

Frontier Explorer



Issue 1
Summer 2012

...an artifact designed for space...



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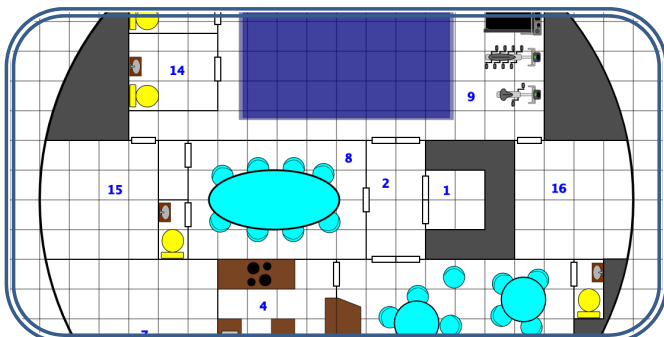
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FROM THE EDITORS

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Frontier Explorer magazine. The Frontier Explorer is a fan supported and run magazine dedicated to science fiction role playing games and fiction. In its pages you will find optional rule systems, equipment, encounters, and more for various RPGs as well as fiction contributed by our authors and the community.

Initially, the focus of the magazine will be the Star Frontiers role-playing game, as that game holds a special place in the hearts of the magazine's founding editors. In addition, this year is the 30th Anniversary of the publication of Star Frontiers and we want to pay tribute to the game. However, as our readership grows and expands, you can expect to see material for other games and settings as well. Despite the initial focus on Star Frontiers, many of the articles and topics should be easy to convert and applicable to other games and/or settings. Our goal is to provide general resources that are easily adaptable to whatever game you love.

We have quite a bit to tell you about the plans for the magazine and the features of the magazine's website. So much so that it won't fit in this small space that we've allotted for Letters from the Editors. Since the details don't fit here, we've spilled them over into a small article of their own. You can find it at the end of the magazine for you to read after you've enjoyed all the great content in this issue.

We're excited to bring you the Frontier Explorer. Turn the pages and begin exploring. We hope you enjoy what you find and will come back in the future.

- Tom Stephens
& Tom Verreault
Founding Editors



PRODUCTION CREDITS



Cover Art: Satellite by Wen-Xaeroaaa (<http://wen-xaeroaaa.deviantart.com/>). We cropped and rotated the image to get it to fit properly on the cover. The uncropped image in the original orientation is shown above. Clicking on the image links back to the full original image.

Back cover comic: AZ_Gamer

Banner Logo Art: Adam Block/Mount Lemmon SkyCenter/University of Arizona (<http://SkyCenter.arizona.edu>)

Editors: Tom Stephens, Tom Verreault

Layout: Tom Stephens

Full Cover Quote: "Man is an artifact designed for space travel. He is not designed to remain in his present biologic state any more than a tadpole is designed to remain a tadpole." - William Burroughs, "Civilian Defense," The Adding Machine (1985)

NEW GAMING PRODUCT:

SCI-FI SANDBOX 05: THE ECHO INITIATIVE

A RPG resource from Occult Moon, The Eco Initiative was co-authored by an active member of the Star Frontiers Community, Larry More (aka w00t). Check out the full description on [the product page at DriveThruRPG](#). (List price: \$1.99)



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THE DRALASITIC CREED

Tom Verreault

Author's Note: A lot of collaboration went into the development of dralasite society in the project forums at www.starfrontiers.us/node/2945. This article would not have been possible without that collaborative process and I am deeply grateful to the host of people too numerous to mention here who have contributed.

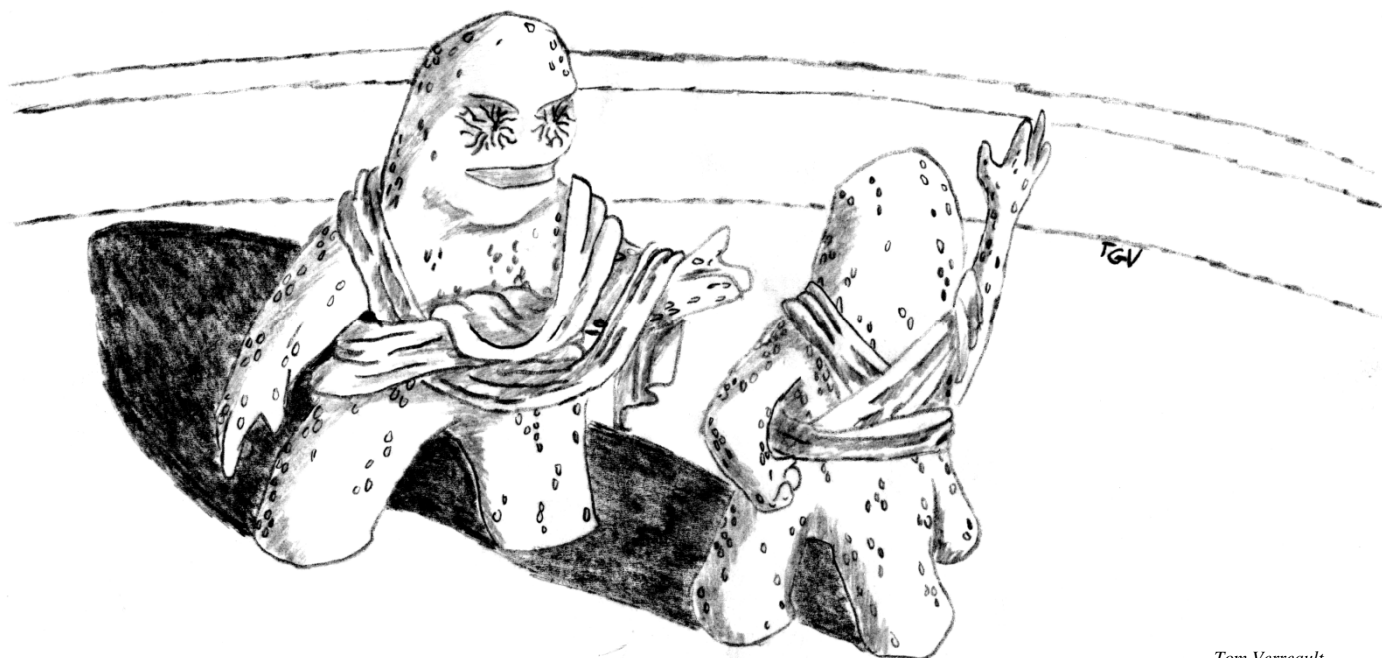
Dralasites, of all the inhabitants of the Frontier, seem to be hard-wired for philosophy. Their society has evolved in such a way to ensure the primacy of philosophical inquiry and it is self-reinforcing in that respect. To understand dralasite philosophy one must understand their society.

Dralasite society has a conception of the family similar to humanity – parents guiding the young – but it's much looser than the human concept. The true foundation of their society is the social school, called the stoa. Social schools are groupings of dralasites that share common opinions, beliefs, interests, or humor. The Circle of Debate is the central activity of the social school. A dral parent has a strong influence in a young dral's initial choice of social school. Typically the

parent first presents its young bud to the school it currently favors.

Life experience and formal education tend to alter a dralasite's choice of school. It would be rare for a dralasite to have not been a member in dozens of social schools over the course of its life. Membership is granted by common consent and rarely revoked. These schools typically number about a couple dozen individuals in active membership. Elder dralasites tend to be the de facto leaders of these schools and when a leader dies it is not an uncommon occurrence for a group to divide into smaller groups.

Like human parents the social school takes responsibility for the young and elderly. In the school is where a dralasite will celebrate life events such as their budding memory, reception of community speaking rights (gaining one's voice), and death. A dral in need may turn to its companions in all the schools of which it is a member for help. Typically, it can only expect a little help here and there from any given school, thus the value of many school memberships.



Tom Verreault

A young dralasite will wander briefly after budding enjoying their new found freedom and are then naturally drawn back to their parent seeking guidance and parenting. This is the time that a dralasite is introduced to the parent's school for membership. Education is pursued separate from the social school in large rounds with professional teachers. A few years after budding, a dral's formal education begins. Young dralasites advance through progressively formal rounds for about ten years until they have been deemed by their teachers to be educated enough to keep up with society. Specialized training, if any, is undertaken after one's rounds. Dralasites are fond of traveling far, even off world if they can work up the means, to pursue their specialized training.

It is no wonder that with a whole society focused on standing in the debate circle that dralasites are philosophical. The very structure of the social school guarantees that each successive generation will have developed a personal philosophy and defend it in debate for hours.

The foundation of dralasite philosophy is the Dralastic Creed. It enshrines a basic belief that all beings should have their own beliefs and defend them:

THE DRALASITE CREED

I believe in truth and will continually test to refine the quality of my understanding.

I believe in the quality of my ideas and can defend them in the circle of debate.

I believe in the crucible of debate where the community can recognize the quality of my truth.

Of all things believed by dralasites, this is the philosophy that is universal to the species.

The Five Appendages is not so much a creed or statement of belief but almost a set of "sacraments" considered necessary to the being-hood of the dralasite. It is not required that a dralasite fulfill all of the five appendages but most do.

THE FIVE APPENDAGES

1. The Creed (affirmed before the community and in the Circle of Debate).
2. The Gaining of Voice (acceptance by the community to speak in the Circle of Debate).
3. The Stand (done in the Great Circle of Debate against all comers, though it is not

necessary to emerge with one's philosophy unchanged).

4. The Budding (an important rite of passage necessary for the preservation of the species - all dralasites are expected to do their part)
5. The Circle's End (sometimes a poetic reference to death but in the Five Appendages it carries the idea of service to the community in the twilight of one's life).

While the stoa hosts the Circle of Debate, the Great Circle of Debate is a gathering of several related social schools. They are not related in any organic sense but related by topic or interest and often from differing sides of that interest. A dral that makes the stand in the Great Circle of Debate attains a special status. It is not expected that the dral making this stand will emerge with his philosophy and belief unchanged. The most highly esteemed emerge with slight refinements taken from their opponents while the core of their philosophy remains essentially the same.

The first three Appendages deal with the dral finding his place in the community but the last two are seen as his confirming his place in the community. The act of budding is a tangible reminder of a dralasite's existence. Circle's End is less tangible in what it gives back but is considered the highest calling of any elder dralasite.

The most widely read of all dralasite philosophy is the Conversations with the Mols. It's a written record (some say fictionalized) between an apprentice and a professional teacher. In the conversations the full scope of dralasite humor begins to emerge in the relaxed style of the conversations. The following is some excerpts from the Conversations with the Mols.

CONVERSATIONS OF MOL GEDDON

CONVERSATION 12

Apprentice: "Mol, what is truth?"

Mol Geddon: "Truth is Truth."

Apprentice: "Yes Mol, but what distinguishes it from a lie."

Mol Geddon: "Being Truth."

Apprentice: "Yes Mol, but how can truth be recognized from lie?"

Mol Geddon: "There is Inner Truth and Outer Truth. When Inner Truth is strong it recognizes Outer Truth."

Apprentice: "Inner truth? Outer truth?"

Mol Geddon: "When the Truth that is in your protoplasm is strong you can recognize the Truth around you and thus distinguish it from lie. When lies are strong within your protoplasm you will deceive even yourself confusing lie for Truth and your truth becomes lie."

Apprentice: "Yes Mol, but how may I become truth?"

Mol Geddon: "One must strive to live truthfully. As food is taken into the body to fuel continued life so truth must be lived to fuel the Truth within. Listen well to this mystery; if you act truthful then you will be truthful. To act truth is to be truth."



Tom Verreault

CONVERSTATION 13

Apprentice: "Mol does truth ever change?"

Mol Geddon: "Yes."

Apprentice: "If it changes, then how can it be absolute?"

Mol Geddon: "Truth is Truth. It flows from finite to absolute, from temporal to infinite. Truth is Truth regardless of its constituent values. When all values reach infinite then Truth is absolute. We move in time and space, space has three values..."

Apprentice: "Three dimensions?"

Mol Geddon nodded slightly: "and time has a value. We perceive Truth from the perspective of time and space, a perspective that has 4 values. When all values reach infinite then Truth is of absolute value."

Apprentice: "Mol, I... I... but how can truth change and still be truth?"

Mol Geddon chuckled: "That is a different question."

CONVERSATION 25

Mol Woosh: "Humor is at once irreverent, joyous, mean, spiteful, honest, happy, hurtful, and one hundred other things."

Apprentice: "Mol, how can humor be all those things?"

Mol Woosh: "It is all those things because it comes from within a being. It is a window to the inner nucleus and is a reflection of the Inner Truth of a being. Some beings laugh out of nervousness that the Truth expressed in the joke may be the Truth deep within them. Some laugh out of mirth recognizing the Truth of the joke as the Truth within them. Some refuse to laugh lest they reveal any Truth and yet even that can be a window to their nucleus."

Apprentice: "You refer to yazirians?"

Mol Woosh: "One should remember that when one pulls a yazirian's leg do not pull his mane also."

A yazirian priest happened by and said: "If you don't get the joke it's probably about you."

Whereupon, Mol Woosh laughed uproariously while the yazirian scowled.

Role-playing Tips

CRAFTING A COMPELLING CHARACTER IN A ROLE-PLAYING GAME

Tom Verreault

Role playing games are about playing a character. Characters with depth are more interesting than a flat character. The best characters are compelling characters, the one you love to play or love to watch someone else play.

Most role playing game rule books typically have rules for resolving combat, skill and ability use, and other mechanics. The rules for character creation usually revolve around the choices or die rolls that will help resolve these game actions. What is not typical in a set of RPG rules are guidelines to help the player craft a compelling character. This article will explore ideas and strategies to assist players in crafting a memorable and fun RPG character.

In researching this topic I discovered a wealth of material geared to help writers create compelling characters but I quickly realized that there was a problem with that advice. While characters in role playing games and those in fiction both take part in a story, the nature of these stories is quite different. A novel is the effort of one story teller but a role playing game is a cooperative narration. A novelist can explore and delve into one or multiple characters as per his whim, but a role player must explore his character in turn with others. Role playing games use the convention of “turns” to break down combat and action to manageable blocks of time. Even if the current game action is not being resolved in combat turns, the usual convention is that each player takes turns in role playing.

Since the character will only be “on stage” for a fraction of the game time, presenting a long laundry lists of guidelines to players is unsuitable. I’ve condensed broad advice for the novelist into three points. Choose one or more of the following suggestions and make a note in your character’s background.

THE PASSION

In most role playing games characters fulfill quests or missions that are almost always provided by or

assigned by the game master. These quests or missions are usually fulfilled in one game session or over a whole campaign of game sessions. They are meant to be resolved and are often the point of the game. Consider giving your character a player assigned “quest”. This will be the thing that your character is passionate about.

A character that wants something is interesting. Thus the first strategy to craft a compelling character is to choose a passion for the character. This point actually covers such things as a driving need, desire, ambition, obsession, as well as a passion. Note that this “quest” or need is player assigned with little or no input by the game master. It is rooted in the character concept the player is choosing to play, and, while it might be accomplished over the career of the character, it equally might not. For example, if a character’s driving desire is to earn the respect of his dead father then he may never gain a sense of closure simply because the father is dead.

Needs are conditions or situations in which something is required or wanted. The best way to give a character a need is to pick one from Maslov’s hierarchy of needs: physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. Physiological needs involve the need for air, food, sex, sleep, etc. Safety can involve security of body, employment, resources, morality, health, family, and property. Love and belonging involves friendship, family, and sexual intimacy. The need for esteem involves self-esteem, confidence, achievement, and respect by others. Self-actualization is about morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, lack of prejudice, and acceptance of facts.

THE SECRET

A character with a secret is interesting. For example which of the following characters draws your interest more: a conservative politician or a conservative politician that cheats on his wife with prostitutes? Ask yourself which of those two politicians has greater potential for people to talk about? Role playing games are about playing a larger than life hero in dramatic

situations. A hero with a secret is more interesting than a righteous crusader.

The secret does not have to be dirty or immoral but it should be something that defines the character in some way. In Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, the hobbits, Bilbo and Frodo, have a secret magic ring and it is one of, if not the major defining elements of these characters. In *Star Wars* and its related sequels and prequels Obi Wan Kenobi's secret is that Darth Vader was his apprentice and he failed to keep him from going over to the dark side. This failure is one of the central elements of the Star Wars saga. In the Bible, King David cheated with the wife of one of his soldiers and had that man killed to cover it up. The secret is revealed when God sends a prophet to King David seeking a decision concerning a man that was a metaphor for David himself. After the king pronounces a severe judgment the prophet announces, "Thou art the man!" It's a powerful scene and this exposed secret becomes the central theme of the rest of his kingship with after effects lasting into the coronation of his son born from the adulterous affair.

I once read a tip in a role playing blog about requiring players to write a secret about their character that only they and the game master knew. I implemented this in a game and the results were fantastic. The character secrets at play in that game influenced how players played their character and were potential for plot hooks to involve those characters more deeply in the story.

THE VULNERABILITY

Characters that are vulnerable or compassionate can be compelling. It's also known as "save the cat." In fiction, an evil character that can show compassion has depth and becomes more interesting. In Tolkien's *Fellowship of the Ring*, Boromir is the traitor of the Fellowship. He's become consumed with desire for Frodo's magic ring and attempts to take it by force. He feels guilt over this and attempts to make amends by sacrificing his life for Frodo's friends against the marauding orcs. In the end he becomes a tragic hero and his confession to Aragorn leads the reader to feel sympathy for him.

During college I worked full time and went to school full time. When I was at work I generally focused on just doing my job with half my brain thinking about the next term paper or mid-term exam. On one occasion while talking with a coworker I let my hair down and shared some of my past with her. Her immediate reaction was, "Wow! I thought you were a goody two shoes." By being vulnerable and letting her see a

deeper depth of character I became more interesting to her and I was no longer a two dimensional character.

Give your character a vulnerability or a soft spot. A soft spot could be for animals. If a character absolutely detests cruelty to animals he might be unwilling to run over a little fluffy critter even though he's being chased by an army bent on his destruction. A vulnerability could be an inability to risk harm to a person place or thing. In the *Firefly* television series Malcolm Reynolds' vulnerability is his crew and ship. He's devoted to them and takes threats against his people personally.

WRAPPING IT UP

Choose one or two of the above suggestions for your character. You don't have to have one of each and you can also have two of the same. For example a character could have two secrets. Once you have done this, ask yourself why your character has these idiosyncrasies. What events in his background led to this character behaving in this way? Explain to yourself the why and how your character became who he is. Finally have fun.



Tom Verreault

LOSSEND

Tom Verreault

SYSTEM DATA

System Primary: Timeon, spectral type: G5

LOSSEND

Gravity: 0.7

Moons: none

Satellite: armed spaced station- Diamond Station

Primary colonizers: humans

Population Density: Light

Economy: Agriculture & Industry

GOVERNMENT, POLICE AND MILITARY

The Lossend government is a democracy. At the grassroots level communities and counties elect mayors. Prior to the First Sathar War the elected mayors of Lossend formed a Mayor's council and elected a president from among their number. The Mayor's Council only met for a few months a year but was sufficient for the colony's needs as a planetary government.

At the time of the First Sathar War and the organization of the United Planetary Federation, a proper planet-wide government was organized with a president, legislature, and judiciary. The new government organized a planet-wide police force that is responsible for law enforcement, forestry, and wild game management called the Lossend Ranger Service (Rangers or Lossend Rangers for short). The LRS administrates the continental game preserve which was set aside for native wildlife.

The Rangers eventually took responsibility for interplanetary cargo inspections to prevent ecological disasters from imported flora or fauna that might damage Lossend's agricultural industry. At the close of the Second Sathar War, Tachtan donated surplus armed shuttles and fighters to the Lossend government and the Lossend Space Rangers were organized as a formal militia although they lack truly interstellar capable hulls.

SERVICE PATCHES FOR THE LOSSEND RANGERS



Service patch for the Ranger Service



Service Patch for the Space Rangers

The service patches feature a stylized image of Lossend with Mt. Spire rising above the planet. The Space Ranger patch has an image of one of the squadron's fighters overlaying the planet.

