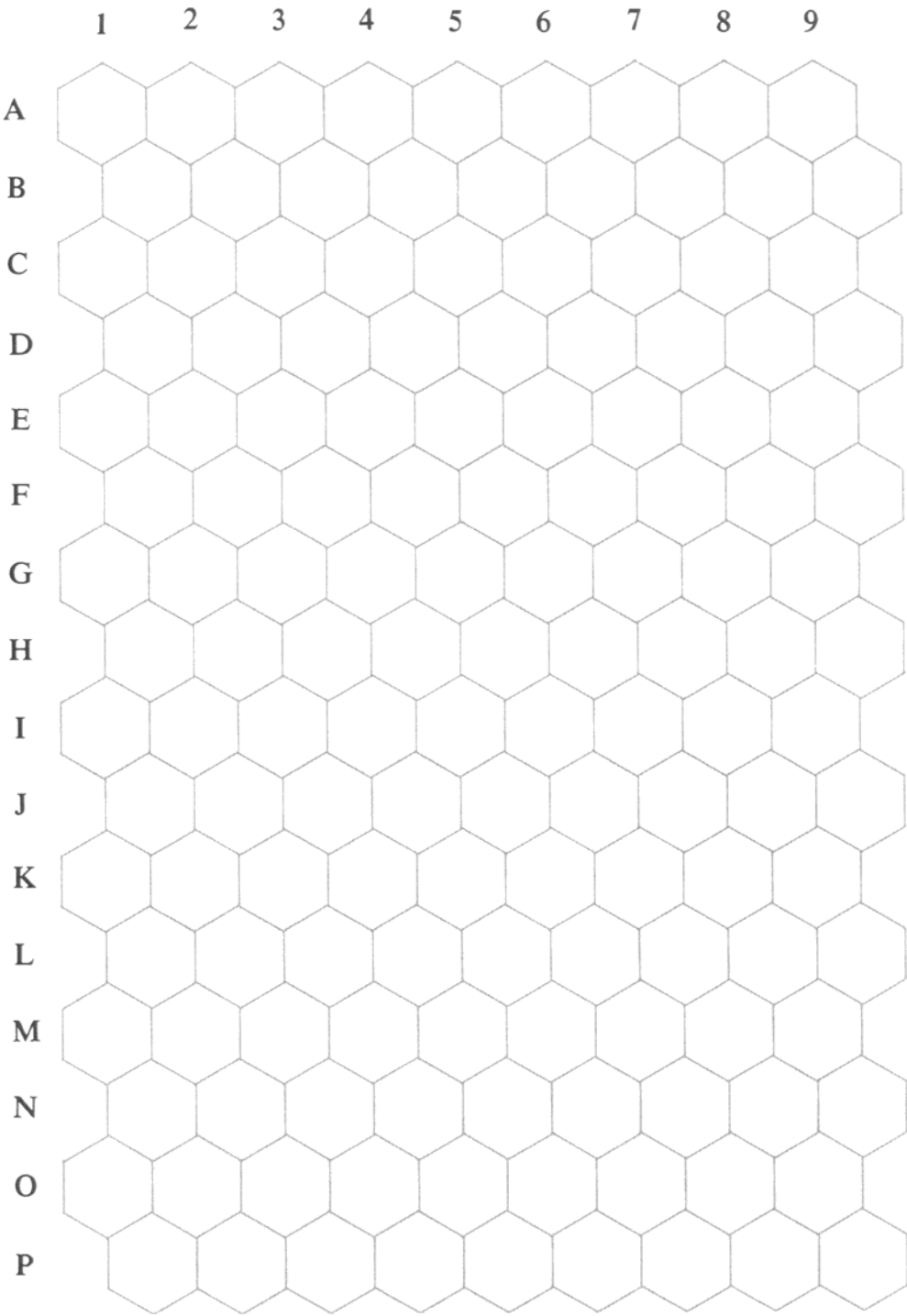
The Region Map represents each rectangle on the Area Map. Each hex on the Region Map is one GSS, exactly as in the STAR ACE game. The numbers at the end of the planetary listings on this page represent a location on this Region Map.

For instance the code "O8" next to Cairn stands for the eighth GSS in the "O" row. Gon, with a code of "A1", is in the upper left GSS of its region of space. If one looks at the Wilderness Region in these terms, the code for Ruoka is O9, while Wilderness is located at I6. Future Pacesetter releases will flesh out many of the other regions of space.

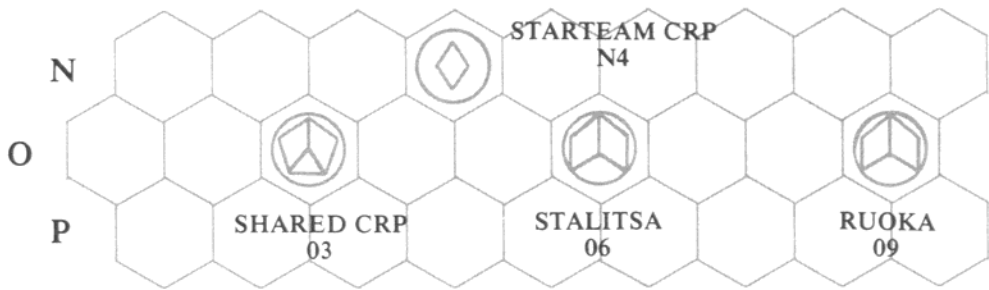
Permission is given for the CM to photocopy the blank Region map for personal use only.



STAR ACE[®] Mapping System



One Region



Gorlons, both green and brown, are found on their home planet of Srilth as well as the planets of Fift and Flarn. Crassites are native to the planets of Fal'el and Algon, but also inhabit Warmf.

Imperial Zone III. Imperial Zone III contains much unexplored territory, and has yet to be explored by Imperial forces, although militarily the Empire controls the zone.

One of the reasons why this area has remained unexplored is the pressure felt by the Empire—from the Xenophobes on one side and the Alliance and Star Teams on the other. In such a situation, the Empire has not seen fit to go out of the way and explore faraway places, while danger is nearby.

The Alliance and Star Teams have never found any passage through the galactic storms that divide this region from their own. Indeed, they believe the storms are a solid mass. They have no idea that there is alien life behind the storms, nor that there are ways to pass through the storms and encounter these life forms.

The Xenophobes have to cross Imperial Zones I and II to get to Imperial Zone III. They have not done this yet, but obviously they are working on it.

Imperial Zone IV. This particular zone represents perhaps the most vulnerable spot in the Empire. Here the Xenophobes pose a constant threat, and the area is actually closer to the Alliance and Star Teams than to the

controlling Empire. It is highly likely that Star Teams will find Xenophobes as well as Imperial patrols in this area, although not as many of either as in Imperial Zone I.

This is also an area abounding in life both beautiful and bizarre. Nurm is the home world of the extremely alien Ferm. The Alliance believes there may be an active resistance movement against the Empire on Nurm. Sherp is home to more barbaric Humans. Skall, on the other hand, is the home of the long-forgotten Hawkmen, aliens who may be used as player characters and members of the Star Teams.

Storm Zone. This zone is completely unknown to outsiders. The Alliance and Star Teams believe the galactic storms form a solid wall, beyond which is probably vast empty stretches. The Empire, too preoccupied with troubles closer to home, has yet to explore the area.

Should the Star Teams explore this area, they may find a passage through the storm—a backdoor into the Empire. However, they will have to deal with the Humanoles on Western Gazz as well as the Demoreans, who don't want to belong to any side.

Alliance Zone. The Alliance Zone simply contains all of the planet systems which are already friendly with the Star Teams. While there is not much adventure to be found here, the zone is home to the Alliance, the reason for Star Team existence.

RACIAL MODIFIERS CHART

Race of acting character	Race of Reacting NPC															
	Human	Traka	Clone	Klbr.	Cras.	Tar.	Gor.	Zoe	Hnle.	Dem.	Hawk.	Ferm	Naut.	Blkr.	Trg.	Xen.
Human	0	-05	-10	+20	0	+10	-20	0	-05	-15	-10	0	-10	+05	-10	*
Traka	+10	0	-05	+15	0	+10	-05	+05	-10	-10	0	0	-05	+15	+05	*
Kleibor	+10	+05	-20	0	0	0	-25	+10	+05	-15	+05	0	-05	+05	-05	*
Crystal Clone	-10	+10	0	0	0	0	-10	+10	0	0	0	0	0	-15	0	*
Crassite	-15	-20	-20	-20	0	-10	+05	-10	-10	-10	-20	0	-20	-05	-20	*
Tarsan	+10	-10	0	0	0	0	-20	+10	0	-05	+15	0	0	-10	0	*
Gorlon	-20	-20	-05	-25	0	-10	0	-10	0	-05	-20	0	-20	-05	-20	*
Zoe	-10	-05	0	+05	0	-10	-15	0	+05	-05	-10	0	-05	-15	0	*
Humanole	0	-10	0	+10	0	0	0	-05	0	0	-05	0	-05	0	-10	*
Demorean	-05	-10	0	0	0	-05	0	-10	0	0	-05	0	0	-10	-10	*
Hawkmen	+05	+10	0	+20	-15	+15	-15	0	0	-10	0	0	0	-05	+05	*
Ferm	0	-15	0	0	0	0	-05	-10	0	-10	-05	0	0	-15	0	*
Nautiloids	0	-15	0	0	-15	0	-15	-10	0	-10	0	0	0	-05	0	*
Blinkers	0	+10	+15	+10	-05	0	-05	-05	0	0	+05	0	0	0	+05	*
Targa	0	-05	0	+05	-15	0	-15	-05	+10	0	+05	0	-05	-10	0	*
Xenophobes	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#

Abbreviations: Klbr.=Kleibor; Cras.=Crassite; Tar.=Tarsan; Gor.=Gorlon; Hnle.=Humanole; Dem.=Demorean; Hawk.=Hawkmen; Naut.=Nautiloid; Blkr.=Blinker; Trg.=Targa; Xen.=Xenophobe.

NOTE: Crystal Folk always have a Personality of 60 when they are the acting character, and a Personality of 80 when they are the reacting NPC.

* Xenophobes make a general Willpower check when encountering any other race and attack or run away as explained in the chapter on Xenophobes.

Because of the nature of Xenophobe behavior as explained in *, there are no other reactions to alien races.

The Kleibor



It is almost inevitable that you will come into contact with the Kleibor race during your service in the Star Teams. It is likely that you will spend some time on Emniyet and if so, no doubt in a bodrum. Therefore it is important to understand, recognize, and respect the culture of this allied alien race.

Emniyet: Home of the Kleibor

Population: 2 Billion (not including occupying forces)
Capital: Kamp Bas Sehir
Major Urban Centers: Kamp Mal, Kamp Safa
Major Military Bases: Kamp Ordu (Imperial), Kamp Altinda
Economic Base: Raw material exports (wartime tributes)
Climate: Arctic

Points of Interest on Emniyet

The arctic sameness of Emniyet's surface offers few points of interest, especially for those of us from more temperate planets; however, this icy world has developed a various and complex culture—a culture threatened by Imperial domination. To understand the strange situation on Emniyet, it helps to look at the occupied capital, Kamp Bas Sehir,

and compare life there with that in the traditional Kleibor *bodrum*.

Once an underground network of caves containing quiet storefronts, productive mines, bustling government offices, and numerous happy bodrums, Kamp Bas Sehir is now a grim city under siege. Human troops under the direction of Imperial Viscount Ligl have modified the capital to reflect the needs of a fortress city.

Based upon resistance intelligence, the Star Teams have reason to believe that the capital city of Emniyet is garrisoned with some 45,000 Imperial Troops, over 2/3 of the entire planetary occupation force. The garrison includes one brigade of Quartermaster Corps and one of Medical Corps, a division of Engineer Corps and of Imperial Command Enforcement (ICE). Air Defense, Armor, and Infantry units make up the rest of the force. (See Military Organization Chart, *Star Team Wilderness Briefing Manual*, p.4.) This large garrison is supposed to counter Emniyet's huge resistance and to supervise the widespread construction of human dwellings in the area.

What once was an easygoing, quiet Kleibor city has now absorbed the tension of an armed camp. The Kleibor go about their business, dealing with the Imperial humans only when necessary. On some rare occasions, Kleibors play practical jokes upon the occupying forces, using their noetic abilities. For the most part, however, they are quiet, even subdued, except in the shelter of their own bodrums.

The Bodrum

The word “bodrum” refers to both the physical dwelling of the Kleibor and the inhabitants of that dwelling. In order to understand the bodrum’s importance, one must first understand how it came into being in the hostile environment of Emniyet.

The entire planet of Emniyet is covered by ice and snow. Of course, the polar areas are the coldest; therefore, the population centers are located in equatorial Emniyet. Even in this “milder” climate, the temperatures are almost always subzero. Most of the food in the bodrum is imported, often brought in from other planets in exchange for minerals, or purchased with the substantial funds brought in by the winter sports vacation packages available from travel agencies throughout the region.

The Kleibor civilization, much older than that of the humans, older perhaps than man himself, never went above ground for long periods of time. As a result, the Kleibor evolved not only their natural physical defenses against the cold, but also the ability to accomplish physical tasks through the use of mental (or “noetic”) energies.

The cold and stark surface of the planet has influenced not only the physical and mental characteristics of the Kleibors, but their psychology and philosophy as well. Kleibors have grown to prefer simplicity in both conduct and values. To them, there is nothing better than sitting in the *evoda* (the main room of the bodrum), the *bebekhim* (children) playing safely downstairs and out of the way, while the adults drink ice-cold *pivo* and watch a good game of dort on the 3-D hologram. Of course, the household chores (including preparing the delicious bodrum meals) are done noetically while watching dort.

The typical bodrum contains up to 40 Kleibors, who are not necessarily related. In fact, it is customary for the bodrum to take in lonely or needy Kleibors—for that matter, to take in members of any race, provided the newcomers are friendly, honest, and good company. After all, when the great cold prevents anyone from faring out of doors, nobody wants to be cooped up with a complainer.

The *evoda* is the center of bodrum life—a combination living room, library, game room, and dining room. In typical Kleibor fashion, its furniture emphasizes comfort rather than looks. Even the alien visitor to Emniyet, who enters the *evoda* to find well worn furniture, scattered toys, and stacks of games piled in the corners, cannot mistake the fact that the Bodrum is a home in the most real sense.

Although Kleibors eat three meals a day in between constant snacking, mealtime in the bodrum is an event. Adults and *bebekhim* come bounding into the *evoda* from all directions, everyone anxious to eat. Children always eat with adults, and everyone enjoys the party atmosphere. The sounds are those of laughter and storytelling, as gigantic servings of mashed potatoes, roast beef, vegetables, and hot biscuits levitate around the room, carefully avoiding midair collisions until they find their intended plate (by the way, Kleibors eat about the same things as

This thing on?

*Emniyet, Oh Emniyet,
You're the bestest planet yet!
Emniyet, my Emniyet,
You're the besstest plaaannet yet!*

That's the way the song goes, the way they sing it back in the bodrum, or, with their right forepaws placed above their heart, before the bounders rush out into the dort arena. It's a beautiful song a *capella* or even without music; people tell me I sing the planetary anthem right nice myself.

'Scuse me if I'm snuffling a bit right now. Never do like to leave home, but Shamba seems like an awful long way and really dull because of why I have to go there. Deposited the last of the *bebekhim*, the cubs, at home after they'd enjoyed their month at Kaptan Sahka's Slush Kamp for Heavy Set Youngsters, where I'm head counselor. Usually I'd get a chance to relax on Stalitsa: even though it's far away, lots of my buddies hang around there over the vacation.

But nuh-uh! Gotta go to Shamba, to a convention that takes away all my party and *pivo* time. Gotta go to some seminar about “Crafts and Noncompetitive Games for Young Kleibors.” Sounds like something a Tarsan would think up. Noncompetitive! Why do you think right-thinking folks put a scoreboard above the dort arena? And is noncompetition any way to prepare a *bebekh* for that day when he has to leave the bodrum? I didn't know competition from a dreaded Beta Red Particle Beam when I made my first trip off-planet. Bought half ownership in the Presidential Palace on Stalitsa for two chips—two chips, you hear? Thought it was some kind of deal, but now I'm beginning to wonder if it was on the up and up. I mean, I've been there six times, and they haven't even let me in. I think I may have been a victim of non-competition. Being too cooperative and all. You tell me, but I won't listen to some kind of sensitive foolishness anymore.

Still, the camp gave me a few chips of spending money—just enough to get by in a cheap Shamba hotel for three days, if you figure in only four meals a day. Old Balik's luck, guess you could call it: trapped between seminar and starvation.

But maybe there's a way out of this. You know, the camp would probly thank me if I could find... some way to pay my way into the seminar and... save them all that money. I got this competition thing figured out now. Can hold my own against those gamblers on Stalitsa, I betcha. Save the organization a bundle. And I'm not gonna buy in on any Presidential Palace, either.

Not unless I can get 'em below a chip.

humans, only in ten times the quantity). Occasionally, of course, some mischievous diner redirects a plate of the softest or stickiest food into another's face, or makes the plate hover just outside the reach of his hungry victim: such pranks are frequent, but never cruel. Every means ends with a dessert—any dessert, as long as it is as sweet as it is massive.

When it is time to retire, the Kleibors leave the evoda, following a maze of tunnels back to sleeping quarters known as the *yatak*. The *yatak* contains three sleeping rooms, one for the parents and one each for the male and female *bebekhim*. Since it is not uncommon to find four or five families living in the same *bodrum*, each *yatak* has its own private area.

In addition to its *evoda* and its *yatakhim*, a typical *bodrum* has bathrooms, storage rooms, and a single large kitchen. A large *bodrum* has three or four bathrooms; these, however, are small compared to the vast amount of storage space.

The typical *bodrum* has 5-50 storage rooms, each filled to its rafters with items the Kleibors could not bear to throw away. Unfortunately, Kleibors cannot bring themselves to throw away anything; as a result, the storage rooms are cluttered, apparently in a state of utter chaos. Somehow, amidst this madness, even the smallest *bebek* knows where everything is and can find almost any stored item in a matter of minutes.

Kleibors are family-oriented, and the larger the family the better. At the center of Kleibor happiness, of Kleibor life, are the *bebekhim*. The adults tend to be hard workers who often bring their work home with them. Household chores, cooking, and childrearing are usually shared equally by the males and females, although usually the female makes most of the decisions and runs the household. It is a lucky thing for the culture that Kleibor females tend to be loving, nurturing, responsible, and hard-working, both as spouses and as mothers.

At the same time, Kleibor females are hardly the long-suffering angels that their duties in the *bodrum* might lead one to believe. Just ask any Kleibor male who has shown up late from work with a few too many mugs of *pivo* under his belt. There is no sound a Kleibor husband fears more than a long loud EEEEEHHAAAAA! when he stumbles and sloshes through the front door to the *bodrum* in the early hours of the morning.

Kleibor of Note

Chief Commander Amca Dondurma

STR	70	DEX	50	AGL	70
WPR	70	PER	70	PCN	70
STA	70	UMS	70	WNDS	15

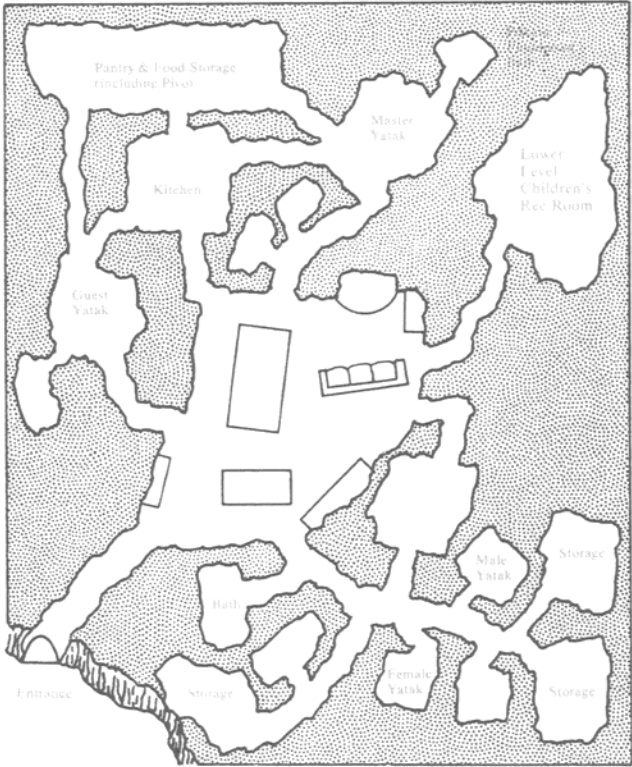
Skills: Spacecraft Piloting, Vet, 94; Noetic Defense Mode, Ace, 125; Ignore Pain, Ace, 125; Levitation, Ace, 125; Noetic Detection, Ace, 125; Shock, Ace, 125; Telekinesis, Ace, 125; Thought Probe, Ace, 125; Laser Rifle, Ace 105; Wrestling, Vet, 100

Commander Amca Dondurma is unusually large, even for a Kleibor. He stands 13½' tall, his weight proportionate to his height. Dondurma's power is far more than physical, and it extends far beyond the doors of his own *bodrum*: he is also the leader of the *Ayikhim*, the resistance forces on *Emniyet*. He personally oversees all military actions in the northern hemisphere of *Emniyet*. Commander Guney is the commander in the southern hemisphere and reports directly to Dondurma.

The guerrillas in the *Ayikhim* love Commander Dondurma and are fiercely loyal to him; such devotion is especially important to this particular resistance movement, given the vastly superior manpower of the Imperial Occupational Force. To the *Ayikhim*, morale, surprise, and strategy must take the place of numbers.

Given the special situation of the Kleibor resistance, the *Ayikhim* could not have chosen a better commander: Dondurma is unsurpassed in both military tactics and in throwing parties (the latter is a classic Kleibor trait, but Dondurma has raised it to an art form).

Dondurma's military genius has enabled the small, well organized bands of the *Ayikhim* to destroy Imperial outposts, convoys, and communication centers throughout the northern hemisphere of *Emniyet*. The Kleibors tend to hit their targets quickly, using surprise to create confusion, while Dondurma himself uses his noetic Thought Probe skill to anticipate each movement of the enemy, including any effort to cut off retreat. The only way to counter the Kleibor advantage is through sheer numbers of Imperial troops.



These tactics have made Amca Dondurma almost legendary among both the Kleibors and their Imperial overlords. Reports of Dondurma's troops attacking filter in from everywhere. Sometimes Imperial troopers "sight" Commander Dondurma on different sides of the planet at the same time, in impossible places—probably even their dreams. Nothing strikes a more profound terror in the hearts of Imperial troopers than a few polar bears, armed with PPRs, bounding over the horizon and screaming EEEHAAAA!

Dondurma's military genius is no more famous than his love of parties. Nobody in the universe enjoys a frosty cold mug of pivo more than Dondurma, and the enjoyment increases with each frosty mug that follows. What is really delightful about the Kleibor is that most people don't realize that he is actually looped until he falls asleep in midsentence. The Kleibor will fall asleep while standing up, while engaged in conversation, in short, at just about any given moment. Of course, when Dondurma falls asleep, he snores loudly, rattling windows and doors.

Before he falls asleep, however, Dondurma is the life of the party. His humor tends to be coarse and crude, but the jokes are told with such unbridled enthusiasm that he usually causes the aptry to crack up in wild laughter. He particularly enjoys watching Dort with all of his "little buddies" (a term that he uses for all of his male friends).

Many are the stories told of Dondurma caught in embarrassing or compromising situations. Even Dondurma himself enjoys telling the stories, his deep bellowing laughter echoing through the halls of the bodrum as he recounts the events of many a half-forgotten night.

One of these stories in particular has found a place in Kleibor mythology. Once, after an especially dangerous recon mission, Amca returned to his bodrum, intent on unwinding and opening up a few pivos. Finally relaxed, weaving through the warmth and pivo fumes, Dondurma decided to take a bath and go to bed. The big Kleibor made his way into the bathroom, drew the bathwater, gently eased himself into the steaming water with a good book, and promptly fell asleep as the water continued to run.

Dondurma's wife awoke to splashing and laughter, astonished to see one of her bebekhim swimming by the bed. The water had overflowed and poured into the bodrum, making its way through the tunnels and eventually

flooding the yatakhim of the Kleibors. Dondurma's wife waded into the bathroom and shut off the water. Then cuffing her husband and shouting at him, she assured him that this little lapse would not go unpunished. Dondurma's only defense was a shrug and a brief excuse: "It coulda happened to anybody."

The story is still told years later, always accompanied by the rumble and roar of Kleibor laughter. Since its first telling, the standard Kleibor excuse for anything that goes wrong, no matter how outrageous, is to shrug the shoulders and say, "It coulda happened to anybody."

Chief Commander Dondurma is completely trustworthy—the strongest ally of the Star Teams on the planet. He personally recommends promising Kleibors to the Star

Teams, and every one of his recommendations has worked out well. He has sheltered downed Star Team pilots on Emniyet while arranging for their safe escape. He has also provided invaluable intelligence information and supported Star Team sorties with distracting ground action.

According to Dondurma, the Ayikhim contains 6,000 "regulars"—actual fighters—with a supporting network of about 2,000 bodrums. The regulars have similar skills as those developed in the Star Teams. When members of the Ayikhim distinguish themselves in the line of duty, they have one of two options: to continue to rise through the ranks of the Ayikhim, or to be recommended by Dondurma to become a member (Horizon Watcher) of the Star Teams. Because of the commander's good judgment and loyalty, his

recommendation makes the candidate a virtual shoe-in.

The network of bodrums is equivalent to a network of safe houses—a sort of "underground railroad." These bodrums represent Kleibor families that do not directly enter the fighting as warriors, but do provide food and shelter to the Ayikhim as well as to Star Team members.

When on Emniyet, all of Dondurma's orders are to be obeyed as if they were your base commander's orders. Show every courtesy to the Ayikhim if you should ever encounter them during a mission on Emniyet. Finally, have a good time but be very careful should you attend a party in the company of Commander Amca Dondurma. Whether you are a "little buddy" or not, the Star Teams will hold you accountable for your actions.



The Traka



Stalitsa: Home of the Traka

Population: 4 Billion

Capital: Spalnya

Major Urban Centers: Pivo, Tabak, Igra, Pit

Major Military Bases: Svyas (Star Team), Vivos (Alliance)

Economic Base: Tourism, Crime

Climate: Temperate

Points of Interest on Stalitsa

Spalnya

Spalnya is known as “the deserted city,” because it lacks the gaudy nightlife of other more popular locations that dot the planet. Planetary authorities decided that the wild and varied entertainment facilities created too much of a distraction, and as a consequence, the everyday business of the Stalitsan government was slowing to a standstill. Even visiting diplomats would rush through meetings to have more time to spend at the fun spots. So a brand new city was built to be Stalitsa’s capital—a city without nightlife, purposely located far away from other urban centers.

Spalnya contains almost all the official government

buildings: the stately Presidential Palace with its rough granite catlike carvings, home of President Scharf; the Stalitsan administrative buildings such as the federal treasury and the federal jail; and finally, the various embassies. But for the most part the streets are deserted, except for those people who are required to report for work. Even the foreigners stationed in Spalnya prefer to get out of town to more exciting places as soon as possible.

Pivo

The Federal Government of Stalitsa has long been concerned that the planet continues to bear a reputation of being too wild for most visiting alien tourists. In an attempt to clean up the image of Stalitsa, the government remodeled and “cleaned up” the great city of Pivo. Stalitsan money imported Crystal Clone engineering and labor, and a modern sprawling resort city arose from the grimy foundations of Old Pivo.

However, Trakans will always be Trakans: although Pivo is modern and clean, the major tourist attractions remain gambling and entertainment. Most of the major acts known throughout the Wilderness Region—everyone from Zoe acrobats to May Zapat impersonators—are booked into the various hotel resorts. While Pivo is still not a family resort center, its facelift has helped Stalitsa’s tourist trade considerably.

Although there has never been any hard evidence presented on the subject, it is a widely accepted belief that Pivo is currently run by the leaders of the Black Market.

Tabak

Tabak is the second largest city on the planet. It is also the city least visited by foreigners, for it is little more than a gigantic slum: the Trakan way of life takes its toll in many forms, and Tabak is one heavy consequence.

When Trakan street hustlers become too old to function on the streets, when Trakan singers lose their voice, entertainers their looks, or (as is most common) when folks simply lose their money in a bet, they end up in Tabak.

Most people are afraid to venture into Tabak: it is as cutthroat as its people are desperate. Still, given the right circumstances, the city can be an adventure in itself, and many lost skills and talents can be recruited cheaply.

Igra

The city of Igra is one of the older resort cities of Stalitsa. It has an active downtown alive with all kinds of entertainment. The city is not quite as wild as Pit, but all Star Team members should be aware of its one most important feature.

The office complex of Lyef Vor, reputed to be the regional head of the Black Market, is located in Igra. The office is in a villa-style building, guarded better than most Star Team outposts.

Pit

Known as “the Pits” from Ruoka to Asfalia and beyond, this city earned Stalitsa its reputation as the wildest place in the region. The Pits is located right on the edge of the Vivos Alliance Naval base and caters to the military on leave as well as to scores of aliens who fly in daily.

The Pit Zone is the downtown area of the Pits, and contains only entertainment establishments: all things from restaurants to the universally acclaimed Stalitsa pleasure houses. The entertainment can be superb; although most of the major entertainers stay away from “the Pits,” up and coming acts abound and are far less expensive than in other cities. The food is delicious; the Galodni and the Vechina are both highly recommended for their food as well as their atmosphere.

On the other hand, the clubs in the Pit Zone range from fairly good to absolutely terrible. Many of the night spots are simple rip-off joints. They offer no cover charge, but inside, the cost of a mug of pivo (the favorite beverage in the galaxy, originally from the city by the same name) is 10 times what it should be. Furthermore, the local law enforcement is usually on hand to arrest complainers for “disturbing the peace.” And treatment at the hands of the

Well, I like to never got off Stalitsa, but here I am back in deep space, some kind of Imperial spacecrafts after me for I don't know what kind of reason.

By the way, I'm not alone here. Got me a new buddy down in the Pit on Stalitsa. Named Guba. I got him off the hook, so he's letting me off another hook. This is how it happened.

I was walking through the Pit Zone minding my own business, and ran into this little Trakan on the street corner. He had a folding table set up, and he had put three shells and a little ball on that table. See, he had this neat new game where he put the ball under one of the shells, then scooted those shells all around the table. Then you get to guess which shell the ball's under.

I thought that sounded like a fair enough bet, so I started out by betting the standard five Imperials. Kinda owe Guba 1600 chips now, so he kinda owns my spacecraft. Was gonna keep it on Stalitsa, too, if it hadn't been for what happened next.

Come to think of it, maybe my luck turned when that fat Crassite came around the corner, about half a dozen Gorlons in tow. Guba took off running, leaving the shells, the ball, the table, and the deed to my ship. I ducked behind a lamppost, figuring I should play it safe, but they saw me anyway.

Didn't pay attention to me, though, because they were after Guba for something. The Gorlons started lighting up the streets with PPRs, and even though it looked like I was in the wrong place at the wrong time, I really couldn't let the little fella get all shot up, specially owing him so much money and all. After all, if Guba was a goner, I wouldn't know who to pay.

So all of a sudden, Guba starts to run down an alley and, quick as you please, finds himself floating over the roof of a building. I was planning to lift him up and drop him in the hovercar I'd rented, which was parked on the other side. I kinda missed, but it did help him lose the guys who were chasing him, even though I found him conked out on the sidewalk when I got to the car.

Now here we are off planet, and Guba's enemies are after us. Seems they claim he cheated them out of a few chips in a card game, but I don't believe them. I mean, why would he have to cheat, when he's so good at that shell game he made up?

Guba woke up about an hour ago. Says he could hardly believe his luck when he thinks about what happened. Calls me his *riba*.

My pleasure, little buddy.

Pit Police? Well that's best left to the imagination. The best thing to do in this situation is pay for the pivo and leave.

At any given moment, "the Pits" probably has the largest *transient* population on Stalitsa: virtually every race found in this part of the galaxy can be found visiting or working in Pit. Aside from scheduled flights into the city, at least 10 chartered passenger liners, packed to capacity, arrive every day from Emniyet alone.

Trakans of Note

Garyet "Paper Boy" Gazyeta

STR	78	DEX	74	AGL	78
WPR	58	PER	62	PCN	72
STA	52	UMS	78	WNDS	13

Skills: Boxing, Ace, 132; Dagger, Ace, 131; Bargaining, Ace, 115; Gambling, Vet, 96; Theft, Vet, 98.

Paper Boy is a 30-year-old Trakan from the Pit Zone. He stands about 5' 8"—rather short for a Trakan—and is quite slim. He could easily pass for 18. His dress varies, but he always wears a black wool knit cap, a watch chain, and sunglasses, no matter the temperature or time of day.

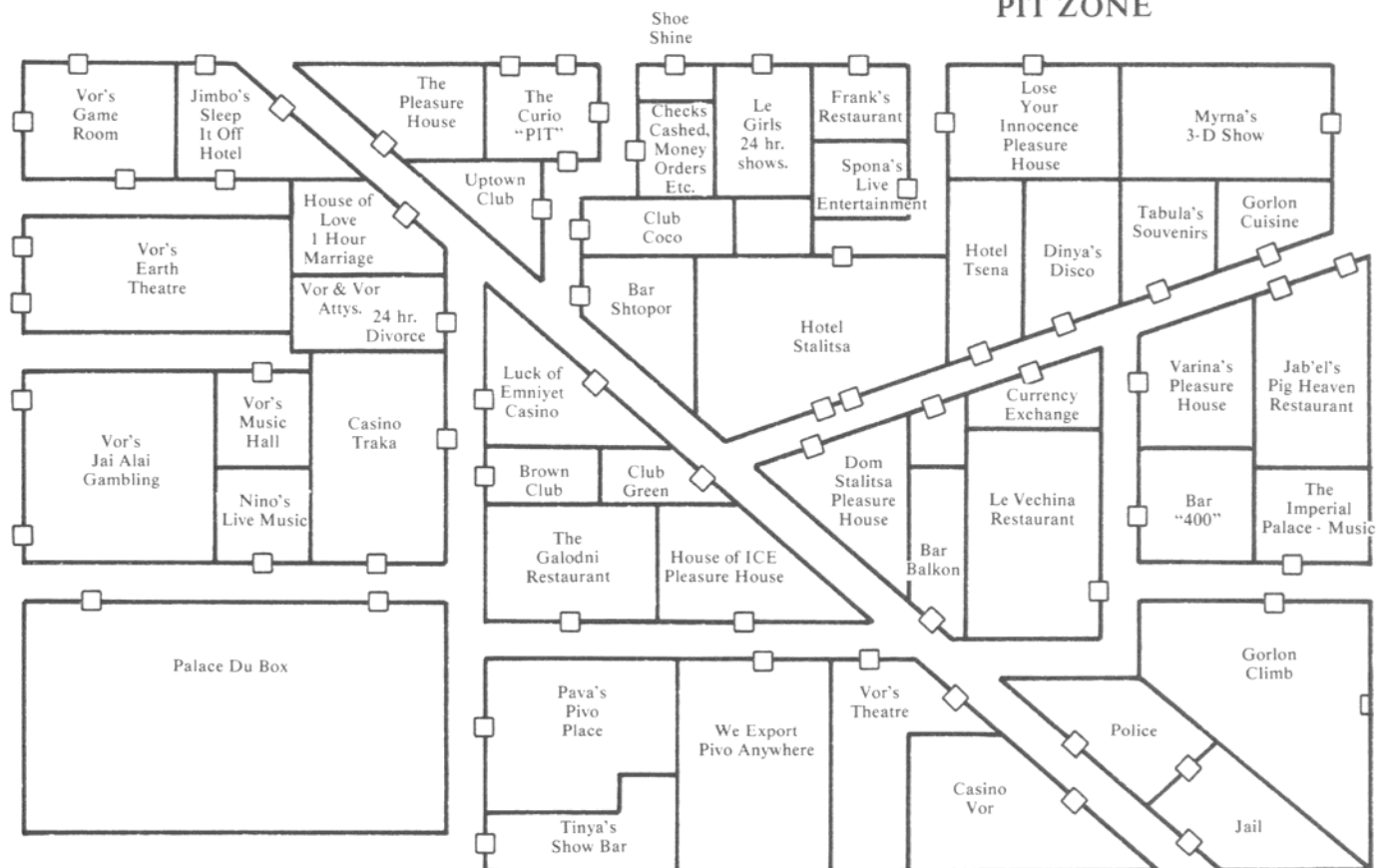
Ever since he was 6 years old, Paper Boy has worked as a "post": a person who is stationed at some point, usually at a street corner, to look out for Alliance Military Police on patrol, runaways, particularly wealthy clientele, or anybody else noteworthy to the people working a particular strip. When Paper Boy spots such people, his job is to spread the news immediately; the reactions of the street people vary, hiding from Alliance MPs and flocking merrily to a wealthy Kleibor. The various folks along Paper Boy's strip give him a cut of whatever they earn.

Over the years Paper Boy has gotten to know everything and everyone in the Pit Zone. At any given moment, he can tell you where money changes hands most quickly, which cops are on the take, what important people are in town (along with where they are staying and what they have been up to), what hot merchandise is for sale, and other important information.

As a rule, Paper Boy likes the members of the Star Teams, and knows virtually everyone from Wilderness Base, except for rookies. (If he doesn't know you, he at least knows of you). Still, he follows the unspoken law of the streets: Don't speak unless spoken to first. This law assures that he will not give away Star Team members on possible secret missions.

Paper Boy provides information to Star Team members, but always for a price. The price varies with the importance of the information and the danger Paper Boy risks to provide it. *Paper Boy knows only about events which take*

PIT ZONE



place inside "the Pit" or would have reason to be known in the city: for example, a major Imperial movement in the region or an upcoming diplomatic visit.

In order to determine the post's knowledge, the CM should make a Specific Perception Check for Paper Boy, with the following results:

L = Little information. Paper Boy really knows very little and will answer as "That's probably true" or "probably false."

M = Moderate information. Paper Boy knows one fact concerning the requested information.

H = Helpful information. Paper Boy knows two things concerning the requested information.

C = Critical information. Paper Boy knows everything about the information requested.

Paper Boy becomes upset and indignant if any Star Team member asks for free information. "Hey man! This is my job, *riba!* You want music, you pay a musician. You wanta eat *aryekhi*, you pay the vendor. You wanta know what's comin' down, you pay the Paper Boy. 'Course, you can always buy a newspaper. I hear they got news."

Paper Boy has been a great help in the past: he has led Star Team members to Black Market outlets in a search for hard to find goods; he has hidden Star Team members from secret Imperial agents; he has pointed out key Imperial personnel on Imperial visits. On the more mundane level, he might lead you to night clubs with up and coming stars, recommend what to order from different restaurants, and get you the best odds for betting the Dort games (and thus a few extra gold Imperials to spend).

Needless to say, Paper Boy is an important contact for the Star Teams. Ideally, you should pay him whenever you run into him, even if he doesn't provide any useful information. As long as he is happy with the Star Teams, he will continue to provide important information when it is available.

Lyef Vor

STR	48	DEX	68	AGL	52
WPR	78	PER	78	PCN	78
STA	42	UMS	50	WNDS	12

Skills: Bargaining, Ace, 133; Disguise, Ace, 128; Forgery, Ace, 128; Gambling, Ace, 119; Impersonation, Ace, 131; Security Devices, Ace, 121; Theft, Ace, 130.

It is unlikely that most of you will ever come face to face with Vor. But in one way or another, this most powerful Trakan touches the life of virtually every Star Team member.

Lyef Vor is the head of the Black Market throughout the Wilderness Region. It is said on Stalitsa that although Peron Sharf is the president, Lyef Vor governs the planet. Certainly, President Sharf makes no major decisions without consulting Vor first, for the Black Market maintains the economy of Stalitsa; corruption is the way of life on the planet, and Vor is the leader of the corruption.

Vor runs his operation out of a villa located in downtown Igra. Actually, the villa serves a number of functions at once. It is the private residence of the Vor family, it is the head office of the Black Market, and it is a protective fortress.

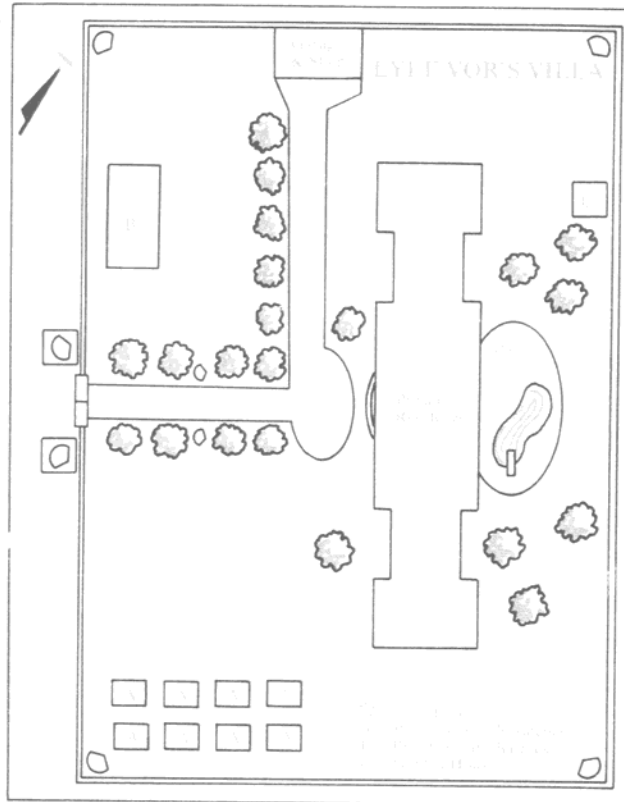
Lyef sees people only in his office, and only by appointment. He seldom leaves his property, and no matter where he goes, he is followed by his two Green Gorlon bodyguards. Actually, Vor fears less for his own physical safety than he fears the possibility that some up and coming Trakan might try to out-clever him and seize control of the operation. This accounts for his reclusive habits.

Lyef Vor's Black Market is a predominantly Trakan-run organization. Six Trakan captains travel the galaxy and re-

port directly to Vor on a regular basis. They are never allowed to stay in one place—Vor's way of assuring no captain gathers any sort of following. Despite the position of these captains, some of them have been known to turn up in the city of Tabak, ruined and penniless; sometimes they disappear altogether. It is a most difficult position to be a Black Market captain: the survival rate of someone who disappoints Vor is very low, indeed.

Vor's Black Market operates on every known inhabited planet in some form or another. It flourishes under the Empire as well as in the Alliance, but on Stalitsa, the Black Market operates openly and with virtual freedom. Only the Alliance Military Police provides any threat to the Market on Stalitsa.

Lyef Vor has a great deal of respect for the Star Teams'



abilities as fighters as well as smugglers: much of the merchandise sold on the Black Market is Star Team plunder. Vor is also aware that the Star Teams depend largely upon the Black Market for their existence.

Whenever the Star Teams and Black Market members get together, the bargaining is exciting. Sometimes the Star Team members might possess an item that would draw a high price on the open market; in such cases, the Black Marketeers may relent and haggle very little with the Star Teams. But whenever the Black Marketeers are dealing from a position of power, they usually let the deal float until the Star Team members give in. It is truly an open market situation, each side depending upon the other for both supply and demand.

Should you, as a Star Team member, receive an invitation to visit Lyef Vor, by all means, accept. It is said that after the Emperor Fredrick, and Executive Randall, nobody in the galaxy is more powerful than Lyef Vor. Some even challenge that Vor should *only* be in third place. Certainly his captains do.

Siryen Finik

STR	50	DEX	60
AGL	70	WPR	70
PER	70	PCN	70
STA	50	UMS	60
WNDS	13		

Skills: Bargaining, Ace, 125; Disguise, Ace, 120; Forgery, Rookie, 80; Gambling, Rookie, 75; Impersonation, Ace, 123; Theft, Vet, 97.

Trakans are known as the most beautiful race in the Wilderness Region. Among the people who know "The Pits," Siryen Finik is considered the most beautiful Trakan. Her hair is extremely long, her eyes are green, and her facial expression always seems to be one of sultriness and yearning. Her voice is soft and alluring.

Siryen's background is colorful and checkered, to say the least. She currently works in the Dom Stalitsa, a pleasure house located in the Pit Zone. She has worked as a dancer, model, and stewardess.

Because of the nature of her work as well as her female Trakan's natural talents, Siryen manages to gain access to all sorts of information throughout the galaxy. It seems as though wealthy people are always trying to impress Siryen with their importance. Sometimes, important people say too much. Of course, Siryen is willing to share this information—for the right price.

Although Siryen enjoys the company of men (in particular, flirting with those who find her interesting), she is fiercely independent. In her experience, men either become too jealous or try to run her life. Therefore, despite many opportunities and offers, she is not interested in any kind of serious romance. Instead, she wants to secure her own future financially, travel throughout the universe, meet and become spoiled by important people, and generally enjoy the finer things in life without the restraints of family or business responsibilities. She would also like to try her hand at a singing career.

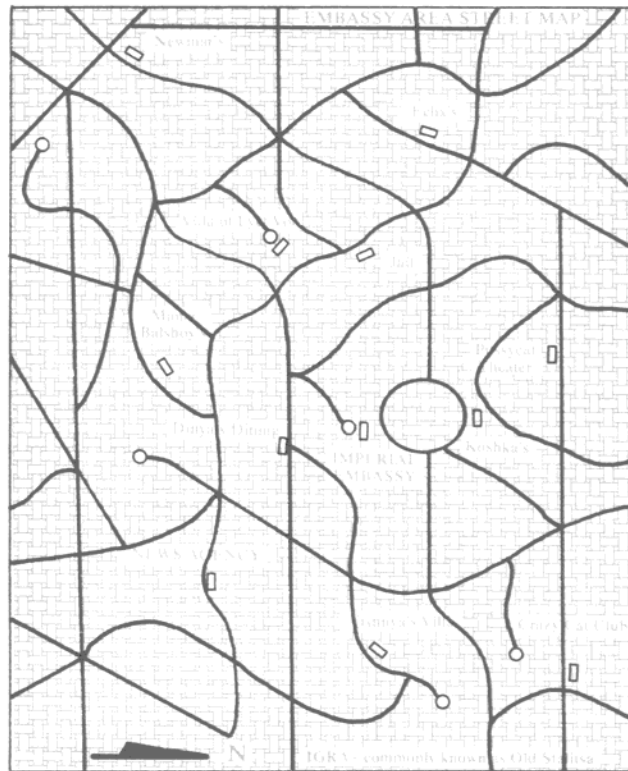
Siryen respects the individuality and strong character of the Star Team members; in fact, she once toyed with the idea of becoming a Star Team member herself, but decided against the semi-regimented life style far from her beloved Stalitsa.