A SHORT HISTORY

Settled by colonist from both Clarion and Minotaur before first contact with the vrusk and dralasites, Lossend remained an agricultural outpost till the organization of the UPF. The farmers first established on Lossend followed a philosophy of sustainability and soft impact on the environment. Changes occurred at the time of the First Sathar War due to tens of thousands of displaced refugees, inflationary food prices, and insufficient food production capacity. Larger farms with more automation began to appear which resulted in shifts in the population to fewer farm owners and more laborers.

After the war with greater emphasis on automation, the robotics industry prospered on Lossend. Margret Bouvia, a Land Fleet captain freshly discharged from service, returned to find her family's farm sold. Using her back pay she founded Tachtan Instruments to meet the rising demand for automation in the agricultural sector. Her company has risen to become one of the megacorps dominating the Frontier.

FARMING ON LOSSEND

The first colonists received grants, materials, and support from FARM (Frontier Agricultural Resource Mission). The arrangement meant that the colonists paid back their "homestead stake" with cheaply priced food. Originally it was a win/win situation as the FARM board received food to funnel into population growth programs on Clarion and Minotaur and the colonist paid off their loan at a fraction of the total cost. The governing board of FARM imposed requirements concerning farming practices, farm size, sustainability, and environmental impact that the colonist had to follow.

The families that colonized Lossend through the FARM program were the first wave and socially this carried clout in the farming communities. Later immigrants often populated the laborer class. At the time of the organization of the UPF (during SW1) a small percentage of the Lossend farm owners had paid off their loan to FARM and were able to increase their operation's size and implement large scale farming practices that were a little harder on the environment (but not noticeably so). The slightly elitist FARM board tried to halt this but had no power to do so, especially in the face of the emergency situation and the critical shortage of food. It did bar the farmers with outstanding loans from doing this and the end result was that the farms that were able to expand got rich while those that could not were marginalized as they were forced to provide food to the FARM board at pre-

war prices despite the inflationary economy. By the end of the war, the fortunes of many first wave colonists had reversed and their particular social status only remained in the minds and hearts of those families.

By and large, farmers on Lossend are seen as resourceful, hard workers with just a bit of haughtiness in their character whether they're 1st or 2nd wave immigrants. By the time of SW2 no one much paid attention to whether a Lossend native was a 1st or 2nd wave immigrant. However, there is a sort of fraternal organization called the Grange of the Founding Fathers (GFF) that requires that its members be descendants of the 1st Wave and that the family has continuously farmed with the original homestead. Naturally this organization is smaller every decade with such strict rules and there has been noise about changing them to allow membership to families that no longer have their original homestead. Typically the GFF is concerned with social status and the glorious past. It provides exclusive club houses to its members and arranges for collective bargaining for its members on exported food prices.

More and more, farming is becoming big business on Lossend and there is tension between smaller farm outfits and larger or corporate run farms. In response, some of the most successful small farms, unable to compete with large farms mass producing cheap food staples, have converted their operations to wineries and breweries. In this way Sherridan Valley has become Lossend's Nappa Valley, producing highly prized wines consumed throughout the Frontier. Lossend's independent micro-breweries produce highly prized beer and liquors as well.

MARGRET BOUVIA AND TACHTON

Margret Bouvia is a tough as nails CEO and former Land Fleet captain. With no prior background in robotics, it is truly surprising that her company now dominates the Frontier's robotics industry. Before Tachtan reached mega-corp status she aggressively threw herself into learning the business, leveraging her knowledge of farming, and her status as a native and descendant of a first wave colonizer to gain market share on Lossend. Pan Galactic Corporation, as the first mega-corp, already controlled market share in the robotics industry but its attitude was, "This is our product, take it or leave it." In less than 7 years Tachtan had come to dominate the market on Lossend and was beginning to branch into military applications as well as file some of the most significant patents in robotics.

Margret, an experienced leader, had always attracted good personnel. She recruited a large number of Land Fleet veterans to work for her, mostly NCOs and a few junior officers. With the combined military experience and connections her company quickly broke open the robotics market on the military sector which put her on a collision course with PGC.

PGC had been getting its way since the First Sathar War and attempted to simply land mercenaries on Lossend and shut down Tachtan but the combination of solid security personnel backed by a horde of armed robots caused the mercenary leader to wisely back down. Next PGC attempted to block Tachtan's ability to ship product off planet but this move failed due to the perception that PGC had become a bully. A period of corporate espionage and sabotage went on but the conflict never broke out into a true shooting war. Tachtan had succeeded by catering to the customer in every sector of the robotics market while PGC had failed through largely attempting to squeeze out the competition.

Eventually PGC made peace with Tachtan and began to purchase their excellent security and war robots for use in the conflict on Laco. Tachtan used the influx of capital to expand the corporation to true mega-corp status.

Since that time the company has expanded its operations, building infrastructure and facilities that also aid the local economy. Mindful of their near corporate war with PCG, the corporation has begun construction on Tachtan Station (an armed space station in orbit).

THE ECONOMY

Robotics are exported to Gran Quivera and sold under license by PGC. Tachtan is also a major exporter of modular automated factories. Robotic farming and food processing equipment as well as parts are sold locally as well as being exported to New Pale, Rupert's Hole, Yast, Inner Reach, Groth, Ken'zah-kit, Kdikit, Morgaine's World, Hakosoar, Circe, and Kraatar

Finished goods are imported from Gran Quivera. Petroleum for plastics is imported from Clarion and heavy duty industrial materials from Minotaur.

Mining is a small but significant percentage of the Lossend economy. The mining corporations involved on Lossend are small and lack mega-corp status. The largest, LRM (This needs to be spelled out), is one of the few whose operation on the southern continent predated the formation of the continental preserve.

COMMON AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS

(see Star Frontiersman issue 17)

The native inikfruit is high in starches and nutrients. 200 million tons are shipped to Clarion annually, 180 million tons are shipped to Minotaur, and 50 million tons shipped to other destinations. The dried gourds are painted and decorated and sold as trinkets to tourists and used as a popular musical instrument locally but otherwise do not impact the economy significantly

Chyctoss, originally imported from Morgaine's World, is an excellent meat substitute. 250 million tons are shipped to Clarion and 98 million tons shipped to Minotaur.

Bacaya Fruit, which is grown on many worlds in the Frontier, is not a significant export but is certainly important to the local economy.

Baslic herb is transplanted from Clarrion. The baslic plant is grown for both the local economy and for export but is not a significant export item.

Chale is transplanted from Gran Quivera. It is a delectable leafy plant and 300 million tons are exported annually to Clarion and Minotaur.

Karreega is another transplant from Gran Quivera. It is a popular food with vrusk but only a small amount is grown and shipped to Kwadl-kit.

Lurine, a transplant from Minotaur, is a major export in the form of liquor. It is shipped throughout the Frontier but Lurine liquors from Lossend sell poorly on Minotaur. It's used in whisky and brandy but the Lossend Liqueur Company has become quite successful marketing a flavored line of Lurine Liqueurs for desserts and coffee and tea mixers. Popular flavors are Inik Liqueur (Red), Grawbello Liqueur (deep orange), and Maccatta Liqueur (Bright green in color). Note: Dralastes despise Maccatta Liqueur and any food prepared with it.

They continue to work the north slope of Mount Spire exporting copper and diamonds.

There are a few independent resorts as well as a few owned by the Star Play mega-corp. Tourism has become important to the local economy especially for the animal breeders providing stock for the organized safari hunts.

Lossend exports food to Clarion and Minotaur (both are high population worlds lacking in agriculture) and these

two planets have been its major trading partners since its founding.

ENVIRONMENT

Lossend is an ideal world for an agricultural colony. Its fertile prairie and plains were easily converted to farmland and the 70 hour day enhanced growing cycles. Large tracks of the planet are also pine forest, though the Lossend Pine bears little resemblance to the Terran pines.

The southern continent, Fallow, has been designated a continental preserve for native Lossend flora and fauna due to radical changes in the ecosystem from importation of a wide variety of plants and animals. Fallow is dominated with forest but its most striking feature is Mount Spire which has the distinction of being the tallest mountain on any planet in the Frontier. The north slope of Mount Spire has proven to be rich in diamonds and a number of small corporations and companies have mining operations that predate the organization of the preserve.

Inhabited sites on Fallow include a handful of licensed resorts, a small number of 2-4 man ranger stations, and a science station studying the Lossend ecosystem. Lossend Resorts Ltd owns the license for the resort at the foot of Mount Spire and caters to climbing expeditions and Lasso-dragon safaris.

The wypong is an animal at the center of much controversy on Lossend. An intelligent primate like animal, it was originally miss identified as a sapient species but this status has since been disputed. Living in bands of 20-30 individuals they are consider pests by farmers. Some farmers have advocated eradication of the wypong in farming areas, especially after the creation of the continental preserve. The government, under pressure from animal rights lobbyists, has had to declare the creature protected. This means that one of the principle responsibilities of the Ranger Service is to manage the wypongs in agricultural districts.

LOSSEND BEASTIARY

IMPORTED GAME & DOMESTICATED ANIMALS

PECKEN

The pecken is a 4-5 kg flightless bird, genetically engineered to effectively digest Lossend's insect life. (Looks and tastes like chicken.) It's an excellent source of protein as well as the eggs it lays. The pecken is extremely cost effective for farmers as they will gorge and grow fat on insects with only minor amounts of

feed to round out their diet. A local chain restaurant, Lossend Fried Pecken (LFP), has recently expanded its operation to extra system locations at Port Loren, Clarion Station, and Minotaur. More are planned for next year but the company is branching into corporate run Pecken farms to support the increased demand.

GENQUINE

The genquine is a genetically engineered Equine stock from Clarion that has adapted well to the Lossend environment. When the colonist arrived on Clarion it was discovered that their cloned horse stock easily became sick and experienced a high mortality rate. Geneticist developed this genetically engineer horse stock called genquine that proved resistant to the adverse Clarion environment. The first farmers on Lossend brought the genquine with them for muscle power. Latter it was determined that the Terran horse would do well on Lossend as well. Some ranchers use pure cloned horse stock but most use genquine or mix bred genquine and horse stock. They're powerful, smart animals and many farmers keep them for transportation even if they have electric vehicles available. Despite Tachton's recent debut of the robotic horse; the genquine and Terran horse breeds remain popular methods of transportation in the undeveloped areas of both Lossend and Clarion.

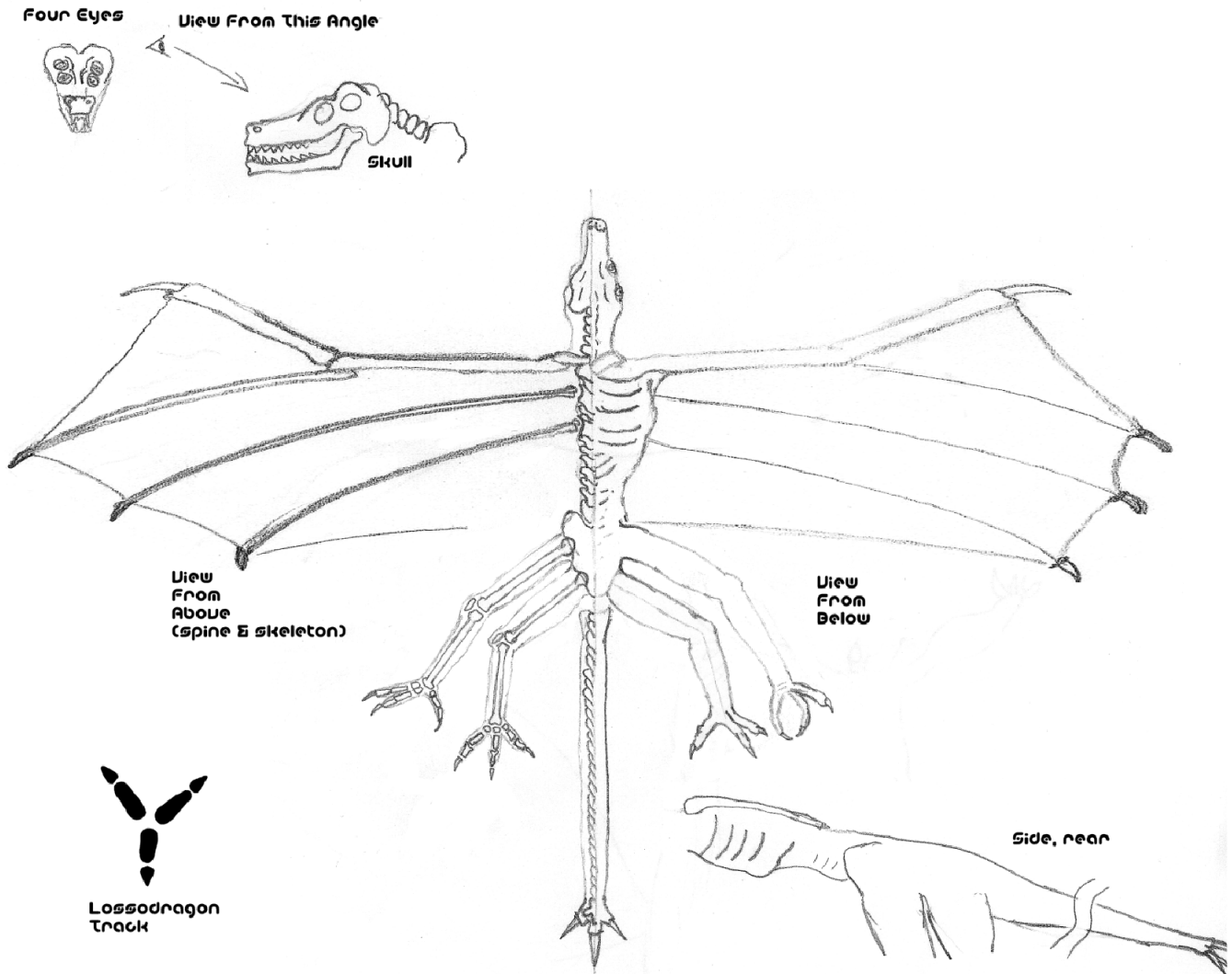
LOXXEN

The loxxen is a genetically engineered bovine developed specially for the farmers on Lossend. Not terribly bright, it can be ill tempered and dangerous. They grow big on Lossend's Parie Grass.

NATIVE SPECIES

THE LOSSODRAGON

High in the cliffs of Lossend's Mount Spire live the closest thing to the dragons of human mythology ever to be found. These two meter long six limb beasts come complete with a horned tail and wings. Though not capable of full flight these dragons are adept gliders. They use their powerful limbs and strong claws to scale the cliff faces of Mount Spire and wait upon outcroppings for their prey to pass below. They then leap from their perches and extend their fore limbs, stretching out the wings attached between their fore limbs and spine. Their wings are adeptly built to allow hurtling dives which they arrest at the last moment when they grapple their prey with their four hind limbs. The wings are strong, bound by a network of ligaments and muscles attached to a radiating set of wing bones. Dive speeds nearing 90m/s have been achieved by their powerful outstretched wings.



Lossodragon wing and skeletal structure.

Eric Winsor

Lossodragon	
TYPE:	Large Carnivore
NUMBER:	1
MOVE:	Slow (10m/turn) walking Very Fast (90m/turn) diving
IM/RS:	6/55
STAMINA:	125
ATTACK:	55 ground 70 air
DAMAGE:	4d10
SPECIAL ATTACK:	Dive and knock out 35% RS check for no knock out suffers regular damage
SPECIAL DEFENSE:	n/a
NATIVE WORLD:	Lossend/ Timeon System

The lossodragons have exceptional eyesight and use it to spy other avian creatures and large grazing animals feeding upon the slopes of Mount Spire. Their four eyes allow them to watch the ground below with the forward pair and the sky forward with the upper pair. However, their night vision is poor so they seldom hunt in the dark.

Lossodragons mate for life but are only found together during mating season. They are mammalian and typically give birth to twins each year. Occasionally triplets will be born. The pups are no more than 15 cm long at birth and are totally dependent upon their mother for survival. Typically, only one of the offspring survives to adolescence and leaves its parents' perch. Additionally, adolescent life for lossodragons is dangerous and about half of all adolescents are killed by predators when the dragons are vulnerable on the

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lower slopes when they have descended too far down Mount Spire. Only full grown adult lossodragons are safe on the lower slopes.

The Lossend government is well known throughout the frontier for its planetary conservation and wildlife management. Lossend has successfully established a big game industry in balance with their wildlife conservation. Lossodragons are the crowning jewel of Lossend's big game industry. Hunting tags for lossodragons are the priciest and are most rare on the Lossend Game Department hunting list.

THE WYPONG

The wypong (Polyhedron Magazine #18) are semi-intelligent omnivorous ape-men. They troop in groups numbering up to 20. They lack a language but use rudimentary vocalizations that convey alarm, aggression or curiosity. They do exhibit tool use with the principle example being very crude bows and arrows amongst the smartest of them but most just throw stones. They have a universal fascination with air vehicles and seem to worship them. Recent research has suggested that this is tied to the wypong's relationship to the lossodragon which does prey on small unattended wypongs, carrying them away.

Wypong	
TYPE:	Medium omnivore
NUMBER:	20-30
MOVE:	Slow
IM/RS:	5/50
STAMINA:	20-100
ATTACK:	55
DAMAGE:	2-10 (fists or thrown stones)
SPECIAL ATTACK:	n/a
SPECIAL DEFENSE:	n/a
NATIVE WORLD:	Lossend/ Timeon System

Their relationship with the farmers on Lossend has been tragic. Viewed as pests and vermin, troops that have destroyed crops and orchards have been wiped out by outraged farmers. Due to their unpleasant odor, the slang term for a wypong is skunk ape or skunk monkey. This name has also become a serious insult in Lossend society. The wypong is now protected and the Lossend Rangers are responsible for their management. The Rangers employ capture and relocation as well as putting down overly aggressive wypongs.

The average stats for a wypong are RW: 55, Move 45, PS 3, IM 7, RS 65, STA 65

Tools: Bow and 8 arrows (crude) or thrown rocks

Note: the original presentation of the wypong in Polyhedron 18 was of a primitive sapient race, we chosen to present them more as an intelligent animal like a chimpanzee or gorilla. I've left in the primitive bow and arrows from the canon article but for myself, I would limit them to thrown stones. I've provided the stats above from the original article and provided a standard creature stat block below, use one or the other.

PLACES OF INTEREST

LOSSEND'S STAR PORT: DAWN'S LANDING

When the joint agricultural mission from Clarrion and Minotaur landed on Lossend they named the site Dawn's Landing after the hot shot Royal Merchant Marine pilot who first landed here. Pilot Lt. Dawn Winters' landing craft suffered a catastrophic failure that should have crashed her ship but somehow she managed to land saving the equipment and engineers on board the shuttle. Unable to lift off, Lt. Winters organized the engineers and kicked and cajoled them into overcoming the obstacle of leveling the location and setting up a landing field. The site was not the intended location for the first star port on Lossend but necessity required that it be used in the early days of the colony. There has always been discussion of building another star port but the political will and even more importantly the financial will is lacking. The Medical Services Organization runs a small hospital at the star port.

O'DONNAN'S STATION

O'Donnal's Station is a thriving but moderately sized city a kilometer away from the star port. Its main street is lined with general stores, saloons, barber shops, trading posts, equipment repair shops, and stables. A major component of the city's economy is the food processing and packaging business (for export), the animal trade (local), and a proper air field for helicopter and air cars forcing tourist to pass through town before departing for their resorts. There is a small government run clinic.

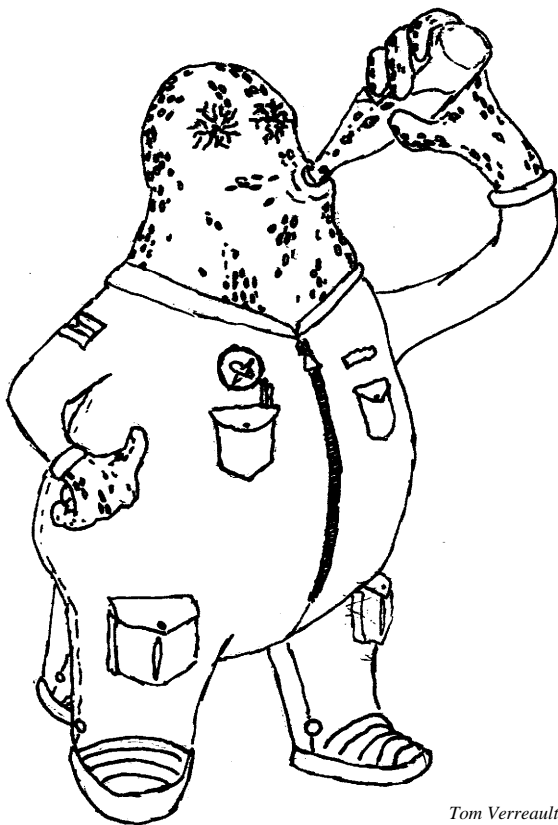
TACHTON CITY

Tachtion City is the corporate headquarter of Tachtion Industries on Lossend. It has a better star port than Dawn's Landing (though reserved for company craft), research labs, factories (mostly robotic), a company arcology for corporate personnel, and support facilities for its operations. It's called a city more for its size than its total population. What is of note is that

Tachton City is a show case for automated living. There is a conference center and major symposiums on robotics and AIs are sponsored by Tachton. The company sponsors a youth camp and a modern university for the youth of Lossend. Tachton also runs a small but very advance hospital here primarily for the benefit of employees. If there was a disaster or emergency, Tachton security personnel would assist and the hospital city would be provided free in the interest of public relations.

SHERRIDAN VALLEY

The Sherridan Valley is a major wine producing center, with idyllic environmental conditions for the cultivation of grapes and other fruits used in the wine making process. Some of the wineries have begun to offer tours and resort like accommodations. For the past five years, the Grape Harvest Festival has grown steadily in popularity and dramatically increased the tourism revenues for the wineries in the valley.



Tom Verreault

DIAMOND HARBOR

Diamond Harbor is the largest town on the southern continent. Fishing and mineral refining are the principle industries of the town. The Lossend Rangers maintain a station here attached to the government

clinic, which is the only medical help available on the continent. Diamond harbor is an active shipping terminal (ocean going) and air field. By default, it is the gateway to the southern continent.

MOUNT SPIRE

Mount Spire is the largest mountain in the known planets of the Frontier. It is located on the southern continent of Lossend and is the epicenter of mining and resort activities on Lossend dating back to before the creation of the nature preserve. The home of the vaunted Lossodragon, it is a dangerous place due to the predators, rock slides, and avalanches.

SUGGESTED ADVENTURE SEEDS

Here are some suggested adventure seeds that could take place on Lossend.

SAFARI!

Big game hunts are big business on Lossend. A variety of animals have been imported to hunting resorts on the mainland and Tachton, in conjunction with Star Play, has developed robotic big game to placate individuals with a desire to not hurt real animals. The robotic safaris are not as popular as the real safaris but are good for beginning hunters as safety protocols are used to prevent injury to hunting parties. Characters visiting Lossend can spend their layover taking a safari or as a hunting guide. If a license can be obtained for the Lossodragon, hunts on the slopes of Mt. Spire are also possible.

HIRED BY MINING INTEREST

Mining interests will hire guns for hire to escort raw or refined ore against the possibility of hijackers. Characters may be hired for general security at mining sites on the slopes of Mount Spire.

JOIN THE RANGER SERVICE

Characters may join the Lossend Ranger Service and function as a general purpose planet wide police force, game warden, and environmental police.

SPACE RANGERS!

Who doesn't want to be a Space Ranger? Characters may join the fledgling LSR militia inspecting cargos, interdicting smugglers, or fighting pirates.

WHAT IS WAR ?

Philip Campanaro

Since the UPFS Lockbox was now in a parking orbit around Laco while they waited for clearance to land, its Captain, Kynthicakuk Xxizt made his way to the galley. Being an experienced spacer he found he made the trip faster in zero-g than if they had been under thrust. Still, he was not surprised to see two of his crew already there getting third meal together. His wife and their pilot, Zyblicit, had warned him and everyone this would probably happen.

Moving to the table and slipping his eight feet into the holding straps, the Captain hit the comm button on the wall and announced.

“Everyone except for Boom Boom report to the galley as soon as you secure your stations. We will have a crew meeting and then third meal.”

Killing the comm he started to get his thoughts together on what to tell the crew when they arrived. It was company policy, and his own, to keep everyone informed as much as possible. It looked like the Pan Galactic officials would not have the star port secured enough for them to land for at least two days. The Lockbox might be an armed and armored merchant transport but he wasn't going to let any stray round injure his ship or crew. Besides, while the supplies they carried were necessary, they were not vital at the moment.

Looking across the cabin he watched his two crewmembers that were now acting as cooks. The yazirian, Marine Nabu Boon, was grasping the ceiling rungs and keeping an eye on the enclosed water boiler while the human, Laser Gunner William Telrog, was stirring something by shaking an enclosed bowl. He

was doing a pretty good job considering he only had his Velcro shoes holding him down.

Wild Will, as the crew usually called William, noticed his captain looking at him and said, “Sir how long are we gonna be stuck up here before we can head back?”

The Captain said, “I will cover that at the crew meeting but it will be a couple days before we can land.”

Trapper, as the crew usually called Nuba, said, “A couple of days with almost no risk since they don't shoot at ships of non-participant companies should be fun.”

The Captain said, “We won't be taking chances so you, Wild Will, and Boom Boom will be on duty and on call the whole time we are orbiting. You, Trapper, and Mouck will be

ready for any boarding attempts. That is once you two finish third meal.”

Wild Will chuckled a little and said, “Oh well, I guess War is Hell.”

At this Xxizt wondered. Being an armed merchant meant he was a usually assigned cargo heading into danger zones. He had heard that saying before from humans but was not sure what it meant. Well now might be a good time to learn. He asked Wild Will, “What is this Hell you compare war to.”

Wild Will stopped shaking and said, “Well Captain, Hell is the place someone who has done evil in their life is sent to when they die. It is a place of never ending torment and grief. A place without hope.



Humans compare war to Hell since both are so horrible.”

At this Trapper let out a laugh. When he finished he said, “That is not what we yazirians say. We say War is Glory. It is only in battle that a yazirian can defeat their life enemy and win a place of honor.”

Captain Xxict clicked his mandibles together as he thought about what his crew had said.

Realizing they were both looking at him, he answered their unasked question, “To the vrusk, War is Profit.”

Both of the crewmembers looked at him incredulously. He just continued, “When two groups fight they both need many things. Many things they would not normally buy or buy on a large scale. After the battles are done they must rebuild that which was lost and they buy more things. During all this a vrusk can make much profit for their company.”

Both of the gunners were a little shocked at this but not totally surprised. After all they did work for the vrusk company The Safe Delivery Service. They knew the vrusk liked to make credits but did not realize how far that went. It was the loud voice from the door which brought them out of it.

“Now that is just a silly idea, we dralasites know the true meaning of war,” came from Chief Engineer Bocuo, who in his Zero-G form looked like a ball with four limbs set at even points around him and his eye clusters in the middle. Some of the crew thought he looked silly but as Bocuo said, it was the best way to move in zero-g.

The Captain twisted his head toward his friend and said, “Then please go on and tell us what does war mean to the dralasites?”

Swinging and almost bouncing himself into a seat at the table, Bocuo waited a moment and then said, “war is another form of debate but with a bad ending for the losers.”

Now the vrusk, human and yazirian stared at the dralasite. They had all known

dralasites had had wars in their history but like most never thought of why they fought. Finding out it was their debates getting out of hand was unnerving.

The rest of the crew began to arrive and as greetings were said the little exchange ended.

As they seated themselves one final thought would not leave Captain Xxict’s mind. “What do the sathar think of war?”

STAR FRONTIERS NETCON 2012

Sept 14-15, 2012

Are you interested in refereeing or playing in one or more on-line Star Frontiers games? Do you want to connect with other members of the Star Frontiers community directly instead of just via the forums? Or maybe you just want to listen in and see how others play. Here's your chance.

Register to participate in the [Star Frontiers NetCon 2012](http://starfrontiers.info/NetCon).

A follow-on event to the successful Virtual Con held back in March, SF NetCon 2012 is a day and a half focused on getting together as a community and playing Star Frontiers, in whatever flavor you like.

There are nine potential game sessions starting Friday afternoon/evening and running all day Saturday designed to accommodate almost any schedule. Sign up for as many or as few as you'd like.

Want to referee a game? Great! Once you've registered, you can set up a game in any of the sessions that work for you.

Looking to just play? Browse the schedule and game descriptions and sign up for the ones you like.

We look forward to seeing everyone on-line and playing Star Frontiers in September. Just like with the Virtual Con, participants in NetCon 2012 are eligible to purchase one of the limited edition Star Frontiers 30th Anniversary commemorative patches (pictured below). Details are provided at registration.

To find out more and register, visit the con site at:

<http://starfrontiers.info/NetCon>



MOOKS WITHOUT NUMBER PART 1

Tom Verreault

Mooks Without Number is a serialized adventure that will be run over the course of The Frontier Explorer's first year. The scope of the magazine is such that full length modules fit best if broken into serialized installments. In following issues you can expect the complete adventure as well as the deck plans of a Cappellan Free Merchant ship. *If you plan to play in this adventure it goes without saying that you should probably stop reading now.*

The overall concept of this adventure is that the players' characters have signed on as crew for a merchant vessel travelling around the Star Frontiers setting. In particular the ship is a Cappellan Free Merchant. The former crew has been detained by police and the captain is forced to replace them so that he can complete a contracted delivery. The campaign idea is that the player characters are simple merchant crewmen making a living shipping goods. They are not looking for excitement but somehow excitement and adventure seems to find them. "Mooks Without Number" is the story of how the player characters signed on to a CFM ship and the events that followed.

ALPHA SECTION: RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

REFEREE'S CAMPAIGN NOTES

This adventure is what is known as a 'Big Ship Campaign.' A big ship campaign is where a ship is detailed to the Nth degree and players are crew or passengers who end up having adventures in the course of the ship's journeys. A great explanation of Big Ship campaigns can be found in the old Polyhedron magazine issues # 21 "Take Command of a Titan" and #22 "Of Great Ships and Captains". (Ed. Note: A copy of these articles can be found in the [Polyhedron Archive download](#) at the [Port Loren Public Library](#) on the starfrontiers.us website.)

This adventure is only a kick off and the above named articles should prove invaluable to a referee running a Big Ship campaign. In case a referee is unable to

locate copies of a these articles, the following advice is provided to help a referee continue the adventure.

1. The number one rule is to not actually destroy the ship or make it a big floating lifeless hulk as that pretty much ends the campaign. The threat of the ship's destruction is good but the possibility of it really being destroyed means an end to the campaign.
2. The ship is often in the background of the adventure but should not be completely relegated to the role of taxicab.
3. Mutinies in the real world are actually a very rare thing. Captain Kleevor, as a CFM captain, holds a reserve commission in the Rim's Navy known as the Flight and his ship has the legal status as auxiliary warship and by default is part of the Flight's merchant marine service. If the player characters decide to mutiny and make off with the ship, United Planetary Federation authorities (both Star Law and Space Fleet) will be obliged to hunt them down due to treaty provisions. The players will quickly find themselves without any sort of safe haven to hide within the Frontier.
4. Kleevor is the Captain and provides some structure for the adventure but should not make all the decisions. He is no Captain Ahab or Bligh. The player characters can possibly take over the ship after a period of apprenticeship and Kleevor can be moved out by having the CFM appoint him to its governing board back on Faire. A referee will need to look for opportunities to delegate authority and leave the PCs to sink or swim on their own merits (as will occur in this adventure).
5. Non-commercial adventures can be introduced by having the ship chartered by a university to transport its scientists and equipment or the ship can be recalled by the Flight to support a military operation.
6. The focus for a merchant ship campaign of this sort is going to be exploring the Frontier and possibly a little beyond. A referee will find that compiling files on systems visited and NPCs met will greatly ease his work load. During the course of this adventure the player characters will visit two planets and meet a number of non-player

characters that the referee should recycle and use as contacts and plot hooks over the course of the campaign.

TO ZEB'S OR NOT TO ZEB'S , THAT IS THE QUESTION

The oft debated controversy of Star Frontiers is whether the Zebulon's Guide material should be treated as canon. This adventure is predicated on the crew being hired by the Capellan Free Merchants which were first introduced in the Knight Hawks supplement and then expanded upon in the Zebulon's Guide partial revision. I'll not debate the merits of using some of the Zebulon's Guide material here. In this adventure Captain Kleevor is presented as an ifshnit and his ship having ties to the Flight which is all Zeb's Guide material. Referees that don't want to use the Zebulon's Guide material can easily make Captain Kleevor a human and ignore any other reference to any other Zeb's Guide material that turns up.



CAPTAIN KLEEVOR'S SHIP , THE VENTURE

The Venture is a Capellan Free Merchant ship and enjoys certain advantages. First and foremost is its status as auxiliary merchant marine for the Flight. This position means she must be equipped with atomic drives and receives government subsidies for fuel. Her captain holds a reserve naval commission and the ship can be activated for active duty at any time though this is actually an exceedingly rare occurrence.

The Capellan Free Merchants is accorded mega-corp status but in actuality it is an association of independent business men like Kleevor. Their one iron hard policy is mutual protection and an extreme response to attacks against its members. Thus any CFM ship can expect help from any other CFM ship in the vicinity.

Since full deck plan for Kleevor's ship will not appear

CFMS Dawn Trader-class light freighter

HS: 5 HP:20 ADF:3 MR:3 DCR:40

Max Crew: 14

Weapons: LC, LB, RB (HARM) x6

Defenses: RH, MS(x1)

Engines: 3 Atomic "B"

Attached cargo shuttle: Capitol

until part 3, the adventure will need to be run with an abstracted deck plan (see the accompanying cross section of the ship, p24). Characters can travel from one area of the ship to another and perform approximately one action in ten minutes. This abstracted movement covers traveling to the ship's elevator and using it to reach another part of the ship and access a piece of equipment or computer console. How long attempted actions take is a matter for the referee's judgment but game masters should be flexible and err on the side of the players if it's a close call.

HARM rocket battery ammunition was detailed in the *Star Frontiersman* issue #17, its name stands for Hypervelocity Anti-ship Reaction-drive Missile. It is specialized ammunition for rocket battery and assault rocket weapon systems that is designed to shred hulls on small craft making a HARM hit almost a guaranteed one shot kill on a fighter craft. The ammo performs

identical to the original ammo for the system firing it except that the rocket battery's advance damage table modifier is increased (from -20 to -30). The Venture starts this adventure with the standard rocket battery ammo loaded in the weapon and two sets of palletized HARM reloads (total of 12 salvos) stored in the cargo hold. RB (HARM): LTD/RA 3/ DTM -30/HDR 2d10

Note: if using the basic game rules for Knight Hawks encounters simply rule a HARM hit on a fighter as an automatic kill otherwise there is no change.

KLEEVOR NEEDS A CREW

The former crew were involved in a bar room brawl at Port Loren. Weapons were drawn and numerous opponents were wounded as well as responding police officers. The crew has been arrested and charged with a host of charges. Kleevor has paid for lawyers and attempted to secure their release but to no avail.

He has delayed making a contracted run to Timeon/Lossend as long as possible but now must replace his crew and make the delivery. He has posted a classified ad on the info net and will interview the PCs at Dinza's Antiques, the business establishment of another Capellan Free Merchant.

This adventure was designed with a fan article from *Star Frontiersman* issue #11, "Spacer Skills Revisited" in mind. It's very much a beginning level adventure

and starting player characters with first level spacer skills and the canon pre-requisites listed in the Knight Hawks rules book ramp the adventure up to high level play immediately. As a referee you can of course use any rule set or rules conversion you desire but it's strongly recommended that you use a graduated system of pre-requisite skills similar to that discussed in the sited Star Frontiersman article.

This module will assume that player characters are essentially starting characters with up to three skills and one of those being a space skill and the others are pre-requisites, all at the minimum levels described in the "Spacer Skills Revisited" article. If a spacer skill only requires one pre-requisite skill then a player will be free to choose any other skill at level 1.

If the party is small, Kleevor can cover the positions of pilot and astrogator. The ship can easily accommodate 1 to 3 gunners though finding an RPG character willing to shoot weapons has never been difficult. The crew should also have at least one engineer and if two players are interested in playing tech characters a robotics tech could come in handy. A large party with all the spacer positions covered can accommodate character concepts that don't have actual spacer skills but until the party is over four in number the players should consider covering all of the spacer skills at least once.

KLEEVOR'S CONTRACT

Normally Captian Kleevor would have arranged for more bulk freight to fill his hold for the run to the Timeon system. However, with his crew in jail he's had to pass on several cargos. The current contract predates the bar brawl and is only a few small crates. He has delayed the delivery as long as possible but must complete it now or else he incurs penalties and will suffer a loss of reputation. It does not sit well with him to essentially abandon his former crew but there is still a banknote to pay on his ship and the humma crewmen have been in more than a few legal scrapes that he's been forced to bail them out of.

The contract is essentially a gun run but there is nothing illegal about the business deal. Pirates have been extorting food from farm settlements on Lossend in the Timeon system and one such settlement has decided to defend itself. Kleevor took the deal to provide weapons (all of them are legal) for twice their worth in grain and an agreement to fill his cargo hold one time at a discounted price. He plans to offload the food at Laco in the Dixon's Star system where demand for food is high. If his former crew had not been

arrested, he would have realized a high profit from the venture but now will just barely operate above a deficit.

BETA SECTION: MAKING THE DELIVERY

GETTING UNDER WAY

The players will report to the star port and help load the unmarked crates form a secure holding facility to Kleevor's cargo shuttle. A pilot PC can copilot the shuttle with Kleevor.

Any curious player with military background, security background, or familiarity with weapons can make an INT check to realize that the packing crates remind him of some shipping containers that occasionally are used for weapons. Treat any character with more than one weapon's skill as having enough familiarity with weapons to make this check. The crates have coded locks that will require a technician to defeat if the players desire to look inside. If anyone wants to attempt that action they will have to wait till after the ship is underway for Timeon, but Kleevor will be aware of the attempt unless elaborate precautions are taken to disable monitoring devices. For the contents of the weapon's shipment see Listing A (p21).

Once aboard the CFMS Venture, there are a host of chores and maintenance that needs to be done as the ship gets under way. Kleevor will assign these to the party and allow them to handle getting it done. He's already computed the jump to Timeon but will spend time on the bridge refining his data while piloting the ship and brooding over what he feels is a betrayal of his former crew.

After a 10 hour shift Kleevor will hold a meal for everyone. This is the time when the players can quiz Kleevor and learn something about the job they are on. In fact, once per day it will be Kleevor's habit to host a meal for the crew. The ship will be on automatic and if anything happens an alarms will sound.

This activity can be simulated at the RPG gaming table as the meal/chat will happen early in an adventure and many RPG gaming sessions have snacking at the beginning of the session before the game really gets going. The informal snack time can be used for this role play meal and cover background details on the adventure.

The trip to Lossend will take about 6 standard days. However, the player characters only have 3 working shifts with which to square away the ship. Captian Kleevor will want to run drills for two days while decelerating in Timeon system given the possibility of

who might be lurking in that system these days. So the crew will lose two days to drills and the last will be lost to the time spent getting underway and arriving at Lossend.

Galactic Standard time is 20 hour days with a 10 hour work shift the norm. Players may opt to use up to 2 hours of their off time per day to try to get more done.