Because of Siryen's ability to obtain prime information and her cooperation with the Star Teams, she is one of the most important contacts on the planet. Of course, Siryen must be paid to inform, and her prices are quite high. Price, however, should be no obstacle for Star Team members.

The nature of Siryen's information tends to be quite different from that from the more common street sources. Siryen can provide insight into the personalities of key government officials from all over the Wilderness Region—insights that the concerned party often wishes to keep private. Star Teams have used this information to help keep certain public officials from taking action that might compromise their missions. Often Siryen has the inside story on newsworthy

events on Stalitsa. In general, there is a 20% chance that she might know classified information about the arrival or departure of a key official of the Empire, the Alliance, or the Black Market, or whether an important cargo or prisoner is being transported onto or away from the planet.

Siryen is likely to be found in the Dom Stalitsa or the Club Vechina. She also enjoys a mug or two of pivo at the Bar Balkon.



The Crystal Folk



We have not uncovered a great deal of detailed information concerning the physical characteristics of the planet Ruoka. While Ruoka and its Xantium are the keys to the politics in Wilderness, and the Crystal Clones are extremely important allies, all of this is still shrouded in mystery. What information is available comes from the descriptions recorded by the first humans to land on the planet, and the sketchy accounts of several scientific expeditions that followed shortly.

Ruoka: Home of the Crystal Folk

Population: Unknown

Capital: Unknown

Major Urban Centers: Crystal Colony

Major Military Bases: Crystal Colony

Economic Base: Mining, mineral exports

Climate: Sub-tropical

Most of Ruoka's surface is covered with an extremely fine crystal sand, snow-white and light reflectant. For those accustomed to the climates of Earth, a "snowy" landscape amidst temperatures of 90-125 degrees Fahrenheit can be most unnerving.

In the central, equatorial area of the planet, bright red domes, some nearly 100 feet tall, rise from the crystal sand. This area abounds with sandpits—hazards resembling false bottoms or the traps of ant lions. Without warning, the sand collapses beneath the feet of unwary

travelers. Some victims sink to the waist; others sink and disappear in an instant, never to reappear.

Further away from the red domes of the equator, the landscape is dotted with boulders, various in size, shape, and color, resembling the rock formations of earth in all respects except to the touch. Ruokan boulders are spongy and quite soft. It is around these boulders that Xantium is found. The amount of Xantium always increases the closer one gets to the planet's poles.

Depending upon the crystal location, size, time of day, and some other factors, Xantium takes on different appearances: sometimes it appears as a clear, icelike shard; sometimes it reflects a spectrum of colors onto the white crystal sand; sometimes it reflects only a single color; often, when combined with the crystal sand, it simply appears as though a monstrous snowstorm has somehow drawn huge icicles out of the ground.

According to eyewitnesses, however, the Ruokan landscape is at its most spectacular when electrical storms race across the planet's surface. The entire world comes alive with brilliant dancing colors, reflecting through the Xantium onto the white crystal sand. Brilliant reds, blues, and yellows flash with the lightning. Sometimes the Xantium crystals themselves become charged during the storm, sending multi-colored lightning bolts through other crystals in bright geometric light flashes.

The dwellings of the Crystal Folk are few and far between: these "crystal mounds," as they are commonly called, are often mistaken for boulders with Xantium

crystal growing around the sides. Since the Crystal Folk themselves are almost invisible, one can see how it took so long for Humans to discover that what they had taken to be a lifeless planet was actually inhabited! Then again, the Humans were intent on gathering Xantium, not on observing Ruoka's life forms.

As explained in the *Star Team Wilderness Briefing Manual* and *Basic Training Manual*, Xantium is an extremely valuable crystal, not only in terms of its basic financial worth, but also necessary for military and communications purposes. Xantium has a number of applications, not the least of which is enabling instant communication throughout the region. Of course, the ability to communicate with parties light years away has obvious military benefits—benefits that brought wave after wave of “visitors” to Ruoka.

The first aliens to land on Ruoka were the Kleibors, in their typical search for a good time. Not only did they fail to find that good time on Ruoka, but they departed convinced that this was a lifeless planet. In typical Kleibor fashion, they left the planet as they found it. Humans, too, acted typically: when they first arrived on the planet, they instantly saw the potential wealth in Xantium, established colonies, and began mining.

Dr. Josie Casillas, a physicist accompanying these early mining expeditions, spent her time on Ruoka conducting experiments on the planet surface. Casillas' work uncovered a phenomenon she first considered simply a “surface irregularity”; however, she soon discovered that these disturbances were a startlingly alien life form—the Crystal Folk, the original inhabitants of Ruoka.

As time went on, the Crystal Folk, though resenting the presence of alien mining on the planet, decided that their survival might depend on communicating with the Humans. Their solution was the creation of the Crystal Clones—a race that could enforce Crystal Folk protection, as well as communicate readily with the Humans.

Through the Crystal Clones, Humans learned more about the Crystal Folk (although the more they learned, the more they became confused), while the Crystal Folk learned more about what was going on in the Wilderness Region. It became clear to the Crystal Folk that dealing with the Humans who fought alongside Kleibors and Trakans was much better than dealing with those who fought alongside Gorlons and Crassites. The Crystal Folk began negotiations with non-Imperial humans in the area: eventually, in 3059, the Federal Alliance was formed and the Ruoka-Sergon Pact was approved.

Points of Interest on Ruoka

Crystal Colony

Crystal Colony is the result of the Ruoka-Sergon Pact, signed by the Alliance on Sergon (and simultaneously approved and confirmed by the Crystal Folk on Ruoka) in the year 3059. The pact called for the Alliance defense of

Guba's calling himself a *riba* now, so I guess it doesn't mean “hero.” He's angry at me over the spacecraft. Says he wants his money back, which is a little mixed up, since all the money he has in the first place is what he won from me. He's pretty clear though, why he hates “Old Bett.”

He can't fly the ship himself, and he thinks it's no good.

See, those Imperial ships caught up pretty soon after we popped out of translight. 'Course I was kinda rushed when we jumped, so I wasn't real sure where we'd end up. Wherever it was, the Imperial ships had no trouble following.

Guba was plenty scared, and started yelling for me to do *this* and do *that*—things that Imperial and Star Team Aces would have a rough time doing, probly—so I asked him if *he* was so smart, why didn't he take the controls.

Well, he turned about three shades of green—yes you did! Don't look that way!—and turns out he doesn't know translight drive from a can of pivo. Says he's “more of an idea man around spacecraft,” and that he's never been off Stalitsa before. All this time I'm trying to control Old Bett and put up the shields, because I don't know what these guys are gonna do, even though I don't see any reason why there'd be any shooting. Meanwhile Guba's trying to push me to the back of the ship, to get me between him and their lasers.

All of a sudden our luck turned around, just when things looked really bad. The Imperial craft had opened fire and done a little damage through our shields. Then everything went light and flashing and wild, all at once. Guba started yelling here comes the cavalry, but it was really a bunch of Alliance ships that came to rescue us. I wondered why they didn't shoot they bad guys down, but Guba said he didn't figure they'd risk an intergalactic incident over us, and I suppose he's right. Specially when the Alliance guys started asking me all kinds of questions over tight beam communications about where I was from and where I was going. Guba whispered “you haven't seen me,” and climbed down in the cargo hold. I didn't know what the fuss was, but I didn't mention him.

Well, the commander of the Alliance squad let us through to the planet surface. Said I had to be for real. If I wasn't, how come he came up to rescue me in the first place, I wonder.

I guess we were banged up a little more than it seemed in space, 'cause when we coasted toward the surface of the planet below us—all bare and shiny—I found out that I didn't have too much control of the ship.

Guba said we were on Ruoka, a few miles north of Crystal Colony. Wondered how he knew that. He told me not to ask.

the planet Ruoka, since the Crystal Folk had no means to do so on their own. In exchange for the promise of defense, the Crystal Folk guaranteed a supply of essential Xantium to the Alliance military.

One of the major provisions of the Ruoka-Sergon pact is that all aliens to Ruoka reside in one location, a place named Crystal Colony. Only certain prearranged scientific expeditions, diplomatic missions, and defense patrols are allowed elsewhere on the planet.

Crystal Colony itself is a strange place. It is totally structured, symmetrical, and alien. Whereas our own carbon based life forms tend to see differences as things of distinction (and often of beauty), the Crystal Folk see symmetry and likeness as the source of beauty. Following this philosophy, every office building in Crystal Colony looks like the others, each single unit dwelling looks the same as the others, and the streets run exactly north-south or east-west.

There is no nightlife in Crystal Colony, or for that matter, on Ruoka itself. Crystal Colony has the least amount of Black Market activity of any spot in the Wilderness Region. Basically, the city was designed to drive a body crazy if there isn't any business to be conducted here. Those who are assigned to work in Crystal Colony prefer even the frozen planet surface of Emniyet to the boring Ruokan colony.

Crystal Colony contains communities of all sorts: Trakan families from Stalitsan diplomatic circles, make-shift Kleibor bodrums, and the always present Humans. Most of the business of the city centers around diplomacy, merchant facilities for resident aliens, and—of course—the export of Xantium.

The Crystal Life Force

There is little question that there exists a strange relationship between the Crystal Folk, Crystal Clones, and Xantium crystals. To date, nobody has been able to piece together the relationship; Crystal Folk tendencies toward secrecy and privacy help maintain this mystery. Recently, however, a number of scientists returned from a research mission on Ruoka with new and exciting insights.

There is a growing suspicion that the key to Crystal Folk life, Crystal Clone life, and Xantium crystal qualities lies in another more powerful life force. Somehow, this life force transmits through the Xantium crystals located on the planet's surface and gives life to the Crystal Folk. Somehow, the Crystal Clones are born of the same energy force. The feeling is supported by mounting evidence that the major source of life is somewhere in the center of the planet Ruoka.

The current scientific belief is that Ruoka contains a central life source or brain, transmitting energy, or even life itself, through the Xantium crystals of Ruoka.

At this point, there is no clue as to where this central life form is, what it is, what it looks like, what its powers are—or anything else for that matter. There is even some speculation that the entire planet of Ruoka might be alive,

and that the central life form directs all of its activities, much as the brain directs the activities of the human body.

If this belief is correct, either completely or in parts, it raises some interesting dilemmas. Should the Crystal Folk and Crystal Clones be treated as separate lifeforms, or parts of a larger life form? What about the Xantium crystals? Should the Alliance deal directly with the central lifeform on matters concerning the planet, or continue to deal with the individual Crystal Clone and Crystal Folk population, or both?

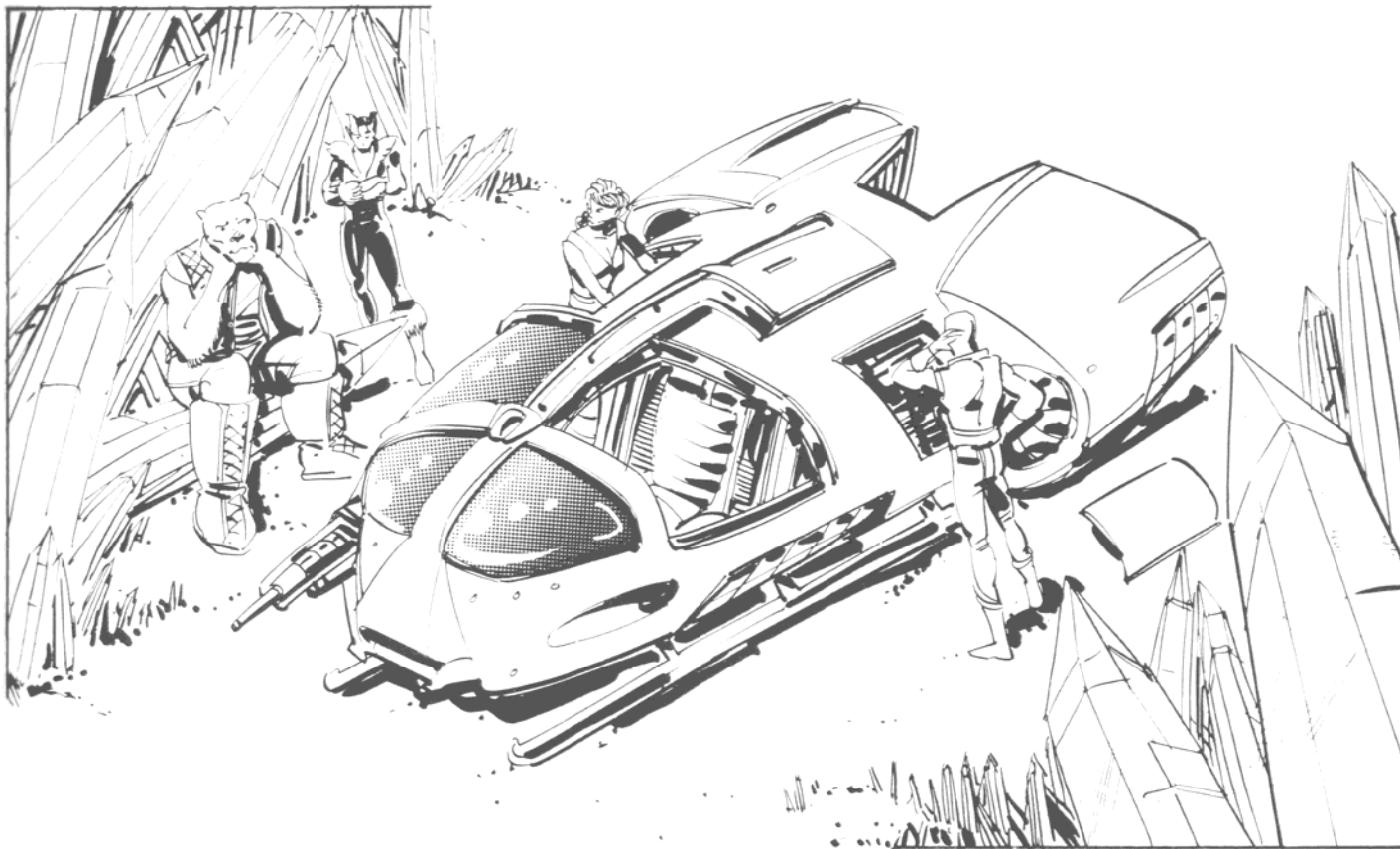
Another important question is whether scientists should start searching for this central lifeform. It is fairly obvious that if such a form exists, it maintains friendly terms with the Alliance, supporting them (and the Star Teams) with Crystal Clones and Xantium. Nevertheless, if the central lifeform exists, it is trying to maintain absolute secrecy. Certainly the Crystal Folk and the Crystal Clones have given scientists no help.

All of this may be speculation: although scientists are leaning toward the "live planet" hypothesis, there is no concrete proof of such a lifeform. If that proof existed, it would resolve some basic questions about the native Ruokan races: why the Crystal Folk never leave Ruoka; why only the Human style lifeform—the Crystal Clone—is able to survive on the Ruoka planet surface; why the Crystal Folk don't want alien races exploring the Ruokan surface; finally, why all the Crystal Races are so secretive.

Perhaps most important of all, the "live planet" hypothesis helps to explain the elusive Crystal Clone life mission known as the "Crystal Purpose." When one begins to view the Crystal Folk as one views a red corpuscle in Human blood, the Purpose becomes understandable: although the red corpuscle lives and functions on its own, it is really an important part of an overall system, nor could the system survive without such integral parts. Xantium, too, is an important part in the overall system, as are the Crystal Clones.

There is still a great deal to learn about Ruoka, but the field of study is rich with possibilities. Who knows what other lifeforms exist on this planet without our knowledge? Maybe we simply cannot recognize them because they are all part of a far-reaching, overall system.

The Crystal Clones



The Crystal Folk and their racial “descendants,” the Crystal Clones, are the objects of much scientific study. The races are so alien to the forms of life that we know, and yet so clearly loyal to the Alliance and the Star Teams, that it is important to understand what makes them tick.

Since the Crystal Clones are related to the human race as well as the Crystal Folk, observing them provides an important step in the understanding of a totally alien life form.

Planets Containing Populations of Crystal Clones

Ruoka: 120,000

Stalitsa: 65,000

Earth: 50,000

The Crystal Purpose

To begin with, Crystal Clones are not born (at least in the same manner as carbon-based life), and have no specific parentage (as in a mother and a father) that we are aware of. We know that they are created for a purpose, and that the cloning process is the combination of a number of factors. To begin with, Xantium is necessary to the creation of the Crystal Clones: all of the clones seem to come from four different banks on the southern end of the planet Ruoka, each of which contains Xantium crystals which rise above the surface. The Xantium crystals on each bank differ from that on each of the others—indeed, from all of the other Xantium on the planet.

We know that the Clones created from the largest bank of crystals (bank 1) always become technicians, or Hearts in the Star Teams. All of the clones from bank 2 become Diamonds, bank 3 clones become Spades, and bank 4 become Clubs. It seems more than likely that the type of Xantium crystal has a bearing on the personality or purpose of the Clone. It is the combination of the crystal, the Ruokan sunlight, and the human cell involved that makes for the final, predetermined Crystal Clone.

There is a mistaken but popular belief among some in the Wilderness Region that the Crystal Folk somehow add their lifeform to the Human body to create a human replica animated by a totally alien creature. This is the major reason behind anti-Crystal Clone feelings in various planetary systems. Human races (as well as others) see the Crystal Clone race as, at best, a cheap imitation of the real thing—a parody of human life drawn out of a stone. This misdirected logic actually frightens a great number of people who simply don't understand that the Crystal Clones are in fact a separate race from the Human race.

Indeed, the Crystal Clones are separate from their moment of creation, separate in the way in which they conduct their lives: for another major area of misunderstanding is the Crystal Purpose. Most Humans go through life searching for direction, asking the oldest philosophical questions: “What is the purpose of life?” or “Why am I here?” On an individual basis, many humans are not clear as to what they wish to do with their lives. The Crystal Clones never ask these questions or face such dilemmas;

they are created with clear objectives and do not need to question the purpose of their existence. Many Humans resent this certainty, which they often perceive as a sense of self-worth or self-confidence on the part of Crystal Clones.

Star Team members, on the other hand, supported by the purpose and discipline of the Star Teams, are better equipped to overcome normal human uncertainty, normal human resentments. The members of the Star Teams have the utmost respect for their Crystal Clone compatriots, even if they are hard to understand at times.

Crystal Clones: World View

Crystal Clones tend to view their world pragmatically, analytically, and efficiently. They see Kleibors as excessive, wasteful, self-destructive, and self-indulgent. On the other hand, the Crystal Clones admire the Kleibor's fierce loyalty, tactical genius, and ability to ignore everything except the matter at hand. Crystal Clones can develop a strong (though not unshakeable) trust in their Kleibor friends.

On the other hand, the Crystal Clones see the Trakans in an opposite light. They find the Trakans totally untrustworthy in virtually every circumstance. Yet to balance this out, they admire and respect the Trakan business sense, for it is cold, calculating, and almost always successful; the Trakans will lie, steal, deceive, or do whatever it takes to come out on top, and this is pragmatism and efficiency. Because of this observation, Crystal Clones are far less likely to have any business transactions with a Trakan. It stands to reason that if Trakans deal with someone, it is because they see how to get the upper hand. Why bother getting caught up in deceptions to begin with?

The Crystal Clone view of Humans is fairly straightforward: because of their violent emotions, Humans are not to be trusted. Humans are inefficient: although they have the capacity to be among the most intelligent, if not the most intelligent race in the universe, they are prone to make hasty decisions often tainted by emotion. Human violence led to the holocaust on Earth and almost caused the extinction of the race. It is also Humans who have abused the Crystal Clone race, ganging together to assault lone Crystal Clones in back streets, coining the insulting racial term "thin rock," and commanding the oppressive forces of the Empire.

The hatred of the Empire for Crystal Clones is deep and relentless: intelligence reports have reached Star Team units stating that the Empire, evidently suffering a severe Xantium shortage, is conducting scientific experiments in a diabolical scheme to extract the valuable mineral from Crystal Clone prisoners. Reports indicate that this "research" is taking place in a deserted mine shaft on the Empire-controlled planet of Tamilla. To date, all such experiments have failed; however, the Empire has destroyed a great number of Crystal Clones in the process. Knowledge of such atrocities is particularly important to Star Teams should any Crystal Clone Star Team member

Guba was out of the cargo hold like a shot when the bottom of the ship started mowing down those crystals. I just couldn't get enough altitude to avoid them, which was a shame. They looked like carved ice stalactites...or stalagmites, whichever one grows out of the ground. And they were tearing up the bottom of Old Bett real bad.

Finally I got the ship to ground, sliding across the gray sand and leaving a trail of sparks that would be kinda pretty if it wasn't so dangerous. We kept sliding, and the sand under Old Bett began to flash dozens of colors and to make noises like it was singing or something.

I started to get into it.

We skidded for miles. Guba yelled at me to shut up, that it was loud enough without me laughing and whooping. But I was having too much fun.

We came to a stop on a plain, surrounded by mirages. Least they looked like mirages—like the way the air gets over hot, dry ground on Tamilla—but they were all around us. I thought they were neat and took out my camera to take some pictures. Then Guba said they weren't mirages, they were alive. And not too happy about those crystals.

So I went over to one of them and tried to say I was sorry, that they couldn't really think that someone would joyride across their planet, knocking over crystals. A whole bunch of them circled around me, and I started thinking, maybe they're gonna cause some trouble. Looked around for Guba, but he was climbing back in the ship.

Then someone was telling me to back up and move back to the ship. Looked back around to see two Crystal Clones. Terve and Hiekka were their names, but I didn't know that right then. They said that these Crystal Folk—'cause that's what the mirages were—were real mad and might have electrified me or something if I got any closer. Terve—that's the lady Clone—said she'd help fix our ship and get us on our way. Said it'd be better all around. The Clones weren't too friendly, either, but I guess being all business is better than letting us get all frizzed and killed.

They started fixing the ship right where it sat, and kept at me about taking better care of it... finding things that didn't have anything to do with the laser damage or the attack. I always heard Clones were sorta quiet types, but Terve and Hiekka kept on talking and talking till I got tired of listening and told them it was Guba's ship anyway. And Guba says, Don't blame me, I don't know how to drive one of these things. And Hiekka says, well that's for sure. That gets me tickled 'cause I didn't know Clones were so funny.

What tickled me more was this: You know who was in charge of our money, so guess who had to pay them?

fall prisoner to the Empire.

From long and painful experience, Crystal Clones have learned that the best interaction with Humans is no interaction at all. As a rule, Crystal Clones go out of their way to avoid contact with humans and speak only if spoken to first. Even in these cases, the answers are short and concise, usually only a simple “yes” or “no.”

Crystal Clone relations with humans in the Star Teams, however, are much friendlier. The Star Teams’ primary concern currently is the defense of Ruoka and of its Xantium stores; it is clear that if the Empire gets hold of the prime source of Xantium Crystal, the remainder of the Alliance planets will fall very quickly. In the front lines of the Star Teams, the Crystal Clones consider the violent nature of the Human race an asset rather than a detriment. Furthermore, the Humans in the Star Teams have shaken off their prejudices, respecting their Crystal Clone comrades for their abilities as Star Team members as well as their complete dedication to the cause. Still, new Star Team members may find the Clones distant and stuffy because of their cold and unemotional nature, even when they are being friendly. However, further experience in the organization—and, of course, close work with the Crystal Clones—does a lot to correct mistaken first impressions.

The first real eye-opener for the new Star Team member as regards his Crystal Clone comrades usually comes in one of several radically different places: in deep space combat, electronic music emporiums, or at a holographic game arcade. The Clones are drawn to dazzling arrangements of light and sound. The glittering silence of deep space battles intrigues them, as does the bizarre electronic music rising from a dark Stalitsan bar. The hologames, combining both sound and light, are almost irresistible: any Clone passing an arcade must pass a general Will-power check or be drawn inside, coaxing and pleading with his friends to join him.

The Veri

Crystal Clones tend to be loners in all facets of their lives except one—the Veri (Brotherhood). The Veri is somewhat like a secret fraternity, open only to members of the Crystal Clone race. Membership is by invitation only. The members of the Veri have all distinguished themselves in defense of some race other than the Crystal Folk or the Crystal Clones. For example, saving the lives of endangered Kleibors might merit an invitation to the Veri.

In a sense, this fraternity is an ironic badge worn secretly under the noses of all of the other races. It is a way of saying to Humans: “Call me ‘thin rock’—whatever you like. Destroy me if it pleases you. But remember: I was able to rise above this petty and destructive hatred, and saved one of your own.” Indeed, the Veri provides a sort of level, philosophical response to the emotional abuse that Crystal Clones suffer. The Veri provides concrete proof to the Crystal Clone that those who persecute him are small-minded. Knowing that a Crystal Clone has overcome this hatred in a concrete way makes the perpetrators of this

hatred seem small. The organization is quite secret. The intent of The Veri is not to rub salt in a wound, but simply to provide a discipline through which the Crystal Clone can endure persecution.

One of the rituals of the Veri is the *kirjata*, a complicated series of hand signals once used by members of the brotherhood to identify one another swiftly, subtly, and soundlessly. To the untrained eye, the gestures cannot be distinguished from idle, unconscious movements one makes naturally.

The *kirjata*, however, is more than a “secret handshake” form of identification: members of the Veri have developed the *kirjata* as a subtle form of communication and can carry on entire secret conversations under the noses of friends or enemies. The *kirjata* is a compressed language of physical gesture: in one round, a user can communicate *one sentence of any length to another Veri*; however, because the *kirjata* must occur quickly and subtly, the user can *neither repeat nor clarify the sentence, nor can the Veri receiving the communication ask for repetition or clarification*.

Because of the nature of Star Team operations, all Crystal Clones who are members of the Star Teams (and therefore all PC Crystal Clones) are members of The Veri. All Crystal Clone Star Team members are able to communicate with each other using the *kirjata*, provided they are able to see each other.

The CM must be made aware of a PC Crystal Clone’s desire to use the *kirjata* in communication with another Crystal Clone. The CM should roll a secret general check against the Perception of the character who is to receive the message: a successful check allows the “sending” character to deliver his one sentence message. If the receiving character wishes to send a message back, the CM must repeat the process.

Crystal Clone of Note

Kone Korva

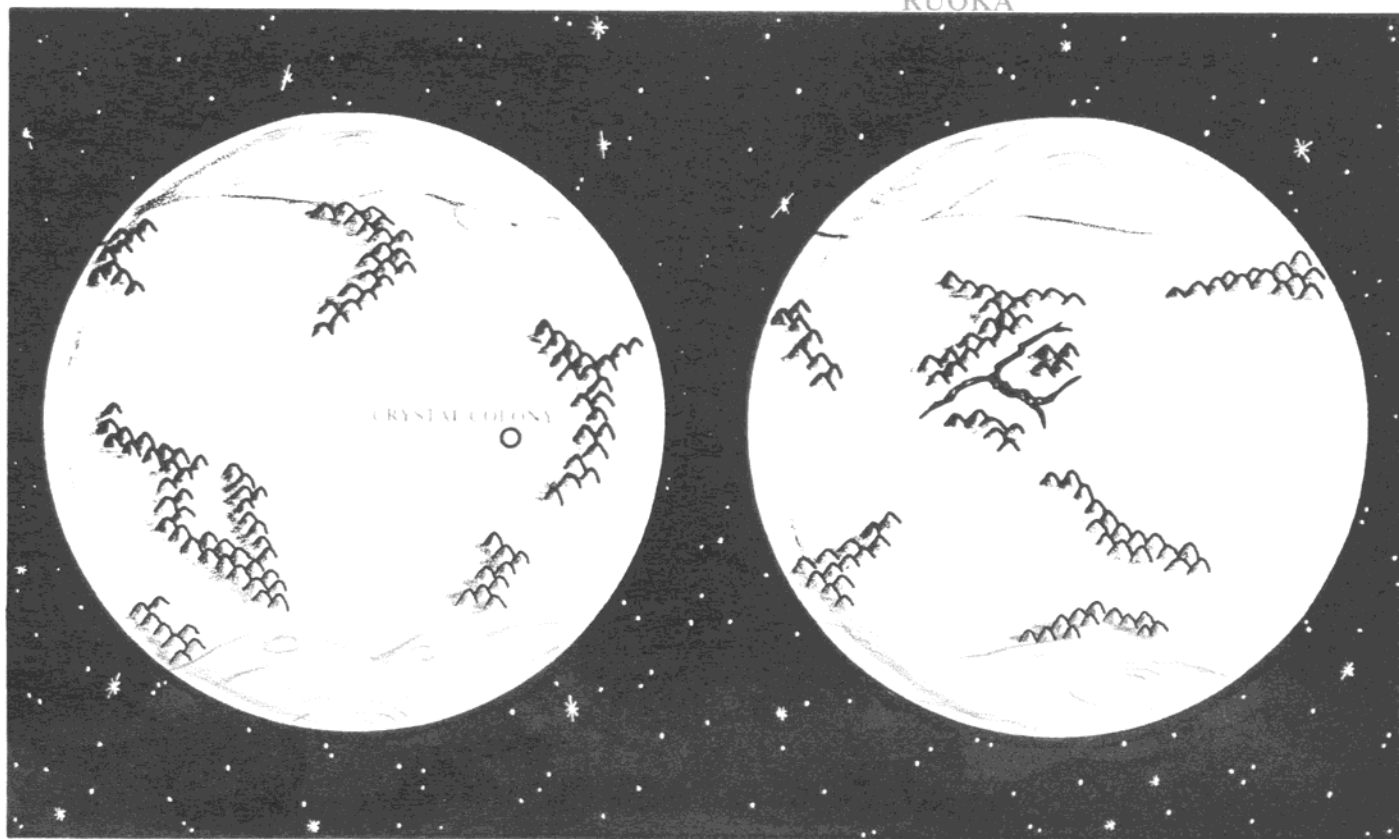
STR	50	DEX	60	AGL	50
WPR	50	PER	40	PCN	80
STA	50	UMS	50	WNDS	13

Skills: Computers*, Ace, 150; Electronics*, Ace, 144.

* NPC Luck score is 80 for the purposes of Skill scores only.

Korva is a computer hack ace now in hiding upon the Imperially occupied planet of Sepa Green. The Black Market on this garden planet was aware of Korva’s tremendous talents with computers, offering her a sensational salary to go to Sepa Green, remain hidden in a safe house, and hack her way into the Imperial Sepa Green Agricultural Computer Network. Such an arrangement, of course, is child’s play for someone of Korva’s abilities. She consented, but only under certain conditions.

First of all, Korva insisted that she be able to use



whatever time was available after obtaining Black Market information in obtaining intelligence information for the Star Teams.

Secondly, arrangements were made so that Korva might visit Stalitsa (and Pit) every four weeks or so. During these visits, Korva tries to contact the Star Teams and hand over any intelligence information she might possess.

Korva found it easy to break into the planetwide Ag computer. Korva was able to alter the records on file so that entire storage centers of meat and grain disappeared. Once the records were missing, it was simple to report the whereabouts of the food to the Black Market. According to the computer, the food never existed.

The military information is a little bit more difficult to obtain. For one thing, the security is better, for obvious reasons. Furthermore, the codes are all written in Gorlon, a language that Korva does not yet speak. Basically, this means that Korva never knows whether she has uncovered anything big or not until she delivers the documents to her Star Team contacts for translation.

One time, Korva unknowingly detected the plans for a major strike on the nearby CRP. The information was found in time, and since it included the time of the strike, the plan, and the participating vessels, the Star Teams were waiting, more than ready for the "surprise attack." The Imperial ships were demolished, and the attack failed miserably.

On the other side, there was the time when Korva was

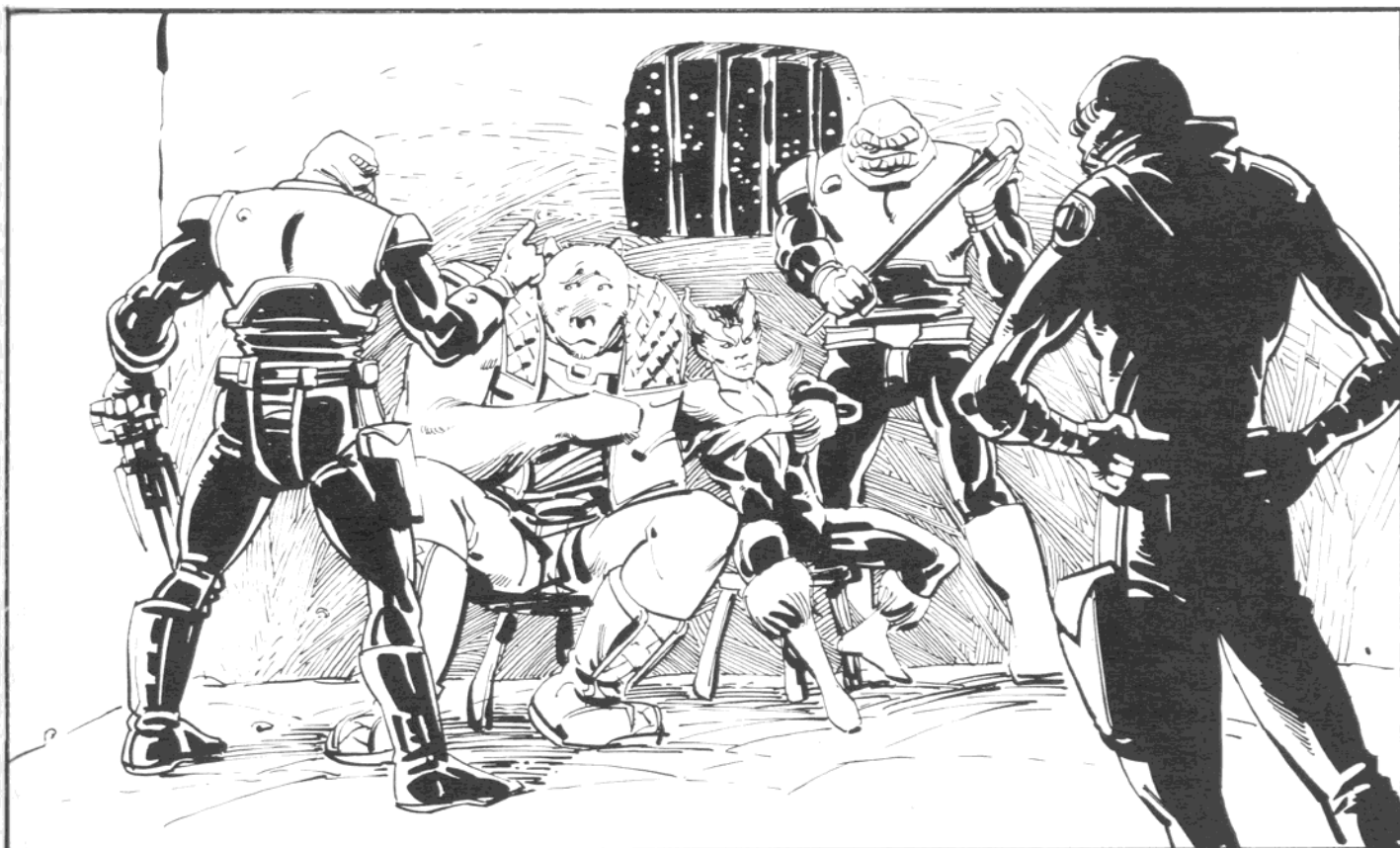
convinced she had found something really big. The document was directed at high level officers, and was quite lengthy. Korva rushed the information back to Stalitsa, where she contacted a group of Star Team members, one of whom was a Crystal Clone Heart-6 who spoke Gorlon.

The Clone read the information out loud to his fellow Star Team members, who burst out laughing. It seems as though the document hacked by Korva was a medical alert to all commanders. Evidently, there had been a large outbreak of mites among the occupying Gorlon troops. The document explained how to recognize the parasites, and how to treat the infestation, as well as how to prevent the mites from spreading any further. All in all, Korva felt foolish, but handled herself gracefully.

Korva enjoys the time she spends alone, fooling around with the computer, trying to get in and out of unknown files. When she is not working on the computer, Korva enjoys working on her immersiograph, an invention designed not only to hear and see music, but also to feel the music, as if the sound contained volume or mass. The music "feel" is projected electronically around and through the body; the louder the music, the more forceful the mass and weight of the music.

Korva is a long time member of the Veri but has a difficult time relating to humans. She tried to tell a few jokes a long time ago, but quickly discovered that no matter how logical her humor was, it still wasn't funny. In fact, Korva has no sense of humor at all.

The Gorlons



Srith: Home of the Gorlons

Population: 8 Billion

Capital: Slavniiss Smestoss

Major Urban Centers: Sklizenss Grain Center, Pslatiss Climb

Major Military Centers: Sstovoss Training Center, Syvoss Staging Base, Ssokoss Command Center, Shlavass Military Center

Economic Base: Industry, Agriculture

Climate: Semi-Tropical/Temperate

Points of Interest on Srith

Slavniiss Smestoss

One assumes that a planetary capital is a major urban center. However, there is not a great deal of activity in Slavniiss Smestoss. Srith is little more than a colony of the Empire, so the only real foreign dignitaries and diplomats in the capital are the Imperial overlords.

Count Gril Sillith has a palace in this city, as do most of the prominent Gorlons on the planet. There are a few human dwellings, but even Imperially hardened Humans find it difficult to wake up in the morning to the sinister sight of thousands of Gorlons perched or climbing on their countless lattice structures.

In line with the infamous racial policies of the Gorlons, the capital city is divided into the Greater Capital (for

Green Gorlons) and the Lesser Capital (for Brown Gorlons). Of course, Lesser Capital Representatives have no say in planet-wide politics or decisions, but only in decisions and laws that concern the segregated "Brown" sections of the planet—laws and decisions easily vetoed or overruled by Green Gorlon Greater Capital Representatives without explanation.

Sklizenss

Located in a highly fertile area of Srith, Sklizenss is the most populous urban center on the planet. Most of the inhabitants are Brown Gorlons, who comprise the huge working force of the city, involved with farmwork and transportation, as well as other forms of physical labor; the Green Gorlon population fills the ranks of the various merchants, businessmen, and landowners.

It is because of the tremendous fertility of the surrounding planet that the city exists. Sklizenss is the market center for the abundant crops that are grown in the area. These crops are brought to the various market places in the city, where they are sold. Processing, packaging and distribution are also handled in Sklizenss.

Because of the prospering economy in the area, there is a sizable human population in the city as well, located in the fashionable east side. But despite the size and human influence, Sklizenss has very little nightlife. The lone exceptions are "Jon's Sleight O' Hand" and "Black Hole Earth Bar."

Pslatiss

The city of Pslatiss is the most fashionable urban center on Srilth. It is not very populous, but it provides several interesting insights into Gorlon life.

Living in Pslatiss is the Green Gorlon symbol of success. Brown Gorlons found walking in the city without proper identification are arrested and forced to join the military. The only Brown Gorlons allowed in the city are the private servants of the Green Gorlon families.

The architecture of the city is a strange combination of mansions with towering concrete, glass, and steel lattice-work—symbols of Gorlon wealth. The two structures, mansion and lattice, are often attached. Gorlons thoroughly enjoy exercising on the lattices, slowly climbing from one structure to the next, sometimes stopping to soak up the sun's rays. To have a private structure in your own home is a message to the rest of the Gorlon world; of course, the bigger the structure, the greater the supposed wealth.

The largest lattice structure on Srilth is 124 stories tall and belongs to Count Sillith, who also owns a home in the capital. Nobody is brave enough to outbuild the powerful Count, but the neighbors compete with one another, careful not to let the size of their latticework rival that of the Count's.

Sstovoss Training Center

Gorlons recognize only power, and regard military pursuits with almost a religious reverence. Military training begins almost at birth for the Gorlon. Again, as in all areas of Gorlon life, indoctrination begins with the separation of Green and Brown Gorlons. The Green Gorlons are directed toward elite divisions (and officer rank) in the Imperial Military. This causes Brown Gorlons to believe early the myth of their inferiority to their green cousins.

Early indoctrination includes such childhood activities as "groupings"—assignments to child play groups. Gorlon children are taken from their parents at a very young age and sent to the Training Center. A Green Gorlon child is assigned to a group of three Brown Gorlon children, where he or she directs play, orders the other children, is the captain of any team game, and disciplines the other children in his/her grouping. The Green Gorlon may beat the Brown Gorlons; however, should the reverse take place, the Brown Gorlon is severely punished. Some "uncontrollable children" have even been destroyed.

The clear purpose of groupings is to teach leadership and military indoctrination to the Green Gorlon, while teaching unquestioned submission and discipline to the Brown Gorlons. The Brown Gorlons, as a result of their childhood rearing, are usually extremely angry and violent when unleashed, releasing all of their locked-up anger and frustration. However, very few ever turn against their Green leaders: life has simply convinced them they are inferior to their green overlords.

A grouping leader who demonstrates leadership and control receives more "playmates" as reward. Eventually,

We're minding our own business on this CRP near the Earth system, next stop being Shamba. All of a sudden, this Imperial frigate carrying a whole bunch of Gorlons moors up at the CRP, and a mess of them come off the ship and start asking us questions, not too friendly like. They look at the scratches down on the keel of our ship. You know, the ones we got on Ruoka? Well, one of them comes up with a few little fragments and scraps of Xantium crystals. So they start to arrest us on suspicion of Xantium smuggling. Tell us we'll have to go to Asfalia for questioning.

We let them see our identification papers and cards. Funny thing, though. A couple of gold Imperials had got stuck to the bottom of Guba's card when he was handing it over to this Gorlon trooper. Now, I know about Gorlons, and that guy might just have walked off with Guba's money. My little buddy might not have missed them until it was too late.

Well, the Gorlon was real upset that I pointed this out. I figured that would happen, 'cause they're all a bunch of greedy bullies. But Guba was mad, too, even though I bet I saved him a couple of Imperials right there.

play becomes more militarily oriented, and by adulthood, the Gorlons are perfect military machines, fully disciplined to give and follow orders without question. The best naturally rise to the top ranks of the Imperial military forces. Indeed, this is how Count Sillith was raised.

Gorlon children leave the training center when they are 14 years old. At this point, the Green Gorlons owe the Empire a minimum of six years of military service, the Brown Gorlons ten years. There are no deferments; furthermore, it is viewed as a type of Gorlon missionary cause, similar to when Humans go on religious missions.

Syvoss Staging Base

Because of the nature and methods of Gorlon child raising, there is no need to run basic training or other forms of military indoctrination, as with other races. Therefore, when the Gorlon comes of age, he or she reports to the Syvoss Staging Base, ready for active duty.

There are at least 30,000 troops at all times at this base; virtually none have combat experience, but all are highly disciplined and well trained. Because the Gorlons keep thorough and efficient records, assignments are made quickly, and the recruit is sent off to a post in the Imperial sectors.

Syvoss serves as the initial staging area for all Gorlon military operations, since all Gorlon troops start their Imperial military career here. Troops gather to be sent to

posts in the Wilderness regions, or off to the galactic core to fight the Xenophobes.

Ssokoss Command Center

The Ssokoss Command Center is the nerve center to the Empire’s Early Warning Detection System (EWDS) for all of the Wilderness Region planets under Imperial control. All of the reports to and from the various EWDS and spacecraft are monitored here. Even the experimental EWDS in Asfalia is monitored at this station, so that the top Imperial brass can decide whether or not use of the system should be extended to other planets. Knowing who is arriving and departing from where, the Empire can respond quickly to a major invasion with substantial reinforcements.

Shlavass Military Center

Located near Pslatiss, Shlavass serves as the Imperial Military Command center for the planet, as well as the overall Wilderness region. Count Silith’s command headquarters are here.

Of course, all of the officers in this command post are Green Gorlons who live in luxury in nearby Pslatiss. To the military mind, the situation at Shlavass should raise several considerations:

1. There must be an Imperial CRP stationed somewhere between Sepa Green and Srilth. The communications are all funneled through one source and are simultaneously monitored on Srilth as they occur anywhere inside the galaxy.

2. The head brass of the Gorlon Military might not be as sharp as they would like to think. Living in luxury just minutes from their homes, perhaps they think of their posts as “nine to five jobs” and have lost their edge. On the other hand, Gorlons have a zeal for the military like no other race known to the Alliance.

Racial Separation Under the Gorlons

It is probably through Gorlon nature (and through the perverse minds of the Humans who run the Empire) that a clearly defined policy of racism arose in the Empire.

There is little question that the Imperial Humans have placed themselves at the top of the order. The Emperor himself is Human, so there can be little argument on this

matter. The Green Gorlons belong to the Imperial upper class, as do Crassites. Every other race is viewed as somehow inferior by official Imperial doctrine.

These feelings are displayed in the treatment of Kleibor prisoners, in oppression of Brown Gorlons, and in the alleged infecting of Tarsans with the plague.

On the planet Srilth, Brown Gorlons are not allowed in certain areas of the planet without proper identification and permission to be in the restricted areas. They are purposely kept away from education by the ruling Green Gorlons. These creatures are abused in virtually all aspects by the Green Gorlon race: they have even been known to kill the Brown Gorlons for “the fun of it.”

The policy practiced by the Green Gorlons, and maintained by Frederick Constantine’s Empire, is designed to perpetuate an elite class, at the expense of other races inside the Empire. Attitudes against various other races are similar. In fact, the Emperor has proclaimed the inferiority of Crystal Clones, changing all references to their racial name to “thin rock” in Imperial documents.

But the hatred does not end with the Crystal Clones. Brutal experiments with cranial implants have caused Kleibors to explode. Trakans are kidnapped and kept for the entertainment of wealthy Green Gorlons.