Their first voyage with the Venture will involve lots of work. The old rocket battery ammunition need to be pulled from the weapon's magazine, disarmed and palletized before being replaced with the new HARM rockets that are designed to shred star ship hulls and potentially be a one shot kill on fighter craft. Someone has taken all the robots apart and was doing maintenance on all of them at once which means none of them can assist with any physical labor till they are put back together again. In addition there is a royal pain of a job requiring vacuum suits fixing a leaking seal on the cargo hold hatch.

Have the players compute their total available working hours: 30 hours times the number of player characters. This is the budget of work hours they have to complete the chores and maintenance tasks. Listing B (p21) gives the list of chores and their total work hours to accomplish. The exact list of tasks depends on the number of player characters in the crew. It is entirely possible that the players may not get everything done and it will be important to note what was not finished for later portions of the adventure, particularly if it impacts the ship in combat.

EXPERIENCE POINTS: GETTING UNDER WAY

The actions and decision made during this phase of the adventure will have their benefits or hindrances latter on when combat erupts so no experience need be given for doing chores. If players go to lengths to learn details about the weapons deal or other details before Kleevor reveals the details at a meal then award 1 bonus EXP when experience is awarded for Beta Section.

A DAY LATE AND A CREDIT SHORT

In Lossend orbit the Venture will be placed in a parking orbit assigned from the space station. Kleevor will remain with the ship while the PCs will take the weapons crates in the shuttle, Capitol, to Dawn's Landing and rent a cargo variant jet copter to deliver the arms to the farming village. They have the necessary credit drafts to rent the copter and purchase the extra grain from the farmers. They may also use weapons from Ventures small arms locker (see Listing C, p21). The PCs mission is to complete the deal or no

one is getting paid. In other words their pay will be deferred till the next completed delivery of which none are currently lined up without the expected grain.

Unbeknownst to Kleevor is that he is a little too late to reach Lossend and his customers have been forced to pay the extortion and that the Lucky Devil pirates committed rape, pillage, and burned the farming settlement to the ground anyway. The farm settlement cannot be raised by radio (if the PCs try) and Kleevor will instruct the PCs to complete the deal but be on their toes.

At the farm settlement the PCs find the moldering ruins of the burnt out settlement and bodies everywhere. A young human boy can be seen working on a heavy duty robot body that looks shot up. His name is Keyvan and he's a level 1 roboticist. He's attempting to get a shot up heavy duty equipment robot to work to plow a mass grave. He is so numb to his experiences that he will simply stare at the PCs



Tom Verreault

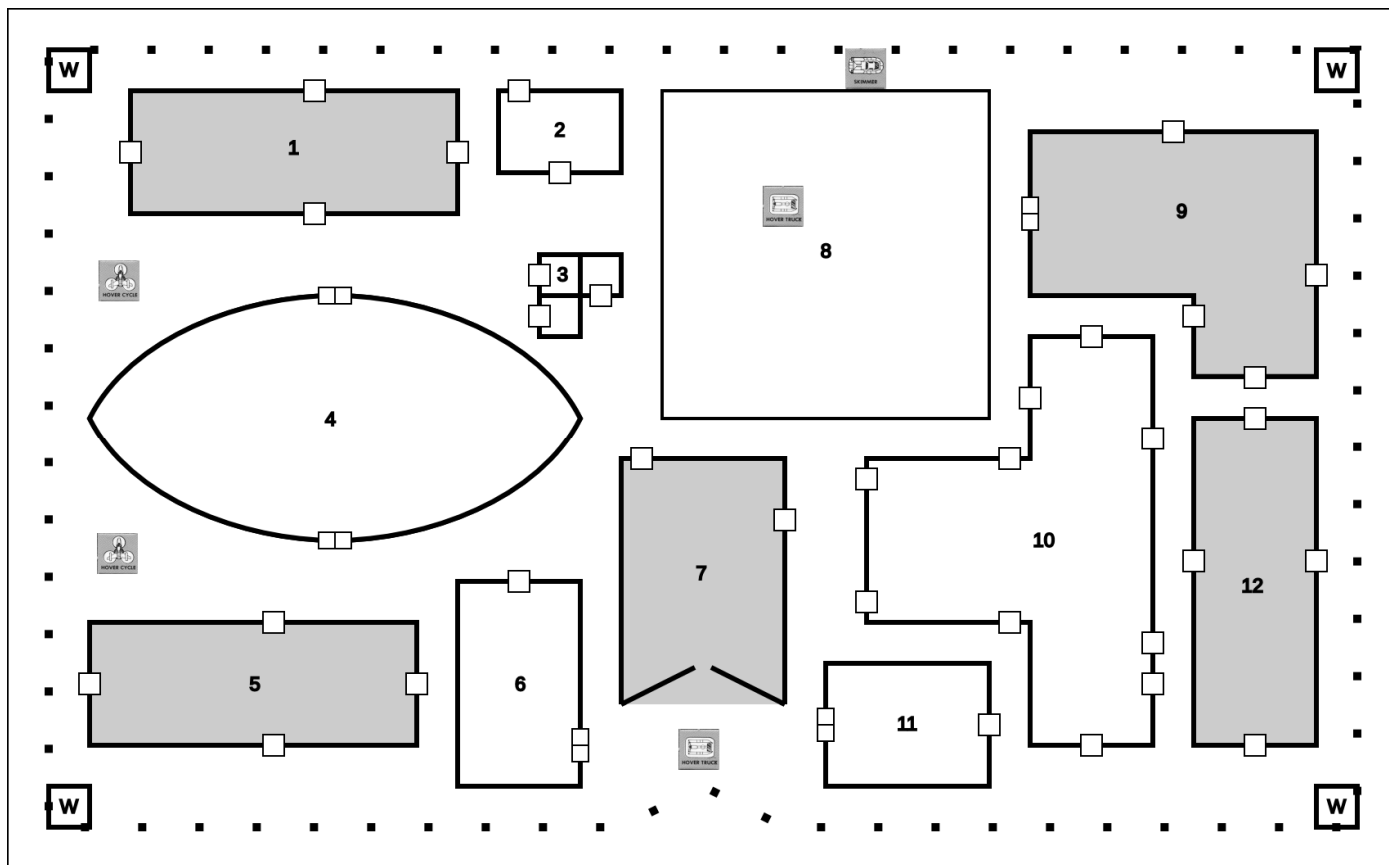
copter expecting to be killed and welcoming it. He can tell the PCs what happened and answer some questions but will doggedly focus on getting the grave dug. He's exhausted and characters with medical or psycho-social skills will realize he needs sleep.

Keyvan, older sister, Mim, is married to the leader of another co-op like farm settlement 30 km north of this location that would be the best place for the PCs to leave him and possibly find a buyer for their guns.

STRIKING A DEAL

Barlo's Post is a repurposed mercenary base from the aborted corporate war between PGC and Tachton Industries (See included map). The mercenary base used to be identical to the town map on the back of the Port Loren poster map except the farmers recycled the fencing to protect important crops from wypong depredation. The fence posts remain as they were set into ceramacrete and the farmers have not yet invested energy into digging them up. The watch towers also remain and sport spotlights to drive off any nocturnally prowling wypongs that the community's dogs will alert on with barking.

Barlo James and his wife Mim lead the co-op though the community is democratic in governance. It's just that Barlo is a forceful personality and most everyone



will follow his lead. The community will welcome the PCs and the news of the other settlement's demise will shock them. Some of the men will tell Barlo that they should have bought weapons to defend themselves but now what can they do if the pirates take the grain AND kill everyone.

Barlo is actually aware of what the other settlement's deal was and will negotiate for the same deal with the stipulation that the PCs teach them how to use the weapons. He will ask for four weeks training but settle for two weeks knowing the pirates will show up in about a week. Barlo is looking to have the PCs present when the pirates do show up on the theory they will probably fight just to save themselves. After the PC's strike the deal, each character has a chance to discover this fact each day they are in the village. Have each character make a PER ability check. Success means that they have learned of the timing of the pirates' arrival. If they learn of the impending arrival of the pirates, Barlo

MAP LEGEND, FARMING OUTPOST

The map above is designed for the referee's use. It shows the starting positions of the pirates in the "Storm Breaking" Section as well as identifying numbers for the various buildings. Basic descriptions of the buildings and locations are given below. Gray buildings are two stories.

- #1 – Dormitory sectioned off internally for families to have privacy
- #2 – Tool Shed
- #3 – Grain sheds
- #4 – Livestock pen
- #5 – Dormitory sectioned off internally for families to have privacy
- #6 – Communal kitchen and cafeteria
- #7 – Barn with internal loft and second story doors opening south and north as well as an obscured floor hatch to a root cellar
- #8 – The Common – an open field used for community events & meetings
- #9 – Warehouse and storage
- #10 – Food processing equipment and offices (videocom radio located here)
- #11 – Workshop and power generator (petroleum fuel for generator)
- #12 – Dormitory sectioned off internally for families to have privacy

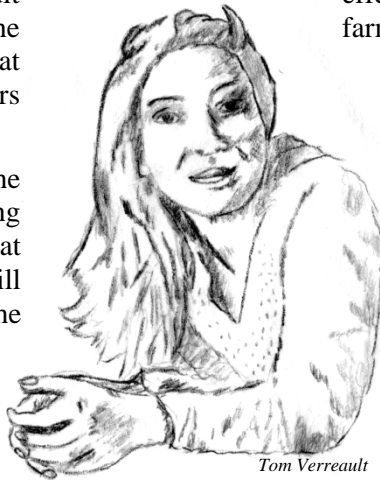
will hold them to the deal. If they consult with Kleevor, he feels responsible for the other farmers' deaths and will tell them that they cannot get the grain if these farmers are dead.

Every 2-3 days that the PCs are in the village, there is a 50% chance of something happening from this table or by referee fiat one or more things from this list will happen that week. Roll 1d5 and consult the list.

1. Twelve and eleven year old boys were taunting a wypong by throwing sticks and rocks at it. The wypong responded by beating one of the youths unconscious and the others fled. If there is a medic in the PCs' party he can treat the youth but if not the PCs can join the farmers in running off the closest pack of wypongs or tracking (provided someone has that skill) and killing the specific wypong that did this. Note that the wypongs are protected and indiscriminant killing of them will bring in the Lossend Rangers. This encounter can lead to a role play encounter with Lossend Rangers concerning activities involving the wypongs. A wypong that attacks a human or other sapient creature may be put down but just killing wypongs will likely lead to 1000 Cr fines per creature killed. They are easily run off with sonic weapons.
2. Two Lossend Rnagers show up and question everyone about the destroyed farming settlement.
3. A lossodragon is killing livestock. After two nights of its predation something must be done. It's impossible to track which will require guards posted to watch for it during the night.
4. Jet copter circles the compound and then flies away.
5. One PC makes a connection with the farmers he's training, roll 1d5 to determine how many of them are now level 1 at the weapon they were training with.

STORM BREWING

The players are in essence roped into defending the farm settlement and may have little time to prepare. There are 12 adult combatants, both men and women, and five non-combatant adults and 12 children. Any combatant farmer is effectively 0 level with a ranged weapon but due to hard work and experience working with farm tools they are



effectively 1st level with melee weapons. Each farmer will be able to scrounge either: a knife, a machete or an improvised pole arm. Farmers' (RW 20, M 40, PS 3, IM 3, RS 30, STA 40) equipment is drawn from the weapons shipment, Listing A.

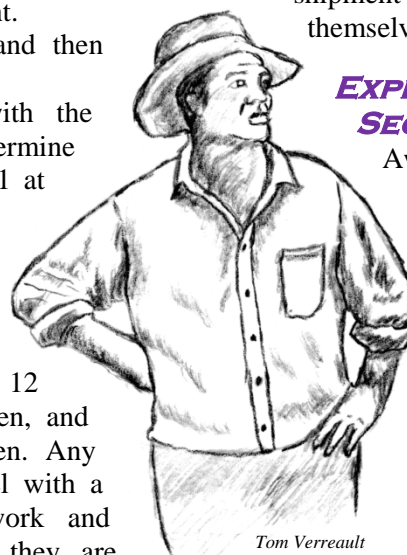
In addition there is any reasonable amount of material and equipment available on the farm at the referee's discretion if the players ask for specific items. Players should be rewarded for trying to devise stratagems against the pirates. Simple stratagems will have more success and complicated ones are more likely to fail.

There are no robots at this farm and if the heavy duty robot is recovered from the other farm it will need 5 hours to restore it from 5 STA to 250. However, each failed repair roll reduces the maximum STA points by 50. It is only level 2 and programed for common farming tasks. To use it in combat it will need to be modified to mount a weapon, have an Attack/Defense program installed and its mission and functions rewritten.

Provide players with the map of the settlement (p22-23) and allow them to arrange the defenders. If they never discover that the pirates will show up when they are still there then allow the player to arrange their PCs and randomly place farmers. Mim is a combatant but she will defend the non-combatants with a sonic stunner. This leaves Barlo and 10 other farmers to defend the settlement with the PCs. Once the PCs and farmers are in place the players will control the farmers for the battle. The players can also divvy up the arms shipment among the farmers but cannot use it themselves.

EXPERIENCE POINTS: BETA SECTION

Award 1-3 EXP for the players' performance since arriving planet side. Take note of whether they did the minimum at the destroyed settlement and how hard a bargain they drove with the farmers (1 EXP). The CFM believes strongly in a deal being good for both parties. Reward good role play with the farmers and discovering that the pirates will arrive within the week (1 EXP). Finally reward good preparation for the pirate's arrival (1 EXP).



LISTING A – CONTENTS OF WEAPON SHIPMENT

The weapon shipment that the players are delivering consists of the following items:

- 10 Sonic stunners
- 2 cases of 20 SEU clips- 50 each case
- 5 semi-automatic rifles (same as auto-rifles but no burst fire)
- 10 empty clips and 1500 rounds of ammo
- 1 case of 20 dose grenades
- 1 case of 20 smoke grenades
- 25 military skisuits

LISTING C – CONTENTS OF VENTURE'S SMALL ARMS LOCKER

The Venture's small arms locker contains the following items. The contents are optimized for repelling boarders without damaging the ship.

- 1 grenade rifle
- 20 smoke grenades
- 20 tangler grenades
- 20 dose grenades
- 3 Electro Stunners
- 3 Needler rifles
- 9 full Needler rifle clips
- 2 laser rifles
- 1 heavy laser
- 2 power belt packs
- 1 power backpack
- 30 power clips (20 SEU)
- 5 electric swords

Note: crew members are responsible for their own defenses and any weapons they desire beyond these.

LISTING B – NEEDED SHIP MAINTENANCE AND CHORES

The following is a list of tasks that need to be completed on the Venture. Each task is listed with the number of work hours needed to complete the task. The exact task list depends on the number of PCs with additional tasks being added for larger groups.

REQUIRED TASKS

- Store crates brought up from Port Loren and get oriented to the Venture – 8 work hours
- Inventory and store the former crew's personal effects till they can be transshipped at Port Loren – 4 work hours.
- Clean ship, must be done immediately to make up for it not being done in a while – 8 work hours
- Maintain a clean ship (could be done automatically by robots if they are put back on line) – 2 work hours per day.
- Finish maintenance on and reassemble 4 robots. Doing this will save on cleaning the ship and save 5 hours on stowing the rocket battery ammo – 10 work hours.
- Pull, disarm, palletize, and stow old rocket battery ammo – 20 work hours.
- Run diagnostic tests on all of the new HARM rocket battery ammo, fix technical issues with individual rockets, upgrade the gunnery programs for the Harm, load the rockets, and test the system – 40 work hours
- Re-align all the targeting hardware and software for all weapons mounts (a -3% deviation has crept into the targeting systems) – 10 work hours per weapon for 30 total.
- Clean and check all of Venture's small arm weaponry – 8 work hours

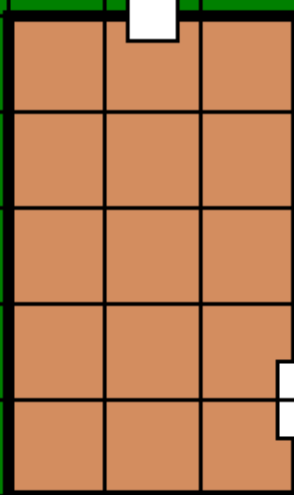
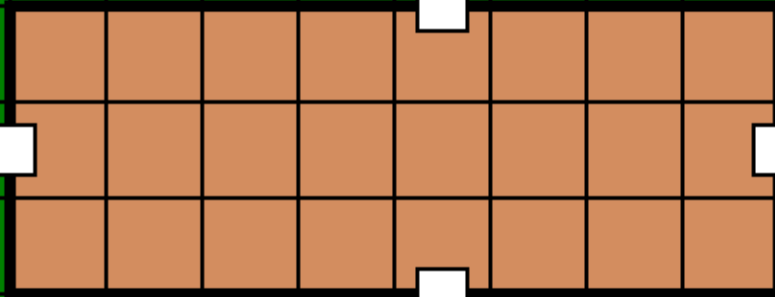
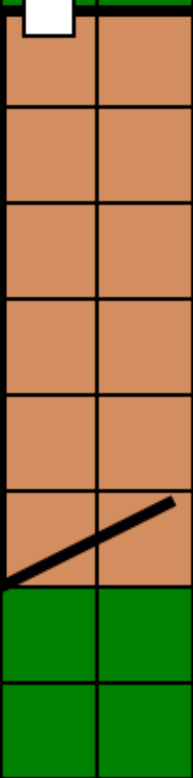
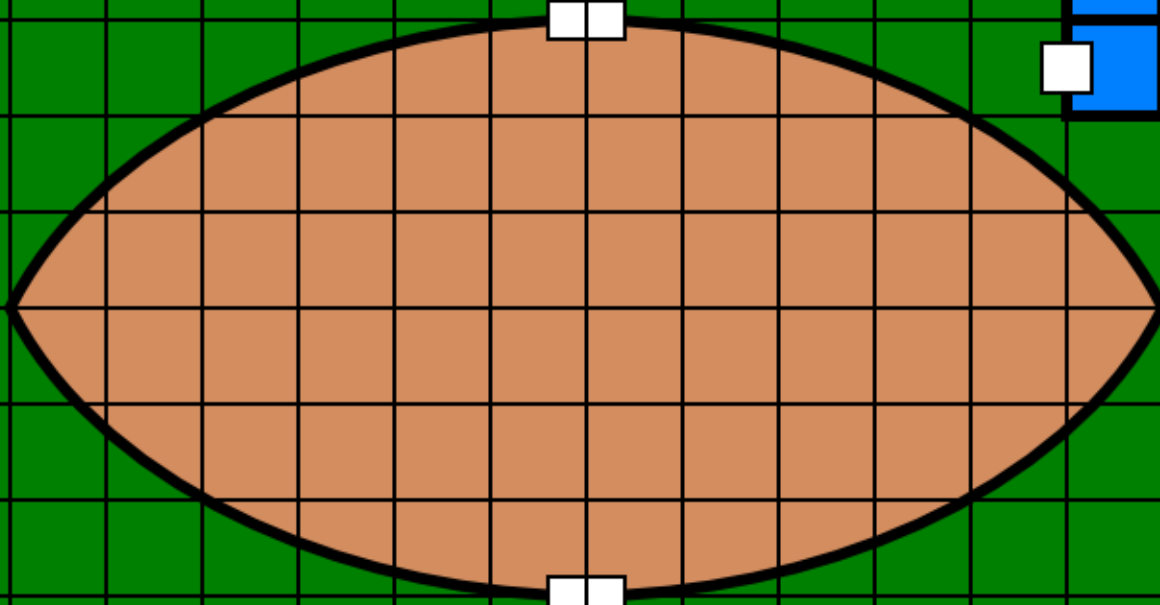
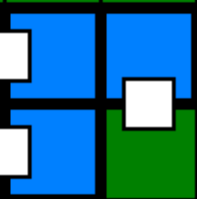
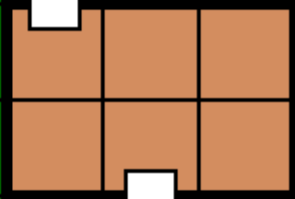
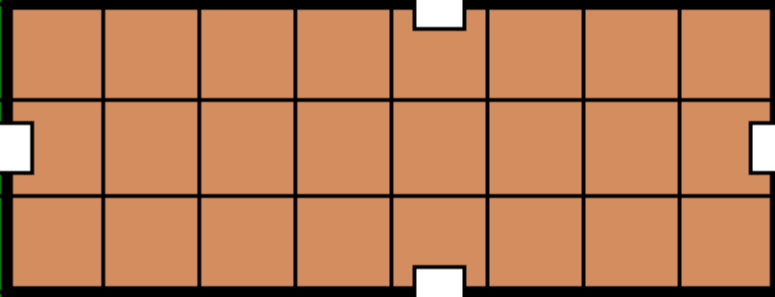
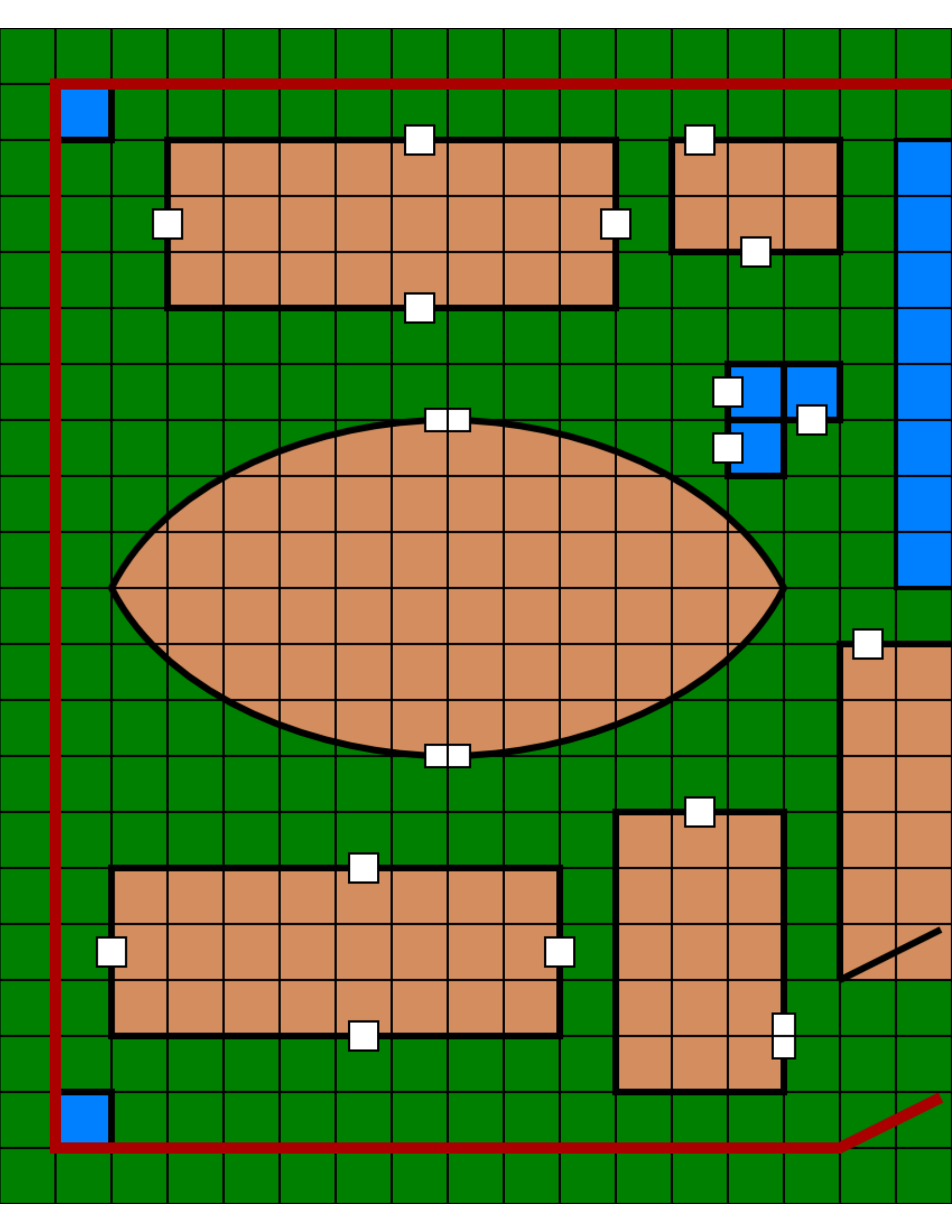
If 4 or more PCs add:

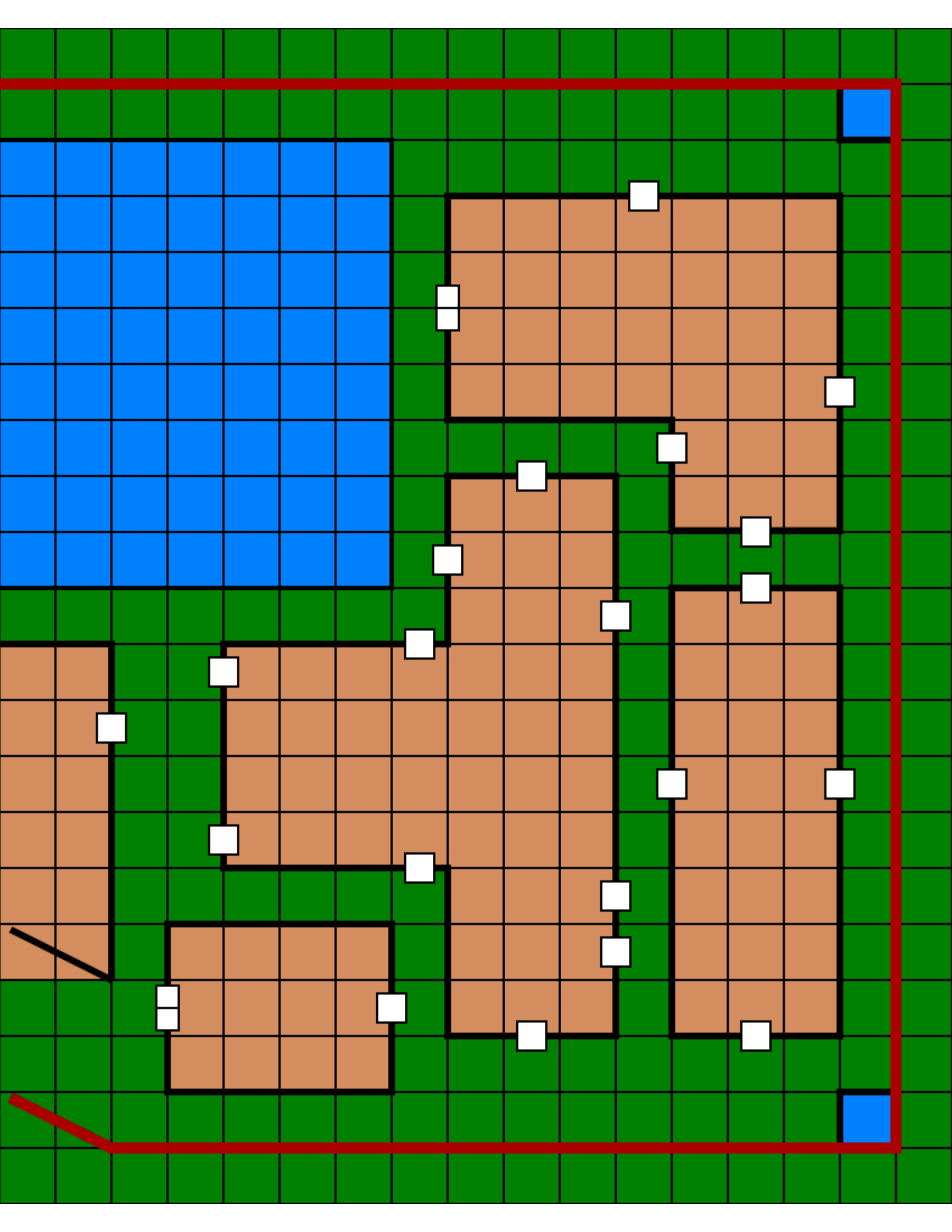
- Environmental Breakdown on the crew deck- no running water or fresh air for this deck till fixed – 10 work hours
- Leaky cargo bay doors – 10 work hours.

If 5 or more PCs add:

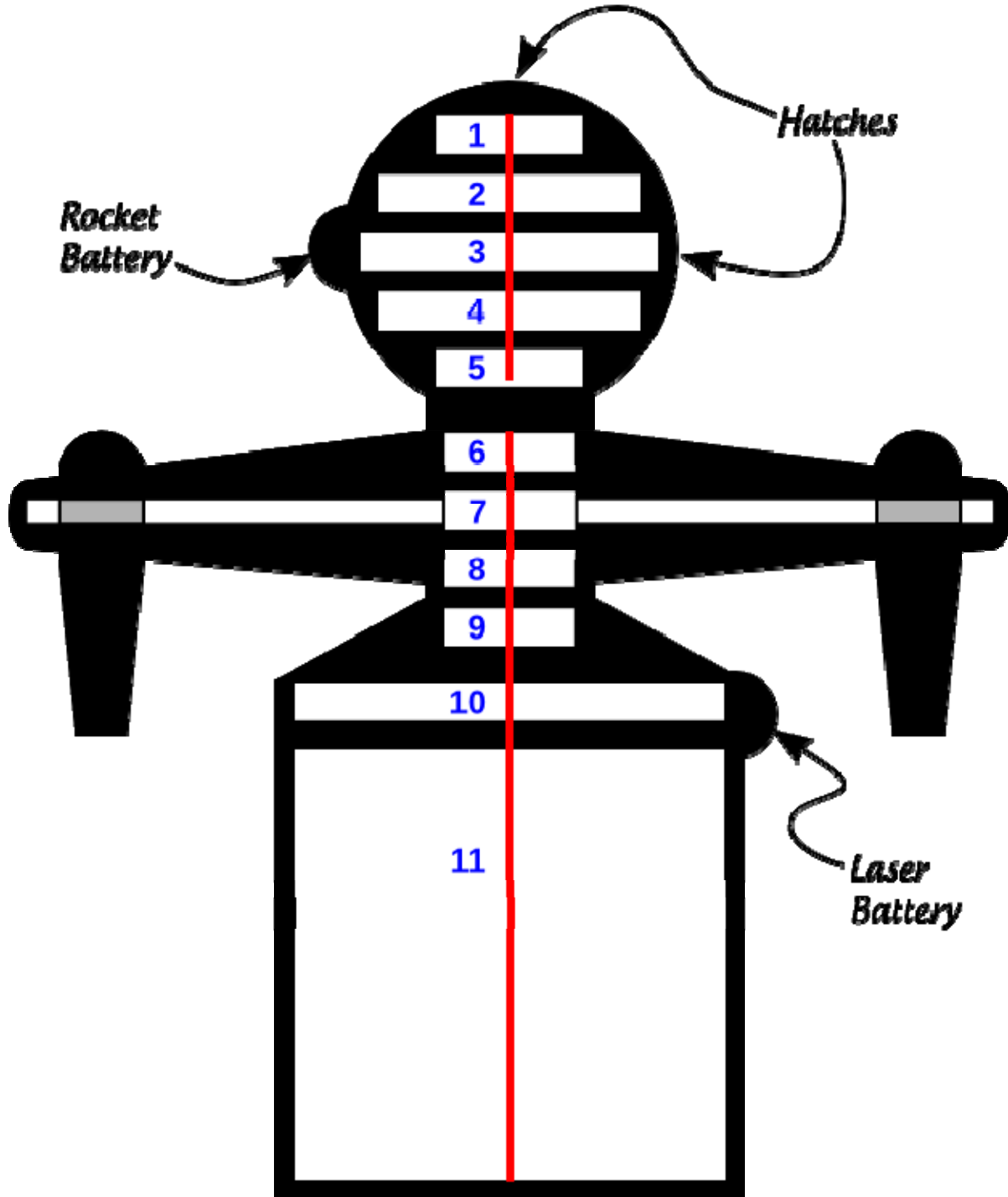
- Micro meteor holes the ships and damages the radar total repair is 10 work hours
- Nozzle indicator on the masking screen system reads red. Diagnose fault – 8 work hours. (It's strictly a fault in the wiring.)

If the robots are brought back on line, they can assist with many of these tasks at the referee's discretion as long as at least one PC is involved in the process.





CFMS VENTURE DECK LAYOUT



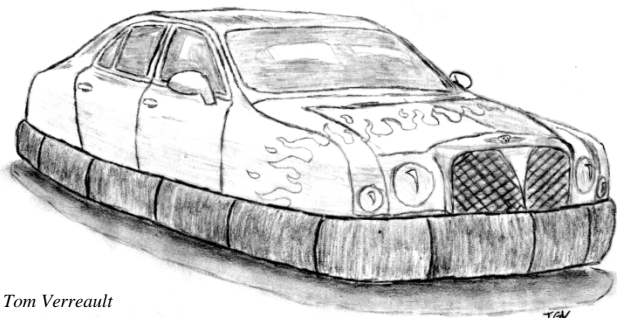
All decks are 2.5 m in height and typical deck spacing is 1 m between decks. The spherical bow section (decks 1-5), as well as the engines, gimbal 90 degrees when the Venture is operating near, or landing on, a planetary

surface. Full details for the decks of the CFMS Venture will appear in a future issue of the Frontier Explorer.

GAMMA SECTION: STAND YOUR GROUND

STORM BREAKING

Treat the top of the town map as north. The Lucky Devil pirates have two hover trucks, one hover car, two cycles and a jetcopter at their disposal. All of the vehicles, except the jetcopter, approach from the South, but split up to surround the town. Truck 1 halts on the South side, truck 2 in the common after entering from the north side, the hover car halts on the North side just outside the common, and the two hover cycles halt on the West side. The jetcopter is a short distance away and will arrive in 1d5 combat turns.



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Hover Truck 1: 6 pirates (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skienisuits - 3 with autorifles and machetes and 3 with gyrojet pistols and electric swords

Hover Truck 2: 6 pirates (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skienisuits - 3 with autorifles and machetes and 3 with needler rifles, 2 smoke grenades & 2 frag grenades

Hover Car: Ramirez (RW 60, M 60, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 50) skienisuit, albedo screen, power belt, laser rifle, sonic sword plus 3 pirates (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skienisuits - auto pistols and vibroknives

Hover Cycle 1: 2 pirates (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skienisuits - autopistols & 2 frag grenades

Hover Cycle 2: 2 pirates (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skienisuits - autopistols & 2 frag grenades

Jet copter (armed with 2 rockets and heavy machine gun): Crew of 2 (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skienisuits - sonic stunners plus 4 yazirian jumpers (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skienisuits - gyro-jet pistols, 2 smoke grenades, swords

Ramirez is the leader and will look to talk first but if he suspects something is up he will be quick to resort to violence. The jet copter will come in looking for high value targets (vehicles, combat robots, the watch



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towers). After making two attacks with vehicle weapons in the turn it shows up, the copter will maneuver to the center of the town just a few meters above the roofs of the buildings and the 4 yazirian jumpers will deploy gliding to roof tops in pairs. Once 50% (12) of the pirates are down, roll against Ramirez's LDR (45%) to see if they break and scatter. If Ramirez is down, roll against 20% to see if they scatter. Once 75% (18) of the pirates are down they break and scatter.

If the players have taken a hand in organizing the defenses they will learn of the trap door in the barn leading to the root cellar where the farmers plan to hide the children and other non-combatants. If the players have organized the defense then the non-combatants will begin the encounter already there. If the PCs have not been organizing the defense then groups of children and women will be running for the root cellar when the pirates show up.

Note: if the PCs failed to clean and check Ventures small arms there is a 10% that one of the weapons being used by the PCs from the arms locker will jam, misfire, or malfunction at a critical moment.

THE FARMERS REMAIN

After a successful defense of the village, Mim, a level 1 medic, will assist the PC's medic (if there is one) in patching the wounded up. The farmers will make good on the deal providing discounted grain at a great price to fill Venture's hold. The PCs will receive some luxury items from the farmers that may be sold or bartered for full value in a market on another planet: 2 cases of quality Lossend wine (6 bottles each case with individual bottles worth about 100 cr. apiece) and 10 cases of dried fruit (about 100 cr./case). It is common practice with the CFM to allow crews to indulge in side deals as long as it doesn't interfere with the ship's business.

Lossend Rangers will show up after the fact to investigate and question everyone. If the battle is a close thing a pair of Rangers could show up to save the day for the PCs but only if they are well and truly on the verge of death.

If the PCs and farmers are taken out, the PCs can be taken captive after being rendered unconscious. They will receive medical help from Mim once the survivors are rounded up. The pirates plan to kill everyone but Lossend Rangers will show up and drive them off. If the PCs are rescued by Lossend Rangers there will be no luxury items offered by the farmer though they will sell grain to Venture's crew at the agreed upon price.

Two privateer vessels will blast off from Dawn's Landing after the fight and an hour later a freighter will suspiciously break orbit and head for the outer system on the same course as the privateers.

EXPERIENCE POINTS: GAMMA SECTION

Award 2-3 EXP for successfully defeating the pirates. If the PCs survive the battle but have to be rescued by the Lossend Rangers only award 1 EXP.

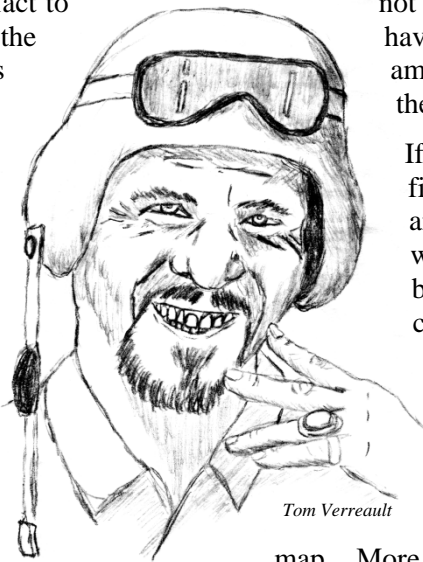
DELTA SECTION: RETURNING TO PORT

OUT OF THE DARK

The Lucky Devil pirates will make a play at the fully loaded Venture as it accelerates for jump speed toward Prenglar. Two privateer class vessels will attack and another vessel will remain at the extreme range of detection equipment and never close. Each of the pirate vessels are placed on the board first on either of the long sides of the map at a speed of 15. Venture is then placed on one of the short sides of the map at a speed of 12. Encounter goes for 8 turns or until one or more of the pirate vessels are seriously damaged.

The pirate vessels are heavily modified Rim Song Class yachts: HS 3, HP 15, ADF 3, MR 3, DCR 29, Laser Battery, Assault Rockets (2), reflective hull, no lifeboats

Note: If the PCs have not finished all of their chores there could be an impact on the battle. If the targeting issues are not resolved there will be a -3% penalty for the weapon with the targeting glitch. If the PC have



not finished loading the HARM ammo but have unloaded the original rocket battery ammo then the RB will not be available for the combat.

If Ramirez has survived the previous fight at the farm, he will be in command and have blood in his eye. He needs a win or he'll face the wrath of his leader back on Laco so he will go hard to capture and/or destroy the Venture. He is likely to converse with Venture as the pirate's standard procedure is intimidation to save on ammo. Role-play the videocom exchange as having happened just before the ship counters are placed on the KHs

map. More role-play could be possible during the battle and a good reasoned argument could cause the second ship to break off. If this happens, make a LDR roll for Ramirez to retain command. If Ramirez remains in command he will continue to fight unless the odds are too hopeless at which case his crew will force him to flee the battle.

A STOWAWAY

The young boy Keyvan will have become attached to the PCs. He is ideal to become an NPC adventure companion with the PCs and he has level 1 robotics which can be a help to the PCs. One way to work him into the party is have him stow away on the last shuttle trip to the Venture. He'll leave the shuttle after the PCs and find a hiding place somewhere.