The point behind all of this information is that a continuation of this philosophy and treatment is what the Alliance can expect unless the Empire is eventually checked and destroyed.

Gorlons of Note

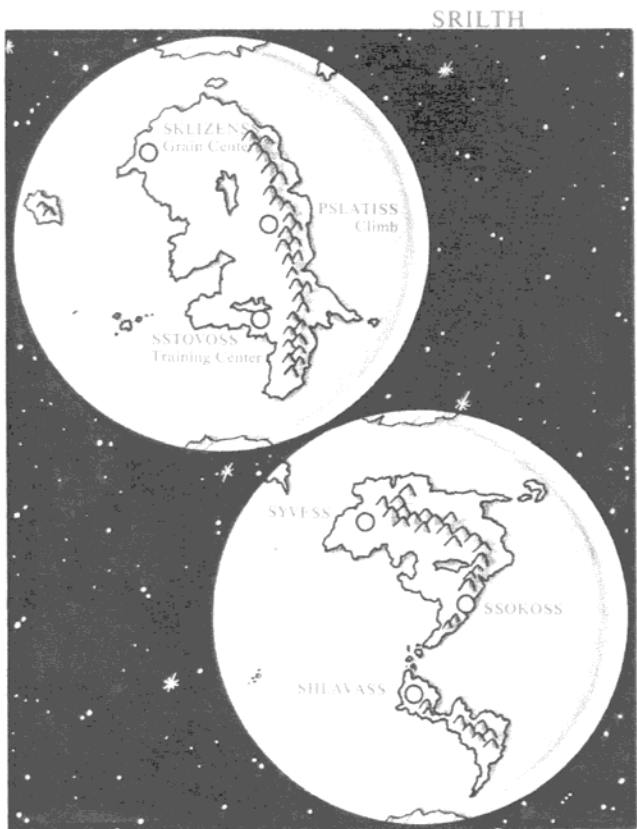
Crytl Smeth

Race: Brown Gorlon

STR	60	DEX	60	AGL	60
WPR	60	PER	60	PCN	60
STA	60	UMS	60	WNDS	14

Skills: Grenade Launcher, Vet, 90; Disguise, Ace, 115; Forgery, Ace, 115; Security Devices, Rookie, 75; Stunt Driving, Ace, 115; Spacecraft Piloting, Vet, 90.

Crytl Smeth’s story is an adventure in itself. Raised in the standard Brown Gorlon fashion, she vividly recalls being



beaten severely in childhood. She was taught elementary reading and writing, but two things motivated Crytl to go beyond the limits imposed upon her because of her race.

To begin with, Crytl constantly questioned why the Green Captain of her grouping was considered superior. After several beatings and death threats, Crytl maintained the appearance of submission. Deep inside, however, she resented the treatment and the lack of reason behind it.

Crytl was thirsty for reading material, for knowledge. She read anything, eventually stumbling across a copy of the famous *Quest of Paradise*, by the great Tarsan philosopher Wingu Mwalimu. Crytl started searching for more works by Mwalimu, eventually becoming extremely well versed in Tarsan thought. Because of her race, she had to keep her knowledge a secret, even among fellow Brown Gorlons, who would have turned her in to the authorities as a subversive.

Soon, Crytl was inducted into the military. Because of her ability to learn quickly, she was trained to fly the Imperial “Gremlin” Interceptor. Soon afterwards, she was allowed to fly Imperial Imps.

With the means at her disposal, Crytl attempted an escape and barely made her way from her outpost to Shamba. She turned her vessel over to the Alliance and asked for asylum. After a short while, Crytl began to write, becoming the voice of the small Brown Gorlon community living in the Alliance controlled planets; her works were read and studied in institutions of higher learning throughout the Alliance controlled sectors of the galaxy. However, the Imperial invasion of Shamba occurred soon afterwards, and Crytl again fled for her life.

Crytl now resides on Stalitsa, in the capital city of Spalnya, where she enjoys the strange quiet that her new home offers its few residents.

Crytl is a superb writer, philosopher, and teacher. More than all of this, she is living proof of the evils of the Empire, in that she represents what Gorlons could become if they were allowed to learn and to develop their potential.

Crytl continues to be a voice for those of her people who will listen. She also fights back against the Empire in the limited ways that she can. On occasion, she has accompanied Star Teams on missions where there will be definite contact with Gorlons, or there is the need for immediate translation. There is 20% chance that Crytl will accompany a PC Star Team mission if she is contacted and asked. (This percentage may be altered as the CM chooses, depending upon the scenario or campaign established.) Crytl always provides information to PCs concerning the Gorlon way of life, including the Green Gorlons as well as her own race. In fact, Crytl serves as the greatest source for Star Team information regarding Gorlon activities, strengths, weaknesses, and motives.

Crytl still has Piloting skill, a reminder of her days in the Imperial Military, and would be happy to fly her own ship into combat for the Star Teams if need be. She is more than capable of pulling her own weight on most missions.

Despite her background in the military, Crytl can pro-

vide little direct military intelligence. She might recognize officers (10% chance) if mentioned, and be able to give a short thumbnail sketch of the individual, but most things have changed since she left the Empire. She was never involved with the military in the Wilderness region, so she knows nothing of military bases established on Asfalia, Sepa Green, Asfalia, or Earth.

Count Sillith has placed a large price on Crytl’s head (10 chips). His intention is to kill a symbol as well as a possible intelligence source in one foul blow. Sillith prides himself on delivering traitors for execution.

Sir Cassis, the Sky Knight

STR	70	DEX	80	AGL	80
WPR	70	PER	60	PCN	80
STA	70	UMS	75	WNDS	15

Skills: Spacecraft Piloting Skill, Ace, 150; Martial Arts, Vet, 120; Beam Saber, Ace, 145; Grenade Launcher, Ace, 150.

Of all the military objectives to face the Star Teams, there is one objective which is coveted more than any other—the right to say “I shot down Sir Cassis.” Sir Cassis has shot down more Star Team spacecraft than any other pilot in the Empire, and he has done so with flair.

The Sky Knight’s craft is easily recognized because of the large figure of a chess knight painted in black on the front sides of the fuselage. Cassis flies his own fully equipped FX-80, complete with Imperial insignias. This allows him to pass through scanners without alerting Star Team members. It is believed that Cassis obtained the spacecraft through Black Market sources.

The Sky Knight is a gentleman as well as a superb warrior. Although he will take enemy craft by surprise, he will not kill ejected pilots, and has even saluted Star Team pilots, defeated and floating in their escape pods, for their courageous effort. The Sky Knight has even called for assistance for downed Star Team pilots.

The Story is told around Wilderness that the Sky Knight once joined Commander Malako in a tavern in the Pit Zone on Stalitsa. According to the story, the two warriors compared battle stories, told jokes, drank enough pivo for an entire Squad, stood up, saluted each other, and left in their respective craft.

Malako does not confirm or deny the story, but he lets a proud smile slip from his usually serious expression before catching himself: “There are so many stories about Cassis. It’s hard to tell what’s fact and what’s fiction.”

Malako has made it clear that whoever is able to bag the Sky Knight will become a legend throughout the galaxy as well. Therefore, Malako hopes that the whoever does this offers Sir Cassis the courtesy due to a worthy and gentlemanly opponent.

The Zoe



Asfalia: Home of the Zoe

Population: 5 Billion
Capital: Protevousa
Major Urban Centers: None
Major Military Bases: Choros Naval Base (Imperial), Kefali Occupation Center (Imperial), Miya (Star Team Outpost)
Economic Base: Agriculture
Climate: Temperate

Points of Interest on Asfalia

Choros Naval Base

Asfalia is the breadbasket for the expanding Empire, and for this reason, the Choros Naval Base is located on the important planet. The Choros Naval Base the largest permanent Imperial military base in the Wilderness Region, and often serves as a staging base for Imperial missions directed toward other parts of the area.

Both number and nature of troops at Choros vary greatly, depending on what kind of mischief the Empire is up to. However, it is safe to say that never less than 80,000 troops are stationed at Choros at any one time. Because of the headquarters functions that the base provides, and because of its sheer size, a large proportion of these troops are officers and technicians. Infantry, armor, tactical, and strategic unit numbers increase when the Empire is pre-

paring for some sort of mission within the region.

Overall, the base is too large for the Star Teams to take on, at least in a direct manner. A few Star Teams have penetrated the early warning detection systems to run hit and run missions intended to rescue important prisoners or destroy specific military targets such as new weaponry or new troop emplacements.

The size of a vessel has a great deal to do with the chances of its being detected by the Asfalia-based Early Warning Detection System (EWDS)—a new system being tested on Asfalia for possible use in other Imperial holdings. Anytime an unscheduled flight, traveling at less than lightspeed, enters the Grand Strategic Hex containing Asfalia, the CM must secretly roll percents to determine whether or not the EWDS detects the incoming vessel:

FX-80, "Gremlin," "Imp".....	30%
FX-90, FX-100	50%
PC-100.....	70%
All other vessels.....	90%

A roll less than or equal to the scores above means the intruding vessel is detected by the EWDS. The Empire responds with 2d10 Interceptors within 1d10 rounds from the time of detection. If there is more than one intruding vessel, roll for the largest craft in a group. If there are more than ten vessels in the group, add 20 to the score above.

Bizou Retreat

The Bizou retreat is located in the heart of the Bizou Forest on Asfalia. The retreat is designated only for high level officials of the Empire. The Emperor himself has spent time recuperating and relaxing at the Imperial Residence at Bizou. Sometimes, high level meetings, treaty signings and other major diplomatic events occur inside the retreat.

For security reasons, there is always an ICE Battalion stationed at the base. Of course, these elite forces are beefed up when the Emperor is present. Most of the forces are hidden from sight, so that visitors can escape from the pressures of Imperial politics and enjoy their stay.

Miya Outpost

The Miya outpost is a simple landing strip located in the Miya Mazi. Anytime the Star Teams are flying directly to or from the Miya outpost, their chances of being detected by the EWDS are reduced by 10%.

This single strip serves as the trade link between the Zoe and the Star Teams. Small FX-80 craft, less detectable by Imperial EWDS, bring in the cargo.

The Mazi: Appearance, Structure, and Warfare

Before discussing the two types of warfare practiced by the Mazis on Asfalia, it is important to understand certain aspects of life in the Mazi.

The actual Mazi dwellings (*spioti*) are located either underground in an elaborate network of tunnels, or above ground in a series of thatched huts, hidden deep in the Asfalian forest. The capital city of Protevousa was created simply to provide a recognizable government center. Otherwise, there are no cities on Asfalia.

To the casual observer, the surface huts appear to be little more than mounds of forest debris, a most common sight on Asfalia. However, a spioti always bears a "part" in its grass and branches, always pointing due north. When observed closely, each spioti appears to have been combed carefully down this "part"; however, this is the only distinguishing feature of the spioti, and it is difficult to spot since the doors are hidden and the huts lack windows. (Successful general Perception check required if a PC announces his/her intention to look for a spioti, otherwise the dwelling appears to be only a grass mound.) Underground Mazis contain tens, sometimes hundreds of false corridors leading to nowhere—or worse, to traps. Only the members of the Mazi, and a privileged few friends of the Mazi, know their way in and out of the honeycomb of tunnels.

The Zoe maintain their secrecy and elusiveness: they see, but they can't be seen. They always seek to surprise their enemy, and rarely stage open battles. At best, they overrun a position, not interested in the least in maintaining the position after they have overrun it.

OK, you think it's been bad before?

Well, they offered to take us to Asfalia, and I said that we really wanted to go to Shamba, but thanks anyway. Guba went pretty near crazy and told me that when the ICE makes an offer it's really an order. See, these troopers are sorta like Imperial police, so unless you don't care about your hide you should be real nice and cooperate.

That's how we got to Asfalia. The woods are pretty and all, but the place is like an armed camp. Bunches of Gorlons and Humans. Hover tanks hightailing it through the big old *achladi* trees, armed to the teeth. Wanted to ask them if they were scared of Star Teams or something, but I guessed it might not be smart for one of us to ask that.

It was pretty clear that they didn't care if they had charges on us or not. Suspicion of smuggling Xantium? I'd never smuggled anything larger than a candy bar. 'Course, Guba had been alone on and off while we were on Ruoka . . . I didn't even want to think about it.

Turns out they didn't find anything. Made us cruise through the whole region, then walk back through the woods without escort, a long ways, and it made me wonder. What kind of place is it where they drive you around when they suspect you of a crime and make you walk when they think you're innocent?

It started up on the walk back to the ship—a sorta high-pitched sound to our north, followed like it was answered by a sound to the south. I wondered what it was, and Guba said, better get up in this tree. I asked him how he knew to do that and he said don't ask.

No sooner did we get halfway up this big velanid tree that all this commotion started below us. About a hundred of these real little fellas poured out of the forest and started beating and stabbing each other, even picking up their friends or enemies and throwing them at each other. I couldn't figure out who was on what side because they all looked and dressed alike.

All this time they keep cutting and beating on each other, shouting ya ya ya like a bunch of little barking dogs. Even biting each other, the nasty little things. Caught myself wanting to climb down the tree and step on them some, but that'd be going down to their level. Well, it ends as suddenly as it begins, as though everybody agreed on a stopping point. Kinda like ants, they start picking up their dead and dragging them off into the darkness. The battle was over.

Guba said they wouldn't be back for a while since this was a War of Vigilance aimed to control population and all. I asked him how he knew that, and he said he read it somewhere.

Zoe battle tactics are barely worth noting, except for their complete absence. They charge by the hundreds, in berserk waves, screaming their high pitched “ya-ya-ya” battle cry. Their weapons range from high tech beam weapons to sticks and stones. Some people even claim to have bitten by these crazed attackers. The Star Team Wilderness Briefing Manual is not exaggerating when it states that “the Zoe just may be the most ferocious race in the galaxy.”

Because of the Imperial threat to the Mazi way of life, the Zoe conduct an active resistance campaign against the occupation forces. All it takes is for the leader of the Mazi to decide that the Zoe way of life is threatened, and the entire Mazi becomes a part of the resistance. More and more Mazis are resisting as each Asfalian day goes by.

The resistance movement is based upon “kill the enemy.” The Zoe do not attempt to gain strategic advantage over the enemy, only to kill each and every one they encounter. Entire Mazis roam the forests of Asfalia, hoping to run into Imperial troops, swarm them, and annihilate them.

Most of the Zoe on Asfalia, with the exception of those in the Miya Mazi, are unaware of Star Team involvement in and support of the resistance movement. Therefore it is best to take precautions when travelling on Asfalia. The Zoe are prone to attack any non-Zoe they encounter, and ask questions later. It is advisable, when traveling on the surface of Asfalia, to employ Zoe scouts.

The Zoe do not confine their military fury to their role in the resistance; every 50 Asfalian years, they engage in a War of Vigilance, a ritual form of population control in which it is considered an honor to die. The Wars of Vigilance are a bit more complicated than simply running out and dying for the good of the Mazi—in fact, several basic rules underlie the conflicts.

To begin with, the Mazi doesn’t exist if it doesn’t have members. At least a few members of each Mazi must survive the Wars of Vigilance in order to maintain the good of the Mazi system itself.

Purity of the Mazi is equally important to the Zoe. The ideal Mazi contains 100 members (maximum size) because this means Mazi members will have to leave upon marriage and populate the smaller Mazi. When the next generation of Zoe are born, the new generation represents an extension of the larger Mazi into the smaller Mazi. The end result is that the larger Mazi remains pure while the smaller Mazi is “corrupted” by outside blood.

With this concept in mind, the goal of any Mazi during the Wars of Vigilance is to maintain as many members as possible. The ideal situation for a Mazi after the War of Vigilance is not to have lost a single member, while reducing every other Mazi to one member.

The beliefs of the Zoe, however, which have the most profound effect on the Wars of Vigilance are those surrounding Post Restant. The Zoe believe that anybody who dies during the Wars of Vigilance dies for the good of the Mazi, and therefore is guaranteed entrance to afterlife in Post Restant (Zoe heaven or paradise) without question. Thus the Zoe have developed into the fierce fighters that

both the Empire and the Star Teams have come to know.

Because of these beliefs, Zoe warriors find themselves in a can’t-lose situation. If they survive, it is for the good of the Mazi. On the other hand, if they die, they go immediately to Post Restant. It is no wonder that this race is as wild and crazed as it is in battle.

Still, it is important to point out that the Zoe will not go berserk to the point of losing every member of the Mazi. If numbers become too thin, the remaining members of the Mazi become quite peaceful and docile. In fact, the remaining few subject themselves to just about any humiliation to perpetuate their Mazi. This explains how the marriages and resulting inter-Mazi agreements are resolved.

The Anti-Mazi Campaign

Because of the nature of Zoe warfare, the Imperial forces have responded with a series of outposts that dot the entire planet of Asfalia. Most of these outposts are located in the forested areas of the planet, where most of the Zoe population is located. Only a few outposts are found in other parts of the planet.

Each of the outposts is constructed in standard prefab fashion. Each outpost is manned by the same number of Imperial troops. In fact, the Star Teams like to think of each outpost as a monument to what the Wilderness Region would become should the Empire take over.

Acting on the knowledge that no Mazi is larger than 100 members, and that each Mazi is poorly armed (with the exception of the few Star Team imported high tech weapons), the Empire mans each outpost with a single platoon (100 Gorlons), headed by a Captain. (See Imperial Military Organization chart, p.4, *Star Team Wilderness Briefing Manual*.)

At least one squad is in the field at all times on search and destroy missions. The remainder of the Imperial troops stay inside the outpost on guard duty, maintaining the physical plant, or simply sleeping. The favorite “policing procedure,” as the Empire calls the dirty business, is to explore the surrounding forest on hovercraft, spot a suspected Mazi, and call in an air strike.

A number of grass piles have been blown out of existence by the Empire without harming a single Zoe. The Gorlons like to call such actions “successful sorties”—the more successful sorties, the happier the Imperial brass.

Occasionally, the Gorlon troops meet up with bands of Zoe in the field. The ensuing battle is usually short. The Zoe attack without reservation. Most of the time, the Imperial troops will try to escape the area and employ the “policing procedure.” The airstrikes are not as successful as the Gorlons would like to think, because as soon as the Imperial troops leave, the Zoe leave as well.

The Empire is probably guilty of killing more Asfalian trees than Zoe, which is fine with the Mazi, and fine with the Star Teams as well.

The Tarsans



Shamba: Home of the Tarsans

Population: 8 Billion (Not including occupying forces)
Capital: Raha
Major Urban Centers: Kitabu, Maji, Takataka
Major Military Bases: Takataka-Kichwa (Empire),
Kambi Amari (Kweli-Tarsan resistance forces)
Economic Base: None
Climate: Temperate

Points of Interest on Shamba

Raha

Raha is the capital city of the planet Shamba. As is too often the case with many once-beautiful spots on this particular planet, the city is a sad sight to behold. What was once a city of culture and splendor is now pathetic—torn down, unrepaired, and occupied.

Raha once was a city of government offices, but it was also the major cultural center of the region. The streets were lined with beautiful statues and structures. Eight major galleries contained art treasures from all of the major Wilderness Region cultures. Centers for the performing arts sprawled throughout the capital city. Parks were places to relax the mind from troubles and stimulate creativity through beautiful and wholesome things. In a very tangible sense, Raha was the capital of paradise.

Today presents a sad and diminished picture. Every-

thing of value was seized by the Empire immediately after the occupation. The treasures were packed up and sent to Frederick I for his personal collection. It is said that neither the Emperor nor his son who succeeded him has ever even opened the shipping crates containing the priceless art treasures.

All of the government halls in Raha have been, of course, shut down. The occupying forces have placed the city under martial law, with orders to shoot anyone out after curfew.

Most Tarsans who resided in the city still live there. They go about their business with the deeply held conviction that good will somehow prevail over evil, and that the Tarsan race must wait patiently until this happens.

Kitabu

This city once served as the educational center of the Wilderness Region. Eighteen different universities were located here, and in the center of the city, a vast library containing every volume ever published in the Wilderness Region. Before the occupation, the Tarsans not only cherished philosophy but thrived upon comparative philosophies of other worlds, challenging alien thought with well disciplined Tarsan analysis.

Today, most of the volumes have been destroyed by the occupying forces, and the library serves as a Gorlon barrack. The same holds true for the universities; most now house occupying troops. The rest of the learning

centers are now state run schools for Imperial indoctrination.

As in the capital city of Raha, most Kitabuan Tarsans wait passively for the Empire to realize the errors of its ways and leave. Of course, this won't happen.

Meanwhile, small bands of student resisters engage in nighttime guerrilla activities. These guerrillas, interestingly enough, are students of Ruokan philosophy.

Maji

The city of Maji has managed to retain much of the pre-occupation atmosphere of Shamba. This hidden city is deep in the heart of the Ua forest, where thick trees provide almost impenetrable aerial cover. It is from Maji that free Shamba is governed by the provisional rebel government, the Kweli—a name translated roughly to mean “the truth.”

Maji itself is full of flowering bushes and plants. Rather than the traditional visual art forms such as painting or sculpture, the artwork of this city is based upon intricate flower and plantlife arranged and combined with water gardens—an artwork that changes throughout the temperate Tarsan year. The intended symbolism of free and growing beauty is not lost upon the Tarsan population. The symbol of the Kweli is the asali, a truly beautiful and delicate flower native to Shamba.

Takataka

The city of Takataka was fairly large at one time. However, its population is declining quickly, for a mysterious and terrifying reason.

Initial indications are that the dreaded plague that struck and nearly destroyed the Tarsan population centuries ago has returned with the occupying Imperial forces. At present, the plague seems to be limited to the city of Takataka, and with some luck, it can be contained inside the city boundaries.

Of course, a great number of Tarsans are attempting to escape from Takataka and the danger of the plague. The occupation troops do not permit “self-directed relocation”: Tarsans caught trying to flee the city are usually shot on sight, whether man, woman, or child.

Of course, the news of the plague has not been announced by the Occupation Military Command. However, too many escaped Tarsans have reached other parts of Shamba with indisputable firsthand accounts of family members who have lost loved ones.

Because of the secretive nature of the Occupation Military Command's handling of the plague in Takataka, the Kweli resistance believes that the plague outbreak is a systematic attempt to use germ warfare against the Tarsan population. The beliefs may be more true than most Tarsans think. If such experiments are going on and are successful, the occupying forces could eliminate large pockets of resistance, if not every Tarsan on Shamba.

Such a plan would be well in keeping with Imperial policy. The occupation forces are having an extremely

Finally. I mean *finally*. We get to Shamba. Now, I figure, I can catch at least the last two days of the seminar.

But nuh-uh. Turns out the Shamban Lights Hotel only holds your room for you for one night. After that, they just suppose you're not coming, and cancel your reservations. I was evicted.

We didn't have 10 Imperials between the two of us. I asked Guba. See, he was holding our money. So Guba says we've got to get some more if we're going to stay in this town.

I say to Guba, why don't you set up that new shell game you were running when we met on Stalitsa, but he says you gotta be kidding. So I follow him over to the Pink Sunset, which I know we'll never be able to afford a room in. And he takes me over to the michezo table.

Balik, he says, now you stand behind me and... think those crescents up to the top of the dice. Seems he had figured out what I did to get him out of that jam back on Stalitsa.

It would sure be easy. I mean, what was so hard in moving a couple of dice after lifting a 150 pound Traka over a building? 'Cept this sounded like cheating. That is, until Guba explained it.

You see, michezo is a funny game. Each guy who rolls the dice has a friend behind him who tries to use noetics to make the dice do just what they want them to do. Kind of cooperative. And that was what I was on Shamba to study in the first place.

Well, it went real well for a while. We were winning everything until I asked this Gorlon squadron leader next to me if he was playing. He looked at me so funny that I thought I better explain the game to him. Then he got real upset. He called for his friends and pulled out his laser pistol.

That was when we decided to leave.

It didn't look like it was gonna be easy. I let Guba do the talking, figuring I'd opened my big mouth enough for today. I followed him upstairs, then through the halls of the Pink Sunset. I expected the Gorlons to catch up with us, but they didn't. Instead Guba talked to some Tarsan hotel workers. Tarsans don't like Gorlons all that much. So they helped us to hide and escape.

There's still a day or two before I have to be back home. You know, I'd kinda like to go to see the market on Fal'el. Guba's been throwing a fit about it. Doesn't want to go. But I don't know when I'll get over to this part of the region again. Might as well drop in on Fal'el while we're close.

difficult time with the Kweli. Even without the resistance, the Empire has little use for Tarsans. Even though the race is physically big and strong, they make very poor workers. Tarsans prefer to sit around and think instead of providing physical labor. Furthermore, the economy of Shamba is in ruins. Most of the planet is under direct occupation, while the remainder is dropping everything to fight the invading Imperial troops. As is usually the case, available funds are spent on Black Market arms and munitions to maintain the fight. Meanwhile, the Empire tries vainly to squelch resistance on a planet that offers a resort atmosphere, and tourist trade dwindles in the threat of fighting.

Tarsans of Note

Uchawi Simba

STR	80	DEX	80
AGL	60	WPR	50
PER	50	PCN	50
STA	74	UMS	70
WNDS	15		

Skills: Beam Weapon (Laser pistol), Ace, 135; Bargaining, Ace, 105; Martial Arts, Ace, 123; Disguise, Ace, 120; Security Devices, Ace 115; Thought Probe, Rookie, 65

Uchawi Simba is the Provisionary Prime Officer of the Kweli. He runs a number of important resistance campaigns from his headquarters in Maji, all of which are directed toward the defeat of the Imperial Occupation Forces. In short, Simba is a busy man.

The first campaign is planet-wide guerrilla action against the Empire's troops—seldom on a large scale, and usually involving an element of surprise.

The second campaign is a type of underground railroad, known as the *zulia*, which operates between the cities of Takataka and Maji. The obvious intent of the *zulia* is to remove the Tarsan citizens of Takataka to Maji before they become infected by the plague. Of course, the *zulia* is inadequately manned and funded, and countless Tarsan families are trying to get out of the infected city, all of which combine to make the operation more complex and dangerous. To complicate matters even more, the Black Market is running an underground escape system from Takataka, and of course, the operation is run for profit.

Still another campaign is that of propaganda. The Kweli are trying to publicize what they believe to be the atrocities occurring in the city of Takataka and the underlying evi-

dence that the Empire intends to destroy the entire Tarsan race. They intend to reveal that the few universities that remain open are little more than schools of Imperial indoctrination which threaten to destroy the Tarsan way of life.

The Kweli are trying very hard to recruit more members, but despite the massive efforts toward recruitment and the very real dangers arising from Imperial domination, traditional Tarsan passivity seems to prevail. Little progress is made with regard to recruitment. Few people, except those from Takataka, believe that the plague has truly returned. The Tarsans seem content to wait out the Imperial Occupation Forces and "let good eventually overtake evil."

As if all of these activities are not enough, Simba also

serves as Prime Officer (a president) of the Tarsan government in exile. In this capacity, Simba meets with heads of state, leaders of the Black Market, and Star Team members in pleas to finance and arm the Kweli resistance.

An interesting trait of the Tarsans is their capacity for mental work. The Tarsans don't last long when physical labor is involved, but they more than make up for this deficiency with their cerebral capacities. While most Humans would find the mental balancing and juggling of so many responsibilities too taxing, the busy work environment is the least of Simba's worries.

Simba is an extremely adept man for the job, for he was once a lecturer in military science at the prestigious Mwalimu University (named for the famous Tarsan philosopher and poet) before the Imperial invasion.

The faculty position is the clos-

est the Tarsans have come to a military leader in the last several thousand years. Simba relies on two sources for his military expertise in guerrilla warfare: textbook military history, of which Simba's knowledge is vast; and advice from the Star Teams.

Of course, Simba relies heavily on the Star Teams for other things than military advice. Many of the arms and supplies used by the Kweli are brought to the Tarsan rebels by the Star Teams. Without the valuable assistance from the Star Teams, Simba would be forced to deal exclusively with the Black Market, which means cash up front and terribly inflated prices. Simba always listens to the advice of Star Team members and lends them any assistance he can.

In his free time (which is obviously very rare) Simba



enjoys reading history. Because of his interest in military science, Simba finds the history of Earth to be the most fascinating of the Wilderness region. The Prime Officer will constantly ask questions of Humans he meets from Earth. The questions are about anything and everything, but with special interest in Francis Marion the "Swamp Fox" (American revolutionary guerrilla of the 1770's), the Afghan resistance of the 1980's, and the activities of General Samuel Jackson in post-Holocaust North America. Simba is trying to understand as much as he can about Earth culture, thought, and military strategy in an attempt to make himself a better warrior. It seems as though he leaves no stone unturned; however, he is already an excellent warrior, who would be hard pressed to improve in any area.

Busu Kisu

STR	74	DEX	78
AGL	60	WPR	30
PER	56	PCN	50
STA	74	UMS	67
WNDS	15		

Skills: Beam Weapon (Laser pistol), Vet, 108; Demolitions, Vet, 94; Electronics, Vet, 90; Investigation, Vet, 76; Outdoor Survival, Vet, 74

Kisu is a young, self-styled campus revolutionary. He maintains a small group of rebels underground in the city of Kitabu. Kisu's student rebels have knocked out power and communications in the city on more than one occasion. As long as Kisu is active, the Imperial Occupation troops have to deal with him; at best, however, the student revolutionaries are of nuisance value only. While his forces are small and his impact minimal, Kisu is still worthy of note.

During the first (Earth) year of Imperial domination, Kisu was a philosophy student at Duara University, specializing in Pre-Holocaust Earth Philosophy. Originally, he was impressed with the writings of Gandhi, King, Chavez, Walesa, and Hunt. When martial law was imposed on Shamba, Kisu led what started off as a nonviolent student protest against the invaders. The act of civil disobedience was intended to cause some change in the situation.

Well, something did change: ICE troopers opened fire on the protesters with beam weapons, killing nearly 200 Tarsan students. Kisu himself was wounded during the attack, but escaped to safety, where he recovered from his

wounds and altered his approach toward the occupation troops.

While recovering underground, Kisu organized student groups into "cells." Each cell contained four students, one of whom was the contact. Orders were sent through the contacts only. This way, if a cellmember was captured by the enemy, the prisoner would not know the other members of the organization. At present, it is believed that there are up to 100 cells operating in and around Kitabu.

Kisu's redirection of the student resistance was not confined to its reorganization. No longer based on non-violence, Kisu's new tactics involved the use of demolitions, surprise kidnappings and other similar acts.

It is possible for Star Teams to work with Kisu, but one

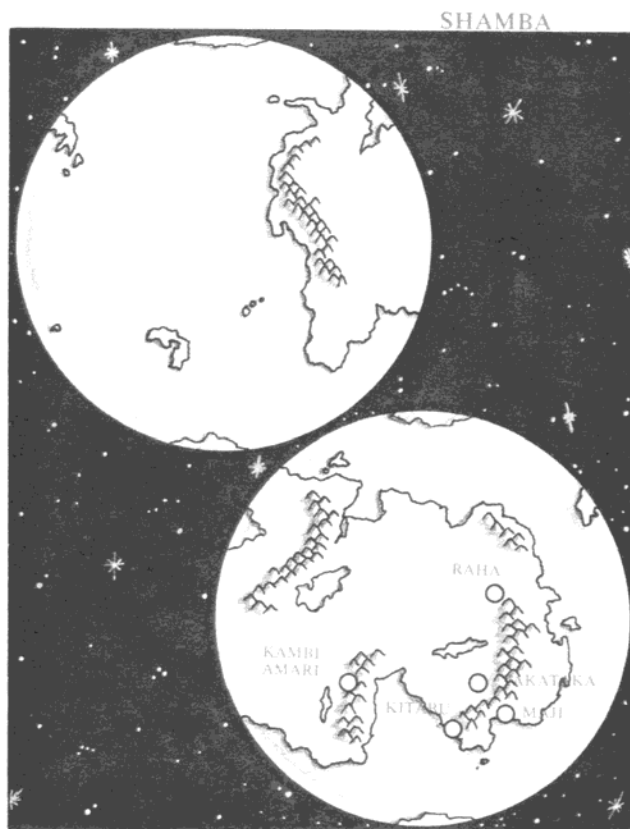
must take his ego into account. Kisu is different from most Tarsans in that he enjoys, actually relishes, the notoriety that accompanies his position. He has even become so bold as to claim that he is the only real leader of the resistance and that when the Occupation troops are defeated, he should be named the Prime Officer of Shamba.

In past dealings with Star Team members, Kisu has been abusive, discourteous, condescending, and a general pain. Once a group of Star Team members risked capture to find Kisu and ask his help on a mission. After nearly crashing while trying to avoid several Imperial interceptors at low level, the Star Team members found his hideout.

All the Star Team daring was in vain: Kisu decided he was not interested in seeing the Star Team members until the next day. The members waited

patiently, only to discover that Kisu had decided not to help them at all.

Because of his personality, dealing with Kisu requires some imagination. Remember that Kisu's followers are devoutly loyal to him, and therefore that offending him could cause the loss of what little Star Team support there is in the area.



The Crassites



In terms of appearance, lifestyle, and overall culture, the Crassite race probably commands the least amount of respect from the Star Teams. Although there can be little doubt that the Human overlords of the Empire represent the very worst their race has to offer, racially they are still Humans, with Human goals, aspirations, and desires. Gorlon racial policies are sickening, but the lizardlike creatures are still respected as some of the fiercest warriors in the galaxy. However, it is just plain hard to find anything to respect in a Crassite.

Fal'el: Home of the Crassites

Population: 3 Billion

Capital: Aasima

Major Urban Centers: Chanzir, Fasoulia, Salsa

Major Military Bases: Lahm Chanzir, Fachtz Chanzir

Economic Base: Mineral Exports, Industry

Climate: Arctic

The overall population pattern of Fal'el is one of heavy urbanization. Star Teams have found it a relatively simple matter to land their vessels in an open snow field. In the countryside, one can travel hundreds of miles without finding any Crassite settlements; if a Star Team member is able to penetrate the planet's defense systems, there is almost always a place to land. However, the landing place is generally in the middle of nowhere.

Points of Interest on Fal'el

Aasima

In many ways one might expect Aasima to resemble Spalnya, the capital of Stalitsa: a rough-and-tumble open city. However, no matter how run-down the Stalitsan capital may be, its appearance is saved by its atmosphere and by the finely tuned Trakan taste and sense of style. Aasima, on the other hand, is a gigantic combination of garbage and overdecoration. Crassite taste in art and architecture is downright vulgar and showy; whereas most capitals pride themselves in their fine sculptures, museums, monuments, and buildings, a tour through Aasima is a plunge into the depths of trashiness.

The Crassite capital streets are lined with blinking Christmas lights all year round. Tinsel hangs from the trees for years at a time. Government buildings are ornate to a fault, their additions in styles clashing so strongly that one might call Aasima an architectural combat zone. A temporary aluminum shelter protrudes from the white marble Corinthian/Geodesic Ministry building, its sides painted over with ads for vacation trips to Stalitsa. Some of the marble buildings have been covered with aluminum siding, then painted various pastel colors. All in all, the best description of Aasima was offered by Byedni Svinina, the visiting Trakan Ambassador from Stalitsa, who was overheard remarking to a friend that Aasima resembled "...a baroque junkyard redecorated in early fast food."

Although Prince Shahm is the highest ranking government official on Fal'el, the real power rests with Duke Yanayir Morleth, Overlord of Imperial Command Enforcement; nobody dares cross the undisputed leader of the elite Imperial troops. Jub'el is known to return to Fal'el on a regular basis, supposedly to visit his muir'im, but chiefly as a friendly reminder to Crassite politicians that he is keeping an eye on things. Prince Shahm is simply content to chase female Crassites to add to his muir'im and meet from time to time with foreign dignitaries.

Chanzir

Chanzir is far and away the largest city on the planet Fal'el. The two major military bases are located just outside of Chanzir. A tremendous amount of mining goes on in the area as well. With both the military activity and the mining operations going full tilt, the economy is booming on this part of the planet.

The city population is almost entirely Crassite, and continually expanding as more and more come from the rural areas looking for work (actually, Crassites look for employment; they never look for work). Many of the Crassites move into the deserted mine shafts that weave under the ever-expanding city.

Despite its rapidly increasing wealth, Chanzir looks as though it had been through a cyclone of vulgarity rather than a great economic boom. This, again, reflects Crassite tastes and values.

Fasoulia

Fasoulia is the Crassite version of the Stalitsan Pit Zone. It offers, however, rather shabby copies of the glittering temptations found in "the Pits."

Fasoulia's dingy and tasteless appearance alone is enough to repel a sensible tourist traffic. However, if appearances alone aren't enough, who in his right mind would pay even a bit to drink *chall* (the favorite Crassite alcoholic beverage, brewed from unmentionable things) and watch a lumbering Crassite (whether male or female) dance on a sagging tabletop that is likely to collapse at any moment?

Fasoulia has casinos, and they are universally crooked. A good casino owner realizes that the customer has to win once in a while, or nobody is going to want to gamble. On the other hand, the Crassite thirst for wealth, natural bargaining instincts, and overall greed prevent the Fasoulia casinos from almost ever paying off a customer. The stories out of Fasoulia are that once in a while, somebody wins at a table completely by accident. When this occurs, the Crassite employees wait outside, beat up the winner, and steal the winnings back.

As if the entertainment is not enough, the Black Market has a strong foothold in Fasoulia. It operates virtually in the open, because the Black Market dealings are so prevalent throughout the planet. Imperial weaponry, military equipment, information and other items are exchanged for

Fal'el's just about where I thought it was. We only had to hit and miss a couple of times, with Guba carrying on each time, wanting to get back to Stalitsa.

But now I bet even he would say it's been worth it. We've both had enough adventure for a lifetime, and I brought back some really great souvenirs. A neat planter, a couple of fine black velvet paintings by genuine name Crassite artists, and salt and pepper shakers made to look like the Crassite Ministry Building in the capital city.

And that's not all. We're getting a little bit tired, Guba and me, so I was real proud to get a map that shows all the shortcuts through the galactic storm, and get us back to Stalitsa or Emniyet in just about no time at all. The guy who sold it to me explained that only the Crassites had been brave enough to map that part of the region and that's why this map cost so much.

Guba calls it a *riba* map. Those Trakans use that word to describe just about anything.

I'm gonna shift into translight. Next stop Stalitsa, little buddy! Pretty soon you'll be home. EEEE—HAH!

drugs (there is a high rate of abuse among Crassite troops), pivo, and Alliance military equipment.

All in all, Fasoulia is a grim place to be, yet the Crassites persist in presenting it as a tourist attraction. Although Fal'el is not open for general travel, aliens may visit Fasoulia in order to spend their tourist bits. Of course, except for Crassites, few races visit Fasoulia. Star Team members have found the city a useful point of departure to other destinations on the planet. However, the rule for all Star Team members on Fal'el is simple: you are on your own. You are likely to get arrested for anything at anytime (depending on the mood of the local law enforcement at any given moment), thrown into the local jail, and forgotten. The activities of the Black Market can make life on Fal'el even more dangerous; although the underworld can be useful for obtaining information and equipment, Black Market members will kill to protect their own income and operations without even blinking an eye.

Lahm Chanzir

Lahm Chanzir is located on the western outskirts of the City of Chanzir. This is the only real full Imperial Fleet base on the planet. Crassites are inducted into military service and trained here.

Fachtz Chanzir

Fachtz Chanzir, located on the eastern outskirts of Chanzir, serves as the galactic headquarters for the Imperial Command Enforcement (ICE). From this location, direct simultaneous communications are maintained with all ICE vessels and major bases throughout the Empire. This includes the Xenophobe front as well as the Wilderness Region.

Fachtz Chanzir always maintains a brigade of ICE troopers on "standby alert." These troops are "rapid deployment" enforcement forces, and are ready to be deployed at a moment's notice anywhere trouble might break out inside the Empire's boundaries.

Crassite Behavior

Crassite manners are completely coarse and crude. They belch out loud, snort, and talk loudly, their mouths stuffed with food at all times; they behave this way whether at home in the *muir'im* or dining in front of the Emperor himself. The rudeness does not end at the dining table; Crassites laugh much too loudly, smacking guests heartily on the back, knocking the breath out of them, or injuring them more gravely. The cause of such merriment is usually a *yadhak*: a joke that is not funny, but extremely stupid and coarse. The more stupid and/or coarse, the harder the creatures laugh. Crassites sit around drinking for hours, telling *yadhaki* as they laugh, batter each other on the backs, and belch.

Crassites are not only rude, but completely unethical according to the standards of most people. For example, it is well known that Crassites are prone to lie. They are terribly dishonest, but Crassite culture does not view this as a negative. To the contrary, dishonesty simply means that a Crassite is trying to seek advantage in dealing with someone else. Such behavior is admired on Fal'el, and explains in part why Crassites are so adept at bargaining.

The unreliability extends to life and death situations; the Crassites do not make very good soldiers. They are extremely corrupt, and self-indulgent. Furthermore, non-Crassite commanders cannot count on the honesty of the Crassite officers under their command.

Crassites of Note

Yazir Zig'el

STR	60	DEX	50	AGL	52
WPR	78	PER	44	PCN	80
STA	50	UMS	56	WNDS	13

Skills: Sensory Knife, Vet, 85; Laser Pistol, Ace, 105; Spacecraft Piloting, Rookie, 76; Deep Space Tracking, Rookie, 95; Investigation, Vet, 98; Bargaining, Ace, 146; Gambling, Vet, 95; Theft, Rookie, 85.

Zig'el is an extremely wealthy man and one of the most important figures in the Black Market. He is, in essence, the underworld kingpin on Fal'el. He reports directly to the six captains who in turn report directly to Stalitsa and to Lyef Vor, the head of the Black Market. But Zig'el is not a mere servant of Vor; he also has contacts and commands attention on other planets such as Shamba, where he owns a condominium in an exclusive resort, and Stalitsa, where he maintains another condominium in Pit.

As one might expect, it is dangerous to work for or with Yazir Zig'el. Alliance law enforcement believes that Zig'el is directly or indirectly responsible for the murders of some 183 people, most of them on Fal'el; his involvement has not been proven in any of these cases.

Zig'el is extremely dishonest, and cannot be trusted under any circumstances. He is known to strike deals, get what he wants, then terminate the person with whom the deal was struck. This tendency probably stems from the fact that Zig'el never allows himself to owe favors to any-

one except Vor—and Vor only because the Crassite has met his bargaining match with the brilliant and slippery Trakan. This means that whenever possible, Yazir does not deal until he has dug up some sort of dirt on those with whom he is dealing. This allows him the opportunity to blackmail the other party as a first option. If the first option fails for some reason, Zig'el usually has the party killed in a gangland-style execution. The reason for the execution is, in Zig'el's words, "educational": to teach others who might cross his path how dear the price is for not playing by his rules.

For one of his great wealth, power, and influence, Zig'el is surprisingly public, outgoing, and approachable. He is most often found in Fasoulia, although he does spend time at regular intervals on Shamba, at the Lake Fuchsia Resort, Condominium 32.



The Humanoles



Look. I know it wasn't Emniyet or Stalitsa, all right? You don't know where we are any better than I do, Guba, so you might as well quit griping and help me figure out this map. You know, I always thought those Star Team guys who studied deep space tracking were kinda dumb and all, but I wish I knew some of that right now.

Still, Gazzì turned out to be fun. That's the name of the planet where we spent the last few days.

At first when we landed I thought we were in real trouble again. Saw what looked like Gorlons around the ship, so I thought we might be back on Asfalia or something.

Funny thing was, there were brown and green Gorlons together, treating each other like they were sorta equal. And everyone knows that's not the way Gorlons think. But that wasn't the end of the weird things.

See, when these Humanoles (I'll call them that 'cause they're sort of a cross between Humans and chameleons, and they sure aren't Gorlons) walked around the ship, they changed colors. I mean, not like rainbows or fancy shirts, but from green to brown and back again. All the while they were talking to each other, in a hissy-sounding language a whole lot like Gorlon. As usual, I began to catch on to what they were saying, and it turned out they didn't know what we were, either.

Sure spooked me. Spooked Guba, too. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw him sneaking a sensory knife out of his boot, and I thought, *uh-oh*, this is it. And this one Humanole grabbed hold of Guba kinda rough, and Guba swung around and cut off his arm.

I remember thinking what a way to go. I mean, lost on some strange planet, then waylaid by chameleons. But that wasn't what happened at all.

What happened was all the Humanoles started laughing. No kidding. Guba and I just stood there, not believing it, while these guys were laughing at their friend wallowing around on the ground without his arm. It was real gruesome.

Then a big one of these fellas steps forward and asks us if we speak his language. I said I do now, which puzzled him a little.

Then he asks, since I know their language, maybe I'm familiar with stiinta. Of course, I didn't have any idea what that was, except that it was probably some kind of game, seeing that "stiinta" meant "game" in their language.

The big fella happened to be Commander Ser Socka, who was a real important guy on the planet. The reason he was asking me about this stiinta business was that he was some kind of team owner, and my size impressed him. He came right out and said he was scouting me for his team.

Well, it seemed to me that I didn't have much choice. I mean, if you run up against a bunch of things that laugh at wounds like the one their buddy suffered, you just better make friends with them—that's all there is to it. So I told Ser Socka that it'd be an honor to play for his team, but I'd have to be going real soon, seeing that I was trying to get home and all.

That was fine with Ser Socka. Seems some big planet-wide championship was taking place in a couple of

days, and all he cared about was winning that championship. After that, I could do whatever I liked.

Sounded like a good deal at the time. I mean, I was a pretty fair dort basher back on Emniyet, and I figured I could get by on natural athletic ability or something. I was pretty sure they'd be quicker, but from the way Ser Socka was talking, I figured I could use size to my advantage.

But let me tell you. Don't ever join a team until you know the game. This stiinta stuff makes dort look like a relaxing evening in front of the holovision.

The game is like the Earth game of lacrosse, with the long-handled baskets and goals at each end of the field. And you're supposed to use those baskets to catch and throw a ball. To throw it, you hope, into one of those goals. Sounds easy enough, but it isn't.

First of all, turns out that the business with the sensory knife was not only funny to these guys, but that those kind of things really don't hurt them much in the long run. They grow the limbs back, just like Gorlons do. The guy that Guba cut up was at the stiinta game when I played, and the arm had grown halfway back. So they tend to play rough. The only real rule is that you can't tear off your opponent's limb and hit him with it. That doesn't mean you can't hit someone else.