When Kleevor calls for red alert and action stations he will have the intercom open to all decks and coughing will be heard over the intercom. The fact that a space battle is imminent and there is evidence of a stowaway aboard should be greeted with alarm. Someone will need to locate the source of the cough even as the battle is beginning. Keyvan does not have a vacuum suit so once he's found precautions will need to be taken for his safety during the battle (if asked, Kleevor will suggest locking him in an escape pod). Once the battle is over, Kleevor will press on to Prenglar and Laco and the party will be stuck with the youth till the ship can swing back through the Timeon system. Kleevor is amenable to putting the boy to work as he himself started as a cabin boy on board a CFM vessel ages ago. However, the captain will require that one of the PCs send a message back to Keyvan's sister explaining his presence and that they'll return him next time they're in system (after all it was the PCs that were operating the shuttle that the boy came aboard on).

AFTERMATH

The Venture may require repairs after the battle and that will call for a brief layover at Gran Quievra where the captain will check on his imprisoned former crew one last time. The crew can visit Port Loren but there is no payday yet as the cargo has yet to be sold at Laco where it will get the best price. The PCs can try to move the luxury items they received on Lossend but will find they can get 90% to 100% of the value with tough haggling session but it will be immediate cash. If they hold the luxury items till Laco they can negotiate and get 100%-120% of the value.

EXPERIENCE POINTS: DELTA SECTION

Award 1-3 EXP for this phase of the adventure. Award more for not getting the ship shot up whether by a negotiated end to the encounter or good gunnery. Award less for the Veturu being heavily shot up.

NPC PROFILES

CAPTAIN KLEEVOR CFM

Ifshnit Male Age 80

STR/STA: 45/45 INT/LOG: 40/40
DEX/RS: 35/35 PER/LDR: 30/35

PS: +3, IM +4

Beam Weapons(3), Technician(4),
Computers(3), Starship Piloting(4),
Astrogation(3)

Kleevor started out as a cabin boy in the CFM and rose to ownership of his own ship. He's faced the sathar and holds a reserve commission in the Rim Coalition's Flight and the Venture can (though unlikely) be activated for merchant marine missions by the Flight and its treaty ally Space Fleet.

He's loyal and protective of his crew and has a relaxed leadership style. One ritual he has is an almost daily meal with the whole crew to build a sense of family. He takes seriously threats against his ship and crew and will respond with extreme prejudice.



KEYVAN

Human male Age: 14

STR/STA: 20/25 INT/LOG: 40/40
DEX/RS: 35/35 PER/LDR: 30/30

PS: +1, IM +4

Robotics(1)

Robcom toolkit, vibro knife

Keyvan is a dreamer and robotics nut. His family has been wiped out by the Lucky Devil pirates leaving him just his older half sister. He's impressionable and will likely become attached and overly helpful to the player characters.



MIM JAMES

Human female Age: 28

STR/STA: 30/30 INT/LOG: 40/40
DEX/RS: 35/35 PER/LDR: 40/40

PS: +2, IM +4

Medic(1) Agriculture(1)

Med kit

Mim is the half-sister of Keyvan and the wife of Barlo James. She has the air of an old soul, seeming wise beyond her years. She's committed to starting a family and founding a community on Lossend with Barlo.



BARLO JAMES

Human Male Age 38

STR/STA: 20/25 INT/LOG: 40/40
DEX/RS: 35/35 PER/LDR: 50/50

PS: +1, IM +4

Melee(1), Agriculture(2), Projectile Weapons(1)

Vibro knife, magni-goggles

Barlo has dreamed of having a farm of his own since a youth. He's gathered other like-minded men and women, obtained property rights to an old PGC mercenary base and scraped together a shoe string budget to found Barlo's Post.



RAMIREZ

Human Male Age 45

STR/STA: 50/50 INT/LOG: 35/40
DEX/RS: 60/40 PER/LDR: 45/45

PS: +3, IM +4

Beam(3), Computers(3), Technician(4),
Melee weapons(3), Starship piloting(3)

Skein suit, albedo screen, power belt, laser rifle, sonic sword, four 20 SEU clips

Ramirez is a tough, personable bandit. He's been with the Lucky Devil pirates a short time having risen to command one of their ships in that time largely on the strength of his personality. He's mindful of the need to continually prove himself to maintain his position. Failure here in Timeon could cause him to be replaced and he fears that possibility so he will act ruthless.



Note: skills for the above NPCs are predicated on "A Skilled Frontier" *Star Frontiersman* #9 and "Spacer Skills Revisited" *Star Frontiersman* #10. The agricultural skill listed for Mim and Barlo is simply a catch all farming skill if there is a need for it.

Locations

PLANARON STATION

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The infamous Planaron asteroid is an unusually large asteroid in the White Light system. Secretly mined by a crazy wild cat miner for years, it was ripe to become the base of operations for the Planaron Pirates who were clandestinely funded by Streel. During the Battle of Planaron, the pirate fleet was wiped out and the base's defenses reduced to scrap. It still took the Royal Marines putting boots on the asteroid to fully clear it and that's when evidence of Streel's involvement was discovered. For a time the asteroid remained abandoned though closely monitored by the Royal Marines.

In an effort to prevent more undesirables from moving back in to use the asteroid as a base, as well as to eliminate the cost of monitoring it, the Clarion Parliament decided to sell the rights to the asteroid to a suitable corporate developer. Space Mines, Inc. purchased those rights with a 100 year charter to operate an ore processing station there. In time Planaron grew to be a thriving, though small, community of miners, spacers, and a few small business operators.

Due to technicalities of the Clarion legal code, the asteroid falls outside of the normal jurisdiction of Clarion police and military authority if there is no "clear and present threat." The view of the law is that Planaron is a corporate facility and therefore its security falls to the corporation not the tax payer. However, Space Mines (lovingly referred to by many as "Spaced Minds") has mismanaged it. Planaron has attracted a criminal element making it a rough and ready hive of scum and villainy. Yet as long as Space Mines ore processing operation isn't interrupted they make no attempt to police the community living on the station.

For a time the Royal Marines detailed a detachment to the station but Kota Mikoshi, the Liberal Party politician on the Prime Minister's cabinet, lead the fight to have them removed. The reasoning being that "the Crown should not pay for security of a private corporate installation." The irony of a Liberal, who espouses the ending of the monarchy, being concerned over an expense to the Crown was not lost on many.

None the less she succeeded and the Royal Marines were forced to remove their detachment. Planaron became a criminal's haven.

Recent developments have seen a Star Law marshal posted to the station. Current policy of the present marshal is to not stir up any hornet's nest he doesn't need to. Wanted interstellar criminals discovered on the station are arrested but he resents Space Mines viewing his presence as free security. Virtually all crime against Space Mines property will be ignored by Star Law.

The station is not spinning and there is no gravity. Throughout the station provisions are made for both velcro-booties and mag boots. Space mines rotates its personnel on a three month basis to prevent excessive bone and muscle loss due to 0 g living. Long term residents suffer penalties to STR ability scores.

PLANARON ORE PROCESSING STATION

Main Operations- Nerve center of the station with control rooms, main computer, sensors, offices, and station defenses: LB x1 & RB x1.

Administration & VIP Quarters- Administration center of the station with corporate headquarters and VIP corporate quarters.

Flight Ops & Station Defenses- This level includes the backup radar, orbital body tracking, flight control stations, and station defenses: LB x1.

Main Hanger- The hangar can accommodate up to HS 4 ships but usually handles ore shuttles. The shuttles can unload the raw ore in one section of the hanger where it is transported to the processing center by special direct conveyor systems. Processed ore is returned in another part of the hanger for shipment off the asteroid.

Engineering Support- This section of the station has three dedicated levels but doesn't need this much space. Engineering support includes life support, environmental controls, and processing but the second

level under the main hanger is just back up and has been given over to warehousing.

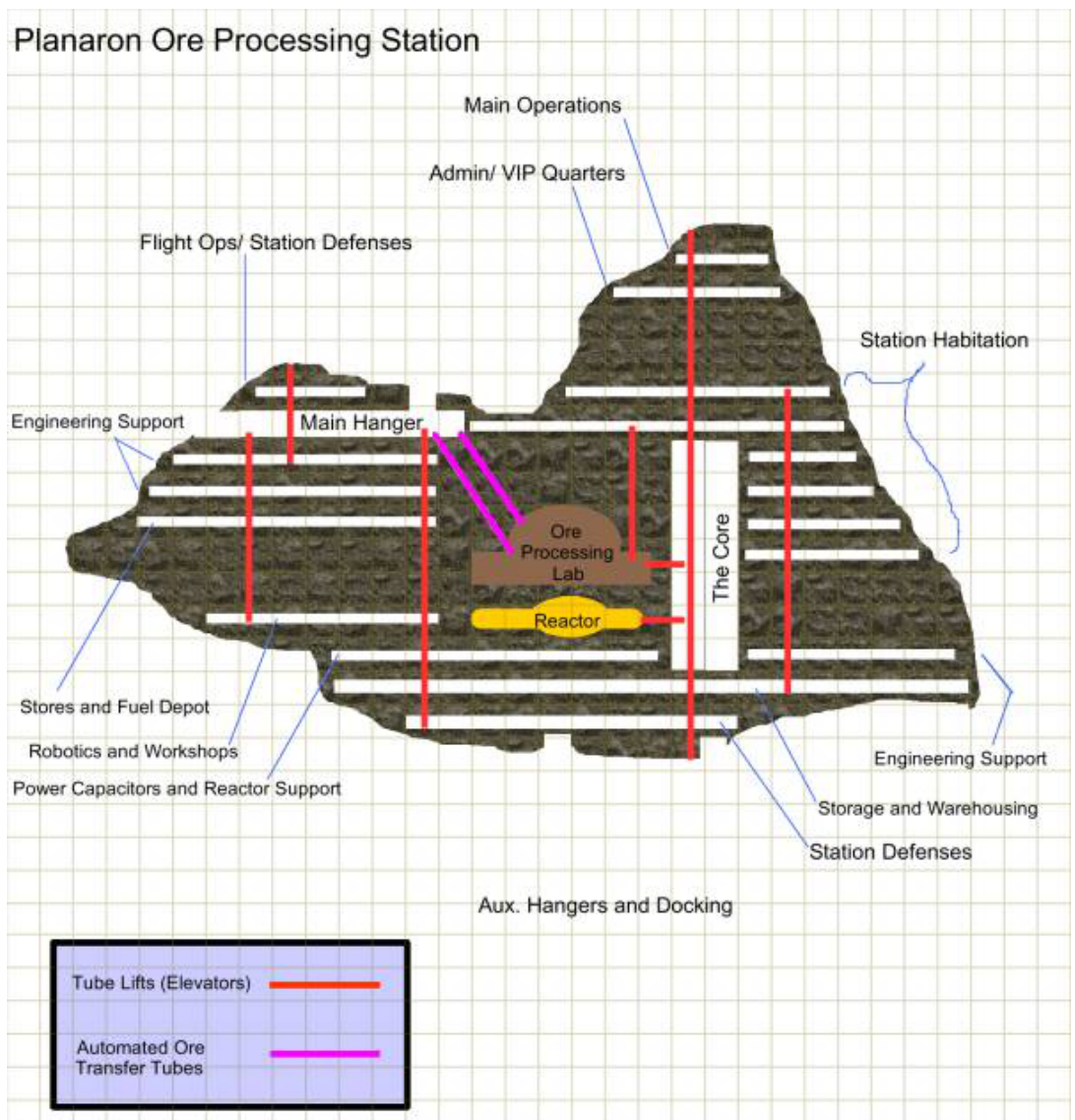
Stores and Fuel Depot- This level is directly concerned with supporting the hangers. It stores the stations supply of chemical fuel, atomic fuel, and ion fuel. Supply depots and workshops here only deal with fixing shuttles and small craft. Some independent maintenance companies have space here serving the mining and prospecting ships. The whole level is referred to as, "The Depot."

Robotics and Workshops- This level is concerned with maintaining everything else in the station that is not related to small craft or the reactor. This level has store rooms, workshops, fabrication shops, etc. Robots make up a significant percentage of the workforce as they do not suffer negative health effects from 0 g.

Power Capacitors and Reactor Support- This level has high density energy storage capacitors to maintain power for the ore processing lab if the reactor goes down (the rest of the station can subsist on emergency power but ore processing continues at full pace). It also contains supply rooms and workshops that support the reactor operations.

Station Habitation- These levels hold the quarters, gymnasiums, and other facilities for the station's workforce.

The Core- This is the large, cylindrical, hollow core of Planaron. It is the heart of the station and the center of commercial activity. It holds a myriad of restaurants, stores, the infirmary, Star Law offices, theaters, etc. The Core is a large open gallery with catwalks ringing



it at each level and elevators in the 12 & 6 o'clock positions. Additionally, there are pipes, support member, and even ladders linking each catwalk to the level above and below and many inhabitants will simply pull themselves up or down to the next level rather than walk to the elevator. The large open space of the Core invites people to use jump boots or rocket packs to zip around. More than one criminal has attempted to evade arrest by rocketing up or down the Core.

Storage and Warehousing- A vast percentage of this level is given over to storing refined ore.

Station Defenses- This level also includes auxiliary hangers and docking. It contains part of the station's defense system: LB x 2, RB x 1.



Author’s Note: This ship was designed for the first Star Frontiers Virtual Con (March 2012) held to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of Star Frontiers. It is a cross between a Destroyer and a Freighter and is designed to be a well armed ship that can go hold it's own against potential enemies and pirates. The design here is the basic pure freighter model. Alternate design options that include a troop/passenger transport, exploration equipment, and others will appear in a future article.

DESCRIPTION

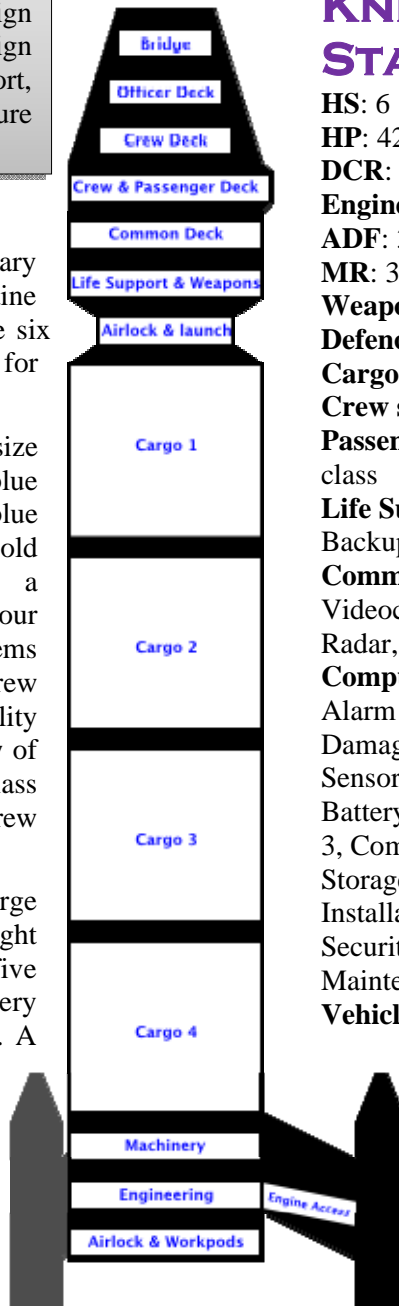
The CSS Nightwind is a custom designed paramilitary freighter designed and built by the Cassidine Development Corporation. Designed around a size six hull, the Nightwind sacrifices some cargo space for extra armament.

The ship was designed to support a nominal crew size of twenty-four split into two complete crews in a blue team/gold team arrangement. Half of the day the blue team crew runs the ship and the other half the gold team is in charge. Each crew consists of a Captain/pilot, an astrogator, three engineers, four gunners, a medic, a cook, a defensive systems operator, a quartermaster and an additional crew member assigned for whatever additional functionality is needed onboard the ship. In addition to the crew of twenty-four, the Nightwind has seven journey class cabins and can take on passengers or additional crew as needed.

The Nightwind has ten crew decks and four large cargo bays. Each crew deck is three meters in height (except the bridge which is four) and space five meters apart allowing for two meters of machinery and duct work between each deck and cargo bay. A single elevator shaft connects the entire ship and can carry up to eight beings at any one time.

In between each deck is machinery and duct work as well as crawl spaces to allow for maintenance of that machinery. A 1m square ladder well runs nearly the entire length of the ship from the Officer Deck all the way down to the Workpod

deck in the machinery column around the elevator. This shaft has access into the elevator shaft on each level and into the crawl spaces between levels.



KNIGHT HAWKS STATISTICS

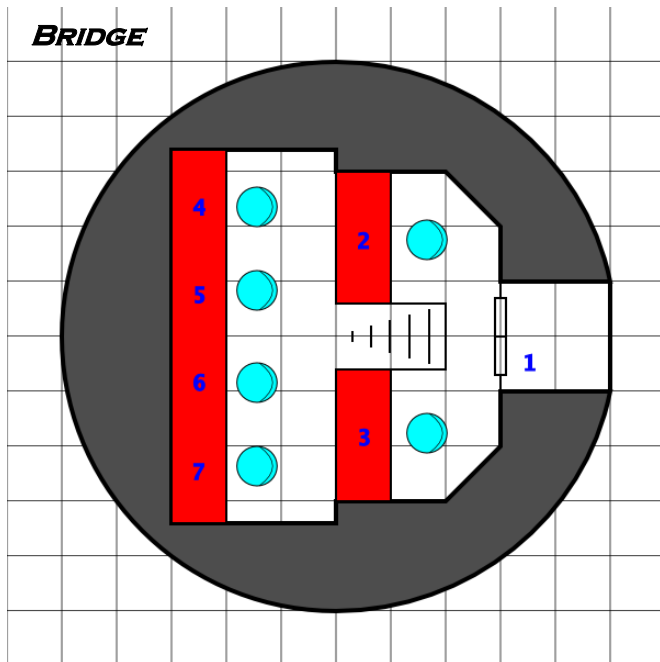
- HS:** 6
- HP:** 42
- DCR:** 60
- Engines:** 3 Class B Atomic
- ADF:** 3
- MR:** 3
- Weapons:** LB, LB, LB, RB(x4)
- Defences:** RH, MS(x2), ICM(x8)
- Cargo Capacity:** 5 units
- Crew size:** 24
- Passenger Accomodations:** 7 Journey class
- Life Support Capacity:** Primary: 35 Backup: 35
- Communications Equipment:** Videocom radio, Subspace Radio, Radar, intraship intercom.
- Computer:** Drive 5, Life Support 1, Alarm 3, Computer Lockout 5, Damage Control 4, Astrogation 4, Skin Sensors 1, Cargo Arm 2 (x4), Laser Battery 1 (x3), Rocket Battery 2, ICM 3, Communications 2, Information Storage 5, Robot Management 5, Installation Security 3, Computer Security 4, Commerce 2, Analysis 4, Maintenance 2
- Vehicles:** lifeboat, 10 person launch x2, workpod x4
- Other Equipment:** Deluxe Astrogation Equipment, 35 Spacesuits, 4x cargo arms, Autonomous Power Reactor
- Cost:** 3,719,100 cr

CSS NIGHTWIND DECK SPECIFICATIONS

The Nightwind has 10 main decks and four cargo areas. The details of the individual decks are given below. Note that the decks have been scaled down to fit. Full resolution images are available on the website.

BRIDGE

The bridge is the top deck of the Nightwind and is only accessible by authorized crew. It contains stations for the pilot, astrogator, and each of the four gunners (3 Laser Batteries and the Rocket Battery). The bridge is split level with the gunners on the lower level. A bank of displays are on the large wall above the gunners that both they and the pilot and astrogator can see and bring up displays on.

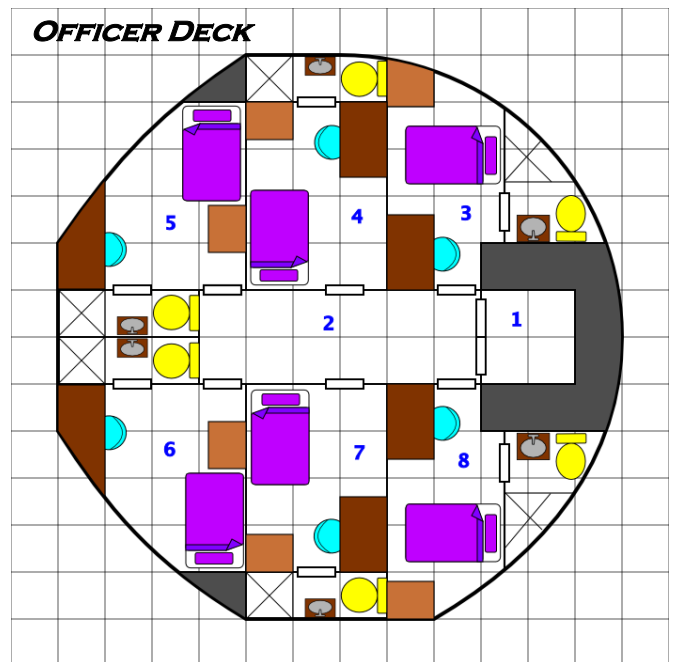


1. **Elevator** - This is the main elevator shaft that run through the entire ship.
2. **Pilot's Station** - Control station for the ship's pilot. Provides access to the main computer, flight controls and has a master intercom panel as well as access to all ship systems. This station, along with the astrogation station are on the same level as the elevator and raised above the gunnery stations by a meter.
3. **Astrogation Station** - This is the astrogator's seat and provides access to the main computer and astrogation system.
4. **Laser Battery 1 Control** - Controls and targeting system for one of the ship's three Laser Batteries

5. **Laser Battery 2 Control** - Controls and targeting system for one of the ship's three Laser Batteries
6. **Laser Battery 2 Control** - Controls and targeting system for one of the ship's three Laser Batteries
7. **Rocket Battery Control** - Controls and targeting system for the ship's Rocket Battery

OFFICER DECK

This deck contains the private quarters of some of the ships officers, namely the pilots/captains, astrogators and chief engineers. Each room is a private cabin. Access is restricted to those crew members with rooms on this level and others that they specifically authorize.

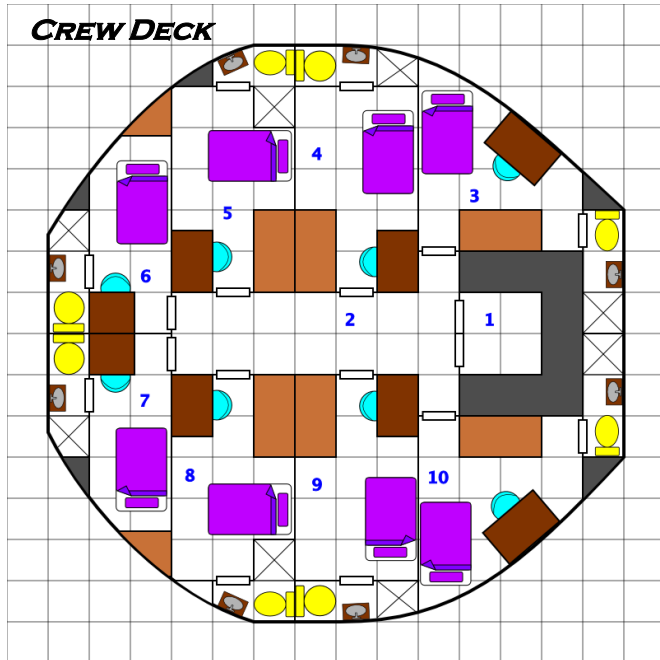


1. **Elevator** - This is the main elevator shaft that run through the entire ship.
2. **Hallway** - This is the main hallway on this level that connects all the cabins.
3. **Officer Cabin** - While this cabin has a smaller living space, it has a larger shower facility that is preferred by vrusk officers.
4. **Officer Cabin** - Standard officer cabin.
5. **Captain/Pilot's Cabin** - This room is for the ship's captain and has a master intercom control station as well as controls for the ship's radios.
6. **Backup Pilot's Cabin** - Similar to the Captain's cabin, this room has full access to the ship's communication systems.
7. **Officer Cabin** - Standard officer cabin.

- Officer Cabin** - While this cabin has a smaller living space, it has a larger shower facility that is preferred by vrusk officers.

CREW DECK

This deck typically holds the two medics, the remaining four engineers and all eight gunners.

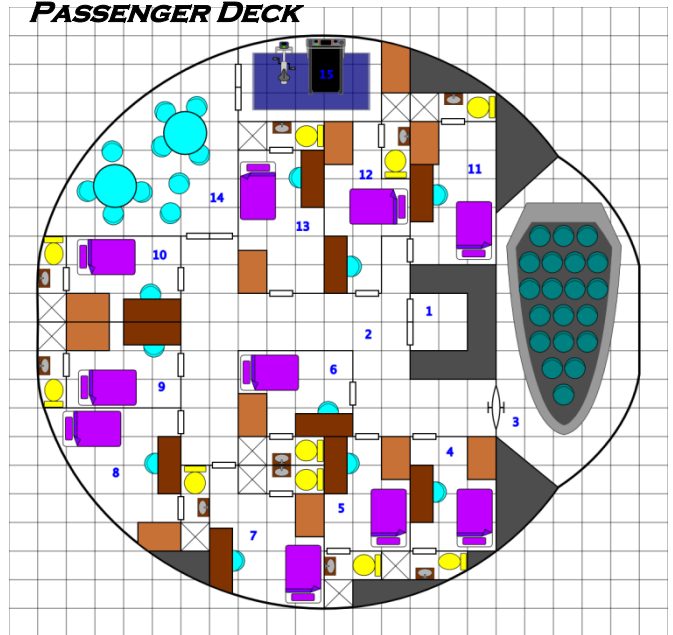


- Elevator** - This is the main elevator shaft that run through the entire ship.
- Hallway** - This is the main hallway on this level that connects all the cabins.
- Crew Cabin** - A standard double bunk cabin.
- Crew Cabin** - A standard double bunk cabin.
- Crew Cabin** - A standard double bunk cabin.
- Crew Cabin** - This is a private cabin typically assigned to one of the medical officers.
- Crew Cabin** - This is a private cabin typically assigned to one of the medical officers.
- Crew Cabin** - A standard double bunk cabin.
- Crew Cabin** - A standard double bunk cabin.
- Crew Cabin** - A standard double bunk cabin.

CREW & PASSENGER DECK

This deck houses the remaining crew members as well as up to seven passengers. It also has a small lounge area and recreation/workout room. The ship's lifeboat is also located on this level to be accessible to passengers in the event of an emergency.

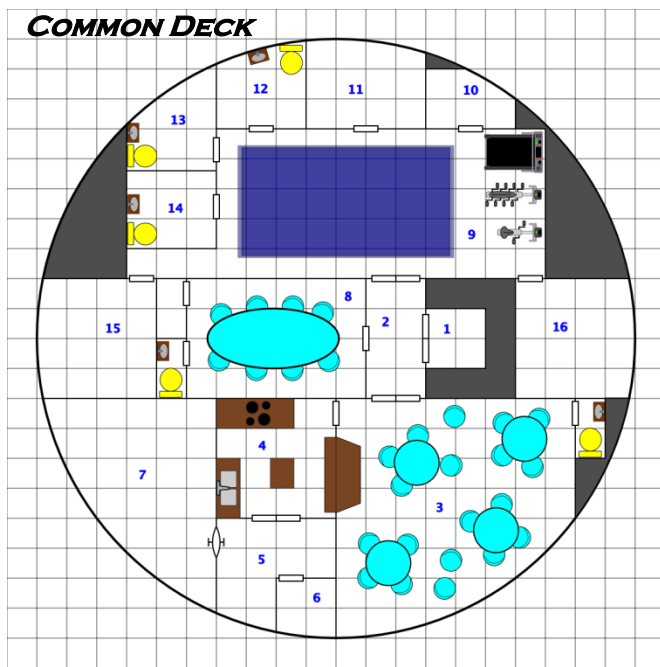
PASSENGER DECK



- Elevator** - This is the main elevator shaft that run through the entire ship.
- Hallway** - This is the main hallway on this level that connects all the cabins.
- Lifeboat** - The ship's lifeboat is located on this level.
- Crew Cabin** - A double bunk crew cabin.
- Crew Cabin** - A double bunk crew cabin.
- Crew Cabin** - A double bunk crew cabin.
- Passenger Cabin** - A single bed stateroom.
- Passenger Cabin** - A single bed stateroom.
- Passenger Cabin** - A single bed stateroom.
- Passenger Cabin** - A single bed stateroom.
- Passenger Cabin** - A single bed stateroom.
- Passenger Cabin** - A single bed stateroom.
- Passenger Cabin** - A single bed stateroom.
- Small Passenger Lounge** - This room has tables and chairs and is a small lounge area for passengers and/or crew.
- Small Recreation Room** - A small recreation room with a treadmill and an exercise bike. Both can be stored away and off the floor mat if the room is to be used for general exercising.

COMMON DECK

This deck is the main social area onboard the ship. Containing the galley, a small conference room and a larger recreation area, this is where the crew and passengers spend a majority of their off-time when not in their rooms. In addition, the main systems for two of the ships laser batteries are located on this level as well.



1. **Elevator** - This is the main elevator shaft that run through the entire ship.
2. **Hallway** - This is the main hallway on this level it primarily serves as a thoroughfare between the lounge/dining hall and the recreation room which take up the majority of this level.
3. **Dining Hall/Lounge** - This is the main dining room/common area of the ship. Connected to the galley, it can comfortably seat up to twenty beings at one time.
4. **Galley** - This is the ship's galley where all the food is prepared.
5. **Pantry** - The ship's pantry were dry goods, kitchen ware and miscellaneous foodstuffs are stored.
6. **Cold Storage** - This room is used for storing items that need to be refrigerated or frozen. The entire room is kept refrigerated and a small section is also a walk in freezer.
7. **Hydroponics** - This hydroponics garden is used to grow all of the fresh fruit and vegetables served on the ship. It is also connected to the life support system to help scrub the air by using up some of the generated carbon dioxide and producing oxygen. The room is separated by the rest of the ship via a pressure door so that the room can remain pressurized in the event that the ship needs to be depressurized for combat.
8. **Conference room** - This conference room can hold up to eight beings and is used for smaller private meetings. Large "all hands" meeting are held in the dining area.

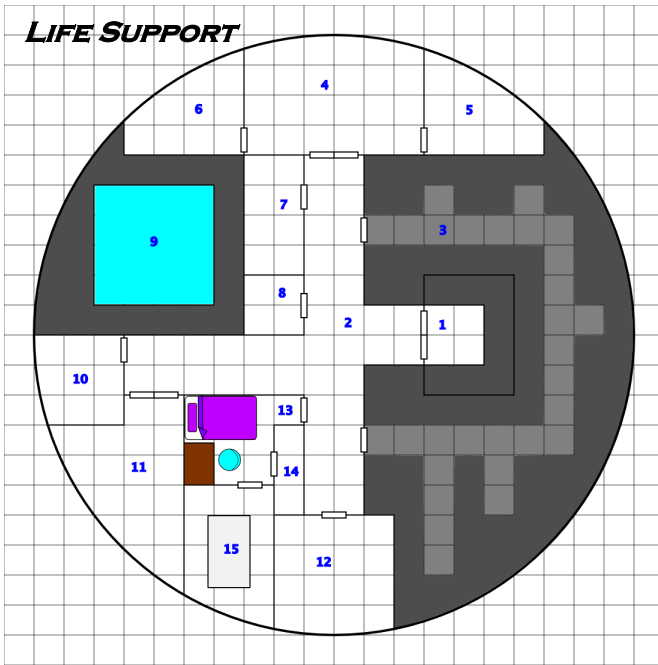
9. **Recreation area** - This room has a large floor mat and a variety of exercise equipment that can be used by the passengers and crew.
10. **Storage** - This storage area is used to hold equipment, games, and other items used in the rec room when they are not currently in use.
11. **Steam room/sauna** - This room can be used either as a steam bath or as a sauna for relaxation as desired.
12. **Changing room** - This room contains changing facilities as well as a shower that can be used before or after using the rec room or steam bath/sauna.
13. **Changing room** - This room contains changing facilities as well as a shower that can be used before or after using the rec room or steam bath/sauna.
14. **Changing room** - This room contains changing facilities as well as a shower that can be used before or after using the rec room or steam bath/sauna.
15. **Laser Battery 1** - This is the main machinery for one of the ships laser batteries. The door to this room is secured with a level 5 lock only accessible by the relevant crew.
16. **Laser Battery 2** - This is the main machinery for one of the ships laser batteries. The door to this room is secured with a level 5 lock only accessible by the relevant crew.

LIFE SUPPORT AND WEAPONS DECK

This deck houses the primary life support system for the Nightwind as well as its remaining weapon and defensive systems. It also contains a small medical bay that can be used if needed during a journey. This level can only be accessed by authorized crew members.

1. **Elevator** - This is the main elevator shaft that run through the entire ship.
2. **Hallway** - This is the main hallway on this level that connects all the rooms.
3. **Primary Life Support** - This is the main life support system. It is filled with a variety of pumps, filters and fans to move and clean the water and air for the ship and recycle wastes. There is a maze of accessways through the machinery to allow for maintenance and replacement of parts. The equipment extends extensively up and down into the spaces between this level and the ones above and below it.
4. **Rocket Battery** - This room contains the ships rocket battery launcher.

LIFE SUPPORT



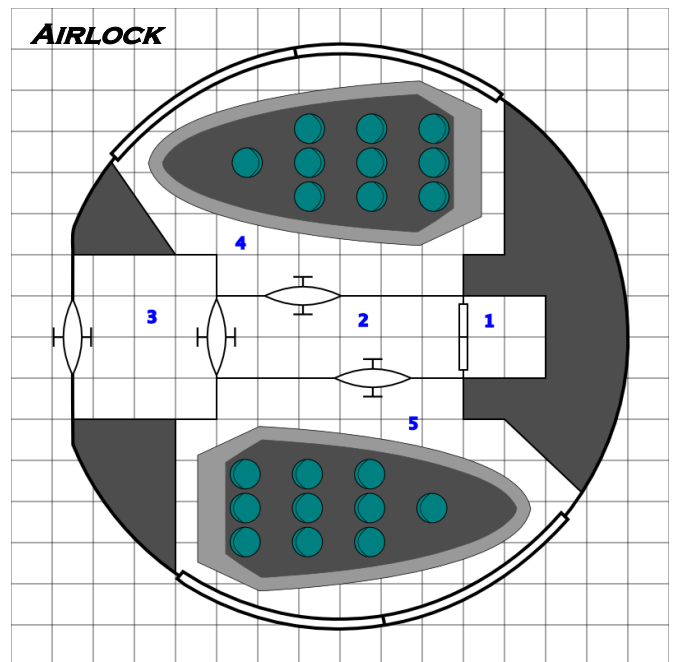
5. **Rocket Battery Salvo Storage** - This room contains the rockets for salvos 1 and 3 of the ship's rocket battery.
6. **Rocket Battery Salvo Storage** - This room contains the rockets for salvos 2 and 4 of the ship's rocket battery.
7. **Masking Screen Pump System** - This contains the high pressure pumps for the masking screen system that pushes the water from the storage tank (area 9) to the dispersal nozzles around the ship.
8. **Weapon's Locker** - This is where the ship's personal weapons are stored as well as any weapons brought on board by crew or passengers.
9. **Masking Screen Water Storage** - This is a large holding tank that holds the water for the two charges of the ships Masking Screen. It is isolated from the interior of the ship and refilled via a connection valve on the ship's exterior when in port. It is also possible in an emergency to connect this tank to the life support system to provide extra water for the ship's crew and passengers. In this situation, the Masking Screen cannot be used as a defense.
10. **ICM Launcher** - This room houses the launcher for the ship's ICM battery.
11. **ICM Missile Storage** - This room holds the missiles that are launched from the ICM battery. It contains enough missiles for eight salvos.

12. **Laser Battery 3** - This room holds the machinery for the ship's third laser battery.
13. **Medical Bay** - This room hold a small medical bay that can be used as an exam room and patient room as needed. Medical skills used here gain a +5% bonus.
14. **Medical Storage** - This room hold various medical supplies to support the medical bay.
15. **Operating Room** - A clean sterile room for performing emergency surgeries as needed. Medical skills used here gain a +5% bonus.

AIRLOCK & VEHICLES DECK

This smaller deck is located at the neck of the ship and contains the ship's main airlock and to bays for holding its two large 10 person launches.

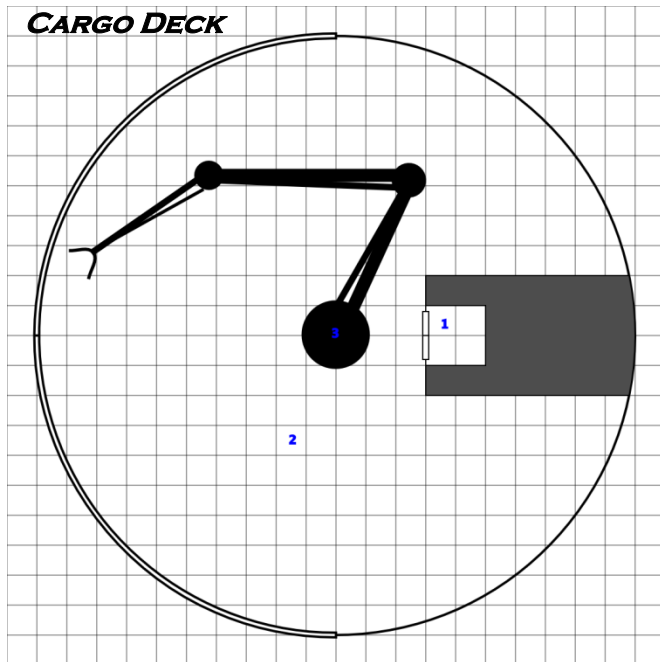
AIRLOCK



1. **Elevator** - This is the main elevator shaft that run through the entire ship.
2. **Hallway** - This is the main hallway on this level that connects all the rooms.
3. **Airlock** - This airlock is capable of passing up to a dozen beings at one time.
4. **Launch Bay 1** - This room contains one of the ship's two launches. The outer wall of the ship swings open to allow the launch to leave.
5. **Launch Bay 2** - This room contains one of the ship's two launches. The outer wall of the ship swings open to allow the launch to leave.

CARGO DECKS

This is the layout of the ship's four cargo decks. Each is simply a large open space for storing cargo with elevator access. Each cargo bay has a large cargo arm that is capable of loading cargo from outside the ship into the bay. The arm moves along a central pillar as needed.

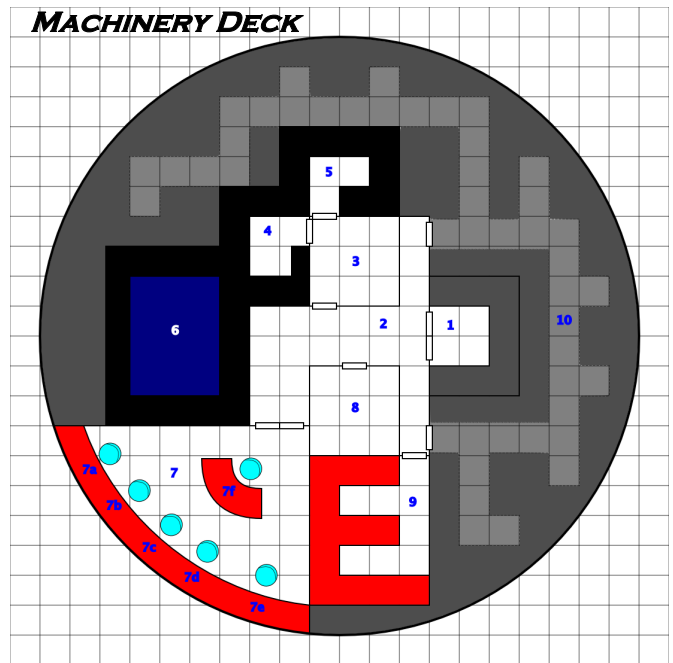


1. **Elevator** - This is the main elevator shaft that run through the entire ship.
2. **Cargo Area** - The majority of this level is taken up by open space for storing cargo.
3. **Cargo Arm** - This cargo arm moves up and down on a central column and can extend well beyond the cargo bay doors when open to load material from outside the ship. The arm can be controlled via controls located outside the elevator doors or from the engineering deck. The arms are capable of reaching any point in the cargo bay area.