Problem was, my limbs wouldn't grow back. I begged off of practice, telling Ser Socka I had to save my energy. Really wanted to save my legs. Guba didn't help matters by telling everybody he saw about my "defective limbs." He said he was trying to raise the betting odds against me so that we'd win a lot of money. He believed in me that much.

Maybe he was right. Watching those Humanoles out there, tearing into and off of one another, was more and more fun as practice went on. I was surprised that I started to get into it. The game was two days away, and I wouldn't miss it for the worlds.

The two days went by fast. I walked into the big stiinta arena and heard the crowd shrieking and laughing. They were expecting some kind of violence, you could tell.

I wasn't about to stay down on the playing field. Those little Humanoles are strong and vicious. So I figure, if everything is fair more or less in this game, why not levitate myself out of range when they get too rough?

It worked real good. As a matter of fact, it got to be fun, too. I mean, coming down and really creaming one of them, then rising back up before the guy could hit back. I even levitated their goalie so my team could get better shots. At first the crowd didn't like it too much. Then I started dropping the goalie on his head after I levitated him, and the crowd came around to my side pretty quick.

We won the game, twenty-seven to twenty. Commander Secka asked me to stay, but I figured as I'd lived up to my end of the bargain, he should live up to his and allow us to go. Well, it seems that Secka was a Humanole of his word. We had a hero's sendoff, and it would have been a perfect visit if Guba hadn't lost the money somewhere that he won betting on my team. He was upset about that, but he was a pretty good sport at the game. I even saw him cheer a little for our opponents, but I don't mind all that much.

The Humanoles have yet to be discovered by either the Star Teams, the Alliance, or Empire. We use the name “Humanole” because it is what Balik and Guba came to call these creatures, and it seems appropriate, given their appearance and characteristics: sharing values and intelligence with Humans, but resembling more closely the Anole, a species of Earth lizard also known as the American Chameleon.

Aside from their obvious use as an NPC race, Humanoles can be used as a player character race in STAR ACE® campaign. The decision is left to the CM, who knows the direction of his or her campaign, and is in the best position to judge the value of Humanoles in future STAR ACE adventures.

Gazzi: Home of the Humanoles

Population: 3 Billion

Race: Humanole

Climate: Subtropical

Lord: Ser Socka

Technology: 5

Economy: 5

Resistance: Yes

Gravity: 0.8

Capital: Kambuzzi

Major Urban Centers: Kambuzzi

Major Military Bases: Sertan Des, Lyandaff, Lutesonge

The only real land mass on the planet of Gazzi is the continent of Western Gazzi; Eastern Gazzi, once a continent comparable to Western Gazzi in size, now lies submerged beneath the vast planetary ocean. Orbiting its sun at an average distance of some 98 million miles, Gazzi is slightly colder than Earth: two large polar icecaps extend relatively far across the surface of the planet, and even though Western Gazzi is an equatorial land mass, its temperatures are merely subtropical by Earth standards.

Immense vegetation covers most of Western Gazzi; animal life forms are fairly similar to many of those found elsewhere in this part of the galaxy. No other intelligent species of life have been found on Gazzi, although Humanole legends present some interesting possibilities.

Most Humanoles believe that their fellows who lived on Eastern Gazzi did not actually perish during the landshift that submerged the continent. Instead, these Humanoles were caught in shelves and pockets caused by the shifting land mass, and now exist, strangely evolved, under the surface of the planet, probably under the sea, in an area now called Sub Gazzi.

While such stories are widespread and enduring, conclusive evidence to support them is missing. However, this does account for the Humanole interest in exploring the interior of their planet rather than looking to space.

Points of Interest on Gazzi

Kambuzzi

Kambuzzi is the capital of Western Gazzi, situated in the

single largest territory on the continent. After the Humanole Wars of Territory (see below), it was a matter of pragmatic reality that the largest of the territories become the home for the central government—a pragmatic reality enforced by pressure from the single largest territorial militia, who “strongly desired” that the capital be placed in Kambuzzi.

The buildings in Kambuzzi are simply larger versions of the traditional Humanole dwellings: the walls and roofs are thatched and interwoven, and there is an actual feeling of the buildings’ being able to breathe.

A stranger would not readily realize that he or she was in a capital, for the city itself is quite simple. There are no statues or monuments. There are no ornate buildings. The closest things to nightclubs in the entire city are the various public gymnasiums. A large stadium, seating capacity 200,000, houses the planetary championship in Stiinta, the favorite sport of the Humanoles.

Humanoles: Physical Characteristics

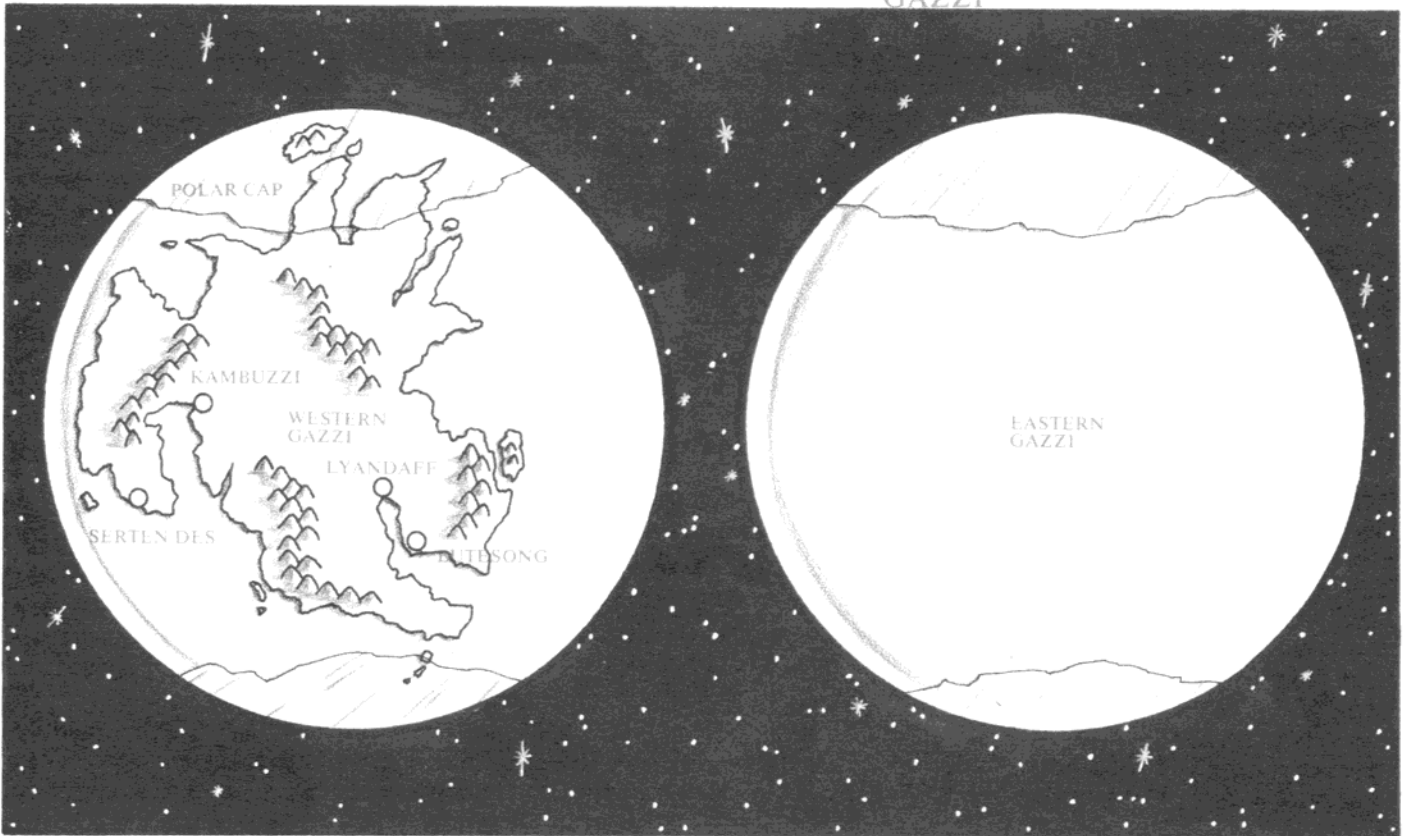
The Humanoles are extremely similar to Gorlons in appearance, but in the case of the Humanoles, appearances can be deceiving, or even changeable. Some of the unusual qualities of the Humanoles are similar to those of the anole, the lizard this race most resembles.

The anole is a lizard native to Earth, common to almost all tropical and subtropical areas of the Americas. Although the anole resembles other lizards, it has some distinguishing features: its long toes, each equipped with tiny adhesive pads, allow it to climb up and down walls as well as across ceilings; the anole (also known as the American Chameleon) changes color, from green to brown or brown to green, depending on its location and surrounding color. The Humanole has these same qualities.

Humanoles can walk up and down walls and crawl across ceilings. A Humanole character can automatically climb any wall. A single general Agility check determines whether the Humanole character can walk across a ceiling.

The Humanole turns green or brown depending upon its surroundings. The change takes 1d10 rounds to complete from the time the Humanole comes into direct contact (touch) with a new color. Consult the following table in order to determine which color causes a color change:

Major Contacted Color	Humanole Skin Color Changes to:
Brown	Brown
Red	Brown
Black	Brown
Orange	Brown
Green	Green
Blue	Green
Yellow	Green
Purple	Green
White	Green



In the event of color variations, shades, or patterns not spelled out in the list above, CM's judgment is final.

Other curious Humanole characteristics are the ability to regenerate lost limbs and the tendency to heal extremely rapidly. A successful armed combat called shot to any Humanole limb severs it from the body; however, the limb regenerates completely in 2d10 days. Humanoles heal wounds twice as fast as do other characters.

Humanoles are far more intelligent than Gorlons. They learn very quickly and with the aid of modern technology, will have no problem mastering the Universal language in a matter of 1d10 weeks. Linguistically, the Humanole language is really quite similar to Gorlon, and either language would be comprehensible to either race.

Like Gorlons, Humanoles are egg layers, usually having anywhere from 7 to 23 eggs. The young are hatched and raised by both parents until the age of 25. The family dwells in one or two large trees, with each member of the family claiming a specific branch for its *wugim*, or dwelling.

A *wugim* is a thatched dwelling. It blends in quite well with the surrounding foliage so that it is difficult to spot from the ground or the air. On first appearances, the *wugim* seems like a primitive dwelling. Actually, *wugims* can become quite involved. Since there is little temperature variation in Western Gazz, the walls of the *wugim* breathe, allowing air to circulate and make the treehouses quite comfortable, while offering protection against the elements.

Electrical wiring is woven into the *wugim* walls to become a part of the decor. The *wugim* itself contains

virtually all of the same advanced technology as do households in the Alliance.

Humanole History

Humanole history is somewhat different from that of other nearby intelligent races. To begin with, because of the cosmic Storm Zone, most of the Alliance worlds are cut off from the Humanoles. Alliance and Imperial space travelers are under the misconception that the Storm Zone is a solid impassable wall from the edge of the Imperial zones back to the Alliance zone.

Because of this misconception, Alliance, Imperial and Star Team explorers have yet to find Gazz and its Humanole inhabitants. Thus the Humanoles have been left on their own to develop without outside interference. Although they developed a technology comparable to that of most planets in the Alliance, they did not emphasize space travel.

Until 1994, Humanoles populated the entire planet of Gazz, but two events changed their history in devastating fashion. The first event was the Wars of Territory. The second was the disappearance of Eastern Gazz.

The Wars of Territory lasted from 1994 to 2590, but they were centuries in the making, given the traditions of Humanole society. Each Humanole family structure was independent, defining its own laws inside its own territory. It was only a matter of time before territories began to feud with each other. When these feuds erupted on a much

larger scale in 1994, combatants quickly sought allies, drawing others headlong into the conflict. The alliances didn't work out well, again because of the territorial nature of the Humanoles, as well as their inability to compromise. No Humanole leaders were willing to alter or change the laws within their territories to suit a stranger. By the war's end no original territory or alliance remained the same.

The battles themselves were chaotic affairs, lacking clearly defined sides. Often alliances would change in the middle of a major battle, and forces that started the battle as allies suddenly turned upon each other while the original enemy watched and cheered. Afterwards, the original enemy might simply mop up the remaining, battered forces.

The Wars of Territory finally ground to a halt when the Humanole population was so depleted, and the suffering so great, the obvious right thing to do was to come up with a compromise. In no case would a Humanole admit that his territory was any less than absolutely righteous, but the armistice arose from a planetwide conviction that the Wars of Territory were just too destructive.

In the year 2847 (by Alliance counting), a great natural disaster took place. Eastern Gazzi fell into the sea; its entire population vanished.

The legacy left by the disaster is of some interest to visitors to the planet. According to Humanole legend or belief, the residents of Eastern Gazzi did not perish when the continent submerged. Instead, it is maintained that the Humanoles on Eastern Gazzi became an underground race, living deep under the surface of the planet. The surviving Humanoles claim that physical evidence of these underground Humanoles exists in the hands of scholars. All in all, though it is a popular belief, there is little if any evidence to support it.

Humanole Attitudes

Humanoles enjoy the tropical environment, which should not be confused with the "easy life" often associated with such climes. They enjoy physical exercise such as climbing and jumping, but almost everything these creatures do is intense and directed toward perfection. Humanoles also display a strange combination of behaviors. Often the combinations appear to be contradictory.

To begin with, Humanoles have an extremely strong sense of right and wrong, often reducing issues to simplistic terms that do not allow for various complexities that often accompany moral choice. If a choice is seen as right, but a great number of characters will be hurt by the decision, then a great number of characters have to be hurt. Such are the consequences of life in the Humanole view.

The creatures hold high expectations for themselves as well as for their comrades. Often times, when a friend is perceived to have erred, even through making an honest mistake, the Humanole becomes extremely angry.

Of course, Humanole anger is not confined to the mistakes of comrades. They tend to have extremely volatile and all-consuming tempers, fighting with crazed smiles on their faces, as if they get some sort of true enjoyment out of

inflicting pain upon others. The temper and the aggression will not subside until the Humanole or his enemy is totally destroyed. As with everything else in Humanole life, there is no compromise. During any combat situation or other situation where a CM believes the roll is in character, the Humanole character must pass a general Willpower check or lose his or her temper for 1d10 rounds. While in this state, the Humanole does not withdraw from combat, no matter what the danger, and goes for all-out victory over the opponent.

The perfect illustration of the Humanole temper is the case of the Humanole who had captured a talking mouska (a sighted, talking bat native to Gazzi) and was training the creature to become a household pet. One day, while the Humanole handled the wild mouska, the pet became frightened and bit its master. Though unharmed, the Humanole went wild and punched the tiny creature in the face. The force of the blow was so hard that it knocked the mouska 20 feet across the room and into the wall, leaving it unconscious and on the edge of death. Fortunately, the pet recovered.

Now, the Humanole owner felt terrible and was quite sad when it seemed that he might lose his pet. Whenever he would explain what had happened, however, the Humanole concluded the story with, "I feel terrible that I had to hit the little thing. But he shouldn't have bitten me!"

The keen sense of territory that gave rise to the Wars of Territory is found in virtually all aspects of Humanole life. The creatures have strong family ties which are defended as strongly as territory, except when two family members are fighting each other about territorial rights. Then family ties go out the window.

Humanoles are carnivores. Therefore, they have developed great skills as hunters and marksmen. They love to use their natural climbing ability to set a variety of traps and ambushes for their prey: for example, the Humanoles are able to climb up the trees with lasers, use their color change to hide, and await their target.

Whether in a fit of anger, plotting a hunt, or enjoying a Stiinta game, Humanoles share one overwhelming passion: they thrill to violence. Whenever Humanoles see a fight approaching, they break into crazed smiles, their eyes glitter, and they erupt in high pitched laughter. It doesn't matter if the Humanole is a participant or a spectator, or if the fight is fair or impossibly matched. All that matters is that some wild violence approaches.

After the fight, Humanoles love to tell stories about the violence. The wilder the violence, the harder the laughter at the retelling. Even if a Humanole lies near death, he will laugh as he recounts the story from his hospital bed.

The Joys of Stiinta

With all of this in mind, it should not be surprising to discover that the Humanoles love sports that involve massive amounts of contact. Some of the Humanole sports make games such as football, hockey, dort, and lacrosse appear as harmless as hopscotch.

One especially gruesome sport is called Stiinta. The game is a particularly violent form of lacrosse. Each player carries a basketed stick, which he uses to pass, catch, and shoot a hard ball about the size of a baseball. The object of the game is to put the ball in your opponent's goal. Ten players are on each team: three attackers must stay on the offensive side of the field; three defenders and one goalie must stay on the defensive side of the field; three midfielders may roam wherever they wish. (Substitution takes place most often at the midfield position.)

Fouls are much more extreme than those tolerated in other sports. Players are allowed to strike each other as hard as they want. However, it is a foul to strike a player with another player's arm or leg.

Often in the heat of competition, Stiinta players yank off the arms or legs of their opponents. This is legal. But it is illegal to beat players with the severed limb. Sometimes players will continue to play with a missing arm. Some goalies have actually played without any legs. In the true Humanole spirit, it's all part of the fun, and given their regenerative powers, the limbs grow back shortly.

The Humanoles enjoy packing Stiinta stadiums with thousands of screaming fans. It is indeed quite a spectacle to hear the crowd go wild with laughter as a goalie chases a hopping attacker around the field, beating the attacker with the poor fellow's own leg until the referee can pull them apart.

Humanole Military Organization

Humanole Military organization is reasonably straightforward. It is best described as a two level militia. The first level is the territorial militia, which arises from a specific territory, and is created to enforce the laws of that territory. Service in the territorial militia is mandatory for all Humanole citizens. Because of their love for exercise and violent contact, Humanoles eagerly look forward to their military induction and training.

After the Humanoles finish their stint in the military, they receive the opportunity to join the elite militia. Differing from the territorial militia, this elite militia operates as more of a planet-wide military force.

Since there is no interest in space travel upon Gazz, there is no space traveling military force. There is, however, an air force of sorts. This air arm of the Humanole military is rather small and does not travel beyond the atmosphere of the planet. Of course, such an air defense unit would be no match for the Star Teams, Alliance, or Imperial forces.

On the other hand, the Humanole militia would be match of any land based outfit in the galaxy. Given the swiftness of the Humanoles, their ability to camouflage themselves, their ability to regenerate, as well as their absolute love of violence (when appropriate in their eyes), these creatures make excellent soldiers.

The basic military unit of the Humanole militia consists of six soldiers, one of whom carries a grenade launcher. The rest are armed with laser rifles. Such a unit is equiv-

alent to an Imperial fireteam. The difference is, however, that the Humanole unit is a lot tougher than its Imperial counterpart, due to the extra soldier per unit and the typical Humanole ferocity in battle.

All members of a Humanole fireteam are natives of the same territory, so the unit develops a sense of comradeship beyond that of most military units. The troops within each fireteam know each other well, and protect each member's interests as well as those of the territory. With such unity and high morale on the units, the fireteams are a formidable fighting force.

Humanole military includes a traditional navy that sails the ample seas of Gazz. The navy consists of submergible hovercraft that would seem more like aircraft from 21st century Earth.

The major duties of all military teams are to police the planet and prevent minor territorial outbreaks from blowing up into full-fledged wars.

Humanoles as Player Characters

It is possible to use the Humanole as a player character race in the STARACE® game, if the CM chooses to do so. A player who creates a Humanole as his or her PC should follow the steps outlined in the section "How to Create a Character," in Chapter II of the *Star Team Basic Training Manual*. Figure all Basic Ability scores for the Humanole normally except Perception, the Humanole's restricted Ability score. Suggested Abilities to increase at the expense of Perception are Agility, Dexterity, Stamina, or Strength. Remember, none of these scores may exceed 80!

The Humanole's Perception Score is always between 20 and 60. It never rises above 60.

The Humanoles are more likely to become combat specialists, or Spades, in the Star Teams because of their racial talents, but a Humanole may choose his or her own skills and Order in the Star Teams. No matter what Order the Humanoles choose, they still fly their own craft and engage in all forms of combat.

Creating the Humanole NPC

To create a Humanole NPC, use the method for creating Human PCs, but make sure the Ability scores follow these restrictions:

1. Minimum scores for Humanole Stamina and Agility are 50.
2. The maximum score for Humanole Perception is 60.

The following scores may be used for standard Humanole NPCs:

STR	54	DEX	64	AGL	64
WPR	50	PER	54	PCN	40
STA	50	UMS	59	WNDS	13

Humanoles of Note

Minister Sinsta

STR	68	DEX	70	AGL	68
WPR	50	PER	56	PCN	58
STA	50	UMS	68	WNDS	13

Skills: Piloting*, Ace, 121; Laser Pistol, Vet, 100; Laser Rifle, Vet, 100; Grenade Launcher, Vet, 100; Bargaining, Ace, 108; Investigations, Vet, 85; Medicine, Ace, 109; Outdoor Survival, Ace, 108.

* Piloting is basically the same skill as Spacecraft Piloting, except that the Humanoles do not have spacecraft. Piloting skill is computed and used in the same manner as Spacecraft Piloting; however, a Humanole must acquire Spacecraft Piloting skill to fly a spacecraft. On the other hand, any character using Spacecraft Piloting skill can attempt to fly a Humanole flying craft.

Minister Sinsta is the head of Western Gazz, being duly elected by the Council of Territories. She is more than token proof that sexism is not a part of Humanole life. She is an extremely popular leader in Western Gazz because of her toughness under pressure.

As with a great deal of the Humanole characters in STAR ACE®, Minister Sinsta is skilled in the use of standard issue military weapons. Otherwise, she is highly skilled in what would correspond to the Star Team Free Order of Hearts.

Sinsta was once a well known physician in Kambuzzi, where she developed a reputation for extreme honesty. Her reputation was so strong that she was elected to the Council of Territories as a representative. Once on the Council Board, her reputation became planet wide for being both a wheeler-dealer and an extremely honest politician.

Minister Sinsta is 7'10" tall and a well exercised 235 pounds. As a show of her patriotism and absolute authority, she always wears a military uniform. The uniform varies from day to day. Sometimes she wears the uniforms of the Elite Militia, other times she wears the uniforms of individual Territorial Militias. She wears all but her own Territorial Militia uniform so as not to offend the various Territories. The intended symbolism is that her interest lies in the well-being of all of Western Gazz, not merely in one or a few Territories.

Sinsta's reaction to alien visitors is fairly predictable. Should the actions of the visitors indicate dishonesty to the Humanole Minister, she will destroy them, no questions asked. If, on the other hand, the visitors seem straight-talking, strong, and fair, she will welcome them.

Of course, it is probable that the first Imperial visitors to Western Gazz will be perceived as dishonest and power hungry, but not necessarily so. Because the Humanoles look and sound very much like Green and Brown Gorlons, it is possible that the Imperial visitors will deal with the

Humanoles as equals until somebody figures out the error.

On the other hand, it is quite possible that Star Team player characters will first spot the Humanoles and mistake them for Gorlons. In this case, it could be the Star Team members who fire first and ask questions when it might be too late. Of course, in such circumstances the Humanoles would attempt to destroy the Star Teams in self-defense. Perhaps the Star Team members might violate some territory without realizing what they have done, or do something accidentally that touches off the famous Humanole temper.

There are a number of possibilities to take into account with the first encounter between the Humanoles and the members of the Star Teams, Alliance, or Empire. The CM might have a specific outcome in mind. It is important, however, to remember that Minister Sinsta will carefully weigh all of the events which take place. Once she has made a decision, she will react swiftly and irrevocably, as is the nature of all Humanoles.

Commander Ser Socka

STR	74	DEX	80	AGL	78
WPR	56	PER	56	PCN	54
STA	70	UMS	76	WNDS	15

Skills: Piloting*, Ace, 126; Martial Arts, Ace, 127; Advanced Self Defense, Ace, 127; Laser Rifle, Ace, 135; Laser Pistol, Ace, 135; Grenade Launcher, Ace, 135; Short Bow, Vet, 110; Computers, Vet, 82; Demolitions, Vet, 97; Outdoor Survival, Vet, 84; Disguise, Rookie, 83; Security Devices, Rookie, 77; Stunt Driving, Rookie, 81; Theft, Rookie, 79.

* See note on Piloting skill under Minister Sinsta.

Ser Socka is a soldier's soldier. He started off as a member of the Lutesonge Territorial Militia, where he had an extremely distinguished service record. After his time was up, Socka joined the Elite Militia, and again distinguished himself repeatedly. After eight years of a standard, although highly decorated, military career, Socka was called upon to head up the Terminators, a special force of the Elite Militia.

The Terminators were designed to be complete soldiers, the best of the best. These troops were trained in the use of all sorts of weapons and methods of combat as well as other survival and support skills. In the event of a major outbreak of violence on Western Gazz, the Terminators will be called upon first to squelch the uprising. Of course, in the extreme Humanole way of viewing their world and its problems, the solution to violent uprising is the elimination (in other words, the death) of the responsible parties. Hence the name and training of this elite military group.

Socka is military and Humanole to the extreme. He follows the orders of his commander, Minister Sinsta,

without question or regard for his own personal safety. He is "spit and polish," always in a uniform of some sort, and his demeanor reflects the extreme of his discipline.

As a military tactician, Socka has the same downfall that many military leaders have shown historically. He believes in total and absolute victory at all costs, regardless of political consequences. In fact, Socka leaves the politics to the politicians and wishes that politicians would return the favor to the military.

Socka does not believe in taking prisoners unless they might contribute information. On the other hand, showing his extreme Humanole sense of right and wrong, once he takes a prisoner, he will not execute him, regardless of whether he receives any useful information. To the Humanole, it would simply be wrong to kill someone after he or she has been taken prisoner, and as with all things in the Humanole world view, it is either right or wrong—there can be no middle ground. Military tactics follow this same philosophy. There can be no middle ground: battles are fought to be won, with the cost in personnel, munitions, and political outcomes to be the concerns of others.

Socka is a big fan of the game Stiinta, and was once a player himself, playing for his Territorial Militia team. He also enjoys reading Humanole philosophy, which is pretty straightforward and simple stuff when compared to Tarsan works. The commander also enjoys wilderness camping, long endurance runs, physical exercise, and martial arts.

Commander Socka stands exactly 8' tall and is a muscular 260 pounds. His trademark is to wear sunglasses everywhere, indoors and out, day and night, and to smoke cigarettes from a silver carrying case, using a silver cigarette holder. By Humanole standards, Commander Socka is extremely handsome, and quite the sex symbol throughout Western Gazzi.

The Commander is married, however, and would never consider another way of life. He is married to his military career, and has "no need of meaningless relationships."

Sirpint

STR	68	DEX	70	AGL	76
WPR	62	PER	58	PCN	46
STA	60	UMS	72	WNDS	14

Skills: Laser Rifle, Ace, 125; Grenade Launcher, Vet, 100; Bargaining, Ace, 115; Disguise, Ace, 119; Forgery, Ace, 119; Security Devices, Ace, 109; Theft, Ace, 115; Investigation, Rookie, 71.

One rule which has been universal throughout this part of the galaxy is the famous "for each rule there is an exception." Such is the case with the Humanole named Sirpint.

Sirpint is a two-faced, scheming, dishonest, and generally loathsome individual. He maintains the opposite position on every Humanole perception of right and

wrong. Yet, at the same time, he maintains a clever cover to keep the unsuspecting Humanoles of his home territory (Lyandaff) content with his behavior.

Because the Humanoles have been so isolated from other lifeforms in the galaxy, there is no Black Market currently operating on the planet of Gazzi. However, one can rest assured that as soon as contact is made, and the aliens introduce the Black Market to the planet, Sirpint will be in the thick of things, if not leading it.

Sirpint's attitude actually goes against the very nature of Humanole tradition in a number of fashions. To begin with, Sirpint detests any form of serious exercise; hence he tends to be overweight. He always has some sort of excuse for not participating in group exercises or group marathon runs. Usually he will mention some horrible war injury, so severe that he is listed in medical encyclopedias for simply having survived. This, of course, is not true; it should be mentioned that Sirpint was excused from military service, having cut off his own arms and legs and stating that the limbless condition existed since birth. Of course, the limbs eventually grew back, but the truthful Humanoles believed the ruse. Although Sirpint's draft dodging was quite painful, it serves as an example to show the lengths he will go to to avoid exercise or similar things.

Sirpint only enjoys violence when it happens to other people. He is never caught in a game of Stiinta, although he giggles and guffaws at the exploits of others on the Stiinta field. Sirpint has also been known to bait unsuspecting Humanoles into fighting each other for no real reason, then wildly lead cheers from the sidelines and talk about how he'd kill either or both of the opponents if he were fighting.

While most Humanoles are inclined to understatement, Sirpint tends to exaggerate circumstances almost, but never quite, beyond belief. To go beyond belief would show the lying Humanole in his real falseness. Since Humanole nature only deals in black and white, and does not really account for the gray areas, exaggeration is the same as dishonesty. Since honesty is highly valued among Humanoles, Sirpint is careful not to expose himself. Exaggeration could actually cost him his life if he were discovered.

Sirpint stands about 7'8" tall and weighs 350 pounds. He tends to wear gaudy colors in horrible combinations that attract the attention (though not necessarily the disapproval) of other Humanoles. Actually, there is a distinct air of Crassite charm about him.

The Demoreans





OK, I'm sorry, Guba. For the million billionth time, I'm sorry! I shouldn't have punched you down there, but I had no way of knowing you were you, and you know that.

The ship began to rattle right outside of the Kakchak System. At least my map from Fal'el said it was the Kakchak System, but that doesn't mean that much. Like Guba says, the map has turned out to be about as useful in deep space as a floor plan of a bodrum.

Anyway, the ship started acting up. So did Guba. First of all, he blames the Clones back on Ruoka, saying they did a sloppy job fixing Old Bett in the first place. Then he blames me, saying I drove the thing too hard, even though he admitted we'd made real good time.

All that complaining didn't do much good. Guba squawked for about half an hour, and do you know what? The ship was still in bad shape. As a matter of fact, it was rattling and whining even more. So I decided to pull into a nearby moon, to see if I could jury-rig whatever ailed Old Bett. There's three moons around this planet, right? I pull into the nearest one.

I must have a talent for trouble.

Not that we noticed at first. There were some signs that the moon was inhabited, but neither of us could see anyone around. Guba said he was gonna explore nearby, seeing as he wouldn't be too much help with the repairs.

This time there was something wrong with the drive on the ship. We could still move and all, but couldn't control translight jumps. Without that kind of control, we could start only millions of miles from home and end up on the other side of the galaxy.

I got up to look for Guba and give him the bad news, but I couldn't find him. Finally, he popped out from behind some rocks, and said it didn't look like anyone was nearby.

At least I thought it was Guba. What should have made me suspect was when I gave him the bad news about Old Bett and he didn't panic. That's not like Guba when it comes to spacecraft. But I'm not always quick to see through things, you know.

Second clue should have been the missing scar. See, when we wrecked on Ruoka, Guba got a nasty cut on his forehead. It wasn't anything that'd leave a permanent mark on the little fella, but I remember thinking that scar sure healed fast. Anybody else might have caught on. But nuh-uh, not old Balik! Took a third clue for me to see the guy in front of me was some kind of phony.

He pulled a gun on me.

That was when some of his buddies came out from cover and surrounded me. These guys were armed, and none of them looked anything like Guba. In fact, they were sorta scrawny, bald, and had four arms. Looked kinda like a cross between Humans and insects. Neither one of which is all that pretty, if you ask me.

The Guba in front of me ducked behind a rock, and came back out looking like his buddies. Then they brought Guba out from behind some rocks, his hands tied behind him. Before I thought about it, I hauled off and punched him one for the dirty trick he pulled a few minutes ago. Or what I thought he had pulled.

'Cause this was the real Guba. Same scar on his forehead, and now a lump over his right ear, where one

of them must have clobbered him. And the real Guba was squawking away at them, asking what they were planning to do with us. Telling them any old thing to trick or scare them. Finally even giving them orders.

You said it, Guba. Don't deny it! You said, "Take me to your leader"!

Funny thing was, they took us to their leader. This fella was a big one, even uglier than most of his friends. The guy's name was Memarg Ny, or something like that—their language was a little hard to pronounce.

I knew we were in trouble when I felt this weird kind of noetic energy going on. As the guy was asking us questions, he was trying to probe our thoughts. I put up my defenses, so he probly thought I was dumb or something since he couldn't tell what or if I was thinking.

Then Memarg Ny turned toward Guba, trying to probe him. And when he did, I kinda turned the tables on him, and found out enough.

So I made up a story. Never thought I was too good at lying, and Memarg Ny was probing me through the whole thing, but Guba caught on at once what I was doing, and he helped me by explaining things.

I told Memarg Ny what I thought he might like hearing. We were exiles from our own planets, I said. They'd thrown us off because we weren't perfect. I showed Memarg Ny my missing tooth. And I showed him Guba's scar. I also saw his scar—a little one on the side of his neck.

Guba took over from there. Gosh, he's a smart little fella! He says that, even though we can never return to our own planet, we'd sure like to have a chance to help other folks exiled for the same reasons. Maybe help them return to their planet someday.

Memarg Ny seemed to buy our story. He wasn't that excited that we were on his side or anything, but he did seem to believe us. And he told us that we'd get a chance to help his people. Maybe we'd get to be heroes on his planet. There was no way Guba and I believed him.

It was gonna be a raid on their home planet. We were supposed to get in our ship and join the raid—be something like Star Team Robin Hoods, like Guba said. Guba said he'd bet a dozen chips that this Megarg Ny would get rid of us after the raid, and I said not if I had anything to do with it. Getting onto our ship was the key. They thought they could surround us in case we tried to get away.

But I got to thinking, which Guba always says is dangerous for me. I told Guba surrounding us wouldn't do any good, that we could jump into translight and get away from them. That they must not know about light-speed spacecraft or they wouldn't let us back on our ship.

Guba said, but the problem with our ship is its translight, and I said that the translight works but you can't control it.

And so, even if you didn't like it, Guba, we didn't have much choice. Still don't know where we are, but I'm glad to get away from those guys.

Hope they never find fancier ways to travel. I'd hate to meet them at any time.



The Demoreans have yet to be discovered by the Star Teams, Alliance, Empire, or the Xenophobes. Their home planet of Kakchak lies at the border of Imperial Zone III and the Storm Zone. The Alliance believes the Storm Zone to be impassible, devoid of intelligent life. Moreover, since the most severe Alliance problems stem from the expanding Empire, they spend little time exploring the Storm Zone.

The Empire is also occupied elsewhere. They are waging a war with the Xenophobes in Imperial Zone I, and countering Star Team and Alliance threats in Imperial Zones II and IV. Imperial military leaders have wisely chosen not to overextend themselves into Imperial Zone III for fear of exposing an unguarded flank to the Alliance. If the uneasy situation in the Wilderness Region were to explode, the results would cause a great deal of trouble for the Empire, who would face open hostilities on two fronts.

Actually, no matter who discovers the Demoreans first, or even second for that matter, the visitors will have one more front opened up on which to fight. The Demoreans will attack anyone or anything that lands upon their planet.

Kakchak: Home of the Demoreans

Population: 6 Billion

Race: Demorean

Climate: Semi-arid

Lord: None

Technology: 5

Economy: 5

Resistance: only vs. Demorean rule

Gravity: 0.8

Capital: Likraal

Major Urban Centers: Kavari (3rd moon)

Major Military Bases: None*

* Other than security forces, there are no major Demorean Military bases.

Points of Interest on Kakchak

Kavari

Kavari, the third moon of the planet Kakchak, is a major industrial area for the planet. The vast majority of the Demoreans who work on Kavari are commuters who stay in temporary barracks during working days. On non-working days they return to Kakchak, leaving the industrial center more or less deserted. Only skeleton crews and maintenance crews stay behind.

It is among these deserted factories and shipping centers that the members of Unassimilated Citizens of Kavari ("the UCKs"), the chief rebels against the oppressive Demorean social system, hide and maintain their war against the planet of Kakchak. The UCKs stay in deserted buildings, or in old shacks barely used by the workers. They come out at night to hit targets and sabotage the Demorean industrial centers. The rebels' objective is to

cripple the Demorean economy and force the government to halt its current practice of assimilation. Major UCK targets are rail shipping tracks, factories that produce essential goods for the home planet, space transportation centers, and of course, the various arms production centers that dot the map of Kavari.

During the early stages of the rebellion, the UCKs were few and represented almost no threat to the Demorean government. However, with the passage of time, the UCKs have become more active, more numerous, and the Demorean government has placed regular guards at the arms factories around the clock.

The Demoreans: First Impressions

One of the great difficulties for Star Team player characters when they first encounter Demoreans will be knowing that they have done so. Demoreans are shape shifters, and in all likelihood they will change shapes to appear as more familiar creatures—perhaps as the player characters themselves.

Whatever its shape at the time of the encounter, the Demorean has a natural state or form. The Demorean is vaguely human in appearance. The face is a lot more flat, and the creature generally has a blank stare in its eyes. The Demorean has four arms instead of two, and its skin is a pale orange in color. There is no natural hair to be found on the Demorean in its normal state, including eyebrows, eye lashes, or body hair.

Demoreans tend to be physically weak. They stand five feet tall, with no variation in height—indeed slight when compared to a Human, whose average height (36th century) is 6'3". In general, Demoreans have low Strength and Stamina, and they are not all that well versed in the use of weapons. Still, a number of them are able to acquire some weapons skills, especially with firearms.

Despite their puny stature, the Demoreans are a handful in combat. What they lack in size they make up for in dirty tactics and lying. In close combat, they will probably attempt to use their Noetic skills, which virtually all of them have.

The task, of course, is unmasking a creature so well disguised. Demoreans will shape-shift to resemble just about any living creature, including Humans, Crystal Clones, Kleibors, and Trakans. More information regarding this shape shifting talent is supplied below.

The Demoreans: Attitudes

The key word or concept behind all Demorean thought is "perfection." A thing is either perfect or it is not; although this is not an uncommon belief, the Demoreans set an unusual stock by their own standards of physical perfection, believing almost religiously that there is no room within the Demorean world for anything less than the perfect.

Kakchak is ruled by a hierocracy, or rule by priests, the teachers of the Demorean religious concept of "the Great

Oneness." The Great Oneness is perfection, containing the one true form of each thing. That single form or oneness is the intended version of perfection. If an object or individual cannot be changed or altered to become "perfect," then the object or individual must be destroyed.

It has long been the belief of the members of the Alliance that variety and imperfection are indeed preferable to sameness and a dull perfection. That is, the differences, not only between various races, but among individuals within the races themselves, make for a better place or led to new ideas for all to share. The very concept of an Alliance depends upon the ability of the participants to work out solutions to differences without offending (let alone destroying) either side.

Not so among the Demoreans. Any individual who differs in any way from the ideal, is destroyed, and the philosophy is taken to the extreme.

Wounded or sick Demoreans are not treated, but are seen as imperfect, weak, or ruined, and therefore put to death by their own people.

Early Demorean Childhood

The Demorean striving for perfection begins, in a sense, at birth. Demoreans immediately check their infants for imperfections; those determined to have faults are "assimilated," a term that will be dealt with shortly.

All children who are not assimilated are put into classes and raised by nurturers. There is no family or sense of loyalty to anything other than the Great Oneness. In fact, the oneness is so complete that there is no difference of sex in the Demorean race. Demoreans can be male or female at will, from birth until death, depending upon the current requirements of the state religion. After Demoreans have gone through 30 years of upbringing, they become Nurturers themselves for the next 30 years.

Demorean Adulthood

The next life cycles are the ones in which the Demorean is most likely to be encountered by members of the Star Teams. For the next 30 years after the stint as a nurturer, the Demorean becomes a laborer. A laborer performs just about any type of manual labor required by the State, from construction work to farm or factory labor.

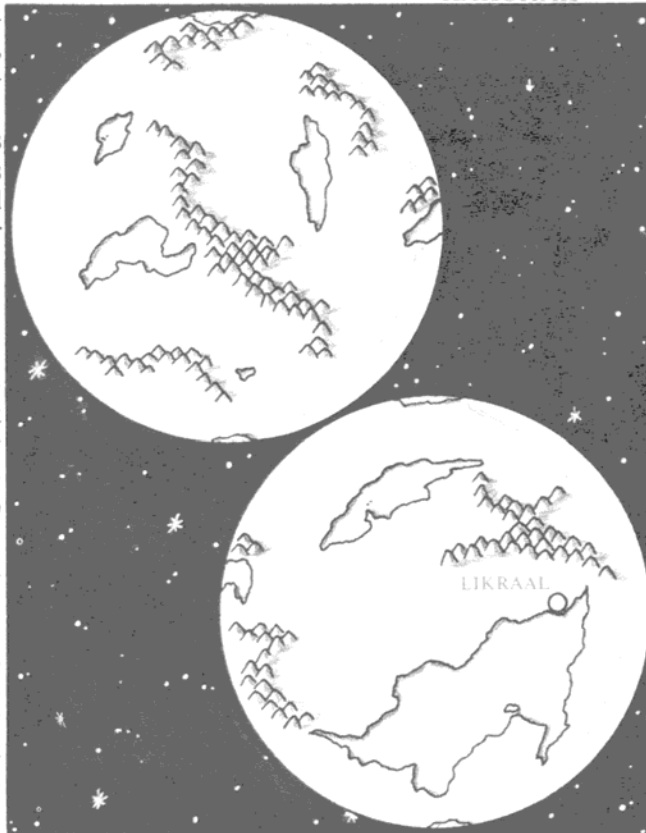
During the next 30 years, the Demorean becomes a

technician, which involves the operation of computers, scientific pursuits, and the like. After these 30 years, the Demorean enters the military service, then 30 years later, becomes a minor official in the state religion.

The next 30 years the Demorean spends as a theocrat or priest. At this point it is believed that the Demorean has been fully indoctrinated into the concepts of perfection, and has survived to this point as a "perfect specimen," therefore meriting the position of priest. Furthermore, the Demorean is now ready for the true test of perfection, at least in Demorean eyes.

The next phase of Demorean life is a literal life and death situation. Anything judged less than perfection results in instant death. At the age of 210, the Demorean

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must attempt to become the Lawgiver, Demorean equivalent to the Alliance Administrator. The difference is that only one Demorean is chosen, once a year, from all of the available candidates (those 210 years old or older and still alive). Those who fail are sent to be assimilated. The one who is chosen as Lawgiver is safe until the following year.

Barring accidents and other forms of premature death, Demoreans would live to be about 250 years old, were it not for the custom of assimilation.

Demorean Assimilation

Assimilation in Demorean life is simple disposal for those who are not perfect. Demoreans to be assimilated are kept in custody until they are sent to a large plant in the city of Likraal. This plant is actually a gigantic slaughterhouse, only instead of slaughtering beef,

pork, or lamb, the "imperfect Demoreans" are put to death, processed, and packaged, to be eaten by those still considered perfect.

Assimilation can occur at any point in the Demorean's life, but is certain to occur to all but one at 210 years old. The reason for assimilation is always imperfection, but imperfection can be interpreted in many ways.

Few Demoreans look forward to assimilation. In fact, most don't willingly go to Likraal. Demoreans go to great lengths to hide their imperfections, covering wounds or shape changing to hide alterations or illnesses.

On the other hand, Demorean meat is the most highly prized food source on the planet. Assimilation or cannibalism doesn't upset a Demorean, as long as he or she is the consumer and not the consumed.

Current Demorean Life

Demorean technology is somewhat behind that of the Star Teams, the Alliance, and the Empire. No doubt, a great deal of that will change when the first spacecraft lands on Kakchak. The Demoreans are quick to learn.

Demorean space travel resembles that of late 20th or early 21st century Earth. They have not explored other worlds, nor have they encountered alien life forms.

The Demoreans maintain a defense force capable of flying beyond the atmosphere of Kakchak, but incapable of surpassing the speed of light. This makes interplanetary space flight fairly futile; however, the Demoreans are capable of defending themselves against either the Empire or the Alliance forces.

Demorean Renegades

An uprising of sorts on Kakchak has resulted in the formation of a rebel colony on the third moon of Kakchak, or Kavari, as it is known. This colony is made up of imperfect Demoreans who refuse to accept their destiny as dictated by the Lawgiver. These rebels, members of the UCK, have taken up arms against the government—the major reason for the Demorean spaceflight military. The rebels, in turn, steal ships and fight back against the government.

As hostile as the Demoreans might be with each other, they will be even more hostile with any intruders, no matter which group of Demoreans is contacted first. As much as Demorean groups hate each other, they hate anything different, such as aliens, even more.

Demorean Noetic Talents

All Demoreans have noetic abilities (see “Creating the Alien NPC”) described in your *STAR ACE® Star Team Basic Training Manual*). Demorean NPCs may have any number of noetic skills, and at any level.

Furthermore, all Demoreans also have the following noetic skill, as part of their racial talents and abilities. This skill cannot be mastered by any other race unless specifically mentioned in the creature’s description.

Shape Shift. *Automatic Skill (Racial Talent). No Check required. Cost=1 Wpr/round.*

Demoreans are able to change shape into an almost exact likeness of another living being. The likeness is based upon one of two factors.

The first method of duplication is based upon sight. If the Demorean has visually spotted and studied a creature for a minimum of 10 rounds, the Demorean can change into a likeness of that creature in one round. The likeness can be maintained at a cost of 1 point of Willpower per round.

The second method of duplication takes place when the Demorean is able to obtain an actual prisoner. As long as

the prisoner is maintained under the custody of the Demoreans, they may Shape Shift into his or her likeness without any cost to Willpower.

The likeness is remarkable, but not quite exact. Demoreans have no tolerance for imperfection, so they unconsciously “correct” the shape that they’ve assumed, fixing the defects caused by wounds or natural imperfections. For example, if a Demorean impersonates a Trakan who has a scar down his face, the Demorean looks just like the Trakan, except the scar is missing.

The victim of the impersonation must remain alive during the Shape Shift, to provide a constant model. If the Demorean does not wish to expend Willpower, the victim must be maintained unconscious. If the victim becomes conscious or dies, the Demorean must return to its natural shape in 12 hours. The Shape Shifted Demorean knows immediately when its model has been awakened or killed, and returns as soon as possible to remedy the situation if at all possible.

After a Demorean Shape Shifts into a creature’s form, it cannot use this skill again until after it rests and recovers all of its lost Willpower.

Demorean Military Organization

Demorean military organization is based essentially on two major points: internal security of the planet and the defense of Kakchak and its moons from possible alien invasion.

The major military emphasis is placed upon internal security. There is virtually no crime on Kakchak; actually, the only real crime on the planet is imperfection. Security’s job is to round up any imperfect citizens they encounter, taking them to assimilation.

Patrols are constant in Demorean life, and the Demoreans don’t really seem to mind their presence that much—unless, of course, they have something to hide. The patrols are legally able to stop anyone at any time, without cause, and check for imperfection. Most Demoreans consider this to be little more than a nuisance.

Planetary defense exists more in the minds of the Demoreans than in reality. To begin with, the Demoreans have no idea from what they might be defending themselves. To date, they have had no contact with any aliens. Defense, then, amounts to little more than throwing the existing security forces and spacecraft up against whatever shows up and hoping that the strategy works.

No Demorean spacecraft is capable of traveling faster than the speed of light; therefore, their range is severely limited compared to that of Imperial or Alliance spacecraft. Actually, the top speeds of Demorean spacecraft are comparable to the battle speeds of the Alliance and Imperial craft. It also follows that the Demoreans are not able to explore other planetary systems, because of the range limitations of their own spacecraft.

The smallest Demorean Security Military troop unit is the patrol. Otherwise the smallest military unit is the fireteam; larger units are built from fireteams. The unit

commander's rank is listed in parenthesis, along with a translation to corresponding Alliance and Imperial ranks for recognition:

- 1 Fireteam = 4 troopers, 1 w/grenade launcher (Nem/Cpl.)
- 5 Fireteams = 1 klum (squad), (Nemchik/Sgt.)
- 5 klums = klumbor (platoon), (Nemchak/Cpt.)
- 4 klumbors = 1 kalamph (company), (Nembo/Col.)
- 4 kalamphs = 1 kalamphady (battalion), (Nembodak/Brig. Gen.)
- 4 kalamphadies = 1 kaladozco (division), (NemChampa/Maj.Gen.)
- 8 kaladozcos = entire current Demorean Military forces, (Champa/Fld. Marshal)

Demorean troopers wear reflector plate armor and carry laser rifles. Officers carry laser pistols.

Demorean Rebel Organization

Demorean rebels simply call themselves Unassimilated Citizens of Kavari. The entire group works as a guerrilla unit and uses Shape Change to hide and mingle with the "perfect" citizens living on Kavari.

Memarg Ny (see "Demoreans of Note") is the sole leader of the UCKs, and will probably remain so until he wins the revolt or is destroyed.

The entire aim of the revolt is to win the right to live on Kavari without the fear of assimilation by the "perfect" Demoreans. The rebels are not interested in anything else. The UCKs' military activities run toward acts of terrorism, guerrilla anti-military, and recruitment—the UCKS always seem to do well with recruitment.

UCK weapons and spacecraft depend on successful raids or missions. Whatever they can steal from the government forces becomes their military hardware.

The actual breakdown in UCK organization is based upon the military training most of them received while in the Demorean Military. Therefore the Fireteams form the basis of the rebel military as well. The largest troop grouping, however, is the klumbor.

Creating the Demorean NPC

Demorean NPCs are created just like Human NPCs with two exceptions: A Demorean's Willpower is always 1d10+ 70, and the maximum score for Strength and Stamina is 60. In addition to any other talents, each Demorean has a minimum of two Noetic Talents at Rookie level, and one Noetic Talent at Veteran Level. One of these Noetic Talents must be Shape Shift, as described above.

The following may be used as statistics for a standard Demorean NPC:

STR	40	DEX	40	AGL	40
WPR	70	PER	40	PCN	40
STA	40	UMS	40	WNDS	12

Demoreans of Note

Reks Krun

STR	46	DEX	41	AGL	50
WPR	80	PER	43	PCN	41
STA	43	UMS	48	WNDS	12

Skills: Shape Shift (Automatic); Noetic Defense Mode, Ace, 116; Shock, Vet, 111; Telekinesis, Vet, 95; Noetic Detection, Rookie, 57.

Reks Krun is the current Lawgiver of Kakchak and the Demorean race. Krun has managed to beat out all pretenders to the position of Lawgiver for the past three years. Krun gained the position when the previous Lawgiver was declared imperfect as a result of the uprising on Kavari.

Krun has managed to destroy all possible claimants to the throne before they came of age. In classic underhanded Demorean style, the would-be competitors suffer accidents, or other similar "mishaps" that result in disqualification and automatic assimilation.

Given the position of Lawgiver and its alternative, it is easy to understand why Krun suspects nearly everyone. He never rests or leaves anything to chance if at all possible; his day is dedicated entirely to planning, scheming, and avoiding the plans and schemes of others, for to fail means instant death through the assimilation process.

The biggest thorn in Krun's side is the rebel force under Memarg Ny. Ever since the beginning of Krun's reign, he has been promising to crush the rebellion and restore respect for the state religion and government. It has been three years, and the only real thing that has prevented Krun from being assimilated is that no perfect Demorean has survived long enough to replace him.

Kinchany

STR	50	DEX	50	AGL	46
WPR	73	PER	48	PCN	46
STA	41	UMS	48	WNDS	12

Skills: Shape Shift (Automatic); Shock, Vet, 87; Noetic Defense Mode, Rookie, 75; Thought Probe, Rookie, 71; Laser Pistol, Ace, 105; Spacecraft Piloting, Ace, 103.

Despite Demorean claims of equality, some Demoreans are more equal than others. Such is the case with the Lawgiver, as well as with Kinchany.

Kinchany is exactly what the Demoreans look for in terms of perfection; he may well become the Lawgiver of Kakchak. Luckily for Kinchany, that day is in the distant future, and he is not yet a threat to Lawgiver Krun. Kinchany is only 152 years old, and there are another 58 years to go before he qualifies for the post of Lawgiver.

Kinchany is the current leader of the Demorean Military, holding the title of Champa. He is an extremely skilled pilot as far as Demoreans go, and a superb leader, but also by Demorean standards. But he has more than met his match in Memarg Ny, which is why the rebellion is taking so long to crush.

Memarg Ny

STR	42	DEX	42	AGL	43
WPR	74	PER	48	PCN	48
STA	50	UMS	43	WNDS	12

Skills: Shape Shift (Automatic); Noetic Defense Mode, Vet, 91; Shock, Rookie, 70; Thought Probe, Rookie, 72; Laser Pistol, Ace, 97; Grenade Launcher, Ace 97; Mechanics, Vet, 60; Spacecraft Piloting, Ace, 100; Theft, Ace, 110; Demolitions, Rookie, 60.

Memarg Ny, current leader of the UCKs, was accidentally shot while in military training and made an important discovery: he didn't want to die. The accident was not his fault, and the way he saw it, imperfect was not all that different from perfect: the only difference was a small scar, and otherwise his beliefs and thoughts were essentially the same. But that didn't matter in Demorean society. Even for something as small as a tiny scar, the only alternative is assimilation.

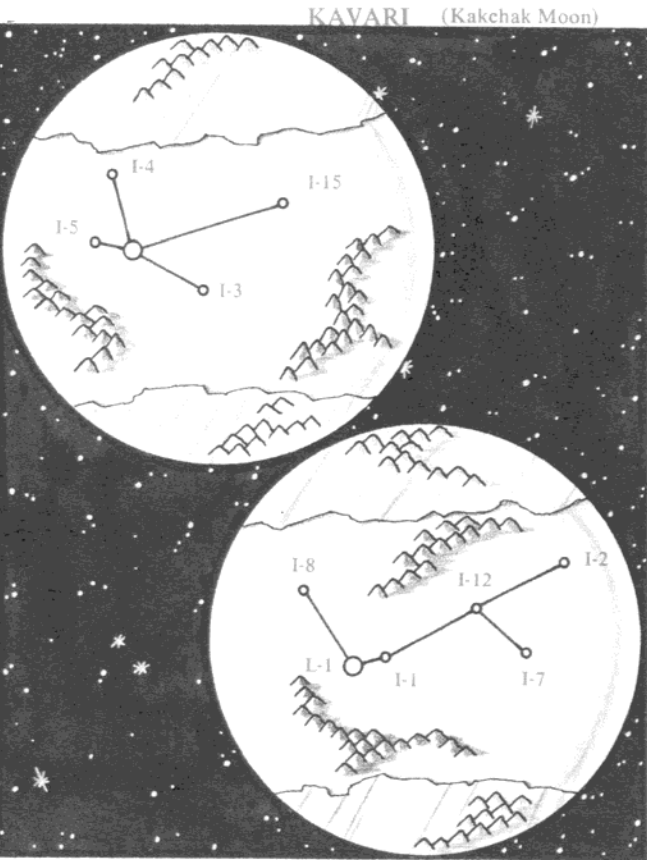
Memarg Ny deserted the army immediately, escaping to the sparsely populated Kakchak moon named Kavari, and discovering a means of survival that seemed to work. As he was pursued by military and security forces, Memarg Ny would shoot and wound them. Once he had wounded them, Ny would call out to the pursuers and ask if they wished to die or "join the cause of minor imperfection." Most of the Demoreans, realizing that their time on Kakchak had run out since becoming wounded, were happy suddenly to have an alternative to death and joined Memarg Ny.

Battles against the insurgents were difficult to fight. The security troops who started the battle in pursuit of Memarg Ny suddenly found themselves shooting at each other instead of at the rebels. Wounded Demoreans would suddenly turn their weapons on the troops standing next to them without warning. Once security officers were wounded, security fire was directed away from the rebels and toward the newly wounded casualties, lest they defect to the rebel cause.

This is the reason why Kinchany is having such a difficult time stopping the revolt. A natural flaw has been detected in the Demorean way of life, and it is being used to its limit by the brilliant strategies of Memarg Ny.

Memarg Ny is intelligent and wily by Demorean standards. He has figured a way to remain alive, but not because of an essential disbelief in the Demorean system as much as a fear of premature death. Memarg Ny will not be interested in any long term alliance with any alien forces to win the insurrection against the Demorean race. On the other had, if there is an obvious short-term benefit, he will feign some sort of friendship or alliance until he gets what he wants. Once the Demorean rebels have no further need of the alien, Ny will backstab his "ally" and go it alone. Ny is still a victim of Demorean upbringing and in most cases would destroy any alien on sight.

Alien life forms, no matter where they come from or what they are, would be declared different from the Demoreans, and therefore inferior. The aliens would be destroyed and probably assimilated as imperfect Demoreans are assimilated.



I = INDUSTRIAL CENTER

The Hawkmen





'Scuse me for sniffing again, but if it wasn't for Emniyet I wouldn't have ever left Skall. Guba liked the planet okay, but for me it was like storybook land or something.

For about the first time since we got lost, we saw a patrol of Imperial spacecraft. I contacted them and asked them where we were.

They wanted to know who we were.

I told them the basic story, and then I asked them again where we were.

They said it was classified, and that we should prepare to be boarded.

Lucky we didn't have anything on board that was illegal. We almost didn't have anything they wanted. They did take what money we had left. Said it was a fine because we had interfered with Imperial tightbeam frequencies.

Jerks.

So we get to the surface of Skall without a credit to our names. No way to get the ship fixed or anything, and still no idea where we are. Things couldn't look worse, I thought, and usually when you think that, things'll surprise you and get even worse. But things surprised me even more. They got better.

Didn't look like they would get any better at first, 'cause the second we got into the atmosphere of Skall, three Imperial interceptors start chasing us, telling us to land and prepare to be boarded. I had seen how expensive these boardings could be, and decided I didn't want any part of another.

So I put up Old Bett's shields and took off toward the mountains. Guba started yelling again about how I was gonna get us killed. The interceptors started shooting at us, and for a minute or two I thought I'd made a real big mistake, that Guba was right, that we were dead. But we got lucky.

The next few minutes were like something out of a fairy tale. Made me feel like a bebehk back in the bodrum. And you know, that wasn't a bad feeling at all.

One of the interceptors burst into flames on its wing. I didn't think much about it at first, 'cause Old Bett does things like that every once in a while. But then this interceptor goes out of control and ends up cartwheeling into a mountainside, and the other two quit chasing us and take off after...these winged people who are shooting at them.

These winged people. Oh, boy! Mamma was right when she told me they were real. Didn't know they could fight the Empire that good, though. They did flips in the air. They did barrel rolls. All the time they're shooting PPRs at the interceptors, and they manage to damage one more of them. Finally, the interceptors flew away, and the Hawkmen guided us to a place where I could land Old Bett.

Well, they're even neater than the stories. We always heard that they sang real well and that they gave you presents if you were good. I was kinda hoping that those presents might include money this time. If we had to make any more stops on our way back to Stalitsa

and Emniyet, we sure might need some to help us get by.

Well, the Hawkmen just stood around posing, looking like things of beauty. I could see they were sizing us up, and they acted a little like they knew me or something.

When they started asking us questions, it took me just a little longer to pick up their language than usual. I mean, all of them—Crassite, Gorlon, Humanole, you name them—were real easy to learn. This one was rougher. Words seemed to mean two or three things at once, and they were always comparing one thing to another, sometimes saying the same thing a little different, like they were trying to find the prettiest way to say it.

When I mentioned Emniyet, they started looking at me real alert and interested. One of them asked wasn't there a song about Emniyet, and I said there was:

*Emniyet, Oh Emniyet,
You're the bestest planet yet!
Emniyet, my Emniyet,
You're the besstest plaaannet yet!*

They all kinda stood there and stared while I sang that song. They said it wasn't the one they remembered. I said I was sorry, but they said don't be. Said they never heard anything quite like my song.

We stayed with the Hawkmen for a couple of days, and they showed me what real singing was like the night before we left. They all took to the air, and in the starlight they spun around. They did loops and barrel rolls like they had against the Imperial spacecraft, but these weren't as violent or fast, but kinda leisurelike and sad.

And each of them was singing a different song, but all of them were in the same key or something, because all the tunes sounded real good together. And the words to their songs were in the old language of the Hawkmen, and all the words were different. But it got to be that you could understand all of the words at once, and the words of each song seemed to be saying something on its own, and at the same time something about each of the other songs. It's hard to explain, but it's sorta like each song is outside and inside the other songs.

It was the most beautiful thing I ever saw or heard... and our good luck didn't end there.

Guba was really pretty sharp when he told them he'd like one of their outfits as a souvenir. See, Hawkmen don't have that much use for money, but they do like jewelry, and they wear a lot of that. So now turns out that Guba's wearing about five chips worth of gold and gems (and when he gets through trading and selling them off-planet, we may get about twice as much).

All I asked for was a couple of feathers. Want to show them to the bebehkim who don't believe in Hawkmen any more.



The race of Hawkmen are introduced into the STAR ACE® game system not only as NPCs, but as a potential player character race as well. The race is presented as a group once discovered by the Kleibors during their age of galactic exploration. Should the CM decide that Hawkmen should be player characters within the campaign, it is up to the current Star Team members to recognize the Hawkmen abilities and talents, then recruit the newly rediscovered race into a new Free Order for the Star Teams.

Skall: Home of the Hawkmen

Population: 3 Billion (not including Imperial Military Forces)

Race: Hawkmen

Climate: Temperate

Lord: None

Technology: 6

Economy: 5

Zone: Imperial IV

Resistance: Yes

Gravity: 0.8

Capital: Brenin

Major Urban Centers: Minhith, Hethuch, Esgyn

Major Military Bases: Brenin, Minhith, Hethuch, Esgyn

Skall is a relatively small planet located at the edge of Imperial Zone IV, near Shamba. Despite its relative proximity to the Wilderness region, there has been little contact between the Hawkmen and the native races of the Wilderness region.

The planet surface is extremely rough and rocky. Sharp jagged peaks scratch the skies, and deep sheer cliffs create narrow valleys. One third of the planet is covered with salt water, another third by immense, grass-covered plains. The remaining third is extremely mountainous.

The rocky areas, where the Hawkmen live, are mostly bare. The mountain rocks are so thick and solid that little is able to grow. The extreme tops are usually snow covered year round. Melting snow from the peaks creates waterfalls that pour over the sides of the cliffs and fall thousands of feet before hitting the foaming pools below.

Because of the Hawkmen's ability to fly, they are well suited for this environment. They walk as well as humans, and do so through their underground city complexes. Yet they can fly from peak to peak with little effort, gathering food from the valleys below, as well as from the extensive grasslands.

The Hawkmen: First Impressions

Male and female Hawkmen stand about six feet tall. Their bodies are human in almost all aspects. They have two legs, arms, a head with a humanlike face. The Hawkmen are never overweight; their bodies appear much like the

ancient Greek statues of the gods, well proportioned, with chiseled muscles. Their skin is bronze, and their hair is straight and black, like that of a raven. The hair is normally long and feathered back, and is at least waist length on all adult women. The eyes of the Hawkmen are almond shaped and coal-black.

The obvious feature that distinguishes the Hawkmen from Humans is the set of large wings located on their back. The wings are attached at the shoulder blades, and reach a span of 12 feet when fully extended. The wings are covered by brilliant, satiny white feathers.

The Hawkmen wear white loincloths, or tunics, accented with shiny studded leather belts and bracelets. They also wear fine gold jewelry, such as crowns, rings, medallions, anklets, necklaces, chains of all sorts, pins, and earrings.

The Hawkmen: History

Inside the Imperial Zone, away from the protection of the Alliance or the Star Teams, lives an almost legendary race of beings once known to the Kleibors as "Kartalhim," or the Hawkmen. This race, by legend, was discovered long ago when the Kleibors were exploring the various planet systems and regions of the galaxy.

The Kleibor explorers beheld this race with awe. The relationship between the Kleibors and Hawkmen was quite different from that of the Kleibors and Trakans. While the Kleibors see the beauty of the Traka in a physical sense, they feel the beauty of the Hawkmen in a completely spiritual sense. Old Kleibor tales tell of the first explorers on the planet Skall finding these creatures, gliding gracefully through the bright sky, gently circling, and watching the visitors from a distance.

While the Traka will tease and flirt with Kleibors, egging them on with an eye on their wallet (to the Kleibor's delight), the Hawkmen appeal to the Kleibor intellect. In the Kleibor mind, while the Traka represent beauty in terms of physical or earthly delights, the Hawkmen represent beauty in truth, knowledge, art, and culture.

Because of a number of reasons, especially the onslaught of the expanding Empire, the Kleibors had more pressing business to take care of elsewhere in the area, and left the Skall system. The Kleibor military is still aware of the planet Skall, its location, and that there was once a race of Hawkmen on the planet. They also believe that, since Skall lies inside Imperial Zone IV, the planet is probably under Imperial domination. However, little more is known about the planet and its inhabitants today.

Among most Kleibors today, the race of Hawkmen is only a legend. Most Kleibor parents tell their children bodrum bedtime stories about the winged creatures, unaware that such a race actually exists in the galaxy. Because of the stories, most Kleibor children grow up with the same feelings toward the Hawkmen as human children do with the tooth fairy or Santa Claus.

There is an 85% chance for any Kleibor to be familiar

with Hawkman “fairy tales” from his or her childhood. There is a 10% chance that any Kleibor is aware that the Hawkman race really existed at one time. Imagine the first Kleibor to land on Skall and find that the legendary creatures really do exist! The reaction would be similar to a human traveling to the North Pole on Earth and discovering that Santa Claus is for real. Only in the case of the Kleibor, the reaction is bound to be a bit more exuberant (not to mention dangerous!) for any characters within hugging distance.

The Hawkmen: Social and Cultural Background

The Hawkmen have a strong sense of what we would call extended family. The creatures not only protect their own siblings and spouses, but distant relatives and neighbors as well. In fact, the Hawkmen are very social creatures in general.

The Hawkmen are also very narcissistic. They are extremely aware of their good looks, and are constantly grooming and primping. They strut when they walk, and expect admiration and compliments from those around them. They always try to give the appearance of grace and control, even when they obviously lose both. Hawkmen might take critical wounds while in flight, but they still try their best to land gracefully afterwards.

The Hawkman language is very well developed, musical, and subtle. In fact, because of their nature, the Hawkmen are probably the foremost proponents of literature and poetry in the galaxy. In an age of extreme technology, the Hawkmen retain superb writing skills, and continue to treat writing as an art form, rather than a simple means of recording data. Poetry, because of its craftsmanship, is viewed as the foremost art form on the planet. Even orders to resistance members are written in various verse forms. In fact, often poetic form and its subtlety of language serves as a code for the Hawkmen.

However, the artistic tendencies of the Hawkmen are not focused entirely in writing. Painting, drawing, sculpting, music (particularly singing), film, video, holograms, dance, and drama are all important parts of the daily life of the Hawkmen.

Hawkman music, for example, is extremely melodic. The only rhythm is the beat required to maintain the

melodic patterns. Even here, however, the appeal of instruments falls a poor second to that of vocals. Singing is part of the religious rites of the Hawkmen, the lyrics coming from their traditional poetry. They sing in the morning when the twin suns rise, and again in the evening when they set. To stand in a Hawkman city during sunset is a splendid experience, the melodic voices harmonizing and building in volume as the sun sets over the tall peaks of Skall. It is no wonder the Kleibors were as impressed as they were by the Hawkmen.

When the Kleibors first landed on Skall, they discovered that the Hawkmen had built large ornate hanging cities along the walls and cliffs of the high mountains. The Hawkmen simply flew from place to place within the city,

depending upon their needs. But with the arrival of the Empire, the Hawkmen were literally forced underground.

Now, since the arrival of the Imperial military forces, the creatures live in vast cave complexes, in protective crags on the mountainside. The lives of the Hawkmen changed even more drastically when they took up resistance against the Empire. The resistance continues in strength; while the Imperial forces control large chunks of territory on the planet, the mountains of Skall still belong to the Hawkmen.



The Hawkman Resistance

The strategy behind the Hawkman resistance is straightforward. The cities have been converted into remote underground fortresses. The Hawkman guerrillas use the natural gift of flight to strike swiftly,

take the Imperial target by surprise, then disperse and rendezvous at an appointed time and place. The attackers are hard to detect on early warning devices, and hard to follow in pursuit, because the entire group scatters, forcing the chasing Imperial ships to make a choice and go after one individual.

Another important policy in Hawkman tactics is always to maintain the advantage of high ground. The mountainous terrain of Skall is extremely rough, almost impassable on foot. When Imperial craft fly through the peaks, they must slow down—slow to the point where the Hawkmen, with their natural flying ability, are on equal terms in a dogfight.

So the Hawkman intent has been to surprise attack, or draw the Imperial forces into the mountains where they

are able to confront the Empire on equal terms.

The Hawkmen vary their weapons, depending upon the nature of their mission. When they attack enemy bases, the Hawkmen use ranged weapons such as laser rifles, laser pistols, grenade launchers, and PPRs. Sometimes they use special grenades and flares (without benefit of projectors or other firing devices), but only when the object is to destroy Imperial vehicles, vessels, or constructions.

On intelligence gathering missions, quick raids against enemy troop encampments, or other covert activities, the Hawkmen use their favorite weapon—the *trancmaeth*, a modified crossbow. The hawkmen prefer the *trancmaeth* because it is accurate, silent, untraceable, and powerful enough to penetrate certain types of armor. When combined with the silent gliding flight of the Hawkmen, the *trancmaeth* is an excellent weapon in a surprise attack.

Battle equipment tends to be minimal for the Hawkman. Since the principal strategy is to strike quickly and retreat, the Hawkman doesn't want to burden himself down with massive amounts of equipment that would hinder movement and maneuverability. Hawkmen tend not to use armor in combat, relying instead upon flying tactics for protection. Most Hawkmen are satisfied to wear a simple belt which carries battle supplies, but occasionally, they use an infrared visor-helmet, which allows them to fly through the night sky, determining targets on the ground without being detected from below.

The Hawkmen: Personality

Hawkmen (referring to both male and female) are extremely birdlike in their personalities. There is a certain vanity to the Hawkman character that enjoys casting caution to the wind for the spectacular and bold. Hawkman battle tactics represent the triumph of the colorful over the careful. This tendency carries over into the narcissistic personality of the Hawkman: they are in love with themselves, and care little about what anybody else thinks. When two Hawkmen are together, there is seldom if ever a direct conflict between them, but they are extremely competitive. They attempt to outgroom each other, outfight each other, and simply "outflash" each other in every way possible.

Hawkmen tend to look down on other races. As long as they are being admired by a visiting alien race, the Hawkmen remain civil; otherwise, they make endless comments concerning the alien's tastelessness in dress, lack of grace, or other shortcomings.

All in all, the Hawkmen see most conversations as wasted chatter as using language to no valid end. On the other hand, they are acutely interested in any type of music or art, and most interested in poetry. Hawkmen listen politely and intently until a performance ends, offering no opinion unless the performance is bad. Then, the Hawkmen lose all sense of dignity, shrieking, "Oh no! That was awful!" as though they were being tortured.

Hawkmen always want to surround themselves with

important or good-looking people. If a Hawkman is a member of a player character party, he or she will attempt to stick close by the best-looking member of the party.

The Hawkmen have encountered only Kleibors, Humans, Gorlons, and Crassites. Contact with the Kleibors took place ages ago, but the Hawkmen never forgot the noetic bears. Other races followed as representatives of the Empire. The Hawkmen have never seen Trakans or Crystal Clones, and would not react negatively to either race in general upon meeting them for the first time, unless, of course, the Trakans or Crystal Clones are in the company of Humans; the Hawkmen have encountered Humans only in association with the Empire. The first encounter between the Star Teams and the Hawkmen could take many different directions, depending upon circumstances.

Hawkmen will not be friendly at first with either Humans or Humanoles, associating both races with the oppressors of the Empire, mistaking Humans for Human Imperial troopers, and Humanoles for Gorlons. Indeed, there is a 50% chance that the Hawkmen will be immediately hostile when they encounter Humans or Humanoles. At best, they will be very suspicious of the two races.

On the other hand, the Hawkmen will be very pleased to find the Kleibors have returned. If there is a Kleibor in the group with Humans or Humanoles, there is only a 10% chance that the Hawkmen react with initial hostility.

Initially, the Hawkmen will be absolutely neutral toward the Traka and Crystal Clones, regarding them with a certain air of suspicion, as most races do when encountering a new, unknown people. If the Hawkmen first encounter Humans and/or Humanoles together with Traka and/or Crystal Clones, there will be a 30% chance that the Hawkmen will be hostile toward the party.

Creating the Hawkman Character

A player who creates a Hawkman as his or her PC should follow the steps outlined in Chapter II of the *STARACE® Star Team Basic Training Manual* ("How to Create a Character"). Basic Ability scores for the Hawkmen are figured normally except strength, the Hawkman's restricted Ability score. Suggested Abilities to increase at the expense of this Strength restriction are Perception, Luck, or Dexterity. Remember: none of these scores may exceed 80!

The Hawkman's Strength score is always between 20 and 60. It never rises above 60.

When the Hawkmen join the Star Teams, they are more likely to become the "Eyes" of the unit (See the section entitled "Free Order of Trump") because of their racial talents, but a Hawkman can choose his or her own skills and Order in the Star Teams. No matter what Order the Hawkmen choose, they still fly their own craft and engage in all forms of combat.

To create a Hawkman NPC, follow the steps outlined above or use the following scores for a standard Hawkman NPC:

STR	40	DEX	60	AGL	60
WPR	60	PER	50	PCN	70
STA	60	UMS	50	WNDS	14

Air Combat for Hawkmen

Hawkmen enjoy the chance to combat their enemies in the air, and have even taken on Imperial flying craft in combat. The means for conducting such combat is very simple, and follows most of the systems already established for Space Combat in STAR ACE®; with only a few minor modifications.

When using the Hawkmen in air combat use the procedures listed below, depending on the combat circumstance. But keep a few general principles in mind, no matter the specific situation.

While in flight, the Hawkmen suffer no penalties for firing while moving. This is because the natural state of the Hawkman is to fly.

Because of their vanity and competitiveness, not to mention their artistic sensibilities, Hawkmen always attempt to fight in the flashiest, most daring ways possible. Even in-flight acrobatics are not out of the question, if the specific Hawkman has the skill and nerve for such stunts.

Here now are specific combat situations, and explanations as to how the CM should handle them.

Flying Hawkman Firing vs. Flying Hawkman

Use the STAR ACE™ rules found under "Dogfighting" in Chapter V: Spacecraft and Combat. Hawkmen do not have shields. The Hawkman's Flying skill is used instead of Pilot skill to determine the Dogfight Maneuver Results.

Flying Hawkman Firing vs. Tactical Craft

Treat this situation like a normal dogfight, with the following exceptions:

1. Because of the great speed of tactical craft, the Hawkmen are considered stationary when fighting against them, just like a CRP fighting a tactical craft. The Hawkmen can neither maneuver nor choose a straight flight option. However, they can fire at spacecraft approaching or leaving in any direction.

2. Hawkmen may fire their weapons at the tactical craft once in each fire step of the round. To have a chance to hit, however, each firing Hawkman must roll a general Luck check. If the check fails, the Hawkman wastes his or her fire. If the Luck check is successful, then the Hawkman fires, using his/her weapon skill score with a -30 modifier for the flying target.

3. Tactical craft can maneuver or use straight flight when fighting the stationary Hawkmen. The standard modifiers apply.

4. PPRs and Beta Red Particle Beams are the only hand held weapons effective against spacecraft (see the explanation and description in Chapter V of the *Star Team Basic Training Manual*).

5. Hawkmen suffer only normal wound damage from spacecraft weapons, as if the weapons were the standard hand-held varieties. This is because the Hawkmen present such small targets it is difficult for them to take the full brunt of a hit. Modifiers (+10, +20, +30, etc.) for lasers and plasma guns still apply. Any "K" result causes the Hawkman both to sustain normal wound damage and to fall to the ground, thereby sustaining full falling damage.

Flying Hawkman Firing at Surface Targets

Flying Hawkmen may use dogfight maneuvers or straight flight at their chosen speed versus ground targets of all types. The range between flying Hawkmen and ground installations weapons, or vehicles carrying anti-spacecraft weapons (for example, hover tanks)

is always considered to be one Tactical Sector. Range between Hawkmen and other ground targets is not actually calculated; instead a flat range modifier of -02 per hex applies, in addition to any other modifiers.

Complex Combats

These are battles involving tactical craft, flying Hawkmen, and ground installations or other ground targets. All of the above rules apply with these exceptions:

1. The Hawkmen may maneuver or use straight flight against ground targets only, not against tactical craft, which should be dealt with as explained above.
2. Tactical craft can dive at and strafe ground targets



only once every 1d10 rounds; keep the craft off the map during rounds when they are not “buzzing” their targets. On the rounds the craft are suppose to strafe their targets, they may instead use dogfight maneuvers against the Hawkmen. Hawkmen must still pass a Luck Check (50 for NPC Hawkmen) to have a chance for effective fire against the tactical craft during these rounds. Fire against the tactical craft is impossible, of course, during the rounds when the tactical craft are not on the map.

Hawkman Flight Table

Speed in MPH	Tactical Speed for Dogfight	Cost/Time
10	1	1 STA/20 minutes
20	2	1 STA/15 minutes
30	3	1 STA/ 5 minutes
40	4	1 WPR+ 1 STA/ 2 min.
50	5	1 WPR+ 1 STA/ 1 min.
60	6 (max.)	1 WPR + 1 STA/ 6 rnd.

The Free Order of Trump

The Free Order of Trump comprises the group of Star Team members who specialize in intelligence gathering or reconnaissance activities. Although these “eyes” (as they are called) have the necessary skills to fight in normal combat, each member of the Free Order of Trump has become highly trained in areas of information gathering.

Because of the natural talents of the Hawkmen, it is the feeling of the Star Teams that this race would most likely be best suited for the Free Order of Trump. Hawkmen usually have high Basic Ability scores in Perception, Agility, and Dexterity, and usually have an added advantage when it comes to performing those skills required of a trained reconnaissance expert. Furthermore, the obvious advantage of being able to fly at will, silently, and without any assistance gives the Hawkman an obvious advantage over the other members of the Star Teams.

Prior to the rediscovery of the Hawkman race on Skall, individuals from each of the four original Free Orders handled their own reconnaissance and in-the-field intelligence gathering. Now the Star Teams see the advantages of creating this new Order, where the very real and necessary skills are taught methodically and responsibly, thereby assuring that Star Team scouts know what they’re doing, and thereby making the Star Teams even more formidable than before.

Members of the Order of Trumps still participate in combat, much like other Star Team members. Perhaps due to the nature of their work, the “eyes” are even more involved in combat than any other Order except the Free Order of Spades. Still, despite whatever natural advantages the Hawkmen have in this Order, Crystal Clones, Humans, Humanoles, Kleibors, and Trakans are all represented in the Free Order of Trump. Any player character

can become a member of this Order if he or she wishes.

Regardless of race, a player character should have Basic Ability scores of at least 50 in Perception, Agility, and Dexterity in order to have a solid chance as a member of the Free Order of Trump. Even without these suggested scores, a player character can become a member of the “eyes.” But his or her chances of survival will not be very good.

A character is promoted a rank in the Order of Trump after every 11 kills, as shown on the chart below:

TOTAL NO. OF KILLS	RANK
0-10	Deuce of Trump
11-21	Trey of Trump
22-32	Trump Four
33-43	Trump Five
44-54	Trump Six
55-65	Trump Seven
66-76	Trump Eight
77-87	Trump Nine
88-98	Trump Ten
99-109	Jack of Trump
110-120	Royal Trump
121 +	Ace of Trump

Though he or she has reached the highest rank in the Star Teams, an Ace of Trump continues to receive benefits of promotion after every 11 confirmed kills: for example, after kill 132, 143, 154, and so on.

TRUMP CARD SKILLS

The following list comprises the Specialty Skills of the Free Order of Trump:

SKILL NAME	BASE	CHECK
Crossbow	(DEX)	Specific
*Flying	(PCN+WPR+AGL)÷3	General
Grenade Launcher	(DEX)	Specific
Laser Pistol	(DEX)	Specific
Laser Rifle	(DEX)	Specific
*Outdoor Survival	(PCN+WPR+LUCK)÷3	Specific
*Photographic Mem.	(PCN+WPR)÷2	General
*Photography	(PCN+DEX)÷2	General
PPR	(DEX)	Specific
*Security Devices	(PCN+DEX+LUCK)÷3	Specific
*Tracking	(PCN+LUCK)÷2	Specific

**=indicates an exclusive skill*

Included in the list above are some new skills which do not appear in your STAR ACE® *Star Team Basic Training Manual*. The new skill descriptions are listed below:

Flying: $(PCN + WPR + AGL) \div 3$. *Specific Check.*

Any winged character who possesses this skill is automatically able to fly within the confines of a breathable atmosphere in good weather. The particular ranges, speeds, and cost in terms of Willpower and Stamina are determined by the particular character description or type of creature.

In the event of foul weather, such as severe snow, rain, or fog, or simply in the case of flight in darkness, a successful specific check is required to assure the character's ability to fly. The character makes one check per hour—no more, no less—and must abide by the following results key until his or her next attempt:

Failure = Character unable to fly.

L = Limited visibility: The character is able to fly, but limited visibility lowers his or Perception by -40. The modifier does not affect the character's Flying skill score. However, if the modified score causes the character's Perception to fall to "0" or below, the character will be unable to fly. Maximum visibility range is one Tactical Sector.

M = Moderate visibility: Same as L, only Perception is modified by -20 while in flight.

H = High Visibility: Character is able to fly to maximum range and suffers only a -05 modifier to Perception.

C = Complete visibility: Character is able to fly to maximum range, with no modifiers.

Photographic Memory: $(PCN+WPR)\div 2$. *General Check.*

This skill allows a character to concentrate upon a visual object or field, and then, if successful, recall the scene exactly, just as if a photograph had been taken.

The character must announce his or her intent to use the skill. At that time, the CM rolls a secret general check. Later, when the character wishes to recall the memory, The CM will describe a scene, and give the account of what the character is able to recall. If the earlier roll was successful, the CM will accurately recall all of the particulars, as if the character had a photograph in front of his or face.

If the general check failed, the CM can do one of two things. The CM can inform the character that he or she is unable to recall anything from the attempted skill use, or the CM can describe the obvious things from the memory, and alter or leave out the important details.

This skill is most often used during recon missions or when written clues or documents are used or found.

Photography: $(PCN+DEX)\div 2$. *General Check*

This skill has two major uses:

1. A character who has this skill can take photographs or make films and develop the results. These films can be used for anything from family albums to top secret military recon missions. A character who has this skill is able to use

any type of existing camera, or photographic recording device, including infrared devices and videocameras.

The skill is useful in the development of the film. Using the skill to record and/or develop film simply requires a general check. Failure means the character did something wrong, the development process used wasn't correct, or something happens to mar the finished product.

2. Photography skill can also provide immediate knowledge of how a given photograph was taken, approximately how old it is, what type of camera, film, and print paper was used—plus whether the photo or film incorporates special effects, whether it has been doctored, or whether it is actually a genuine photo or film. This use of Photography skill also requires a general check.

Tracking: $(PCN+LUCK)\div 2$. *Specific Check.*

Use of this skill lets a character follow the tracks or trail of an animal or character outdoors. Because of their amazingly keen vision, Hawkman characters are able to track other characters or animals while flying up to an altitude of 150' above the ground. The skill requires a specific check when the tracking begins, and a new specific check each time the trail is interrupted, as explained below:

Failure = The character cannot pick up the trail; the trail is covered, or else carefully and cleverly hidden.

L = Limited success. The character can follow the trail for up to one mile, at which point the trail is interrupted. If the character searches for an uninterrupted trail, he or she finds it again in 1d10 hours.

M = Medium success. The character can follow the trail for up to two miles, at which point the trail is interrupted. If the character searches for an uninterrupted trail, he or she finds it again in 1-5 hours.

H = High success. The character can follow the trail for up to 10 miles, at which point the trail is interrupted. If the character searches for an uninterrupted trail, he or she will find it again in 1d10 minutes.

C = Complete success. Despite bad weather and any clever efforts by the animal or character being tracked, the tracking character can follow the trail to its ultimate end.

The CM should roll these checks secretly and give the results to the tracking character only as they occur. Rain or other bad weather may, if the CM judges, cancel any successful result except a "C."

The Ferm





Was still thinking about the Hawkmen, trying to remember part of that wonderful final song they sang for us, when we went into the Nurm system.

I know that, sooner or later, I'm gonna have to find someone who can fix this translight control. 'Cause if I don't, Guba and I are liable to float around in this part of the galaxy for the rest of our lives. So I figured that, maybe somewhere in this system, we could get some help.

Guess I got my hopes up when we spotted some spacecraft down on the surface of Nurm. We were sailing kinda quick at about 1000 feet, so I had to turn Old Bett around to get a better look.

Sure enough, several ships were down there. Funny thing was, some of them were Alliance and some of them Imperial. Guba didn't like that at all, saying it was a sure bad sign.

As for me, I musta still been thinking about the Hawkmen, 'cause I started a lecture on how maybe these guys had found out that people could live in peace and all, like the Hawkmen said in their song. Guba said, yes, like the Hawkmen themselves get along with the Empire? But we were already on our way down to the planet surface. Wish I'd listened a little closer to Guba.

The surface of Nurm looked a lot like jungles on Earth, where I've been a couple of times, except everything was bigger. Said to Guba that I'd sure like to see some of the berries and stuff they had around here. He said, betcha you'd like to see the cans of *pivo* they stock, too.

We couldn't figure out what was going on with the ships, though. It was like they had been converted into places to live or something. And whoever lived here was probly not that far away. Was this some kind of new colony?

Never did find out the answer to the question about the ships. What I did find out was that I don't want to go back to Nurm. Ever. It's probly the hardest place to take in the galaxy, mainly 'cause the intelligent life there thinks it's so dadgum intelligent!

We never did get much of a welcome on Nurm, but I can't say that I made a good first impression. See, I saw these shiny things flying around in the air. They were fast and bright—sorta the thing that the bebekhim really love. And I thought, well here I've gone through half the galaxy and haven't brought any pets for the little fellas. These things were kinda small, and I thought they were probly some kind of bird or something. Had no idea that they were as smart as they were.

I got out of Old Bett, and took a butterfly net with me, planning on catching some of those things. Well, they moved faster and faster. Some of them bumped into me, and they hurt. I heard Guba shouting over nearer the spacecraft. I didn't pay much attention to him, because there was some noise coming from these things now. It didn't take me long to understand that the things were talking. So it didn't take me long after that to pick up on what they were saying. And it was some strange stuff that they thought I should understand, and when I didn't, they started talking to me like I was dumb.

"Friends of Vanessa, I presume?" one of them asked.

I said I didn't know who this Vanessa was, and that seemed to make them excited and a little bit irritated. So they started asking me more questions, and saying things that weren't all that nice.

Things like, "If you don't know who Vanessa is, you must be dumber than you look." That from something that looks like a paperweight.

Or, "Why don't you go back to where you belong?" As if that wasn't what I was trying to do.

Or, "You're ob—naahhxious! You EEEEreetate us!"

Well, I figured I'd better get back to the ship, what with Guba still yelling about something and these little flying things being so rude. But before I went, I couldn't resist it. I asked one of them if I picked him up and shook him, could I look inside him and see a snow scene or something.

That *really* got them mad. They started bumping up against me and really hurting. Saying stuff like "Eat death, ursoid!" and laughing like they said something clever. I swatted a couple of them out of the air, but more and more of them swarmed around me. Looked like I was about to get beaten senseless, so I rushed back to the ship with a whole bunch of them buzzing along after me.

Things there weren't all that hot, either. Guba had closed up the ship and was sitting behind the controls and shaking. He was shaking 'cause there was a great big cat outside, about as big as the ship itself. And it was looking inside at Guba, and swatting on the cockpit of the ship.

I had to talk Guba out of this one. I mean, he had to move the ship. So slowly I started sending him directions. You know, mentally? Problem is, there's no way to tell with a Trakan if he's picked up all you've set him, or only enough to misunderstand completely.

I told him to raise Old Bett and fly over to a hilltop nearby, where he could pick me up. I hoped that everything was clear to the little fella. I wasn't about to run by the giant wildcat myself.

It took a while, and I was getting kinda tired, but Guba got the ship off the ground and started to drive it toward me. He did just fine, even though he came too close to a couple of trees. Fine until he ran into a flock of those silver things.

I mean, he *really ran into them*. They started spattering on the side of the ship like bugs on a windshield. Some of them started dividing and forming up again on the ground. I didn't have too much time to feel sorry for them, though. Not that I do when I think back on it now.

Guba bumped into me some when he brought the ship down again. But I'd been bumped around already on this planet, and what's a bruise or two between friends? Already, I could hear the big cat crashing through the trees and everything, trying to get at our ship again.

We were too quick. We got off of Nurm before the big cat could catch us. Guba told me all about him, though. Seems he'd cornered my little buddy while I was out chasing the shiny things with my butterfly net. All in all, it was a pretty lousy visit all around, and I couldn't imagine how things could get worse.



Despite the Empire's desire to expand its own borders as far as possible, Imperial forces have bypassed the planet system of Nurm. It was not always so: for generations, the Empire tried to establish a number of bases in this planet system; however, all attempts failed. After several attempts at occupation and colonization, the Empire finally gave up, leaving the planet alone. Given the usual aggressiveness and stubbornness of the occupying troops, the situation simply did not add up.

The Alliance considered the possibilities and decided that there must be some reason why the Empire had bypassed the planet. Perhaps there was a population on the planet that was able to repel the invaders with a well trained militia or resistance movement. Perhaps there was some undetected alien element that infected or destroyed the Imperial visitors. But all scanners and readings on the planet system indicated that the planet life support systems should be identical to those of Earth.

Three Alliance missions, sent behind the Empire's borders, tried to determine what caused the Imperial bases to fail, to identify and befriend any resisters to the Empire's intentions, and to open diplomatic channels between the Nurm system and the Alliance.

Nobody knows what happened to the men and women on those missions. Since the planet system lay within the Empire's border, there were no CRPs with which to keep immediate contact with the mission. Despite more than adequate food and water, as well as abundant air and water on the planet, no Alliance troops returned from the mission.

All current maps simply list the area as "Dangerous"—to be avoided by space travelers. Nobody seems to know the reasons why Nurm is so dangerous. Star Team members can attempt to explore the region, if they dare.

Nurm: Home of the Ferm

Population: Unknown

Race: Ferm

Climate: Temperate

Lord: None

Technology: NA

Economy: NA

Resistance: Yes

Gravity: 1.0

Capital: NA

Major Urban Centers: Imperial Landing

Major Military Bases: None

The first reaction of a character landing on the planet Nurm may be that somehow he or she has landed on an Earth where all other objects have been enlarged incredibly. It feels almost as though one has fallen into some type of cartoon.

Everything that is found upon Earth is found on Nurm as well, except for Humans and their obvious signs. The creatures are similar, as are the plants; however, they are

four times larger than plant and animal life on Earth.

About two-thirds of Nurm's surface is covered by salt-water (which makes no difference to the Ferm, the planet's principal inhabitants, since they survive equally well in water and air). There are five continents on the planet, one at the northern pole, two others in the northern hemisphere, and two more in the southern hemisphere.

The weather patterns mimic those of earth, from the polar areas to the equator. Mountain ranges form near the coasts of the continents, and large freshwater rivers flow through the central areas and into the sea. Deserts, jungles, grassy plains, dank swamps, and snow-covered polar regions round out the planet's landscape.

The animal life on Nurm follows patterns similar to those on Earth, except that the Ferm are found almost everywhere. The only natural enemy of the Ferm are the Ferm themselves; animals will not eat them, because they will simply drain Stamina from within the animal's stomach. Biting or chewing the Ferm simply causes them to multiply. Indeed, on the planet Nurm, the Ferm are the predators rather than the prey.

Points of Interest

Imperial Landing

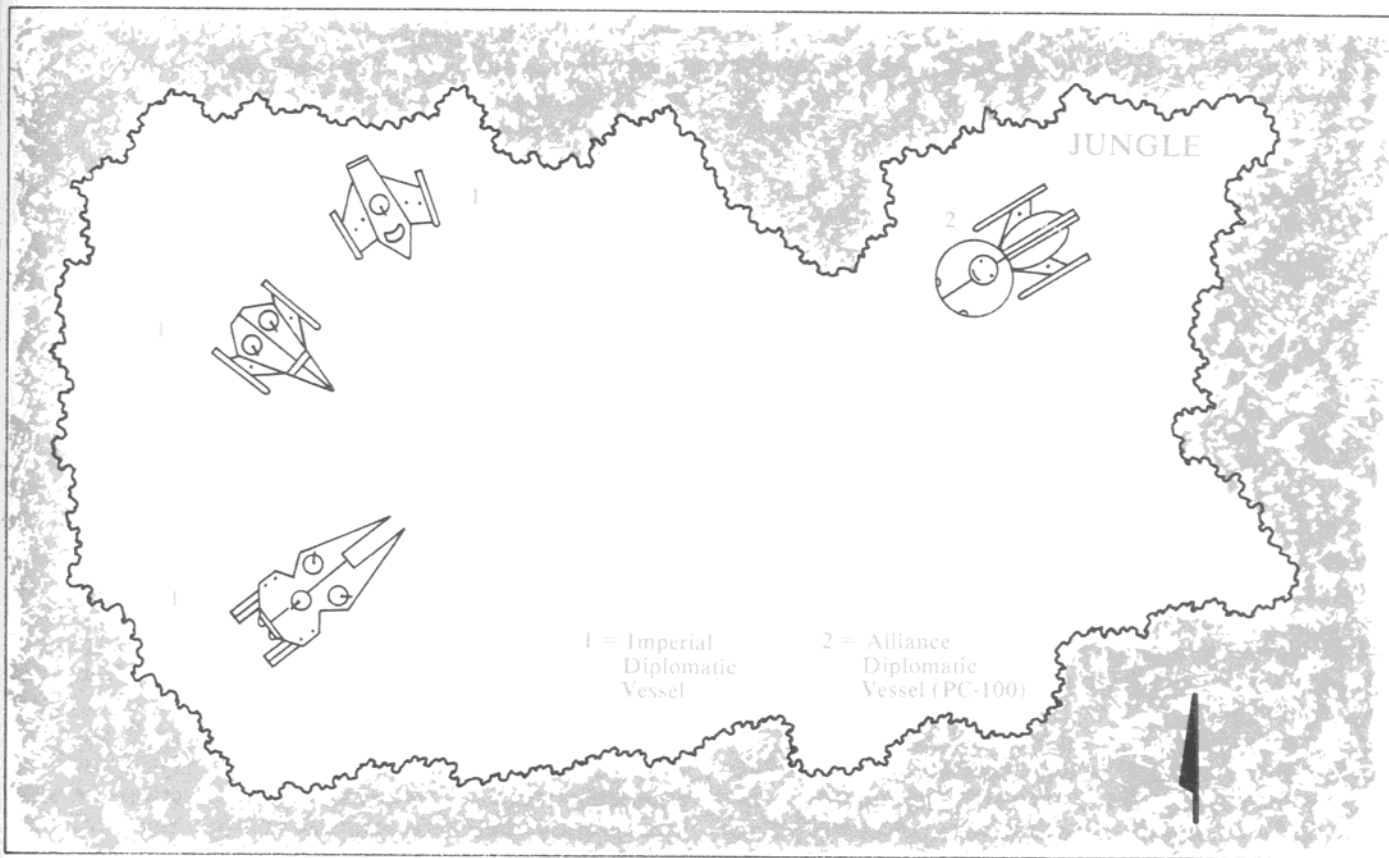
This was the landing point for all Imperial and Alliance missions to Nurm. The feeling initially was that this area of the planet stood the most reasonable chance of sustaining intelligent life. When the first mission failed, the others followed to find out what had happened. The Alliance, believing they had possibly found a strong pocket of resistance, sent their mission to the same location in an attempt to contact whoever had destroyed the Imperial missions. All of the spacecraft landed at the same location; abandoned, they remain where they landed years ago.

Imperial Landing lies in a clearing surrounded by dense forest. The clearing was used to set down the spacecraft. Initially, Imperial and Alliance scouts believed that the forest harbored intelligent life forms. Scanners showed large animal life in the forest and picked up traces of language, although the language was untranslatable (at least with the technology available at the time).

Today, the craft serve as the private residence of Vanessa, "Ruler of the Planet." One of the Imperial crafts serves as a control center: through its still-functioning detection systems, Vanessa can detect spacecraft approaching Imperial Landing. A second Imperial craft serves as a utility workroom in which to perform things such as laundry, repairs, and other tasks. Still another craft serves as Vanessa's private residence.

Northern Polar Area

One of the largest Ferm settlements on Nurm is located on the fringes of the northern polar area of the planet. Actually, the settlement is more like a nomadic army. Count-



less T4 Ferm (one of the three subspecies of Ferm on the planet) compose the population, constantly on the move but keeping near the edge of the permanent snowline. It seems as though a Ferm is even more unable to withstand severely cold temperatures for long periods of time than it is to get along with Ferm of other subspecies. Rather than traveling north to take on the remaining T4s, T7 and Vaccinia Ferm are content to let the T4s suffer in conditions which threaten them with virtual extinction.

The T4s in this region are led by TX-272-T4, one of the more powerful Fermes.

The Ferm: First Impressions

Phage T7 Ferm

The Phage T7, or simply T7, is a particular subspecies of Ferm—the most numerous of the three. They reside in the more temperate zones of the planet.

The front of a T7's head is hexagonally shaped, about four inches wide and one inch thick. A small one-inch tail protrudes directly from this head.

The exterior membrane of the T7 is almost like a plastic. It is gray (although shades of gray vary from one individual to another) and feels somewhat flimsy. The membrane is slightly transparent, exposing a swirling liquid content on the inside.

The creatures can fly, even though they are heavier than

air. How the Ferm defy gravity is, of course, unknown to scientists. The Fermes can fly as long as they are moving. Once they stop moving (swimming), they immediately begin to sink at a rate of 10 feet per round. The T7 Ferm are surprisingly quick, able to cruise at 75 feet per round, soar at 150 feet per round, and attain a top speed of 300 feet per round. The T7 propel themselves into flight by wagging their tail at an incredibly fast rate.

The gray exterior membrane serves as a multi-sensory device, sensing both heat and sound waves as well as absorbing nutrition through a biological osmosis. This particular type of Ferm feeds on mammal blood, of which there is an ample supply to be found on this overgrown planet. The T7 "ear" is simply the detection of the sound waves through the membrane. The T7 "pictures" heat instead of light, and is therefore able to distinguish objects, size, and distance; this seeing device is much like a well developed pit on a pit viper snake. Each T7 has a small orifice at the opposite end of the tail, used only for communication.

Phage T4

The Phage T4 is the most highly evolved of the Ferm. Because of the similarities between the body part shapes of the T7 and T4, it is felt that the two aliens are related, although the T4 is more advanced. These creatures have five identifiable body parts (as opposed to only two for the T7): the head, collar, sheath, base plate, and legs.

The head of the T4 is similar to the T7 in its hexagonal shape, but somewhat more elongated. The same kind of membrane covers the T4 as covers the T7. The T4 has an orifice for ingestion as well as communication. The T4 also "sees" in the same manner as the T7.

The color of the head is coral, and sits directly upon the collar. The collar connects the head to the sheath, and allows the creature to bend its head. The creature has a 360 degree field of vision, but must bend its head to see down around the feet.

The sheath is similar to the human torso in that it allows for some form of digestion. The sheath averages about four to five inches in length. It connects the collar to the base plate.

The base plate, located at the far end of the sheath, manipulates the six tail fibers or legs. The T4 often sits on the base, which makes the T4 look like a strange flower, mushroom, or plant. The fibers are used for walking. The T4 moves at the same rate per round as a Human.

The T4 diet consists of plant sap, as well as animal blood. In essence, the T4 is an omnivore while the T7 is a carnivore.

Vaccinia Ferm

The Vaccinia Ferm, or simply Vaccinia, are the most primitive of the Ferms. They are in the shape of a six inch decahedron, with a single orifice used exclusively for communication.

The Vaccinia also has the same type of membrane as that on the head of the T7 Ferm. As one might expect from this similarity, the functions of the Vaccinia such as sight, hearing, and ingestion are identical to those of the T7.

The Vaccinia has no means of self propulsion, but is able to float in the Nurm atmosphere through the use of its own Noetic talents (Levitation). It floats aimlessly about until it strikes a plant or animal, whereupon the creature immediately attaches itself and begins to feed.

Each Vaccinia has three Noetic Talents, two of which are always Noetic Defense Mode and Levitation. Of course, since the Ferm have no developed technology, they have no space ships. Therefore, the Vaccinia Ferm would have no use for the Noetic skill Shield Ship.

The Ferm: Current History

The principal difference between life on Earth and life on this particular planet is that the Ferm, a viral life form, is the most intelligent species on Nurm. To complicate matters even more, the nonintelligent life forms on this planet are much larger than those of Earth. The Ferm themselves are about the size of a human fist, incredibly outsized for virus; other life forms tend to be about four times as large as their equivalents on Earth. This means that the average German Shepherd on Nurm would stand about ten feet tall at the shoulder.

With beasts of prey growing to such sizes, one can well

imagine what occurred to the Imperial and Alliance emissaries who landed here.

However, not all visitors perished on this planet. In fact, one has managed to survive and do quite well. Vanessa came on the first Imperial vessel to arrive on Nurm. Her professional background was in microbiology and medicine, and she used her knowledge to avoid the many dangers of the planet while gathering important information. She established contact with the Ferm and realized that these creatures were intelligent and able to communicate through observed gestures.

Vanessa did not inform the exploration party of her discoveries and continued to observe the Ferm. During the initial three weeks of the mission, a number of hostile creatures claimed the lives of many of the settlers. At the same time, Vanessa was learning extremely rudimentary verbal communication with the Ferm, and forming friendships.

Eventually, Vanessa was able to take advantage of a number of situations in political events on the planet, befriending certain types of Ferm. She was able to turn some of the Ferm against other types, and through this common Imperial tactic, gain control of the planet.

During her rise to power, Vanessa had her colleagues killed by the Ferm, and thus was able to assure her own position of undisputed authority. As more vessels arrived, both Imperial as well as Alliance, their crews were ambushed and destroyed as per Vanessa's orders.

Only the Ferm are aware of Vanessa's existence; they protect her and maintain her in luxury.

The Ferm: Social and Cultural Background

The three separate races of Ferm have very distinctive features, and partially because of these differences, have been at odds throughout their history.

The T4 Ferm have always been the most advanced of all the types. Their development shows clear development toward a lifeform recognizable by Wilderness races. However, all three races are about equal in intelligence. This is where the first group of explorers (except Vanessa) went wrong. They looked for signs of intelligence through standard comparisons with the humanlike races of Wilderness. They looked for body development, fingers and thumbs, organs designed to communicate, well developed brains and the like. They looked for a written language, for dwellings, and for technology. However, the explorers failed to see what was under their noses.

Ferm life is intelligent life, but very foreign to the intelligence and lifestyles we are used to seeing. Still, there is some common ground. The Ferm are perfectly able to carry on intelligent conversation with any race from the Wilderness region. They particularly enjoy topics such as philosophy, abstract math or physics, and politics (only as politics pertains to the Ferm on their own planet, since they are unaware of other planets and their politics).

The Ferm are always extremely opinionated, and are

willing to voice their opinion, no matter how unsound, anywhere at any time. This is one of the reasons for the chaotic state of politics on Nurm. It is, strangely enough, also the reason that a high degree of education exists on a nontechnological planet. The Ferm are used to exchanging ideas, thoughts, and lessons; it is through this process that the Ferm learn without the aid of recorded material, and the oral transmission of knowledge has made all three types of Ferm develop tremendous memory retention, well beyond that of Humans or other races from Wilderness.

Ferm reproduction is different from that of other intelligent races in the galaxy. The Ferm simply divide and create two Fermis, similar to the reproduction of an amoeba, or other one-celled creatures. This reproduction occurs naturally about once every month, and the cell takes 1d10 rounds to complete from the time it starts. The cell division also occurs at the same rate whenever a Ferm is struck by a sharp weapon such as a sword or saber, or any type of beam weapon. (Perhaps it should be noted, while we are on the subject, that the Ferm are vulnerable to blunt weapons, sonic devices, and standard copper/lead bullets. If the creature does not die by the 1d10 rounds required to divide, a new Ferm will be standing next to the wounded one. Needless to say, the new creature will not be too pleased by the "violent birth.")

When the Ferm battle each other it is quite a sight. Since they have no technological devices for use as weapons or protection, the Ferm use themselves as weapons, running into each other headlong and doing so continuously until one smashes the other to death. The Ferm use various individual tactics, and on occasion, fight entire battles with actual battlefield tactics, military leaders, and the works. Often, however, an extremely opinionated junior officer argues with the military leader and a fight breaks out in the ranks while the battle is going on.

Ferm attack by striking its opponent for normal wound damage. On a "C" result, the Ferm attaches itself to its opponent and drains Stamina from the character at a rate of 1d10 per round. The Ferm stays attached until it receives a critical wound, is removed by a called shot, and/or killed. It is not that difficult to kill a single Ferm; however, they almost always attack in large numbers, which makes things very difficult for their enemies.

T7 are not as strong as the T4, but the T7 compensates with superior quickness to the T4 as well as the ability to fly. The Vaccinia Ferm, on the other hand, can use their Noetic skills in tactics, but have no real mobility.

The three types of Ferm have never gotten along well. It seems as though the T7, T4, and Vaccinia Ferm have always disagreed over something and fought over the differences in opinion. No Ferm is ever willing to back down from its own opinion if it differs from that of another type of Ferm. The result is that most encounters between subspecies inevitably end in conflict and the death of one of the participants. Often, when a T7 encounters a T4, they simply do away with the pretense and attack each other from the outset.

Given the relationship of Ferm to Ferm on the planet,

the current state of politics on Nurm is volatile, to say the least. When Vanessa and the first Imperial crew arrived on Nurm, the planet was little more than a battleground. Vanessa, through her ability to observe, as well as certain Noetic talents she shared with the Ferm, realized what was going on between the various subspecies of Ferm.

Vanessa skillfully drew an alliance between the T7 and Vaccinia, and with the combined talents of both Ferm types, they defeated the T4 in a gigantic battle.

The battle represented a turning point in the history of the planet Nurm. For one, it marked the first planned alliance between two types of Ferm on Nurm. For another, it marked the descent of the T4 into exile and virtual extinction. Of course, last but not least, Vanessa now has her own little empire, deep inside the Empire of Frederick Constantine II. While it is true that Vanessa's empire is not nearly as great as that of Frederick, she reminds her Ferm subjects that small is how Leo I started.

Vanessa realizes that she will remain in power as long as there is no outside interference with her doings. Therefore she has proclaimed that all outsiders be destroyed immediately upon their arrival to the planet surface. This is why the followup Imperial and Alliance missions were never heard from again.

Also, to make life easier for herself, Vanessa has proclaimed Universal the official language of the planet Nurm. The Ferm mastered the language very quickly; after all, they are bright and adaptable. Now even the isolated T4 Ferm are able to speak broken Universal, despite their limited contact with the other subspecies.

The Ferm: Personality

The Ferm are a classic case of very intelligent beings who have their heads in the clouds, totally unaware of the world around them. Aside from what they can pick up from their limited senses, the Ferm prefer to deal in abstractions.

The Ferm are outspoken, even blunt. If they disagree with a statement, they matter-of-factly volunteer "That is pretty stupid." Actually, they have no tact whatsoever, and could not care less about their lack of social graces.

The Ferm have no real sense of humor at all. They seldom laugh, but in the extremely rare moments when they would normally laugh, they instead exclaim "That's neat!" The Ferm never tell jokes that are funny. The things that they laugh at are extremely clever variations of logic problems, or stupid sayings that show how clever an individual Ferm believes itself to be.

For example, Vanessa jokes have become the craze on the planet. The latest example that drives Ferm wild with laughter is the following:

Ferm #1: "Why does Vanessa have nostrils?"

Ferm #2: "I don't know. Why?"

Ferm #1: "So she can breathe!"

Creating Ferm NPCs

To create a T7 Ferm NPC, use the method for creating Human PCs, but make sure Ability scores follow these restrictions:

1. A T7 Ferm's Strength is always 20
2. A T7 Ferm's Dexterity is not applicable (NA), since it has no fingers.
3. Maximum Personality and Agility scores for a T7 Ferm are 50 each.
4. Minimum Willpower and Stamina scores for a T7 Ferm are 60 each.

The following scores may be used for standard Ferm T7 NPCs:

STR	20	DEX	NA	AGL	40
WPR	65	PER	54	PCN	54
STA	65	UMS	30	WNDS	14

To create a T4 Ferm NPC, use the method for creating Human PCs, but make sure Ability scores follow these restrictions:

1. A T4 Ferm's Strength is always 30.
2. A T4 Ferm's Dexterity score is not applicable (NA), because it has no fingers.
3. Maximum Agility and Personality scores for a T4 Ferm are 60 each.
4. Minimum Willpower and Stamina scores for a T4 Ferm are 60 each.

The following scores may be used for standard T4 Ferm NPCs:

STR	30	DEX	NA	AGL	50
WPR	65	PER	50	PCN	54
STA	65	UMS	40	WNDS	14

To create a Vaccinia Ferm NPC, use the method for creating Human PCs, but make sure Ability scores follow these restrictions:

1. A Vaccinia Ferm's Strength and Agility scores are always 10 each.
2. A Vaccinia Ferm's Dexterity score is not applicable (NA), since it has no fingers.
3. Maximum Vaccinia Ferm Personality score is 30.
4. Minimum Vaccinia Willpower and Stamina scores are 70 each.

The following scores may be used for standard Vaccinia Ferm NPCs:

STR	10	DEX	NA	AGL	10
WPR	75	PER	30	PCN	50
STA	75	UMS	10	WNDS	15

Characters of Note

Vanessa

STR	54	DEX	60	AGL	64
WPR	68	PER	52	PCN	48
STA	70	UMS	59	WNDS	15

Skills: Mace, Vet, 89; Outdoor Survival, Rookie, 71; Medicine, Rookie, 70; Noetic Defense Mode, Ace, 113; Noetic Detection, Vet, 80; Thought Probe, Ace, 111.

Vanessa was assigned to the first mission as a nurse/medic. She is treacherous, scheming, deceitful, and very cunning politically. She very cleverly observed the Ferm when she first arrived and saw her chance to rule her very own planet. Carefully she planned everything, so that everyone in her party would be killed, until she was the last person left alive on the planet. At last, a childhood fantasy came true: Vanessa is an Empress although she rules over a bunch of overgrown virus more intelligent than she is.

Vanessa's plans to imprison the next bunch of people who land on the planet. Then she can rule them, hoping they will stay on the planet and reproduce so that her Empire will grow. If the next characters to arrive don't wish to go along with her plans, she will simply have the Ferm destroy them.

Vanessa is interested in ruling her own world someday. Her problem is that, in order to really rule, she needs more than a bunch of Ferm to lead. Yet bringing in alien life would jeopardize her tenuous hold over the Ferm.

Vanessa has attempted to keep prisoners in the past, but none have been pleased to serve as slaves. Some have managed to escape from the settlement and into the nearby forest. Vanessa sent Ferm in pursuit, but she is not really certain that they dealt with the escaped prisoners.

TX 272 T4

STR	30	DEX	NA	AGL	60
WPR	80	PER	60	PCN	54
STA	80	UMS	45	WNDS	15

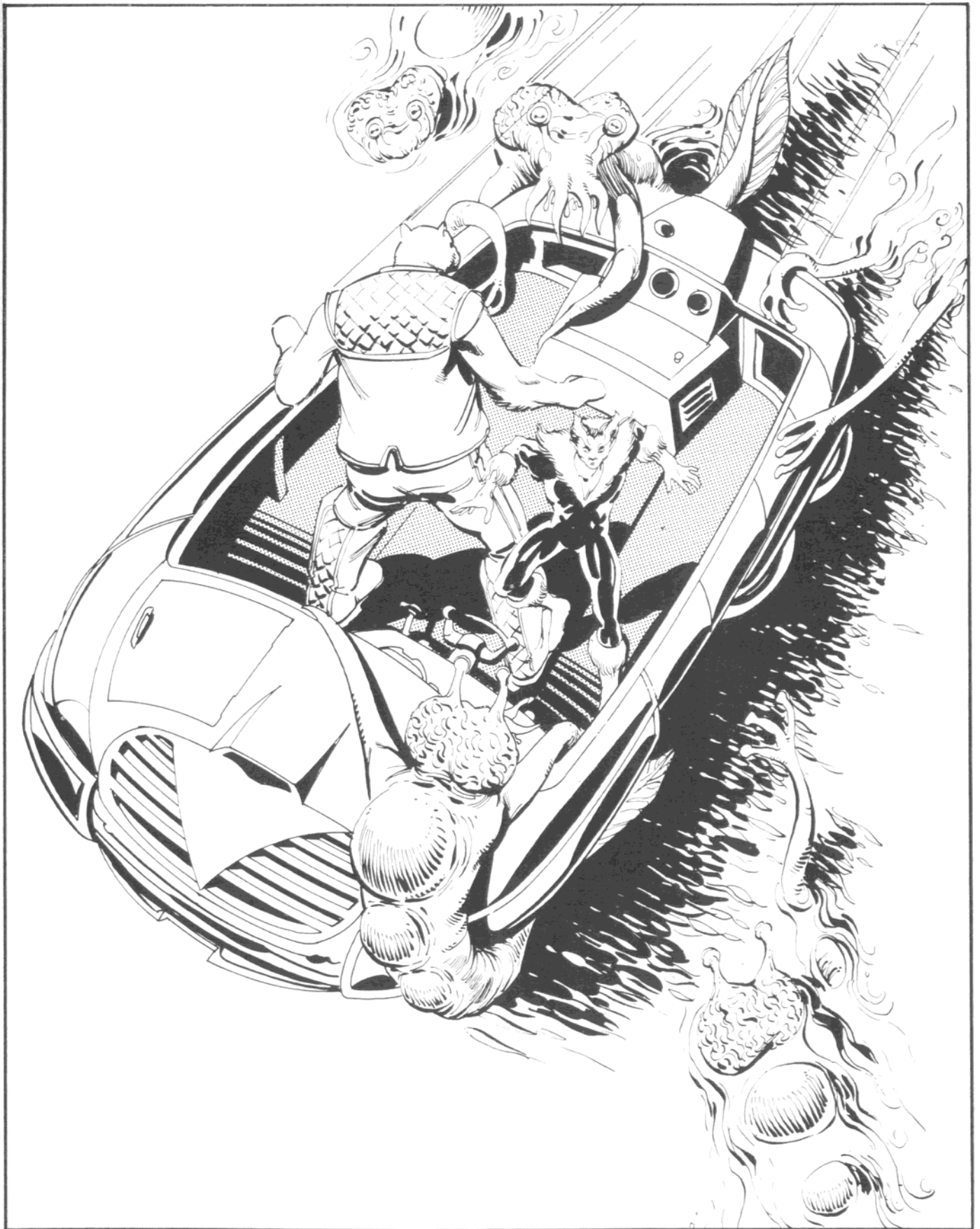
TX 272 T4 is the undisputed leader of the migrant T4 army. It is powerful as Ferm go, and therefore comes out on top in all disputes.

TX 272 T4 (or TX for short) speaks some Universal and would be willing to align with visiting Star Team members if, during their first encounter, the Star Team members demonstrate that they are in no way associated with Vanessa. If not, the T4 will run or fight when they meet Star Team members again.

Since Star Team members have no knowledge of what is going on on this planet, of Vanessa, or even of the Ferm, the first encounter between the Star Teams and the Ferm should prove extremely interesting, to say the least.

Even if the Star Team characters are able to win over TX, they will have to put up with constant verbal abuse and insults.

The Nautiloids



You shoulda seen the one that got away.

That's what some folks say when they're ice fishing on Emniyet, and what that usually means is they're making something up about a large fish that they just about caught. See, if the fish barely gets away, that's almost as good as catching it. Sometimes better, 'cause you can make a getaway fish as big as you want to in your story, but if you catch one, you gotta stick to facts.

On Sepa Blue I really don't know who got away, the fish or us. It's kinda a strange story, and it's one I'm still figuring out. But it's every bit true.

We're skimming the surface of this planet—water as far as you can see—and I said to Guba if we can find a place to land it might be fun to do some fishing. I asked him if he had ever done any fishing before and he laughed and said depends on what you mean.

So I finally learn what *riba* means. It's Trakan for "fish," but it has more than one meaning, like all those Hawkmen words. *Riba* is also somebody you trick or fool. So on Stalitsa there's fishing like you do on water and fishing like you do on a city street, if you know what I mean. And Guba had done some street fishing but not any water fishing, so I promised the little fella he'd have a good time. Providing we found a place to land Old Bett.

We did, at this little island called Blue Colony. It's an Imperial base and all, but not a very important one. You could tell, 'cause the soldiers didn't seem to think they were such big shots. Fact is, they were pretty friendly, once they found out we weren't Alliance or Star Team.

Still, it was easy to see that there was something wrong at the Blue Colony Base. Almost everybody was scared to go out onto the water. Which, if you live on Sepa Blue, limits you a lot. The base was like an armed camp, which made me wonder why they had been fairly friendly to us in the first place. Maybe they were watching out for something besides the Alliance and Star Teams. It didn't bother me, though, 'cause I'd found the enemies of the Empire fairly nice to us in the first place.

Well, we finally found someone who would take us out on the water. There were two platoons of soldiers at Blue Colony, and the captain of one of them, Ahab Amatoria, finally offered to take us for one of the earrings the Hawkmen had given Guba. I thought that was a good price for some good deepsea fishing.

Guba thought Captain Amatoria was crazy and not worth a plugged credit. The captain was always talking about "*lashing meself to the mast*" and shouting weird things I didn't understand—like "*the corposant, matey! St. Elmo's fire!*" and "*They come! Crustaceous and dreadful, dripping ordure and chthonic ichor!*" He also fainted a lot. When I look back on it, Guba might have been right. But the captain was the only chance I had for some good fishing, and I wasn't gonna miss it for anything.

We went out in the hovercraft the next morning. I was the only one having fun. Guba was clutching the rail and got a little sick, and Captain Amatoria was saying "Avast" and "Aargh" a lot. But by the time we were a couple of miles out, both of them had calmed down a little, and we were getting ready to fish.

All of a sudden weird things began to happen. Cap-

tain Amatoria let out a cry, and I turned around. Something—some kind of tentacle or tail—had grabbed hold of his ankle. And this tentacle was attached to some kind of huge head with eyestalks. I conked the thing on the head once and it let go, but another one of these things reached up around the other side of the hovercraft and grabbed onto Guba, who was still leaning over the railing a little.

By the time I was done conking the one after Guba, two more of them had grabbed hold of Captain Amatoria. Before I could get over to him, they had pulled him off into the water. He was screaming something about deep ones as they pulled him under. The whole thing was kinda unspeakable.

Then they started climbing up on the hovercraft. I didn't really know how to raise the thing up. Figured I'd better learn pretty quick, though. Of course, the first thing I did was set it down smack dab in the middle of the water. So I guessed I'd do what I'd just done, only do it backwards.

Lucky thing that the controls of Imperial stuff make sense. Soon I got the thing rising up and up, but the sea-creatures kept following, raising themselves up into the air. They looked sorta like shrimp that had gotten out of hand, or like balloons in a parade or something. And that gave me an idea.

You see, the sea creatures had these little bubbles or bags that swelled up and flattened out as the things went up or down. I pointed this out to Guba, and he threw his sensory knife at one of the bubbles. The sea creature exploded. He sorta fizzed around in the air for a minute like an untied balloon, then fell back into the water. Guba had lost his knife, and it looked like we were in some kind of big trouble now.

So now they all started climbing on board, and their weight pulled the hovercraft back into the water. Guba and I stood at the middle of the craft. I thought, maybe we can take one or two of them with us, but that's about the best we're gonna do.

By this time one of them had crawled halfway on board, and I guess it was the first time they got a good look at us. The creature stared at us with those stalk eyes, then backed into the water. Got off the hovercraft.

All of a sudden, we heard a bunch of clicks and whistles, and all the rest of them started to sink below the water. They were leaving us alone, and I still don't have any idea why they did.

Figured we might be in for some kind of trouble when we got back to Blue Colony. At least some questions, 'cause we did come back without their captain, you know. But they let us leave the planet without much trouble. Seems they were a little afraid of Captain Amatoria.

But not nearly as scared as we were of those sea-creatures. Why, those things must have been fifteen feet long!

What, Guba?

Well, at least twelve feet.

Eleven?

Ten?

Since their accidental discovery by the Empire only a few years ago, the Nautiloids have continued to resist Imperial takeover. The race is extremely intelligent, highly developed, but content to stay within the confines of their home planet, Sepa Blue.

Sepa Blue: Home of the Nautiloids

Population: Unknown

Race: Human, Nautiloid

Climate: (Overwater-Temperate, Underwater-Moderate)

Lord: None

Technology: 7

Economic Base: Surface—Fishing Underwater—

Agrarian, industrial

Resistance: Yes

Gravity: Surface—0.9

Capital: Blue Colony

Major Urban Centers: Blue Colony

Major Military Bases: Blue Island

Points of Interest on Sepa Blue

The surface climate of Sepa Blue is temperate, although the winters and summers are extremely mild, even for a temperate zone. Minimum temperatures seldom fall below 40 degrees Fahrenheit or climb above 80 degrees. Seasons are 4 months long, which makes the planetary year 16 months long; however, time references, as with all human settlements, are Earth years, hours, and days.

Underwater, the planet's surface varies enormously: mountain ranges, vast plains and valleys, canyons, shelves, and volcanoes. Through all this submerged, contrasting landscape, there are thousands of Nautiloid settlements or cities. The plains and underwater terraces are covered with Nautiloid crops.

The water itself is fresh, perfectly suited for drinking. It is a transparent blue and relatively warm, both day and night, except in the deepest valleys.

Blue Colony

Blue Colony has changed since the early days of the settlement, when it was little more than a serene fishing village. It is now a fort under occasional siege, with at least one Imperial platoon stationed at the colony at all times. Three hovercars are assigned to the colony to escort the fishing craft out to sea. These craft are specially modified, manned by one fireteam apiece.

Blue Colony itself is a series of cabins which serve as family dwellings. There is a general store, located in the center of the colony, along with a meeting place, and a bar. The streets are fairly deserted, except for the occasional military patrol. Most of the women and children have been sent back to their respective planets in the Empire, because it is too dangerous to keep them in the colony while the Nautiloids are attacking the colonists. Were it not for the need of the food supply for the Xenophobe front, maintaining Blue Colony simply wouldn't be worth the effort.

The residential area of the colony is surrounded by a

large wall, about 12 feet tall, designed to force the Nautiloids to climb over the top, since they are incapable of floating over 6 feet above the ground. Manned lookout posts sit at various points along the wall. At the north end of the colony, the barracks are located, along with the mess and vehicle pool.

Blue Island

Blue Island is the only island or surface land mass on the entire planet. The island is very small, about four miles square, with a single peak and one natural harbor, where Blue Colony is located. Just outside the colony is an airstrip for cargo vessels and military craft that stop by on a regular basis. A large transmitter inside the colony is the source of contact with the outside world.

The surface of the island is rocky. Its only life forms are algae, moss, mushrooms, and lichens; otherwise, no native life forms live on the planet surface.

The Nautiloids: Physical Characteristics

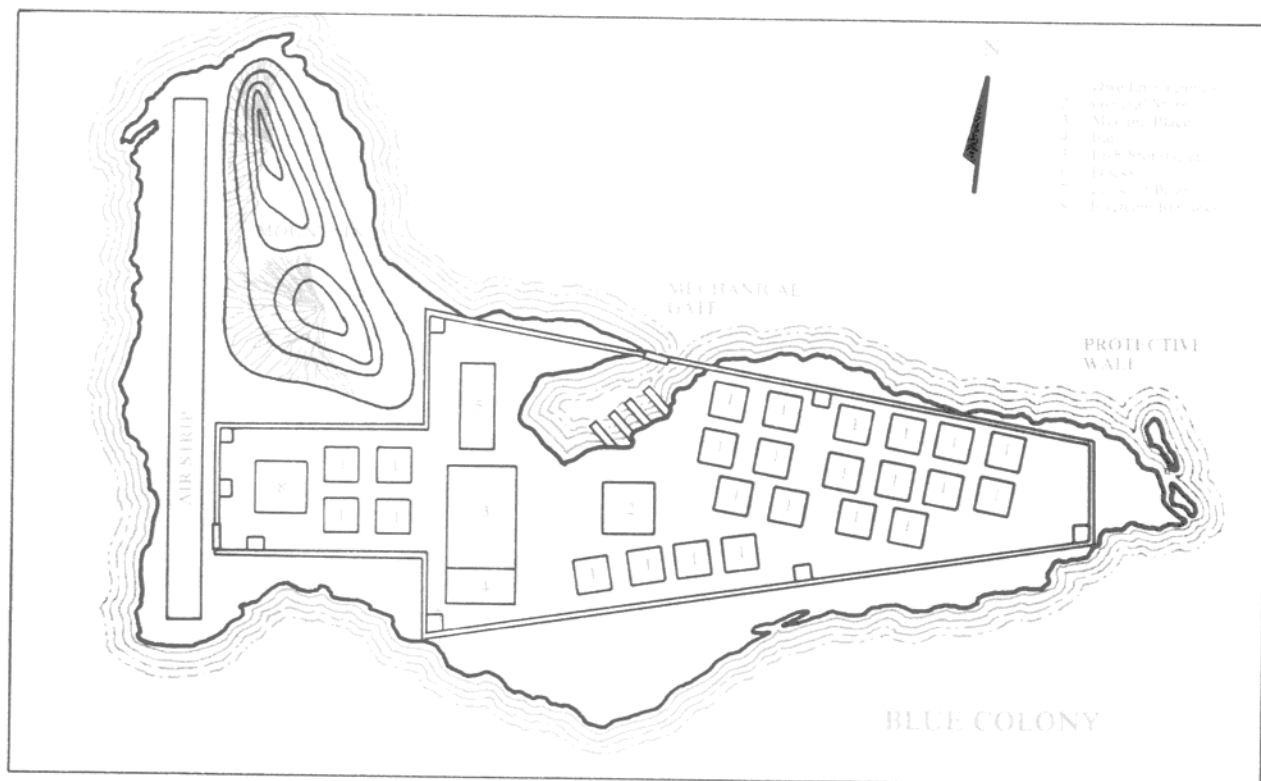
The shape and color of the Nautiloid torso resembles that of a very large shrimp. It is sectioned, and protected by a thin exoskeleton. From head to the tip of the tailfin, Nautiloids average from eight to nine feet in length. Weight is essentially irrelevant due to a number of factors.

The Nautiloid head has evolved in curious ways: the large, well developed brain appears much like the brain of the Zoe; there is no skull, and only a thin membrane covering the brain. The face features two protruding eye stalks; the eyes at the end contain pupils much like those of a cat. Small tentacles protude from the upper lip of the mouth, used for eating while the creature is underwater.

Two long boneless arms protrude from small shoulders—arms that would be better described as tentacles, were it not for the fact that each has a three fingered hand at the end. These fingers are slightly webbed, but separated enough to allow for dexterity. Each fingertip contains a single suction cup, which allows the Nautiloid to climb objects, including sheer surfaces, at normal rates.

The back of the Nautiloid's torso contains perhaps the race's most unusual feature—three "air bladders" which enable the creature to move in a strange and surprising fashion. These bladders fill with hydrogen, absorbed directly through the exoskeleton from the water around the Nautiloid. The creatures voluntarily control the filling and emptying of the bladders, and it is through this control that they are able to rise and sink in the water. However, Nautiloids are not confined to water; when the bladders are filled with hydrogen, the creatures can rise and float up to six feet above the ground or surface of the water. The Nautiloid can remain out of water for periods of up to 10 hours before returning to its native habitat; however, it loses five points of Stamina for every hour spent out of water. The creatures must return to the water to recover the Stamina, which returns at the rate of five points per hour. This Stamina recovery does not apply to combat.

The Nautiloids may vary their methods of movement. In



the water, they can drift at the rate of the current, or swim in dolphin fashion, moving the tail up and down. The creatures can also move by a form of walking, using their arms and tail. In air, they can float and move at wind speed, or “walk,” using a snakelike slithering motion with the tail while the body stands upright. The creature can also “pogo” its way around by filling the bladders full of hydrogen, then bouncing off the ground or water surface with its tail.

Character movement for the Nautiloid is the same as the movement rate found on page 27 of the *Star Team Basic Training Manual*.

The Nautiloids: History

During its years of expansion, the Empire assigned a reconnaissance mission to Sepa Blue in order to determine the possible benefits of Imperial control and colonization. The mission returned to Cairn, reporting the obvious facts: that the planet was 98% water covered, and that the remaining 2% was unpopulated; that the planet appeared to have all of the proper conditions to support carbon-based life forms, but that with the exception of aquatic life forms such as fish, mollusks, and crustaceans, there were no real life forms of note on the planet.

Even though there appeared to be no intelligent life on the planet, the Empire was interested in using Sepa Blue as a source for food. Fishermen began to harvest the sea, and a minor colony was established on the lone island on the planet's surface.

Blue Colony, as the colony was named, was settled by

240 nonmilitary Humans from the Imperial planet Thalassa. Two fireteams (10 men) maintained security, and the force seemed adequate at the time. Cargo vessels stopped by the island on a daily basis to pick up the catch. Life was slow, peaceful, and prosperous for the Imperial colonists.

After a while, strange things began to happen. Entire crews vanished mysteriously from their fishing vessels: the weather would be fine, the ship would be well stocked, the holds would be half filled with fish, but the entire crew would be missing.

Investigations failed to turn up clues. There were no signs of struggle, no prints except those of the crew. And most important of all, there were no clues as to where the men had gone or what had happened to them.

The colony itself began to experience the same strange events. People disappeared from their homes on land, without any trace. A panic began to spread through the remaining colonists. Security increased dramatically, and the Empire began to investigate the possibility of underwater resistance on the planet.

Sure enough, when the search went underwater, it discovered an entire civilization existed, unknown to the colonists. Evidently, the fishing tactics of the colonists were disturbing the daily life and undersea constructions of the Nautiloids, who retaliated in a like manner.

Today, the empire is concerned about the Nautiloids but considers the threat to be minimal. Sepa Blue is not a highly prized Imperial possession. The colony is very small and of little strategic importance. Furthermore, the Empire's military machine is not especially well suited for extended underwater campaigns.

The Nautiloids: Social and Cultural Background

Nautiloid culture is foreign to most of our concepts of family and social relationships, resembling more the type of society one would imagine "intelligent fish" to have evolved. Adults are egg layers and do not raise their young, at least in the sense that we know childraising on other planets. There is no sense of family, as in brothers, sisters, parents, and all of the support systems which usually operate within the traditional familial structure. Instead, there is the school.

The school contains 10-100 members, few or none of which belong to the same parents. Early in Nautiloid life, the schools serve as educational vehicles. One older Nautiloid, placed in charge of the school, teaches the primary objectives of the school as a unit and of group self-defense. After the creatures learn the discipline of the school, they are taught other, more advanced concepts, such as the arts and sciences. But the Nautiloid is never an individual, and should never be considered as such.

Nautiloids who demonstrate individual or maverick tendencies are left on their own to fend for themselves. The overwhelming majority of these loners fall victim to the various forms of carnivorous plants and animals that live underwater.

By the time Nautiloids are full grown, they are fully indoctrinated into the philosophy of the school. The thought of self is foreign to the Nautiloid; the fact that there are no particular relationships to confuse allegiances, such as family and friendship, makes the "school philosophy" much easier to accept and to practice.

At various points, Nautiloids are assigned to various schools to perform tasks ranging from farming and construction to military service and reproduction. Everybody, at one time or another, serves as the leader of a school. Leadership has nothing to do with ability: the Nautiloid school system is completely classless.

Political decisions are made by the current leader of the military school. Yet surprisingly (or actually unsurprisingly, after you get to know the school) there is no noteworthy fluctuation of leadership policy.

The Nautiloids live in gigantic underwater caverns, some of which are natural, while most have been constructed by the creatures. The constructions are huge, often accommodating thousands. Again, there are no divisions for family, friends or other such relationships, so the constructions often appear to be gigantic halls on the inside.

Nautiloid buildings are multi-tiered, and have entrances on any number of levels. Because these constructions are guarded on the outside, the Nautiloids inside are able to sleep and eat without the fear of attack.

The buildings are extremely ornate, using natural underwater plantlife. Many of the plants are vinelike, twisting around beams and blooming into multicolored bouquets where the beams join. Often, the stone walls and ceilings are carved in intricate bas-relief. Other forms of decorations, such as underwater plant gardens made of woven seaweed, coral carvings, and shell constructions, abound

as well.

Even though the school philosophy seems to eliminate individuality, this does not mean that Nautiloids are devoid of personality or thought. These aliens are intelligent, capable of using advanced tools, weaponry, and other products of advanced technology. The Nautiloid's consciousness is simply that of an alien brain developing in an alien manner.

In fact, much of what the Nautiloid learns is genetically triggered. Much of their learning occurs automatically at a certain age. Only the concepts of the school, such as simultaneous reaction, formation, and battle tactics need to be practiced. After repeated practice, an entire school can turn simultaneously, so that nobody, not even another Nautiloid can distinguish the leader from the other creatures.

Nautiloids are able to communicate orally both under and over water. However, they never orally communicate with each other while they are in a school.

Nautiloid Tools and Weapons

The major differences between the technology of the Nautiloids and the technology of Humans stem mainly from the living environment differences between the two races. The Nautiloids cannot leave the water for long periods of time, and perhaps more importantly, have no particular desire to leave the water and go exploring. Therefore, the developments in Nautiloid technology have been made almost entirely within the context of an underwater society.

Another major difference between Nautiloid and Star Team technology lies in the physical difference between the Star Team races and the Nautiloids. Nautiloid tools resemble Kleibor tools in their tendency to favor squeeze mechanisms. This is because of the physical makeup of the Nautiloid's hand. Nautiloids also prefer to operate in large schools, so many machines that appear in Wilderness technology are unknown and unnecessary on Sepa Blue. Farming, for example, is done by the labor of the school rather than by machines. Construction and factory work rely on school labor as well and resist any attempts or ideas of mechanization. Again, as with virtually all phases of Nautiloid life, the overall good of the school is the determining factor in Nautiloid policy.

Nautiloid weapons and devices are among the few such items which are not available for sale on the Black Market in the Wilderness Region. However, should the Star Teams land on Sepa Blue and encounter Nautiloids, they will certainly come into contact with such items, and perhaps even have occasion to use the items. Many weapons are virtually the same as those of the Wilderness Region, such as daggers and swords. However, other weapons and devices, particularly ranged weapons and armor, reflect the differences in environments.

The following weapons items are standard Nautiloid military devices:

Speargun with Sensory Spear Attachment

The Nautiloid speargun is extremely similar to the underwater spearguns used for fishing by divers on Earth. The major differences are that the Nautiloid speargun has a squeeze grip trigger, and the guns are loaded with sensory spears. In fact, sensory harpoons are the preferred ranged weapon of the Nautiloid military schools.

The shaft of the 18 inch spear has a switch which activates a homing device, allowing the spear to seek its target by sensing the body heat when it is fired, like the more familiar sensory knife.

The spear also contains a propellant that allows for a far greater range than that of a standard underwater speargun. When the spear is fired, it homes in on the head of the target. A "C" result causes severe brain damage and instant death, providing the spear has penetrated any helmet or armor (if any) that protects the target's head. However, unless a "C" result is achieved, the damage is the same as that of a normally fired arrow.

The spear gun can be fired above the water as well as in the water with equal results.

Throwing Net

This item is similar in nature to the throwing rope, a Star Team favorite. The throwing net, however, is slightly more complex.

The weapon appears to be a normal throwing net, not unlike the nets used by the archaic Roman gladiators on preholocaust Earth. The throwing net has a set of controls attached to one end, which operate a small wire that runs through the length of the net. If the wire is activated, the net springs up and wraps itself around two Nautiloids, or two of any other character races (except Kleibors—the net can only trap one Kleibor at a time). To use the net successfully, a character must make a successful Dexterity check.

Once a character or creature is trapped inside the net, the trapped individuals are held much tighter than they would be in a normal net. This is because of the controlled constrictive nature of the net. Therefore, anyone trapped inside would be absolutely helpless to move, draw weapons, or attempt any physical actions. Of course, a trapped individual is still able to use noetic abilities while caught up in the net.

An uncaptured character can cut through the net to free captured characters in 1d10 rounds. Burning through the net requires a blow torch or similar heat, and 2d10 rounds to burn an escape way through the net.

Vest Armor

Armor Type/Rating: C/15

Armor is extremely important to the Nautiloids, because the creatures are extremely vulnerable to attacks, due to the hydrogen filled bladders on the creature's back. Therefore, every member of a military school must be outfitted with vest armor.

The armor fits much like a vest does. It has holes for the

Nautiloid's arms and head, as well as fitting to a point about halfway down the creature's torso, leaving its bottom half exposed. Naturally, the bottom half exposure is important: the bottom half, combined with the tail fin, provides mobility.

The Nautiloids do not use beam weapons; therefore, the vest armor doesn't protect the creature from beams.

Nautiloid helmet

Armor Type/Rating: A/15

The Nautiloid helmet is an extremely important protection device, since there is no real protection for the creature's brain except a thin membrane. The helmet is like a Star Team LSS Helmet with the following exceptions:

1. The Nautiloid helmet provides no life support or communication system.
2. The Nautiloid helmet is essentially faceless because the creature needs only to have space for the eye stalks, the mouth, and the mouth tentacles.
3. The Nautiloid helmet offers no protection from beam weapons.

Disk

The disk represents the most exotic weapon/device used by the Nautiloids. It also clearly demonstrates the differences between these creatures and the various races that make up the Star Teams.

The disk is a perfectly round metal disk with a monofilament edge. The Nautiloid holds the disk by sticking the geometric center of the circle to the suction cups at the end of his or her three fingers.

When the device is held in the above manner, it can be used as a shield. However, sometimes Nautiloids will twist their boneless arms, holding the disk with their suction tips, and throw the disk, almost as though they were throwing a discus or frisbee. A person who would try to catch a disk would surely have his fingers or hand severed.

Type	Range Mod.	Ammo	ROF	RL	Mounted Use?
Disk (underwater)	-30	NA	2	NA	Yes
Disk (overwater)	-25	NA	2	NA	Yes

Nautiloid Politics

As mentioned earlier, political decisions are made by the current leader of the current military school. Although the leader changes often, the decisions show continuity, rather than an expected fluctuation in policies.

The continuity in policy is because of two major factors. One is the overall genetic nature of Nautiloid thought and knowledge. Because of this genetic factor, much of the thought, goals, and information carry over from one leader to the next. The other important factor that allows for continuity is that the overall good of the schools is always the foremost consideration of every Nautiloid.

On the planet Sepa Blue, beneath the surface of the

water, there are a number of major schools—perhaps more than 100. A major school is a Nautiloid version of what a country used to be on Earth. There are, however, some basic differences.

The various major schools throughout the planet are all united in a great planetary school—or so goes the general governing philosophy. None of the schools are in competition with each other. Instead, they all seem to work in harmony.

Far from being a general instrument of war, the military actually serves as a protection force against the numerous predators that exist in the waters of Sepa Blue. Some of these predators, such as the sepa shark, are intelligent enough to use tactics against the Nautiloids; some are as vicious and mindless as the dreaded carnivorous sirenweed. The military must watch for all of them. Other than what really amounts to continual security, the military has little to do. Or at least they had little to do until the arrival of the Imperial colonists.

The Imperial presence on Blue Colony represents a threat to the Nautiloids on several counts. To begin with, the fishermen hover above the water and drag nets behind, catching fish, but also destroying Nautiloid constructions and agricultural fields. The fishing itself also poses a threat, since it takes away a principal Nautiloid food source.

The result of Blue Colony's fishing activity has been to cause the Nautiloids to turn against the colonists. This resistance is not political; indeed, the Nautiloids have no real grudge against the Empire. Instead, they are protecting themselves and their homeland (or more appropriately, their homewater).

Their ongoing conflict with Imperial troops has made the Nautiloids leery of aliens, and of Humans in particular. The Sepa Blue natives cannot tell one type of Human from another, and seem convinced that the best policy is to destroy all members of that race.

This is not to say that Star Teams cannot establish friendly relations with the Nautiloids. To do so, however, they must prove to the Nautiloid that there is a difference between Star Team member and Imperial citizen, even if both are Human. Proof must come through actions, one of which might well be helping to destroy the Imperial installation at Blue Colony.

How to Play a Nautiloid

The Nautiloid is a completely alien race in its behavior, philosophy, environment, and social structure. These vast differences, combined with the creature's predisposition against Humans, should make for a very interesting first encounter for the Star Teams.

It is highly likely that the PCs will discover the military tactics of the Nautiloids very quickly, if not in the first encounter. Whether overwater or underwater, these tactics are essentially the same; outnumber the enemy and keep coming until you wear him down. It doesn't matter how many hundreds of Nautiloids have been wounded or killed; hundreds more take their place without hesitation.

The school is the most important thing in Nautiloid life, and it comes to the surface in their warfare.

When Nautiloids are wounded, a number of things are likely to occur, depending on whether the wounding takes place on land or underwater. Armed combat damage affects the Nautiloid in the following ways:

- Scratch Wound = Normal damage, no unusual effects.
- Light, Medium, or Heavy Wound = Normal damage, plus the wounded Nautiloid zooms around uncontrollably, propelled by a leak in one of more hydrogen bladders (like an untied balloon which is let loose to fly about), for 3d10 seconds. See below.
- Crippling Wound = The Nautiloid explodes and dies instantly.

If the light, medium, or heavy wounds take place in the water, the Nautiloid sinks in the water at a rate of 10' per round after uncontrollably zooming around.

If the wounding takes place on land, the Nautiloid immediately falls to the ground after zooming around the air for 3d10 seconds. Once on the ground, the Nautiloid tries to move back into the water by crawling at a rate of 10 feet per round. Wounded Nautiloids on land always try to make their way back to the water if it is possible.

If the PCs take the time to develop relationships with the Nautiloids, they should find the aliens very interesting, and really not as hostile as they appeared at first. The only real desire of the Nautiloids is to be left alone. If the Star Teams are interested in helping them rid Sepa Blue of the Empire, they can gain a very strong and fierce ally in the Nautiloids. Otherwise, these strange creatures will simply wage a war against Humans in general, Star Team members included.

Creating Nautiloid NPCs

To create a Nautiloid NPC, use the method for creating Human NPCs, but make sure the Ability scores follow these restrictions:

1. The minimum score for Nautiloid Willpower and Perception is 60.
2. The maximum Ability score for Nautiloid Agility and Personality is 50.

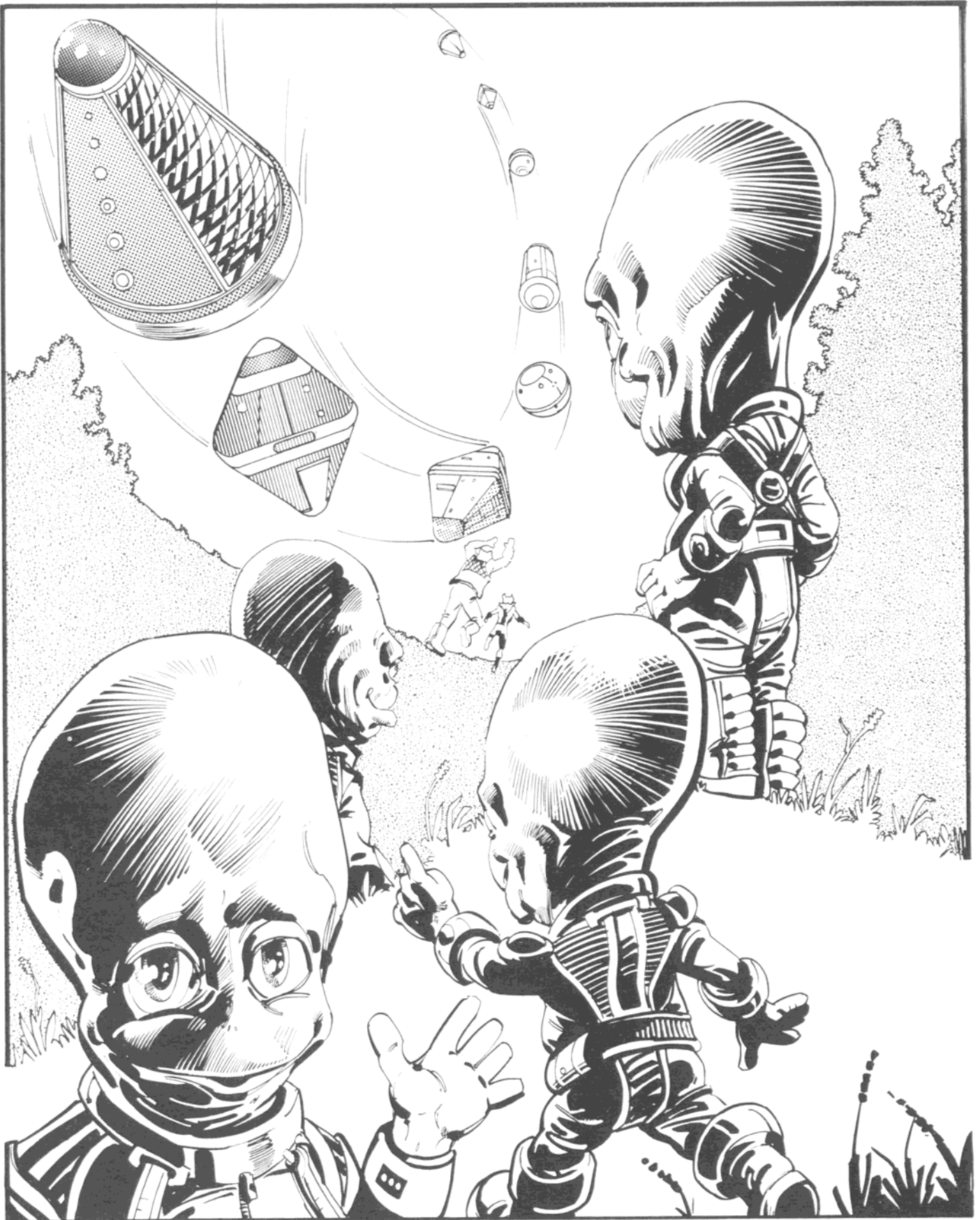
The following statistics can be used for a standard Nautiloid.

STR	50	DEX	50	AGL	40
WPR	74	PER	40	PCN	74
STA	58	UMS	45	WNDS	13

Hit Locations

Dice Roll	Location Hit	Dice Roll	Location Hit
01-15	Head	61-70	Left Arm/hand
16-35	Upper torso	71-80	Upper air bladder
36-50	Lower torso/tail	81-90	Middle air bladder
51-60	Right Arm/hand	91-100	Lower air bladder

The Blinkers





Now those little guys were fun, weren't they? Guba? Guba? Why are you curled up in the corner, there. I mean, what's a few minutes of speed and daring after all the places we've gone to, little buddy?

Guba?

I'll be...the little guy's fainted. Well, I guess that means I won't be interrupted while I say what I want to say about our visit with the green men.

We pulled into the Bajaha System because we thought that we might be able to get our translight control fixed there. It's an Imperial planet, so they're gonna have engineers there, I figured. Even though I'm not too fond of the Empire, we have to deal with them day by day on Emniyet. Sometimes they don't cause too much trouble. And you gotta go to them to get things fixed this far from the Wilderness Region.

We passed by the usual Imperial interceptors. They asked us our business, then gave us directions to Tembaga, which is the capital city. We were about 500 miles away. The Imperial pilots said we could probably hire a decent engineer there. Said it'd cost us, too.

So we flew toward Tembaga, and as we did, the weirdest thing happened. This whole line of little spacecraft buzzed by us. None of them were more than a foot apart. And almost all of them came within a foot of Old Bett. Made both Guba and me jump. Then they flew off into the distance, moving so fast that we couldn't see who was inside.

These spacecraft looked sorta like flying saucers in the old Earth movies. So I laughed and said "Take me to your leader" to Guba, which gets him mad ever since we had that run-in with Memarg Ny on Kakchak's moon. And I said, betcha they're little green men. I really did.

'Course, when the first one of those Mickeys—that's what they call their ships—pulled up beside us. I saw that they were little green men, after all. They waved at us, and I waved back. But Guba starts reaching for this laser pistol I keep hidden in the ship, 'cause he had his fill of unfriendly natives back on Sepa Blue. And he says, who knows, smiling and waving may mean they want to eat you on their planet. And I said, then I probly scared that little fella right back. Then I said, come on Guba, look how cute they are, and all the bad aliens are ugly.

So we see a bunch of them sitting around on top of their spacecraft, which they've parked on little hilltops, on the banks of streams. Or which they have jammed up in trees. All those little green men are in a circle. In the middle is a real mess, 'cause one of the little ships has cracked up.

Guba and I got out of our ship, and we walked over to get a closer look. I mean, I didn't think they meant any harm, and if one of them was hurt, maybe we could help out. Well, no sooner do we get over near them, than most of them hop back in their ships and fly off cheering. They get into a line almost as soon as they get off the ground.

Well, you would figure from this that their buddy was all right, wouldn't you? But he wasn't. He was all smashed up inside the Mickey, and it was kinda gross. Guba asked don't you think they care anything about their

friend, and I said maybe they do but maybe they forget real quick.

They sure didn't forget about us, though. The whole line of Mickeys came back and started buzzing us. I could hear laughs and whoops coming from inside the ships. And the same kind of laughs and whoops coming from the hills nearby, 'cause a bunch of them had come to watch. We finally made it back to the ship, and got up into the air.

The Mickeys circled around us. Below us. Above us. One of them pulled alongside us. The little guy inside was yelling something that I couldn't understand at first. But finally I got the idea. He wanted me to follow him.

When I told Guba, you can guess what happened. Squawking, squalling, and hiding in a cargo hold. On the other hand, sounded like fun to me. So we took off.

I've never gone that fast on a planet surface. I've never had to dodge trees, rocks, power lines. Or Mickeys. Pretty soon, we were starting to dodge buildings, and lots of them had big craters and burned spots on the sides, so I betcha some of the green men hadn't been lucky. I pointed those spots out to Guba, and he said thanks a lot. Also said that the little green men might have died but their names probly lived on for minutes.

Then it got even stranger. All of a sudden some of the green men would just jump out of their Mickeys, and it looked like they were gonna splatter on the ground, then some elastic cord they wore on their waist would pull back—*boinnng!*—and they'd be right back in the driver's seat of the Mickey.

Guba said that does it, these are the craziest. He said they're crazier than those lizards that tore each other up and those giant shrimp-things on Sepa Blue. These guys are gonna get us killed in some silly game, he said.

I thought that was kinda funny, and I say that maybe Guba wants to try to bounce out and in of Old Bett. That the little green men are gonna think we're chicken if he doesn't. Guba starts squawking and squalling and calling me some words in Trakan that I don't know and that he said later on I shouldn't repeat. I was getting into it.

Then I decided to bail out, because the line was going in a way I didn't like. See, they decided to fly through an Imperial barracks. Maybe those guys would put up with a bunch of little green men, but a big old bear and a Trakan could get in real trouble. Besides, we needed to borrow one of their engineers.

So I split out of the line, and some of them cheered for me. That made me feel kinda good...coming to a strange planet, joining them in their culture and sports. Maybe they'll remember me and Guba. Then again, maybe they won't.

Oh. Waking up, little buddy? You really have to learn not to panic. I've got Old Bett under control at all times. That's at...all...times. Now that we've got the translight control all fixed up, Old Bett's gonna just purr like a kitten.

Balik, hero of the little green man's race, is ready to move. Next stop, little buddy, is gonna be....Stalitsa.



On the edge of the border between Imperial Zone I and Imperial Zone II lies the planet system of Bajaha, the home of one of the liveliest and fun-loving races of this part of the galaxy, the Blinkers. Although their planet has been occupied by the Empire for some time, one can hardly tell it from the Blinkers. They have a way of turning everything to fun and games, even their conquest by the Empire.

Bajaha: Home of the Blinkers

Population: 6 Billion

Race: Human, Gorlon/Blinker

Climate: Temperate

Lord: Baron Nicholas Romero

Technology: 5

Economy: 5

Resistance: Minimal at best

Gravity: 0.7

Capital: Tembaga

Major Urban Centers: Ketanian, Tembaga, Pergi, Kota

Although the planet Bajaha is covered primarily with rolling hills and grasslands, numerous rocks and crystals litter the terrain in certain remote areas. The presence of the crystals drew Imperial interest: the Court of Cairn suspected that there might be a small find of Xantium on the planet. As of yet, none has been found, and the Empire has been saddled with some troublesome and most unruly subjects.

One of the stranger features of Bahaja is its long seasonal nights, or periods of darkness. The Bajahan winter leaves the planet totally dark, but not uncomfortably cold. However, during the summer, it is always light outside, the temperature reaches 130 to 140 degrees Fahrenheit. Spring and autumn alternate between darkness and light, the proportion depending upon the closeness to summer or winter.

The Blinkers: Physical Characteristics

Blinkers are the original "little green men from outer space" described in many of the first U.F.O. sightings on Earth. Blinkers are humanoid in basic bodily structure, but seldom grow to be more than 18" tall or weigh more than 20 pounds. Blinkers are hairless, their skin a bright green color that glows in the dark.

The facial features of the Blinker are not that much different from those of the Zoe: the outsized head and eyes, the recessed ears. However, the Blinkers have virtually no nose structure but do have two nostrils and a mouth. Also, unlike the Zoe, Blinker skull structure protects the head.

The life expectancy of a Blinker is 42 Earth years. They may well be capable of living over 100 Earth years, but almost all of them fall victim to accidents well before that.

The problem of care for the Blinker elderly is minimal, if any problem at all—most of them never live long enough to get old. Those very few who manage to reach old age are

just as active as they were in their younger days.

Blinkers: History

Blinker history is filled with gaps and mysteries. Neither the Empire or the Alliance has been able to make sense of these wild little folk. The Blinkers are fairly secretive: they don't mind contact with aliens, but they have little time or interest in what they consider the boring pursuit of sharing their culture, knowledge, or view of life.

The Blinkers were first discovered on Bajaha in 2126, during the age of Tarsan and Kleibor exploration. The natives were not unfriendly by any stretch of the imagination. As a matter of fact, things were almost too friendly to believe. The Tarsans, Kleibors, and the Blinkers all thought they had found a new play toy.

All of the contact made between the races was superficial but friendly. Often the Blinkers came racing and screaming through the Tarsan and Kleibor camps, occasionally capsizing things or crashing vehicles into walls. But the patient Tarsans and Kleibors were quick to realize that the Blinkers meant no harm, but were only having fun. The damage was always slight, and the bizarre joyrides through the Kleibor camps were little more than a slight nuisance.

When Humans first arrived on the planet, the relations were much the same as those between the Tarsans, Kleibors and the Blinkers. Things were basically friendly, although the Humans were not quite as patient and understanding as were the Tarsans and Kleibors.

A group of Tarsans from Kitabu on Shamba began a series of studies to discover more about the background of the Blinkers. Evidence soon led the Tarsans to believe that the Blinkers had developed interplanetary travel long before any other known people. The studies uncovered centuries old spacecraft, fully capable of travelling to most points in the galaxy.

The Blinkers shed no light on the Tarsan discovery. As is their way, they found the interviews and technical questions extremely boring after a short while, and left the researchers by themselves to go outside and play.

Other sources, however, began to fit together—various pieces in an old and interesting puzzle. The preholocaust years on Earth are packed with flying saucer stories in which spaceships would dart around, land, and little green aliens would pour out, stand around various items and humans while jabbering away, then return to their ship and take off. The alien characters in these stories follow a strong Blinker behavior pattern, as well as fitting the basic physical description. Such stories are not confined to Earth: they pop up on all the inhabited planets of the Wilderness Region, long before any of the planets had the capacities to travel in space.

Almost all Tarsan scientists now subscribe to the theory that the Blinkers traveled and explored the galaxy before anyone else. The scientists believe that characteristically, the frenzied little people became bored quickly, and left without making any long-lasting contact with alien races.

Eventually, again because of Blinker impatience and boredom (especially on long flights), they gave up space travel. Of course, the theory remains a theory: the final conclusive evidence is missing. The Blinkers themselves have not stopped long enough to tell the interviewers anything of importance.

In 3120 the Empire invaded Bajaha and took over the planet without any real struggle. The Blinker size, lifestyle, and technology have all conspired to make their resistance about as much of a nuisance to the Empire as were the Blinker joyrides through Kleibor camps.

The Blinkers pretty much ignore the occupation. They are not actively fighting the Imperial forces. By the same token, they do not support the invaders in any manner. It is a matter of debate as to whether or not the Blinkers have actually been conquered; life hasn't changed too much for them, and one has to wonder whether or not the Imperial forces could do anything of importance to them anyway.

The Truth Behind The Theory

The quest for thrills was the result of a period in Blinker History when all was not fun and games. At one point in Blinker history, before the Blinker exploration of the galaxy, these little green folks were quite serious. They had no time for amusement; the quest was to study and explore outer space.

At this time, there were no such games as the Great Race or the "living kite." All was serious, and time was precious. Blinkers directed their energies toward programs of science and technology. Space travel was a vehicle in the grave quest for knowledge.

The Blinkers tried their best to observe the various lifeforms they encountered; For the most part, they were successful. However, what they found surprised them; rather than finding other intelligent species that would contribute to the wealth of knowledge, they witnessed the open hatred of the Gorlons for each other, the disgusting, gaudy and deceitful pursuits of the Crassites, and the many wars waged on Earth, finally culminating with the nuclear holocaust in 2054. Blinkers realized that the various lifeforms throughout this part of the galaxy had chosen to measure their own advancement in terms of technological growth, rather than in terms of philosophical, social, or personal wisdom.

These were the supposed intelligent species that inhabited the galaxy.

The Blinker race went into a gigantic soul search—one which, believe it or not, still goes on today. It started with a mass depression. Everything to which the Blinkers had dedicated themselves had been undermined: there was no absoluteness in science or in technology. Knowledge can actually be deceptive, even harmful in some cases.

As often happens with depressed individuals, the behavior of the Blinkers became quite erratic. At one moment they were extremely excited, happy and cheerful, only to lapse into total gloom and despair, suddenly and without warning. Often the depression would result in Blinker deaths.



The Blinkers: General Attitudes

The overriding and central theme to Blinker thought and life is "living on the edge," for thrills and absolute enjoyment. The little aliens believe that life is only full when you have pushed it to the limit, or even beyond the limit.

Blinkers tend to be extremely high-strung. They are always moving, fidgeting, talking, tapping, or busy about something. The nervous behavior quickly turns to boredom if nothing exciting is happening, and avoiding boredom is at the source of the Blinkers' most outrageous behavior.

The favorite way of coping with boredom on Bajaha is by participating in the Great Race. As the race begins, the Blinkers board their "Mickey's"—small, single-seat flying vessels illuminated in the most brilliant of

colors. Then, without signal or forewarning, everyone takes off. Nobody is appointed leader, but the Mickey's eventually fall into a single file and follow whoever happens to be in front. Forming the line is hectic: Mickey's collide with one another, sometimes causing great pile-ups.

From this point the race becomes a life and death game of follow the leader. The lead Mickey makes incredibly sharp turns, rolls, and loops, dodging obstacles and making things tough for those who follow. All of the other Blinkers get their thrills out of seeing how closely and how well they imitate the lead Mickey while maintaining single file. Sometimes the craft follow each other so closely that they accidentally nudge the frontrunner into a tree or some other obstacle.

When big smashups occur, the Great Race makes a brief and mournful pause. The Blinkers stop their Mickeys and inspect the damage. Although they are genuinely upset to see their friends injured (or worse) as the result of the race, they show their emotions for only about 30 seconds. After they are through mourning, the Blinkers let out a wild cheer, run back to their Mickeys, and continue where they left off, screaming and shouting with delight as they rocket through breakneck turns, narrowly missing trees, cliffs, and Imperial hovercraft.

Another favorite pastime of the Blinkers is the “living kite,” named for the brief feeling of floating and freefall experienced by those who join in the game. The game is simple: a pilot leaps from his Mickey, attached to its cockpit by a long elastic cord. Before the Blinker hits the ground, the cord reaches its length and snaps him or her back into the cockpit. “Living kites” love to see how far they can jump without hitting the ground. Of course, just as in the Great Race, there are occasional accidents.

The most famous living kite was Api Kepala, the Blinker who tried the most heroic leap of all—a jump into the crater of a large (and active) volcano. Kepala carefully accounted for the depth of the jump, correctly measuring his elastic cord to achieve the most dramatic of effects. Unfortunately, he failed to take into account the drastic temperature change from the top of the crater to the bottom.

Api Kepala jumped, and as he plunged toward the bottom of the crater and the end of his cord, the air became hotter and hotter. When the cord snapped back into the cockpit of his Mickey, Kepala was nowhere to be found. The pilotless Mickey, containing only a singed and melted elastic cord, raced off into the long Rajahan night.

Despite their wildness, Blinkers really do care for life and feel loss over death and destruction. However, they don’t dwell on it for any length of time because of their extreme behavior (and short attention spans). The creatures are pacifists when it comes to matters of politics and war; in terms of temperament and thought, they are quite gentle, ascribing to many of the same goals and values as do Humans, Tarsans, or Kleibors.

Most of all, Blinkers love to laugh and to be thrilled. They shout and scream gleefully as they look for excitement, for the chance to skirt the ultimate peril. If the stunt kills the Blinker, then at least he or she came to a thrilling end.

Blinker Social Structure

Blinker social structure is based upon the family unit. Blinkers give birth to their young and usually have very large families—in this way the race survives its reckless lifestyle. The average Blinker family has 10 children.

Blinkers raise their children in a “fun system,” teaching them through games and interesting activities. Everything in Blinker society is designed for entertainment and delight, and school is no exception. For the adult Blinker, choosing a career is like choosing among favorite games. A major attempt has been made to eliminate anger, frus-

tration, and boredom from Blinker life.

The attempt has been successful for the most part. Blinkers just don’t seem to be angry. This is one of the reasons that the Empire is at a loss with how to deal with them. The resistance activities on Bajaha are, in essence, a game rather than an insurrection. In fact, the resistance is so much fun that the Imperial occupation forces aren’t sure if there really is a resistance on Bajaha.

When, for some reason, a Blinker does become angry, the situation is treated as though it is a nervous or emotional disorder; angry Blinkers to game centers, where they play games until they win and have fun. Once the “patient” has calmed down and is happy once more, he or she returns to everyday life.

The game centers are extremely important structures in Blinker life. No non-Blinker has ever entered one of these mysterious centers, and no alien knows what kind of games go on inside. Most representatives of the Empire—from Baron Romero down to the most insignificant private in the Imperial Occupation force—hold fast to a superstition that any alien who enters one of these establishments and plays one of the games will go absolutely insane and never come out. There has never been any evidence to support or deny this belief.

Blinkers are extremely friendly and playful, yet they are not open or especially warm. They play and toy with visitors to Bajaha, and do not cause harm on purpose. Of course, given the Blinker lifestyle, accidents occasionally happen; yet these are clearly accidents, as far from ill intentions as possible.

Blinker friendships are not deep in terms of getting involved with the lives of individuals, but the creatures clearly have their favorite groups. They quickly befriend visiting aliens who particularly enjoy dangerous fun and a wild time, such as Trakans. However, the Blinkers avoid more stable types such as Humans and particularly Crystal Clones, considering them unbearably boring.

Blinker Political Structure

The Blinker political structure is best described as chaotic democracy. As the citizens—planetwide or in smaller groups—perceive a social or political need, they elect someone to fill it. Elections can be an ongoing experience, because often the elected official becomes tired or bored with the appointment.

Because of the Blinker nature, there is no real call for a police force. When one is required, one is elected. There have even been times when the Blinkers have elected a thief policeman to recover the property he stole. Everything in Blinker life can turn into fun and games if one is clever enough.

Creating the Blinker NPC

To create a Blinker NPC, use the method for creating Human PCs, but make sure Ability scores follow these restrictions (see Chapter 5 of your *Star Team Wilderness*

Briefing Manual for more information on creating NPCs):

1. The maximum Strength and Stamina scores for a Blinker are 50.

2. The minimum Perception and Agility scores for a Blinker are 70.

The following statistics are those of a standard Blinker NPC:

STR	40	DEX	55	AGL	75
WPR	55	PER	55	PCN	75
STA	40	UMS	58	WNDS	12

What makes the Blinker different from other NPCs in his or her overwhelming sense of thrill. Virtually every other character from the NPC races would not—and should not—choose to do things that would jeopardize his or her own life. The Blinkers, however, are just the opposite. The important thing for players and CM to remember when playing with a Blinker NPC is that the more dangerous and thrilling the situation, the more fun it is for the Blinker.

Bajahans of Note

Zin

STR	38	DEX	72	AGL	76
WPR	48	PER	66	PCN	72
STA	40	UMS	57	WNDS	12

Skills: Spacecraft Piloting, Ace, 129; Stunt Driving, Ace, 129; Computers, Ace, 116; Electronics, Ace, 120; Mechanics, Vet, 102; Gambling, Vet, 91.

Zin is generally recognized as the champion Blinker gamester. He is easily the best Mickey driver in Bajaha and has an extremely keen sense of fun, which serves to make him a superb gamer. Despite his unparalleled skill in almost every Blinker game, Zin draws the line at one: he will not be a living kite.

Zin is married to Ginja Q and has 23 children. He is extremely pleased with his life except for the presence of the Imperial Occupying forces, whom he considers terribly serious and boring. Zin has invented a number of wild games which have gotten him into a lot of hot water with the occupation forces for both disturbing the peace and “potential assault,” some obscure Imperial charge. Although Zin has some more games in mind, he is convinced that the Imperial troops will ruin the fun again, just as they always have in the past. This conviction has brought Zin to the conclusion that the Empire takes itself far too seriously, and therefore should be banished from Bajaha.

Zin would very much enjoy visitors from a planet, especially those who would be interested in the overthrow of the Imperial forces on Bajaha (such as the Star Teams). However, remember that Zin is still a Blinker. Even if he is interested in alien visitors who plan to overthrow the Empire, he is not interested in boring, elaborate military

tactics. Like all Blinkers, he would find such plans dull. Zin simply yawns, and leaves his visitors if they cannot come up with anything more exciting than a simple war of liberation.

On the other hand, if the rebels design the overthrow to resemble a Blinker game, Zin would be acutely interested and probably have no trouble finding volunteers to come and play along. Such a game, where the dangers provide the thrills and the Empire provides the target, would be extremely stimulating for any Blinker. Furthermore, Zin would be the perfect natural leader in such a game.

The design of such games is up to the visiting characters. They will have to be clever enough to recognize the Blinker traits and adapt them to their own needs. Whether or not the Blinkers enjoy the game ideas and are willing to participate is up to the CM. However, the following brief scenarios should give the CM some guidelines as to what Zin might find interesting:

1. A game whereby the Blinkers create a series of diversions to draw Imperial attention away from a particular Star Team target. Such a diversion might be a Great Race though an Imperial military base, in which the Mickeys fall suddenly out of line, scattering in all directions toward Imperial troops. The Blinker who buzzes the most troops and returns safely wins the game.

2. A Great Race might include a strategic variation: the line of Mickeys could fly right through the occupation force barracks. This in itself is not terribly unusual, because the Blinkers have been known to do this before. What would be different about this particular race, however, would be the Blinkers' specific orders to swipe weapons when they pass through the barracks. The Blinker who steals the most weapons wins the game.

3. Another game would consist of keeping the Blinkers hidden as a raid or other military action begins. Then, at about the time the Imperial forces react, the Blinkers fly in on their Mickeys and sabotage whatever and as much as they can. Whatever Blinker does the most damage is the winner.

Aside from all of the games and occupation force resistance, Zin is the type of character who is naturally interested in the arrival of any strangers on Bajaha. He is likely to pester any PCs who land on the planet, zipping his Mickey around their heads and coming dangerously close to hitting them—this, initially, so that he can get a closer look at them. He will ask them whether they want to play (and will agree to play anything except living kite). If the answer is no, he becomes bored, yawn, and takes off in his Mickey.

Still, the encounter is not over. Zin is likely to return 1d10 times, making the same offer. If the PCs still appear boring to him, he loses interest and doesn't return.

Baron Nicholas Romero

Race: Human

STR	64	DEX	62	AGL	56
WPR	48	PER	54	PCN	72
STA	50	UMS	60	WNDS	13

Skills: Spacecraft Piloting, Vet, 94; Noetic Defense Mode, Rookie, 75; Laser Rifle, Vet, 92; Laser Pistol, Vet, 92; Bargaining, Vet, 81; Gambling, Rookie 76.

The 32 year old Baron Nicholas Romero stands 6'6" and weighs 265 pounds. His features include green eyes, unkempt and graying black hair, and a particularly long nose.

The Baron always wears military dress uniforms, even though he was never really in the Imperial armed forces. He also sports an oversized black beret, along with an ugly green and blue sash that he claims are the colors of Bajaha.

The Baron is the Imperial leader, or "Lord of Bajaha." Romero is a distant relative of the Emperor, but he is not all that bright or on top of things. This is why he was sent to head the occupational government of Bajaha—certainly not a glamor position in the Empire. In fact, most Imperial Lords would be ashamed of the assignment.

Romero, however, is just dumb enough to be oblivious to the disgrace, and is actually quite proud to be one of the Imperial elite. He sees himself as an intellectual, a man of misunderstood talents and genius. Under this profound misconception, Romero has attempted to play the part to the hilt.

One of the baron's first intellectual endeavors was to demonstrate the fact that anyone could write poetry. In an essay entitled "Everyone's a Poet, but the Readers Don't Know It," Romero contends that there is no such thing as bad poetry, only bad readers who do not possess the intellectual tools required to understand what is in front of them. Romero has published several poems, to highly unfavorable reviews. A Tarsan professor rebutted the essay by writing a tongue-in-cheek "study" of the baron's poetry, especially focusing on one poem that begins. "*We have a long way to travel, my hefty sweetheart and I/Bravely in search of jewels, those shining rocks.*" The poetry itself was actually funnier than the biting satirical essay.

The baron also claims to be a painter, dealing in horrible abstracts, and a musician. When deciding which instrument to play, the baron settled on the violin, actually quite literally: sitting on the instrument at his first recital, he crushed it beyond recognition and sound. The baron now plays the flerm because of its melodic qualities, claiming rhythm is too primitive. So is the baron's flermwork; many of his neighbors have moved.

The baron remains serenely oblivious to the world around him, assuming that everyone's confusion over his stupidity is the inability to understand an artist or genius. He is not aware that the people around him see him as a bumbling idiot. Instead, he believes that he commands the awe and respect of all.

Lately, the baron has picked up gambling as his favorite hobby. He dreams of someday walking into the major casinos of Stalitsa and Fal'el to the hushed admiration of a casino-wise crowd. A young man offers a chair, and beautiful women swarm around in anticipation of the coming events of the night. The casino offers unlimited credit, and the game begins.

Of course, the dream takes a number of turns from this point. But the simple fact remains: the baron is a far better gambler in his fantasies than playing for the high stakes in the real world. Some of his companions lose on purpose, so as not to provoke his violent temper, while other extend apologies and leave the table. Most of the apologies play to the baron's ego with the statements such as "We wouldn't dare risk our money against one as skilled as you!" To

which the baron always smiles and responds, "But of course."

Romero also labors under the belief that the Blinkers the planet of Bajaha love Imperial rule and are cute and loving followers. Here too, he is wrong. Although the Blinkers neither hate nor love the Empire, they are simply too wrapped up in their own games to care too much about the baron, the Empire, or even the Alliance and the Star Teams.

The baron is completely unaware of the plans and aspirations of General Srint. As far as the baron is concerned, Srint is a completely loyal and devoted follower. Of course, the General does nothing publicly to change the baron's opinion.



Brigadier General Srint

Race: Green Gorlon

STR	60	DEX	74	AGL	76
WPR	66	PER	32	PCN	54
STA	76	UMS	68	WNDS	15

Skills: Spacecraft Piloting, Rookie, 83; Noetic Defense Mode, Rookie, 75; Laser Rifle, Vet, 104; Laser Pistol, Vet, 104; Bargaining, Vet 79; Disguise, Vet, 83; Forgery, Vet, 83; Gambling, Vet, 82; Stunt Driving, Vet, 95; Theft, Vet, 95.

The 56 year old General Srint wears the standard dress uniform of the Imperial Army, with no flashy additions. Srint does not wish to draw too much attention to himself. He is 8 feet tall, but somewhat thin for a Gorlon. His reptilian eyes are shifty and always darting nervously about, as though he were expecting some type of ambush.

General Srint is the highest rankig military officer on the planet of Bajaha, *supposedly* answerable only to Baron Romero. Srint realizes how inept and totally worthless the baron is, and considers this his chance to assume a positions of power within the Empire.

Srint is a terribly dishonest individual, always on the lookout for the chance to improve his own lot at the expense of others. Of course, the baron supplies Srint with the perfect setup.

The general has a long and checkered career of receiving the praise and delegating the blame. He has always managed to escape the repercussions of failure, because he is always able to maneuver the situation so that others will take the blame. Basking in glory and hiding his mistakes, the general has risen through the Imperial ranks.

Srint avoids direct confrontation with his opponents. Rather than show his motives or feelings, he prefers to appear friendly with everyone. Up until the end, most of his unfortunate enemies feel that he is a good and trusted friend. Srint sets up his intended victim, then catches the individual totally by surprise. Often he sets up situations in which he plays one person off another, letting his enemies do his destructive dirty work for him. When the dust settles, Srint has removed two (or more) political enemies at no cost to himself.

Currently, the general is maintaining an air of friendship with Romero. In his monthly reports to the baron, Srint carefully paints a portrait of a planet happy to be under Imperial control. All the while, the general is giving accounts of the baron's ineptness in weekly secret reports to ICE.

Most of the secret reports deal with the baron's state of mind. These reports are no more factual than the ones Srint presents to Baron Romero: they are slanted to make the baron appear emotionally unstable and unfit for his pos-

ition. At the same time, Srint is careful to mention that the Blinkers are going unpunished after racing their vehicles through the military bases.

In the meantime, the general gambles with the baron, losing on purpose to give the baron a false sense of security. The general also entertains the baron at home from time to time, again with the motive of winning over the baron's trust.

With all of the backstabbing and sabotage Srint is conducting, it is likely that the arrival of Star Teams on the planet would be all he would need to prove that the baron is an unfit ruler. The general would most likely seize power and have the Baron conveniently put away.

Addendum: the Mickey

Stress Points: 10
VCR: 50
Cost: Not available

Combat Speed: 10
Crew: 1
Type: Recreational

Weapons and Damage Boxes:

Front: None

Rear: None

Drive: ☐

Capacity: 0.05 cargo units

Note: Sublight drive only

The Mickey is a spherically shaped craft, about 2½ feet in diameter, used by the Blinkers from early childhood. When the Mickey starts up, it glows in luminous colors. The color identifies the driver of a Mickey during a race, much like the color of a jersey designates an athlete's team.

Mickeys are fast and highly maneuverable, but are used strictly for recreational purposes. They cannot be used for interplanetary travel, although they can fly in space at sublight speeds for 24 hours before needing refueling.

Mickeys are not armed craft. In fact, the only remotely military function the Mickey can perform is the traditional Blinker "beaning"—flying the spacecraft to strike, or bean, the target. Beaning requires a successful called shot using the pilot's Piloting skill score.

The Targa





Guba was giving me a real rough time about messing up the translight when we landed on Piatra. Can't say as I blamed him, 'cause I was bragging an awful lot when we made the jump that was supposed to get us back to Stalitsa. Here we are—according to the Imperial folks on Piatra, pretty close to the galactic core. That's not the way I wanted to go.

And this is another one of those Imperial planets like Sepa Blue where everybody seems scared or something. Maybe it's the Xenophobes, or maybe it's something else, but even if they are suspicious of us and everything, they just seem like they'd rather worry about something else and leave us on our own.

Piatra is a woodsy planet. It's real pretty, reminding me of those pictures of lands on Earth, specially those up north in their Western Hemisphere, the way they looked before the Corporate Land Renovations of 1989, when Earth's business community decided they needed more space for shopping malls.

Yea, it looks kinda wild and untouched. I thought it was the perfect place for a picnic or something before we tried to get away from the galactic core. After all the threats on Sepa Blue and the excitement with the little green men on Bajaha, I felt like it would be nice to sit back and relax.

Well, you *know* that would be too good to be true. We had the cloth down in the clearing and a basket full of goodies—gosh, what did we have? Cheese, bread, those little winged goldfish from Sepa Blue, some pretty decent Imperial military rations, some *pivo* for me, and lotsa other stuff. We were only a few bites into it when all kinds of trouble broke loose.

First of all, this spear flew into a tree right by my head. Then a hatchet of some kind flew right into the picnic basket. We got up and started to run back toward the Imperial base, but before we could get far at all, they had us surrounded.

Good thing we didn't get far enough for the big cavemen to know that we were running back to the Imperial base. By the Crassite and Gorlon skulls they wore as decorations, I could tell they were just about as fond of the Empire as the Hawkmen were.

Trouble was, they were wearing bearskins, too, and some of them were looking at me kinda funny, in a way I didn't like.

Same time, they seemed to think Guba was something real cute—What do you mean, "Of course," Guba?—and while lots of them started poking me with spears, they were stroking his arms, patting him on the head, and pinching him real gentle like you would a bebekh or something.

Their language was easy to pick up, 'cause it was simple and all. Right away I understood that they were trying to decide if I was a "magic bear" or not. Some of them thought I was just a weird color and all, but that I was the "pet of the pretty thing," and that they shouldn't bother me, because maybe the "pretty thing" was magic itself. Others of them thought I was "magic," and that meant that "its fur and teeth are magic, good to wear."

I decided to act as much like a normal bear as I could, and I sent a little noetic message to Guba to let him

know. He picked up on it as quick as usual, and I got down on all fours and growled a lot.

Guba had a problem in that he doesn't learn languages the way a Kleibor does. So he started talking Trakan to make sure that he wouldn't be found out if any of them knew Universal. That puzzled them some, and they kept talking about him in their own language, petting him and making a fuss over him.

I figured it out pretty soon. The cavemen thought he was a good spirit of some kind, sent to bring them luck against the enemy. Who was probly the Empire, from the skulls they wore. I let Guba know this.

Which was a mistake. A real mistake. Leave it to a Trakan to take advantage. Guba starts using sign language and all to ask them for food. He was careful not to eat any meat—guess those skulls put him off. Then he gets them to build a litter. To carry him around in.

In a matter of hours I've gone from the brains of this operation to the pet of the King of Piatra. Guba sat up in his litter like the Emperor himself. He makes me dance to entertain the cavemen. Makes me balance a ball on my nose. Makes me "speak" like a bear and sit up on my hind legs.

All the time I'm thinking just let me get you back into Old Bett, little fella. I'll jerk a knot in *your* tail for sure.

Then I found out I'd get a chance sooner than I thought. Seems the cavemen were making a big fuss about ambushing an Imperial squadron, *and carrying Guba into battle with them*. I decided not to tell him about that. Let the King of Piatra find out on his own.

Which he did, when he saw them glide into the bushes, getting ready for an ambush. He tries to tell them in sign language that maybe this isn't the right time to do this. But that's a hard idea to get across in sign language, so they think he's wishing them good luck.

This was all real funny, Guba starting to squawk and make hand signs and all. But I didn't want to be around when the action started either. So I decided to help Guba get away the same way I did on the first day we met. I raised him into the air.

That impressed the cavemen quite a bit. Now they were bowing down to Guba, and he tried his best to look royal and larger-than-life while he floated (and I walked) back to Old Bett.

If any of those cavemen had found out what a "magic bear" I really was, I'd be somebody's coat and necklace inside a minute. I even forgave Guba. Now that I've had a good laugh.

So why are you sitting there sulking? You had your fun with the dancing bear, then I had my fun. Guess you could call us even and everything. Now that we know where we are, it's simple to go back toward the Wilderness Region. I'll be more careful on the translight jumps. It should be smooth sailing from this point...

What's that? *Guba! What's that!*

Whaddya mean, *Xenophobes?*



The Xenophobes are expanding throughout the galaxy, despite the Empire's increasingly frantic attempts to fend them off. The next planet in the path of these fanatical, noetic creatures is Piatra, the home planet of the Targa.

The Targa are a strong and hardy race who have resisted the Empire for a long time. If anybody is a match for the Xenophobes, it might well be the Targa. The problem is, however, that the fight won't be a fair fight, one against one; eventually, the Targa will lose.

If the Star Teams are able to arrive in time, perhaps they can serve a double purpose: turning the tide against the Xenophobes and supporting the Targa resistance against the Empire.

Piatra: Home of the Targa

Population: 2 Billion

Race: Crassite, Human, Gorlon/Targa

Climate: Temperate

Lord: Brig. Gen. Chatim

Technology: 2

Economy: 2

Resistance: Yes

Gravity: 1.2

Capital: New Fal'el

Major Urban Centers: None

Major Military Bases: Camp Leo I, Camp Innocence

Piatra resembles Earth during the Stone Age, long before recorded history. About two-thirds of the planet is covered with water. The remaining third is land and polar icecap.

Much of Targa's land surface is forest, as Earth's was before man changed it. Mountains, deserts, swamps, and large grasslands cover the rest of the land.

Animal and vegetable life are also similar to that of Earth, except that each species on Piatra is roughly 20% larger than its equivalent on Earth.

The Targa population is centered in the forested and mountainous areas of Piatra. Long ago, before the arrival of the Imperial forces, the Targa lived in almost all areas of the planet. They left the planet's surface unmolested, as they pursued great herds. Now, since the coming of the Empire, the Targa remain hidden in those areas of the planet that afford the most cover.

Originally, in its early years of expansion, the Empire established a series of colonies on Piatra as well as some military basic training centers. Since that time, however, Imperial colonists and troops have withdrawn to the safety of a few well fortified areas on the planet. None of the military training centers are of use, since the Targa no longer fight on the side of the Empire.

For all practical purposes, the Empire owns the planet Piatra. However, the Imperial occupation troops sleep lightly with the Targa walking on the planet's surface. It is the Empire's desire, General Chatim's orders, and the Imperial trooper's responsibility to scour the planet and find, destroy, or subjugate each and every Targa.

Whether or not the Star Teams arrive on Piatra, and

what they'll do if they arrive, should be interesting issues for a STAR ACE® campaign to explore. Another interesting question is which side will win the struggle now taking place on the planet: the evil, sophisticated, technological race, or the primitive, ignorant barbarians. However, as the ancient Kleibors or Tarsans would likely say, perhaps the most interesting pursuit of all would be to watch—to allow this race the opportunity to grow on their own and find their own way in the galaxy.

The Targa: First Impressions

The first impression created by a Targa is that he or she is actually a giant Human. The creatures stand over 8½ feet tall, and are proportioned much as the Humans of Earth. Most Targa have extremely well defined, muscular bodies, reflecting the strength resulting from their primitive lifestyles. The eyes of the Targa are a bit more round than the eyes of a human, and the ears are substantially smaller than those of Humans.

The Targa are covered with long, thick, body hair, but not to the extent that they would be confused with apes. The men wear beards, and often braid their hair and beard. The women wear their hair extremely long, also in various intricate braids. The Targa are light complected, their hair black or a dark brown.

As is often typical with primitive hunting tribes, the Targa wear furs from the animals they hunt. They fashion primitive jewelry from the bones and teeth of animals and from unusual rocks they find during their nomadic travels. Their dwellings are made of animal hides and fur mounted on wooden frames.

The most pressing problem of the Targa, after the Imperial threat, is food supply. The Targa have learned to scavenge, but are still primarily dependent upon hunting for their food supply.

The average life expectancy of the Targa is 80 years.

The Targa: History

Until the arrival of the Empire, the Targa had been left completely on their own to develop. The various Tarsan and Kleibor explorations somehow bypassed this planet system; for some reason the technological advancements of the race never approached those of the rest of the galaxy.

Actually, the planet Piatra was one of the first conquests of the young Emperor Leo I. This occurred in 2898, but is never included in the Alliance histories of the Empire. The reasons for this exclusion are both simple and complex at the same time.

To begin with, the conquest itself was relatively simple and bloodless. When Leo and his barbarian renegades first landed on Piatra, the primitive Targas thought they were being visited by spirits. The barbarian humans were infinitely more technologically advanced than were the native Targas, so Leo's forces waltzed into Piatra without any resistance whatsoever.

Such a smooth beginning seemed to be an omen. Things continued to go well for Leo. He was worshipped, and the Targa were content to give the Humans whatever they demanded in tribute.

What Leo demanded in tribute was bodies. The Targa became a slave army. Leo's Human followers trained them into a semidisciplined army, and Leo armed them with familiar weapons—swords, clubs, daggers, bows, and spears. Leo quickly unleashed this army upon the planets of Cairn, Gon, and Fyr, in 2899.

The Targa forces, combined with the barbarian Human forces, and aided by the element of surprise, quickly overran Cairn. Gon and Fyr quickly followed. The ferocity of the warriors is still a subject of story today.

However, judging from the stories that arose about the conquests, it is clear that the inhabitants of Cairn, Gon, and Fyr didn't realize that they had encountered a new race. Because the Targa were very Human in appearance, the planet defenders thought they were fighting an army of particularly large, violent, and barbaric Humans.

Nobody except Leo and his forces were aware at the time that such a race as the Targa existed. The Targa were quite naturally mistaken for barbarian Humans, and the race is not mentioned in Alliance histories of the Empire.

Whether mistaken for Humans or recognized as something entirely different, the Targa were a tremendous psychological factor in Leo's early victories. Stories spread throughout the region about "Leo's berserkers," who overtook a university center and devoured the laboratory rats and mice, many of which had been injected with various disease-causing germs. The troops who ate the diseased rodents became ill themselves and died. However, the stories of wild, barely controllable barbaric warriors lived on, spreading a wave of fear that preceded Leo's troops through the first of his conquests.

The beginning of the end in the relationship between the Leo and his Targa soldiers came dimly at first. Targa troops began to notice that some of the forces they were fighting were substantially more advanced than Leo's Human troops fighting beside them. Suspicion began to rise among the Targa: perhaps these strangers were not really gods or spirits, but something else. Even if they were gods, then certain gods were even stronger than these. Despite growing misgivings among the Targa, the forces of Leo I continued to advance; Targa suspicions remained only that.

By now, the Targa had certainly begun to express their doubts. Veterans of Leo's campaigns, they had seen much of what their part of the galaxy had to offer in technology. While the Targa troops couldn't understand how or why the various devices functioned, they were no longer impressed by the use of technology. Or at least the use of gadgets no longer caused the Targa troops to believe that their Human counterparts were superior beings. After all, they had killed more than their fair share of Humans and other aliens in battle, even with their own primitive weapons.

Finally, the end came when Leo I was assassinated in

2910. By Targa reckoning, no god or superior being could be assassinated; they realized that they had been duped and the deception had cost the lives of many of their people.

The Targa were still primitive enough that they had no problems whatsoever in retreating into the backwoods of Piatra and surviving. Using their almost animal instinct for survival, the Targa fought *against* the Imperial troops with an even greater fervor than they had fought *for* them during the Imperial wars of expansion.

The methods of warfare used by the Targa are very simple and crude, but they make up for lack of sophistication with animal-like ferocity. The weapons used are exclusively those which were used when the Targa were allies of Leo's conquering armies: daggers, swords, clubs, spears, shortbows, tomahawks, darts, javelins, and slings. The Targa are unable to use more sophisticated weapons because they have no idea of how the weapons function. Nobody has ever taught the Targa how to load, aim, fire, clean, and maintain a firearm. Even a beam saber is useless, because the Targa don't know how to operate the beam mechanism. The Targa themselves believe the weapons to be operated by some type of magic.

Bands of primitive Targa have ambushed thousands of Imperial occupation troops on Piatra since the resistance began. Today, the Targa are still fighting their war against the Empire, and they still use their primitive methods. In fact, the primitivism of the Targa has become a matter of pride and a cause for fighting against the impurities of culture threatened in the presence of the Imperial forces on Piatra.

Targa Military Organization

Targa military organization is actually a contradiction in terms. They have very little outward organization, no official military ranks, no uniforms, no marching orders or divisions. However, the Targa do possess a superb sense of discipline and superb morale, and any military expert will attest to the value of both.

To begin with, every member of a Targa group, whether male or female, is considered a warrior/hunter. Every Targa group has a leader, whom they follow without question.

Sometimes, various Targa groups join together to attack an Imperial encampment or overland convoy. When this occurs, the leaders decide ahead of time, based upon previous battles and reputations, who should be the overall commander. They make this decision cheerfully and calmly: the Targa are not in the least competitive for power or command; instead, the goal is the overall good of the race.

The Targa often pick up weapons from dead Imperial troops, selecting only weapons they know how to use. Since the Targa don't know how to use items such as laser pistols, beam sabers, grenades, or grenade launchers, they simply smash or bury them so they cannot be used again by the occupation troops.

The same holds true with other equipment found on the dead Imperial troopers. Such items as armor, knapsacks, belts, helmets, and canteens, are all highly coveted items; the resistance fighters can put these things to immediate use in hundreds of ways.

The armor is selected by what fits. Most Human-sized armor and helmets are too small; some Crassite items fit even though the armor is generally short; Gorlon armor generally fits best. Although Crassite and Gorlon helmets almost always fit, the Targa often pass them up because of the desire to remain as camouflaged as possible.

The result of all of this battlefield scavenging is that no two Targa warriors look alike. They adorn most of their confiscated arms and equipment with furs, bones, and stone decorations. Most Targa cannot stand to wear shoes, but a few do. The various dress works to their advantage: Imperial troopers even complain that it is impossible to distinguish officers from common foot soldiers in battle. But then again, the Imperial troopers don't realize that the Targa don't have ranks, like the Imperial troops do.

Another aspect of the Targa military behavior is not very pleasant, but necessary to understand. Prisoners are seldom if ever taken. The Targa hatred of the Imperial troopers is too great. The bodies of the Imperial troopers are most often mutilated and sometimes even eaten. The corpses are often put on display to frighten the Imperial troops. The ploy works quite well. Sometimes the Targa carry the corpses into battle, throwing them at the living troopers to frighten and demoralize the comrades of the dead. The huge warriors often keep and wear skulls, bones and pieces of skin as grisly battle trophies. War against the Targa is not for those with weak stomachs.

The Targa always prefer to ambush and run. They hide well, and generally do not strike unless reasonably assured of victory. When they do attack, however, they generally pursue the enemy relentlessly, giving no quarter. Once the battle is over and the Targa have confiscated what they want to take, they immediately break into smaller groups or single units and meet at a designated place, each group taking a separate path and masking their trail to avoid detection by the enemy.

The Targa: Attitude

It is the Empire's contention that while the Targa are considered to be an intelligent race, they are on the lower end of the intelligence spectrum. Were it not for the arrival of the Empire, this race would probably still be in caves. To begin with, much of what the Empire believes about the Targa should be taken with a grain of salt. It really isn't a matter of intelligence with the Targa as much as it is a problem of development. What would have happened to Human civilization if aliens had landed on Prehistoric Earth? Needless to say, the transition from a primitive nomadic hunting society into a highly technological world has had its impact on the Targa way of life.

The Targa needed time to evolve and advance on their own, but Leo I denied them that opportunity. As a result, they have no real way of coping with the extremely hostile technological society around them. The only answer the Targa have found is to resist the technology as well as the Empire that spawned it, to go back to their roots, fend off outside threats, develop at their own pace, and meet others when they are ready. The Alliance is completely unaware of the Targa existence, as are the Star Teams, so no real help can stem from either source. Certainly an alliance with the Empire is not in the best interest of the Targa.

One lasting effect of the Imperial presence on Piatra and the former relationship between the Targa and the Empire is that the overwhelming majority of the Targa speak an extremely broken

but understandable version of Universal. Should Star Team members land on the surface of Piatra, they might be able to communicate with the Targa, if given a chance.

Targas live in small groups, usually centered around the family, although it is not uncommon to find outsiders among the roaming groups. Targas are carnivores and follow their prey wherever it might lead them. This practice, of course, encourages a nomadic life: Targa camps are very simple and break down easily, allowing for life on the move. The Targa do have full use of fire for cooking, heat, and illumination.

Life within the small groups is communal. Everything is shared, from food to work. Any member of the group



caught stealing—or even hoarding something selfishly—is likely to be put to death. Targa life is brutal: survival depends upon community effort, and failure to support the community is equivalent to treason.

This nomadic lifestyle also makes it a bit more difficult for Imperial troops to round up any sizable numbers of Targa for execution. The Empire once decided that the way to defeat the Targa was to eradicate their supply of meat by killing droves of the various animals on Piatra which the Targa use for food. However, when this operation began, the Targa simply began hunting the Imperial troops and eating *them*. The Targa are primitive enough that cannibalism is an accepted form of survival, causing them absolutely no moral dilemmas. The Human Imperial troops felt differently however, and quickly changed their minds about destroying the food source of the Targa.

Not only did the Imperial change of policy send a sigh of relief through the occupation troops, but it was also pleasing to the Targa. While the Targa didn't mind eating enemy troops for breakfast, they preferred Piatran elk any day to Imperial Gorlon. However, before the policy change, they did develop a taste for roast Crassite.

Creating the Targa NPC

To create a Targa NPC, use the method for creating Human PCs, but make sure Ability scores follow these restrictions (See *Star Team Wilderness Briefing Manual*, Chapter 5, for more information on creating NPCs):

1. Different from other NPCs, all maximum scores for a Targa are 80.
2. The Minimum Strength and Stamina scores for a Targa are 60.

The following scores may be used for standard Targa NPCs:

STR	70	DEX	54	AGL	54
WPR	54	PER	54	PCN	70
STA	70	UMS	62	WNDS	15

It should be noted that the Targa have no restricted score as do other character races. But despite their high Ability scores, the skills of the Targa are severely limited.

The Targa should be role-played as extremely primitive. They are superstitious, prone to violence in self-defense, and incredibly (and intentionally) ignorant of modern technology and warfare..

The skill restrictions on the Targa characters reflect their primitive nature, but also the hardships of an environment in which characters must learn basic things quickly and well. All Targa skill scores are computed as Specialty Skills, so that they use Rookie skills at a +30 bonus, Vet skills at +45, and Ace skills at +70. However, they can possess only the following skills:

Polearms (Spear only)
Short-handed weapons(Club, Axe, and Hammer only)

Sword (any sword except Beam Saber)
Short Bow
Thrown Weapon Skills (Axe/Tomahawk, Dagger/Knife, Dart, Javelin, Sling, Spear only)
Outdoor Survival
Theft

Targa of Note

Ker-Ma-Tu

Race: Targa

STR	72	DEX	62	AGL	60
WPR	64	PER	60	PCN	66
STA	74	UMS	66	WNDS	15

Skills: Polearms (Spear) Ace, 136; Short-handled Weapons (Club) Ace, 136, (Axe) Ace, 136, (Hammer) Rookie, 96; Sword, (Monofilament Sword) Vet, 111; Short Bow, Ace, 132; Thrown Weapon Skills (Axe, Dagger, Spear) Ace, 137; Outdoor Survival, Ace, 130; Theft, Ace, 134.

Ker-Ma-Tu stands 8'10" tall and weighs a trim 300 pounds. His long black hair is worn in a long braid in the back, and his beard is braided into three separate strands in front. He wears a Gorlon flak vest over a bearskin vest, and leather pants.

Perhaps the most distinguished features of Ker-Ma-Tu's attire are two of the ornaments he wears. First, he wears a medallion, originally intended as a gift for the Emperor. It fell into Targa hands during a raid on an Imperial overland convoy. The center of the medallion holds a large Xantium crystal.

The second ornament is more grisly: a Crassite skull attached to Ker-Ma-Tu's battle helmet. The helmet itself was taken off a dead Crassite officer.

Ker-Ma-Tu is the leader of the largest band of nomadic Targa on Piatra. He is an extremely skilled warrior and hunter, and a dedicated leader. Of all the Targa leaders, Ker-Ma-Tu would be more likely to inspect visiting aliens, ask questions, and think things through before judging what to do about (or with) the aliens.

Ker-Ma-Tu has seen, fought, and killed more than his fair share of Humans, Gorlons, and Crassites. However, he has never seen the likes of Trakans, Crystal Clones, and Kleibors. Should a visiting Star Team encounter Ker-Ma-Tu on Piatra, his reactions to the various new races in the group are important. The following should help serve as a guideline in the event of such an encounter:

Humans in the party = The Targa leader is likely to associate the Humans with the Empire, since Imperial Humans are the only Humans he has ever encountered to any degree. He will not immediately attack if the Humans are in the presence of other races, but he may very well

ambush the Humans if there are no other races in their party.

Trakans in the party = The members of the group will gawk at the unusual Trakans, dropping their guard (and probably dropping their weapons) while staring at the beautiful creatures, certainly making noise and drawing the attention of the Star Team party. Regardless of whether the Trakans are male or female, the Targa leader will attempt to capture them, take them back to camp, and befriend them.

Crystal Clones in the party = Ker-Ma-Tu will watch the party very carefully, fascinated with both the Crystal Clone's resemblance to and difference from Humans. In the long run, although the Targa will be immediately attracted to any Traka, they be most impressed with the Crystal Clones, seeing these aliens as some sort of magical beings.

Kleibors in the party = The Targa will be most likely to attack Kleibors, believing them to be some sort of magical bear. Therefore it follows that the fur of the Kleibor would have magical properties, or the teeth or bones could be used for magic potions or lucky jewelry. It will take some quick talking by the Star Team members to save any Kleibor from death at the hands of the Targa hunters.

Once befriended, Ker-Ma-Tu will be a tried and trusted friend. Loyalty and honesty are two of the most revered Targa traits, and he is exemplary in his pursuit of both.

Ker-Ma-Tu's followers number 64 adults, 31 men, 33 women, and about 20 children. Since hunting, building, and all other chores are equally shared in Targa life, it is not uncommon to find a majority of men staying in the camp taking care of children while the women are hunting bear and elk for food and clothing. The Targa leader shares in these responsibilities the same as anybody else.

Lan-Gwa-Jube

Race: Targa

STR	80	DEX	74	AGL	76
WPR	66	PER	58	PCN	76
STA	74	UMS	78	WNDS	15

Skills: Polearms (Spear) Ace, 148; Short-Handled Weapons, (Club, Axe/Tomahawk, Hammer) Ace, 148; Sword (Monofilament Sword, Short Sword) Ace, 148; Short Bow, Ace, 144; Thrown Weapon Skills (Axe/Tomahawk, Dagger, Javelin, Sling, Spear) Ace, 147; Outdoor Survival, Ace, 134; Theft, Ace, 142.

Lan-Gwa-Jube is 8'8" tall and weighs an extremely trim 250 pounds, all of it muscle. She wears her hair intricately, bones tied to the bottom of the many braids. Her straight brown hair shines in the sunlight.

Lan-Gwa-Jube wears a Gorlon flak vest under her furs. She also wears a green headband, and two bracelets fashioned out of hollowed out Human skulls. Lan-Gwa-Jube is always barefoot, and dresses in camouflage colors.

Lan-Gwa-Jube is a legend among all Targa people. She is regarded as the fiercest warrior on Piatra, and embodies the very spirit of the Targa race. She is honest, and respected by the members of her group as well as by the members of other Targa groups.

Despite her great leadership abilities, Lan-Gwa-Jube also has a strong streak of independence. Often she leaves her own group to hunt on her own. Actually, these "hunts" vary in purpose and goals: sometimes she hunts for food, sometimes for Imperial troopers. Most of the time she hunts for both.

Lan-Gwa-Jube often kills deer, leaving the carcasses where a group of hungry Targas will find the meat. She provides for all of her people, and might represent the first step toward a planetwide unifi-

cation of the scattered Targa groups. Her fame as a provider for the hungry is so well known that often, when nomadic Targas find a dead animal, they credit Lan-Gwa-Jube for the kill, even though she had nothing to do with the find.

In warfare, Lan-Gwa-Jube uses virtually all of the weapons traditional to the Targa, and is highly skilled in using them. She is credited with being the first to leave "messages" for any Imperial troops patrolling the forests looking for Targa resisters—the dead bodies of Imperial troopers, mutilated in various manners. The intended message to the Empire is clearly, "leave Piatra, or this will happen to all Imperial troopers."

Targa legend maintains that Lan-Gwa-Jube's group is made up entirely of women, although most of the time, she



hunts on her own. However, the females in the group are supposedly fierce warriors in their own right. A number of Lan-Gwa-Jube's raids against the Imperial occupation troops allegedly were conducted by her group, under her leadership.

To the members of the Empire, Lan-Gwa-Jube is a terrorist, a wild savage whose chief delight is killing and mutilating the bodies of Imperial troopers, leaving them on display. She is a big enough thorn in the Imperial side to cause General Chatim to offer a 100 chip reward to anyone—Imperial trooper or Targa traitor—who brings in her dead body to be displayed as a symbol to the Targa resisters. If anyone collects this reward, it is most likely that it will not be one of the Targa: Lan-Gwa-Jube is a heroine to her people.

Brigadier General Dr. Anf Chatim

Race: Crassite

STR	66	DEX	60	AGL	48
WPR	48	PER	54	PCN	74
STA	38	UMS	57	WNDS	13

Skills: Laser Pistol, Vet, 90; Laser Rifle, Rookie, 75; Computers, Rookie, 77; Demolitions, Rookie, 82; Electronics, Vet, 92; Emergency Spacecraft Repair, Rookie, 76; Engineering, Rookie, 76; Investigation, Ace, 114; Mechanics, Vet, 97; Medicine, Ace, 112; Outdoor Survival, Vet, 88; Bargaining, Ace, 106; Forgery, Vet, 87; Gambling, Vet, 92.

Of all the Imperial planet rulers, the Crassite in charge of Piatra, Brigadier General Anf Chatim, is known as the most demented. He is a career military man, but with a strong background in the sciences. Chatim is a physician—actually, a surgeon—and although one hesitates to call the man an intellectual because of his demented behavior, he is certainly well educated, articulate, and learned.

The general first arrived on Piatra three years ago. No military leader had been able to squelch the Targa resistance on the planet, and General Chatim decided he would assume this undertaking as a personal challenge. The general sees the struggle with the Targa in terms of “progress against primitivism”—an overall struggle between the educated and enlightened elite versus the barbaric and ignorant inferiors.

Of course, the general sees himself as a member, if not a leader, of the educated elite. To not be able to break the resistance of the ignorant savages of Piatra would represent the worst possible insult. So Chatim has methodically assembled a plan whereby he intends to bring ultimate victory to the Empire within another two years.

The general has attempted to use science and state-of-the-art technology to battle the primitive Targa. It is the

general's contention that the Imperial strength is in superior intelligence and technology, while the strength of the Targa lies in their animal-like behavior. If strength is used to combat strength, maintains General Chatim, the Empire will surely prevail. Following this simple premise, Chatim has seen to it that computers maintain files on all prominent members of the Targa resistance, that aerial surveillance continues all over the planet, that attempts are made to poison the food and water sources of the Targa. Nothing, however, seems to have worked.

It seems as though the Targa animal-like instincts manage to save them on every occasion. Their keen perception allows them to sense poison before ingesting it. They camouflage themselves so well that it is virtually impossible to spot them in the thick forests of Piatra. In fact, Chatim's grand strategy seems to have had no effect on the resistance.

As one might imagine, frustration has driven the mad General even more mad. He demands prisoners for his medical experiments—experiments the General claims will unlock the animal secrets of an animal race.

The General has built up some sort of prisoner camp to maintain a stock of Targa for his brutal experiments. The truth is, all the authentic scientific evidence that has been collected through these experiments suggests that the Targa are an intelligent but primitive race. However, the purpose of the General's experiments is not scientific discovery, but widening unspeakable horizons of torture, pain, and perversion.

The General vents his frustration, anger, and illness on the poor Targa victims. It is the belief of the disgusting Crassite General that when the Targa see what is happening to their people, they will surrender out of fear. Actually, the reverse has occurred, for the experiments have aroused the anger rather than the fear of the occupied people. The Targa are more determined than ever to destroy the Imperial troops.

Of course, the more determined the Targa become, the harder they fight, and the more minor victories they claim. This also means that slowly but surely, the General's plans are failing, at least in the time frame he had established, if not in the ultimate goal. It then follows that with failure staring the General in the face, he becomes madder. He cannot face the fact that his “superior” intelligence is being defeated by creatures he considers barely more than animals, than guinea pigs for his perverse speculations into how much pain a living organism can endure. The General is now little more than a total madman.

The Xenophobes





Whew! This made everything that happened before seem like a peaceful afternoon in the bodrum. There must have been a dozen fighters surrounding us. Tightbeam communications filled up with all this ratty jabber—they were on all frequencies, like none of them knew how to use the thing.

Pretty soon I got what they were saying. They thought we were Star Team members! And we were prisoners of His Most Serene and Exalted Majesty, Lord of Mung, Grand High Rodentate, Crown Prince of the Core, Munificent Pulverizer of Seven Worlds, King Son of the Xenophobes. It was a mouthful.

And Guba said he was afraid we might be mouthfuls ourselves. 'Least that's what some of the Imperial troops on Piatra claimed the Xenophobes did to prisoners. I said I figured we were dead anyway. But I'd figured that on Sepa Blue. On Kakchak's moon in front of Memarg Ny. On Piatra when the cavemen cornered us. I said to buck up, little buddy, that sometimes things look kinda down just before they start looking up.

That was a stupid thing to say. 'Cause we hadn't met King Son.

He was sitting at the bridge of this big transport ship when they brought us aboard. Surrounded by all these really trashy-looking officers, some of them just wounded. I wondered if they had just come out of battle. Turned out that they had just come from an audience with the king.

'Cause, see, King Son was shooting at just about everything that moved. When they brought us to the bridge, the first thing we saw him do was duck behind his throne, and blast two of his buddies with laser pistols. While he was back there he picked off another. Then he came back around the chair, sat down, and stared at us like he could stare through us with those little red eyes.

Before he could speak to us, he seemed to get another idea. He started screaming "Snipers!" and shot the pistol up at the ceiling of the bridge. I thought he was really crazy until he stepped back and one of those huge Xenophobe ratbodies dropped from somewhere above. It landed right in front of the throne.

Was the guy crazy, or was everybody out to get him? Probly yes.

There was no question that King Son probly wouldn't keep us around too long. I figured that every second we stayed around was another second in which he could decide we were snipers or Imperial warlords or meteor storms or something and start shooting at us.

Strange, but this one seemed kinda easy. Maybe I'm learning some things while I'm lost. But anyway, I start sending King Son noetic messages.

Behind you!

Sniper above you!

To your left!

He must have been listening, 'cause he shot three of them in rapid fire. I coulda kept this us a little longer, but Guba tugs at my arm and whispers let's get going, Balik, before he turns on us just because we're in the way.

So we left the bridge and took off toward that hold where they'd stored Old Bett. We met three or four

troopers along the way, but all of them turned around and ran except for one. Guba went up against him with a knife and it was sorta nasty. I don't wanna talk about it all that much, but at least my little buddy was quick and got the guy out of the way. All the time, radio messages coming from all parts of the ship: "*Enemy bear is still there. Enemy bear is still there.*"

Old Bett was where we left her, and there were a couple of their engineers looking her over for military secrets or something. I picked up one of them and threw him against a wall, while Guba took a knife to the other one. Again it was pretty messy, but it got us into the ship.

Now I'd learned enough of their ratty talk to talk our way back out into space—just saying a few things on all frequencies and hoping for the best. Then we cleared the big transport. We were out, and I jumped Old Bett into translight as fast as she would go.

So that's that. Saw the Xenophobes and lived to tell about it. Guba says I'm sure not a *riba* anymore. Says I've got an idea out there.

We hopped out of translight just past Piatra. Gonna coast along and jump again pretty soon, once we've rested up and done any repairs we can. There's a big old planet or asteroid or something that I don't remember from before that's coming in this direction. We'll jump before it gets too close—no big deal. It probly won't be long now, little buddy. First Stalitsa. Then...

*Emniyet, Oh Emniyet,
You're the bestest planet yet!
Emniyet, my Emniyet....*

[Transmission ends here, cut off abruptly. The shell of the Eski Bettina, light civilian ship sailing from Emniyet 3/24/3514, destination Shamba. No sign of crew. Apparently no survivors.

A few items found on board. Inexpensive planter, velvet paintings, and salt-and-pepper shakers—all apparently from Fal'el. Camera and Hawaiian shirt from Earth. Gold jewelry—ornate patterns of predatory birds—place of origin unknown. Two large hawk feathers.]



Far, far away, on the other side of the galaxy from Wilderness, a war rages on. The particulars of the conflict are unknown to the members of the Star Teams as well as to the Alliance. However, the Empire is well aware of the specifics, much to their great discomfort and dismay: the struggle with the Xenophobes continues, and things aren't going well for the Empire.

The Xenophobe War is the specific reason for the shaky treaty between the Alliance and the Empire. Even with its great military superiority and the equally great confusion and disarray of the Alliance, the Empire could not press its advantage after the Battle of Sol (3480) because of the appearance of the Xenophobes.

Only bits and pieces of information concerning the Xenophobes have reached the Alliance or Star Teams. Most of the information about the distant alien race is not welcome news. Captured Imperial troopers have occasionally mentioned the Xenophobe Wars, but most of their knowledge is restricted because of the Imperial policy of separating theaters of action: troops that operate in Wilderness seldom if ever fight on the other front. Only a few officers currently serving in the Wilderness Region have first hand experience with the Xenophobes, and they don't wish to remember the details.

Player character information concerning the Xenophobes should always be sketchy in a STAR ACE® adventure or campaign: never allow player characters free access to information concerning them. Instead, make the PCs investigate, interrogate, and piece together the puzzles surrounding this unknown enemy. Xenophobes should only appear sparingly in the Wilderness Region. Otherwise, the contact with the Xenophobes should be in the Imperial Zone I (35% chance of encounter), or Imperial Zones II and IV (20%). Imperial Zone III is too far away and too well defended by Imperial Zone II to have any real Xenophobe activity.

The following information is intended for the CM only. It contains factual background concerning the Xenophobes, including their history, appearance, weaponry, strengths, and weaknesses.

Mung: Home of the Xenophobes

Population: 12 million

Race: Xenophobes

Climate: Temperate

Lord: King Son

Technology: 5

Economy: 5

Resistance: No

Gravity: 0.8

Capital: Ninkung

Major Urban Centers: Melchong, Singwat, Mytoy

Major Military Bases: Mytoy, Terkone

The planet Mung is about the same size as Earth. Many years ago, it is said that the planet had much the same

appearance as that of Earth. Now, however, most of the planet shows the scars of Xenophobe presence.

Most of the forests on the planet have been destroyed because of the Xenophobe disregard for their own environment. The waters are extremely polluted and, except for the major oceans, devoid of life. Even the lifeforms native to the ocean are endangered.

Not too many Xenophobes live on the planet surface of Mung. Instead, they have traveled on to other planets in search of food and the chance to repeat their previous errors with regard to their environment.

Points of Interest on Mung

Ninkung

The city of Ninkung is the capital of Mung. It has a current population of 27 million in the city proper, while another 40 million live in the suburban areas of the city. The entire population is Xenophobe.

Unlike other capital cities elsewhere in the galaxy, Ninkung contains no foreign embassies or diplomatic missions. The reason for this, of course, is the xenophobic nature of the native race. Any aliens who visit Ninkung run the risk of being instantly attacked, killed, and probably eaten. It is totally against Xenophobe nature to allow any type of alien race amongst themselves.

Ninkung is no more clean than it is cultural. Brand new buildings are scattered around the city, but they will soon fall into the same state of disrepair and decay as the older buildings beside them. Dirt and grime covers everything in the city. The air itself is so polluted that rain stains the clothes of the Xenophobes walking on the city streets and skywalks.

While Crassite cities tend to be giant junkyards, they are not as filthy as those of the Xenophobes. This is partly because the Xenophobes disregard their environment totally. The Xenophobe believes that the surrounding environment is to be used until exhausted. Then, having used up everything, it's time to move on to someplace else and do the same thing all over again. This is exactly what the current Xenophobe expansion is all about.

Ninkung is filled with overpopulated apartment buildings and storefronts. Most buildings run from 40 stories high to the highest building, the King's palace, which is 172 stories high. Sidewalks, skywalks, monorails and hovercraft are the predominant forms of transportation in the city. The streets are crowded at all hours, the noise deafening.

It would be extremely difficult to adventure here because of the number of Xenophobes on the streets at all hours of the day and night, the always-present security teams with their spot checks, and the fact that anyone who looks different for any reason is rounded up and sent to assimilation at once.

Mytoy

Unknown to Imperial military intelligence (and certainly unknown to the Alliance and the Star Teams), Mytoy is the home port of the "Big Cheese"—the famous Xenophobe Death Orb, responsible for the destruction of several planets. The Death Orb is far too big actually to land on the military base, but crew members, supplies, and arms are all shuttled between the Big Cheese and Mytoy. The Death Orb rests in a stationary orbit just above the military base. The craft is so large that sometimes its placement causes minor eclipses.

Down below, on the base itself, a large number of replacement troops are in training or on standby for immediate active duty on board the Death Orb. These troops are specially trained—among the Xenophobe military elite. The Death Orb spends about 40% of its time moored at Mytoy. During this time, the crew stays on the ground, and only a skeleton crew is left to man the ship. If the Big Cheese were to come under attack during its stay at Mytoy, only 15 of its 60 +40 lasers could be manned, and it would take 1d10 minutes for these guns to respond to a surprise attack.

The rest of the time, when the "Big Cheese" is not in base, it is on patrol in the galactic core or in Imperial Zone I.

Mytoy also houses a battalion-sized security force, regardless of whether the "Big Cheese" is on base. Also stationed on Mytoy for security reasons are 60 XP-1 "Mouse" interceptors. These interceptors can respond to a surprise attack within 2d10 rounds from the time it begins.

The Xenophobes: First Impressions

Xenophobes are covered with mangy gray-brown fur over virtually all their bodies; only their tails are hairless. Upright on their hind feet, as is their custom, the Xenophobes stand about five feet tall. Their bodies are humanlike (with the obvious difference of fur covering), and pudgy, with pot-bellies. The face is a horrible cross between that of a human and that of a rat. The Xenophobes have long snouts, rodent teeth, and whiskers.

Xenophobe clothing, armor, and jewelry are scavenged from the bodies of their victims. The Xenophobes wear

anything, including combinations of armor types, Crassite nose rings, and anything else they can collect off the dead.

Despite the fact that these creatures belong to an organized army, it often seems otherwise. The Xenophobes appear ragtag and disorganized, often attacking or retreating chaotically, without any outward appearance of strategy.

History of the Xenophobes

The Xenophobes are a race of evil beings that make the dreaded Imperial ICE troopers seem mild and softhearted by comparison. The creatures are intelligent and have a well developed wartime economy and technology.

The Xenophobes have just completed a war which they call the Core War. The planets that were conquered were either destroyed outright or left barren of all living beings. Now the Galactic Core is almost devoid of life, thanks to the Xenophobes and their Core War.

The reasons behind the Core War and the Xenophobes' current struggle against the Empire is based upon two overwhelming Xenophobic drives. To begin with, the Xenophobes have developed a culture of survival, based upon the basic instinct to survive in the wild—to kill or be killed. In the Xenophobe mind, there can be no middle ground, no variation from this belief. To see middle ground shows weakness, indecision, and leaves one vulnerable. Xenophobes who hesitate to kill are themselves killed by other Xenophobes.

Secondly, Xenophobes are carnivores with a voracious appetite. They will eat virtually any intelligent flesh and blood creature, including Humans, Crassites, Gorlons, Kleibors, Humanoles, and Hawkmen. The Xenophobes will also eat Crystal Clone flesh if there is nothing else available, but they prefer other types of meat if at all possible. The prey must have measurable intelligence or the Xenophobes will pass the creature by.

The majority of the Xenophobes have left their home planet of Mung because of the shortage of food. For a while, the creatures were actually participating in cannibalistic rituals. The Xenophobe Wars are really wars of necessity resulting from starvation, rather than wars of expansion or imperialism.

When the Xenophobes could penetrate no farther into



the galactic core, they turned their attention outward, toward the heavily populated Empire of Frederick Constantine II. The first invasion of the Empire was in the year 3503, on the planet Zun in Imperial Zone I. Zun was populated by barbarian Humans, under the command of a Crassite Viscount named Youin. Viscount Youin immediately sent for help, requesting reinforcements from the Imperial capital on Cairn. The Empire responded quickly, dispatching an entire division of crack troops to Zun.

The reinforcements never arrived. They were met by an entire fleet of Xenophobe heavy spacecraft and destroyed in space before they even landed on Zun.

The Empire is still unsure as to the whereabouts of Viscount Youin, but later encounters between the Empire and the Xenophobes have given the Imperial brass little hope that anyone survived the invasion.

Maps of Imperial Zone I no longer indicate the planets Menjor and Fyrnarmor. These planets were once located close to Zun. When the Xenophobes encountered heavy resistance, they withdrew from Menjor and Fyrnarmor, then blew up the planets, using a newly developed weapon system.

The Xenophobes: Attitudes

The attitudes of the Xenophobes are very simple and straightforward. They are absolutely terrified of other aliens. Their reactions to other aliens are either to run away or to become absolute killers. Whenever a Xenophobe encounters an alien other than a Crystal Clone, he must pass a general Willpower check or flee in terror; if he passes the check, he attacks. If a group of Xenophobes encounter any alien(s), make a general Willpower check for the group of Xenophobes, rather than making individual rolls. Use the highest individual Willpower score for the group roll.

Xenophobes are not particularly interested in taking prisoners unless the prisoners might possess some important military information. If the information is obtained, or is impossible to obtain, then the Xenophobes kill the prisoners and eat them. As with all Xenophobe behavior around aliens, the extreme behavior is motivated entirely by fear, as a person might automatically kill any spider, insect, or snake he or she finds.

The Xenophobes are not exactly a highly trained and efficient military machine. They are unpredictable fighters who will do just about anything, motivated solely by feelings of fear, hunger, and rage. If the Xenophobes don't run away, they often appear to have icewater in their veins, attacking their enemies relentlessly—hacking and slashing without the slightest show of fear. At other times, however, the creatures simply turn and run. Xenophobes retreat with the same frenzy with which they attack.

One race above all strikes fear in the heart of the Xenophobe: the Crystal Clones. When the Xenophobes encounter the crystal based creatures, their terror is likely to overwhelm them: subtract 20 from the Willpower score

for purposes of making the general check. Therefore, a Xenophobe with a current Willpower score of 50 would have to roll a 30 or less or flee in terror (50-20=30).

Because of their great fears, the Xenophobes always prefer to fight their enemies from a distance rather than hand to hand; Xenophobe weaponry and combat strategies reflect this philosophy. Great emphasis is placed upon ranged weapons. Fighting from craft and vessels also helps alleviate the fears of the Xenophobes.

Creating the Xenophobe NPC

Xenophobe NPCs are created just like Human NPCs with one exception: a Xenophobe's Willpower score is always 1d10+70. In addition to all other talents, each Xenophobe has a minimum of three noetic talents at Rookie level, two at Veteran level, and one at Ace level. The following may be used as statistics for a standard Xenophobe NPC:

STR	40	DEX	60	AGL	60
WPR	75	PER	30	PCN	50
STA	40	UMS	50	WNDS	12

Xenophobes of Note

King Son

STR	61	DEX	70	AGL	78
WPR	79	PER	45	PCN	69
STA	51	UMS	70	WNDS	13

Skills: Noetic Defense Mode, Ace, 129; Ignore Pain, Ace, 117; Levitation, Vet, 100; Noetic Detection, Ace, 112; Shock, Vet, 100; Thought Probe, Ace, 120; Laser Pistol, Ace, 125; Theft, Ace, 128.

King Son is the current reigning monarch of the Xenophobes. He is a psychotic paranoid who trusts absolutely nobody except Satrap Corb. The king believes that everyone around him is out to kill him, except for his one friend. Son has been known to pull out his laser pistol suddenly, blasting people and things with absolutely no warning. He sometimes lets out a shriek and searches his clothing for some unknown, non-existent creature that he is convinced is attacking him. In short, the king does just about anything that is unexpected at any given moment.

One of the reasons for the king's eccentric behavior is that he is forever eavesdropping on the thoughts of the people around him with his noetic skill, Thought Probe. When the king encounters somebody or something new, wants to use Thought Probe but has run out of Willpower, he simply blasts the encountered character. If there are too many people to probe, the king opens fire on all of them.

The king is almost always low on current Willpower, and his behavior reflects his state of mind. The royal staff has learned to approach him one at a time, and never (if it is

within the realm of possibility) surprise him.

The king is not interested in any imperialistic expansion into the galaxy; if he were, he would colonize planets rather than blowing them into cosmic dust. It could be argued that King Son wants to extend his conquests to provide food for his subjects. The truth, however, is that he wants to eliminate the possibility that someone else might take over Mung someday. Therefore, he will not rest until every potential enemy is eliminated. All of his efforts are directed toward this end.

King Son's daughter Sinj, who is next in line for the throne, is reputed to be wilder than her father. It is said that she is terrified of her own siblings, has often attempted to kill her 18 brothers and sisters (and has succeeded in two cases). One can only wait and imagine what her reign will bring to galactic history.

Grand High Satrap Gonk

STR	76	DEX	80
AGL	80	WPR	79
PER	70	PCN	74
STA	70	UMS	78
WNDS	15		

Skills: Spacecraft Piloting, Ace, 133; Disguise, Vet, 105; Forgery, Vet, 105; Gambling, Vet, 92; Impersonation, Vet, 106; Theft, Vet, 108; Laser Pistol, Ace, 135; Noetic Amplification*, Ace, 132; Noetic Defense Mode, Ace, 132; Ignore Pain, Ace, 130; Levitation, Ace, 133; Noetic Detection, Ace, 127; Shield Ship, Ace, 133; Shock, Ace, 132; Telekinesis, Ace, 135; Thought Probe, Ace, 130.

* **Amplification.** ($WPR + STR + PCN$) ÷ 3. Cost = 40 WPR. *General Check.* This Noetic skill was developed especially to amplify the huge Beta Red Particle Beam in the Big Cheese—the Xenophobe Death Orb. Gonk himself developed the skill; it is available only to Xenophobes, and only Gonk can teach it.

The skill allows six participants to enter into the chambers of the gigantic Beta Red Particle Beam. At the same time that the weapon is activated, the six Xenophobes use their Noetic Amplification Skill. This skill, combined with the inner workings of the weapon itself, causes the beam to intensify. The intensified beam can cause a planet the size of Earth to explode after 2d10 rounds of continuous exposure. The explosion completely destroys the planet. For each 0.2 of Gravity above 1.0 listed in the planet's description, another d10 of contin-

uous rounds is required to destroy the planet. Therefore a planet with a gravity listing of 1.4 would require 4d10 rounds of continuous exposure to be destroyed.

The Grand High Satrap is the highest rank in the Xenophobe military, and the current Satrap may very well possess the single most dangerous military mind of the Xenophobes. Gonk is perhaps the only Xenophobe who is not afraid of aliens, or anything else for that matter. His military decisions are clear, concise, sound, and completely ruthless.

Yet despite Gonk's abilities, the king does not trust him; in fact, it is most likely that King Son would shoot him on sight. Nothing in the Grand High Satrap's past merits such treatment, but then again, the king never requires any reasons or justifications for his actions.

Gonk is aware of the touchy situation at court, and has managed to keep clear of the King. He spends his time in the field, in battle, where he is most comfortable. He continues to serve his king well as the ultimate military leader. Demolition of planets and Xenophobe expansion has continued on schedule throughout the Imperial Zones. When the Xenophobe troops are unable to face the enemy and go into retreat, Gonk simply blows the planet to pieces. He has yet to fail a mission.

In order to keep his political risks at a minimum, the Grand High Satrap keeps moving around. Most of the time, he stays on the Death Orb, or the "Big Cheese" as it is referred to around the galaxy. When he is on board the Big Cheese, he automatically assumes command of the vessel. At other times, he flies his own craft,

usually an XP-1. He also has a troop transport which has been converted into a luxury vessel for his own personal use. Gonk hardly ever shows up on the planet Mung any more, spending virtually all his time in space.

Because of the King's lack of trust, Gonk has also learned to disguise himself. He is forever changing his appearance so that he will not be readily recognized; he is also able to forge documents that allow him to pass into areas with false identification. Apparently he is quite skilled at concealment: rumor has it that he once infiltrated as far as Stalitsa, where he gambled and did quite well for himself before returning to his private vessel. At least that is what a number of Gorlons who were there claim. The only trademark carried by the Grand High Satrap which might help identify him is that he always wears black—not



The most startling fact about Gonk is that he is not afraid to face any aliens. He doesn't need to check against current Willpower as other Xenophobes do. He stays and fights if he chooses, or he turns and retreats of his own free will (CM's discretion). In terms of strength of character, while both the king and the Grand High Satrap are evil, they are opposites. One is afraid of everything, the other fearless.

STR	45	DEX	67	AGL	69
WPR	77	PER	32	PCN	59
STA	43	UMS	57	WNDS	12

Satrap Corb is the one and only advisor trusted by the King Son of the Xenophobes, and as one might expect, this trust is not very well placed. Corb is able to read through the King's paranoia and use it to his own advantage. Having taken the time to understand the inner workings of the King's mind, Corb is not going to surrender his upper hand until he sits upon the Xenophobe throne. Of course, this rise into power must take into consideration the presence of two other political figures: Crown Princess Sinj and the Grand High Satrap Gonk.

Gonk saw his duty as a military leader and not as a court politician; because of this attitude, he is now paying a tremendous political price. Corb has convinced the king that Gonk is an enemy of the throne. It is Corb's plan to have the Grand High Satrap relieved of his commission and then take his place.

Eventually, when the king dies, Corb plans to prove the Crown Princess guilty of murdering her brothers and sisters. It seems as though the Crown Princess has seen fit to conspire with Corb on the murders with the promise that Corb will be rewarded when she assumes the throne.

Satrap Corb has other ideas and has been saving the evidence. Somebody is going to pay dearly.

Satrap Corb can be recognized by the eyepatch which he always wears over his left eye. He lost the eye in a battle against the Empire outside the planet system of Zun.

XP-1 "Mouse" Interceptor

<i>Stress Points:</i> 100	<i>Combat Speed:</i> 6
<i>VCR:</i> 60	<i>Crew:</i> 4
<i>Cost:</i> Unavailable	<i>Type:</i> Tactical

Front: (Crewman 1) *Laser:* ☐
Front 7 sides: (Crewman 2) *Laser* ☐
Rear: (Crewman 3) *Laser* ☐
Rear & sides: (Crewman 4) *Laser* ☐
Drive ☐☐ *Control* ☐☐
Capacity: 0.5 cargo unit

<i>Stress Points:</i> 120	<i>Combat Speed:</i> 5
<i>VCR:</i> 60	<i>Crew:</i> 6
<i>Cost:</i> Unavailable	<i>Type:</i> Mixed

Front: (Crewman 1)	Laser	<input type="checkbox"/>
Front & sides: (Crewman 2)	Laser	<input type="checkbox"/>
Left side: (Crewman 3)	Laser	<input type="checkbox"/>
Right side: (Crewman 4)	Laser	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rear: (Crewman 5)	Laser	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rear & sides: (Crewman 6)	Laser	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drive <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Control <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
Capacity: 1 cargo unit		

<i>Stress Points:</i> 200	<i>Combat Speed:</i> 4
<i>VCR:</i> 40	<i>Crew:</i> 4
<i>Cost:</i> Unavailable	<i>Type:</i> Strategic

Front: (Crewman 1 or 2) Laser ☐
 Rear: (Crewman 3 or 4) Laser ☐
 Drive ☐☐☐☐ Control ☐☐
 Capacity: 10 cargo units or 1000

<i>Stress Points:</i> 3000	<i>Combat Speed:</i> 1
<i>VCR:</i> 100	<i>Crew:</i> 750
<i>Cost:</i> Unavailable	<i>Type:</i> Strategic

60 + 40 Lasers	□□□□□□□□□□
1 Amplified Beta Red	□□□□□□□□□□
Particle Beam*	□□□□□□□□□□
	□□□□□□□□□□
Drive	□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
Control	□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
Crew	□□
Capacity: 120 cargo units	

Note: Carries 12 XP 1 Interceptors, able to launch 3 per round every round.

* The Amplified Beta Red Particle beam is explained under Grand High Satrap Gonk.

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Dear Folks,

Like my shirt?

Don't know if this card is gonna get to you, but I sure hope it does.

You know that educational seminar I was supposed to go to on Shamba? Guess I kinda missed it, but it wasn't all my fault. Had a little spaceship trouble on the way. Been wandering around ever since.

But as you can see from the picture, I've been to a lot of places and met a lot of new little buddies. There's lots of neat places and folks outside the Wilderness Region; just hope I can find my way back to tell you about them.

Bye for now. Having a good time. Wish we knew where.

הַפֶּלֶאָה



ALIENS is a collection of stories and descriptions of fascinating alien worlds and the creatures who inhabit them. Join Balik the Kleibor and Guba the Trakan as they explore faraway planets and bizarre societies and cultures, introducing the primitive Targa, the weird Nautiloids, the beautiful and mysterious Hawkmen, and other alien races. ALIENS, however, is more than a guided tour: each planet in this book can provide players with dozens of exciting adventures for the STAR ACE™ role-playing game. So prepare yourself—there are worlds to discover!

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