MACHINERY DECK

This deck is home to most of the backup systems on the Nightwind. Access is restricted to authorized crew members. This deck also houses a small nuclear reactor that provides power to the ship whenever the engines are off-line. It is equivalent to a Class A atomic drive.

1. **Elevator** - This is the main elevator shaft that run through the entire ship.
2. **Hallway** - This is the main hallway on this level that connects all the rooms.

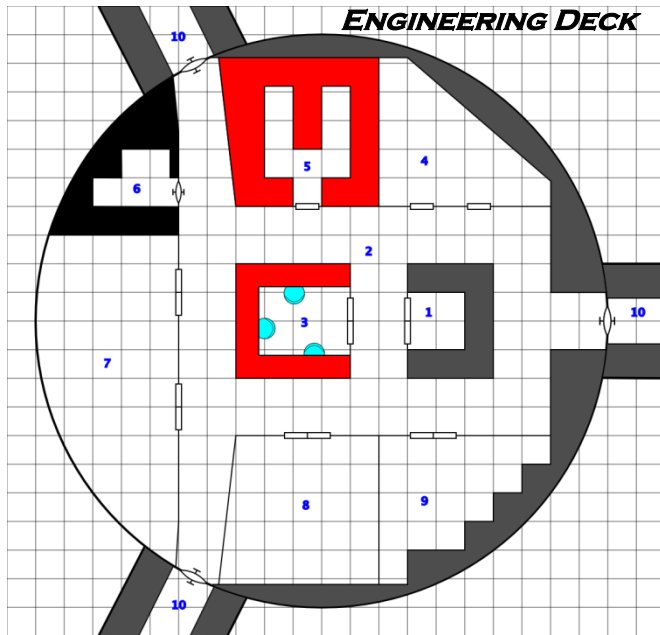


3. **Reactor Control** - This room houses the main controls for the ship's reactor.
4. **Reactor Fueling** - This room houses the mechanism to add fuel to the reactor and remove spent fuel.
5. **Fuel Storage** - This room is used to hold extra fuel for the reactor that is not currently being used.
6. **Power Reactor** - This is the power reactor proper. It is basically self-contained and isolated from the rest of the ship. The reactor, along with the fuel storage and fuel loading rooms are heavily shielded to contain the radiation from the fuel.
7. **Auxiliary Bridge** - This is the auxiliary bridge. The ship can be run from here just as it can from the primary bridge. The stations here are:
 - 7a - Laser Battery Control
 - 7b - Laser Battery Control
 - 7c - Laser Battery Control
 - 7d - Rocket Battery Battery Control
 - 7e - Astrogation/Sensors Control
 - 7f - Captain's Station
8. **General Storage**
9. **Backup Computer** - This is a complete backup computer with all the same programs and data as the main computer. It is kept constantly in sync with the main system and can take over at any time as needed.
10. **Backup Life Support** - This is the backup life support system. Like the primary system it is capable of supporting thirty-five beings. It can be switched on in place of the primary system or can be run simultaneously if needed

allowing the ship to support up to seventy beings in an emergency.

ENGINEERING DECK

This is the engineering deck of the Nightwind and contains the engine access passages, a machine and robotics shops as well as storage and the ship's main computer.

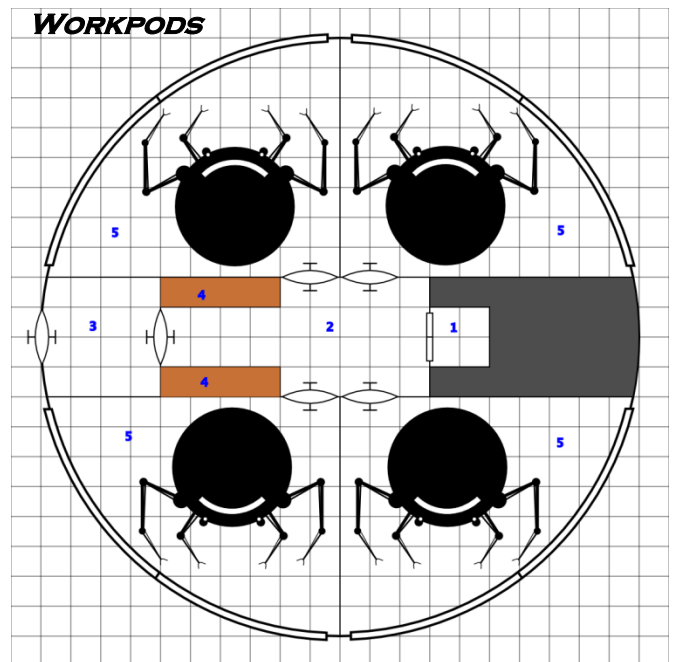


1. **Elevator** - This is the main elevator shaft that run through the entire ship.
2. **Hallway** - This is the main hallway on this level that connects all the rooms. It is wide and open to allow for the movement of large pieces of machinery if needed.
3. **Engineering Control** - This houses the control stations for the engineers and allows them to monitor all the ships equipment and the engines.
4. **Storage** - This storage room is used to house materials and parts for ship repairs and general maintenance.
5. **Main Computer** - This is the ships main computer system.
6. **Engine Fuel Storage** - This room is shielded like the rooms on the Machinery Deck and designed to hold extra fuel for the ships engines.
7. **General Storage**
8. **Machine Shop** - This is a complete machine shop and can be used to manufacture just about any mechanical part that may be needed for the ship.

9. **Robotics Shop** - This is a complete robotics workshop used to maintain and repair the ship's robots. Any robotics skills used here gain a +5% bonus.
10. **Engine Access Tunnels** These passageways slope down from the engineering deck through the engine struts to allow access to the engines from inside the ship when performing repairs and overhauls.

AIRLOCK & WORKPOD DECK

This deck contains the ship's secondary airlock and houses its four workpods. The workpods are used both for ship repairs and maintenance and can be used for cargo loading as well as they easily fit within the cargo bays.



1. **Elevator** - This is the main elevator shaft that run through the entire ship.
2. **Hallway** - This is the main hallway on this level that connects all the cabins.
3. **Secondary Airlock** - This airlock is actually slightly larger than the main airlock and can accommodate up to fifteen beings or, as it is more commonly used, large machinery parts.
4. **Spacesuit lockers** - The lockers here can hold up to eight space suits.
5. **Workpod Bay** - Each of these bays hold one of the ship's workpods.

MAKE A RUN FOR IT

Tom Stephens

Welcome to Knight Hawks Encounters. Knight Hawks Encounters will be a regular feature of the Frontier Explorer where we present one or more encounter setups for the Knight Hawks board game.

Typically these will be small stand-alone scenarios that you can set up and play in an hour or two. If the issue includes a new ship, as this one does (CSS Nightwind, p30), at least one of the scenarios will focus around the new ship to see how it performs in the game. Others may come from a hypothetical setup up and play of the Second Sathar War Strategy game from the Star Frontiers Knight Hawks Campaign book (pp. 55-60). Others may be created just for fun.

If you have ideas for scenarios to include, feel free to send in ideas to the submission queue of the magazine on our website.

SHIP STATISTICS

CSS NIGHTWIND

HP: 42 ADF: 3 MR: 3 DCR: 60

Weapons: LB(x3), RB(x4)

Defenses: RH, MS(x2), ICM(x8)

CORVETTE

HP: 25 ADF: 3 MR: 3 DCR: 45

Weapons: LC, LB

Defenses: RH, MS(x2)

ASSAULT SCOUT

HP: 15 ADF: 5 MR: 4 DCR: 50

Weapons: LB, AR(x4)

Defenses: RH

CARGO DELIVERY

A scenario to highlight the capabilities of the CSS Nightwind class ships.

BACKGROUND

The CSS Nightwind is on its way back from Voltornus to Triad with a hold full of valuable ore purchased on Voltornus. Streel would love to get its hands on Cassidine Development Corporation's new armed freighter to study its design. As it passes through the Truane's Star system, a trio of Streel ships, disguised as pirates, attack the Nightwind and its escort as they are passing through the outer part of the system. No help is available, the CDC ships will have to survive and make their escape on their own.

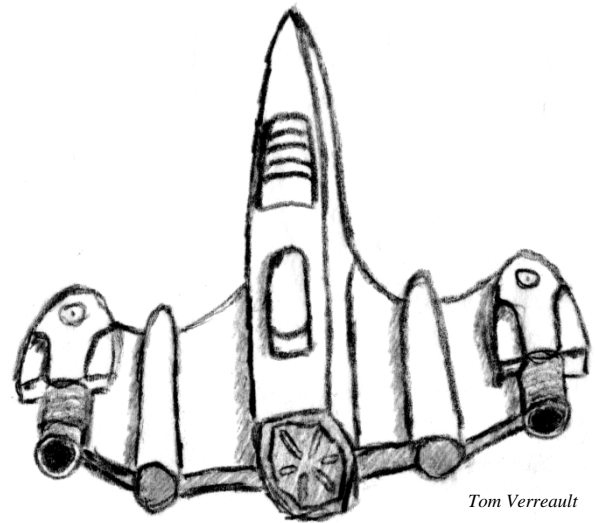
ORDER OF BATTLE

CDC SHIPS

- CSS Nightwind
- 1 standard Assault Scout

STREEL SHIPS

- 1 corvette
- 2 standard Assault Scouts



Tom Verreault

SETUP

The CDC player sets up first along one of the short sides of the map. The two CDC ships can be placed anywhere within five hexes of the map edge. After setting up the ships, the CDC player declares the ships' starting speed. They may be moving at any speed up to 15 hexes per turn but both must be traveling at the same speed.

After the CDC player sets up, the Streel player sets up his ships along the other short edge of the map. Again,

the ships can be placed anywhere within five hexes of the map edge. The Streel player then declares the starting speed for his ships. Like the CDC ships, the Streel ships must all be moving at the same speed and their speed cannot exceed the CDC ships' speed by more than 5 hexes per turn.

SPECIAL RULES

SELECTIVE TARGETING

Allow the Selective Targeting skill to be used from the Knight Hawks skill descriptions. Player's may choose to target a specific ship system (such as engines or specific weapons) instead of rolling randomly on the Damage Table. To use the selective targeting ability the chance to hit is reduced by 30%.

ESCAPING FROM BATTLE

The Nightwind is considered to have escaped from battle if it a) moves off of the opposite edge of the map from which it started with no ships in pursuit or b) is moving faster than any remaining Streel ships and has an ADF that is higher or equal to the remaining Streel ships.

SHIFTING THE MAP

This scenario has the potential to be a running battle. If a ship is being pursued and is in danger of moving off an edge of the map, then all ships should be shifted to move the battle back towards the center of the map. Alternately, additional pieces of hex paper can be used to extend the map.

CAPTURING THE NIGHTWIND

To capture the Nightwind, the Nightwind has to be reduced to 0 ADF and MR and a Streel ships has to match speed and direction for two turns. If this condition is met, then the Nightwind is considered captured by the Streel player.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

STREEL VICTORY

The Streel player wins if he can capture the Nightwind and destroy the Nightwind's escort.

CDC VICTORY

The CDC player wins if he either destroys all of the Streel ships or the Nightwind escapes from the battle.

If the Nightwind is destroyed, the game is a draw.

HOPELESSLY OUTGUNNED

Opening shots of the Second Sathar War.

BACKGROUND

Late in FY 80 several small fleets of Sathar warships swarmed into the Frontier from a variety of directions. The lone armed station at Kwadi-Kit (K'tsa-Kar) was quickly overwhelmed by the Sathar fleet that appeared in that system. That fleet then headed toward White Light. Another similar fleet appeared in the Kizk'-Kar system headed toward Zik-Kit. The two Assault Scouts of the Zik-Kit militia, as well as the armed station orbiting the planet, waited for the onslaught, knowing that they were hopelessly outgunned by the approaching Sathar ships. The best they could hope for was to get away to join with other ships to make a better stand somewhere else or maybe take one of the Sathar with them if they were destroyed.



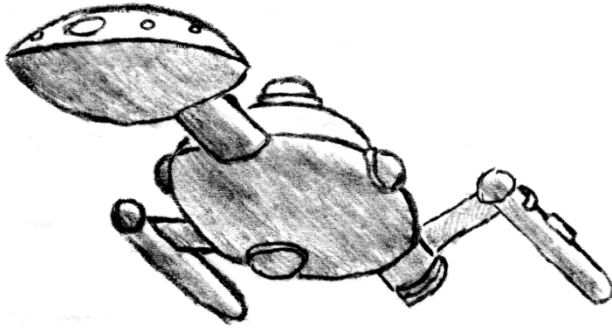
ORDER OF BATTLE

MILITIA SHIPS

- 2 Assault Scouts
- Armed Station

SATHAR SHIPS

- Frigate
- 2 Destroyers
- Light Cruiser
- Heavy Cruiser



Tom Verreault

SHIP STATISTICS

ASSAULT SCOUT

HP: 15 ADF: 5 MR: 4 DCR: 50

Weapons: LB, AR(x4)

Defenses: RH

ARMED STATION

HP: 80 ADF: 0 MR: 0 DCR: 75

Weapons: LB, RB(x6)

Defenses: RH, MS(x2), ICM(x6)

FRIGATE

HP: 40 ADF: 4 MR: 3 DCR: 70

Weapons: LC, LB, RB(x4), T(x2)

Defenses: RH, MS(x2), ICM(x4)

DESTROYER

HP: 50 ADF: 3 MR: 3 DCR: 75

Weapons: LC, LB, EB, RB(x4), T(x2)

Defenses: RH, MS(x2), ICM(x5)

LIGHT CRUISER

HP: 70 ADF: 3 MR: 2 DCR: 100

Weapons: DC, LB, EB, PB, RB(x8), T(x4)

Defenses: RH, ES, SS, ICM(x8)

HEAVY CRUISER

HP: 80 ADF: 2 MR: 1 DCR: 120

Weapons: DC, LB(x2), PB, EB, RB(x8), T(x4), S(x2)

Defenses: RH, ES, PS, SS, ICM(x8)

SETUP

The Sathar player declares which side of the map the Sathar ships will be entering from.

The Militia player then places a planet marker in the center of the map and places the Armed Station in orbit around it. They then place the two militia assault

scouts anywhere on the map and declare their initial speeds up to a maximum of 10 hexes per turn.

Once the militia ships are placed the Sathar player then places their ships within five hexes of the side of the map they declared to be entering from. The ships can be moving at any speed up to 15 hexes per turn but all ships must be moving at the same speed.

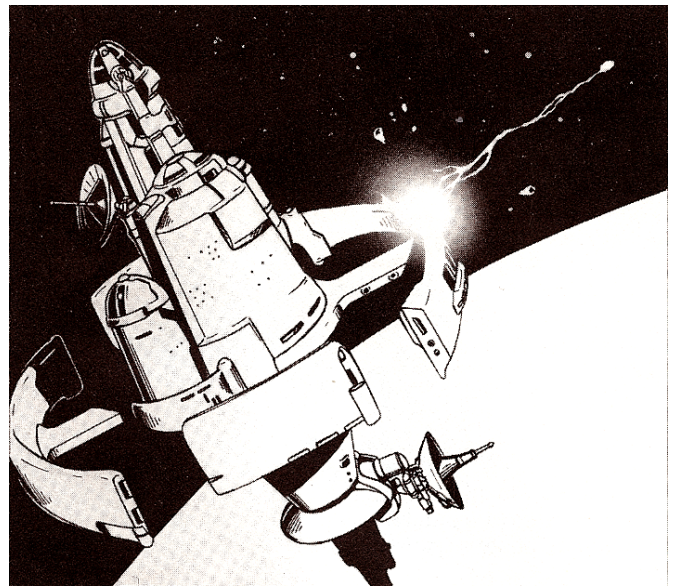
SPECIAL RULES

DEFENDING HOME TURF

Militia ships cannot just turn and run but must make some effort to defend their home worlds. A militia ship cannot attempt to escape from battle until they have fired at least one shot at the invading ships.

ESCAPING FROM BATTLE

A ship is considered to have escaped from battle if it moves off any edge of the map with a) no ships in pursuit or b) is out of weapon range and has a higher ADF than any pursuing ships.



VICTORY CONDITIONS

SATHAR VICTORY

The sathar can claim victory if they can destroy both the militia ships and station before any ships can escape and don't lose a single ship.

MILITIA VICTORY

The militia can claim victory if either a) both militia ships escape the onslaught, or b) they can destroy a sathar ship before both ships and the station are destroyed.

If only one militia ship escapes and no sathar ships are destroyed, the game is a draw.

DON'T GO IN THE WATER

Tom Verreault

In role playing games most of the challenges stem from puzzles, skill challenges, and combat. The Hazardous Environments and Weather series was conceived to provide game masters details on environment related challenges. Each article in this series has a theme this one focuses on all things water.

Note that life jackets are an oft overlooked equipment item from the basic equipment list. It is appropriate for the boats that are available for player use to be stocked with life jackets. It's almost certain that insurance carriers will require them on commercial vessels transporting passengers.

TIDAL BORE

Tidal bores require particular geographic features in order to occur. They must have a large tidal range, at least six meters between high and low water and a narrow inlet. When the strong tidal surge forces its way into a river or bay it creates a large wave or waves sweeping in against the current of the river or bay. A tidal bore's identifying features are turbulence and a roar. Large bores can be hazardous to shipping (requires a ship handling check for boats).

The occurrence of this phenomenon is by referee fiat and could be used as an extra wrinkle to an otherwise placid river crossing or to spice up a combat taking place in a shallow inlet. A tidal bore can travel between 6-15 meters/turn (1d5 + 10). A referee can assign a strength value to the tidal bore or roll a d5. Any character caught in turbulence must make a DEX check modified by 10% times the strength of the tidal bore to keep his feet. If a character loses his feet he takes damage for one turn from being rolled in the turbulence at 1d5 times the strength of the bore. A successful STA check cuts the damage in half. Characters that lose their footing will be pushed along with the wave, requiring a STR check just to swim in a direction desired by the player.

WHIRLPOOL

Whirlpools are not normally powerful and are usually produced in narrow shallow straits with fast moving current or at the foot of a powerful waterfall. Powerful

ones are known as maelstroms. Among the most powerful maelstroms on Earth, speeds of 37 km/h (23 mph) have been observed. The danger is to swimmers not to ships. Tales of large ships being sucked down are entirely works of fiction.

Should characters ever find themselves in water near a maelstrom or whirlpool they should make a STR check at the time they would first come within the area of effect of the vortex. On a failed check they are pulled into the vortex and have 1d5 turns before being pulled under. On the turn after a character first feels the vortex and fails a STR check he can make a second STR check to swim out or be sucked deeper. After that he's too deep to swim out and requires rescue by rope or branch.

A character pulled under will be churned in the water for 1d5 combat turns taking 1d5 STA hits per turn. He must hold his breath for the entire experience but if reduced to 0 STA he has drowned and will require immediate medical attention. Any character race with lungs will require basic rescue breathing technique that all characters are assumed to know. The game procedure to preform rescue breathing is to make a STA check against the unmodified score for each turn of rescue breathing to revive the character. If a medic is on hand revival is automatic with rescue breathing and shot of stimdose. Dralasites simply require basic first aid (stimdose) since they have no lungs to fill with water.

Use of a rope provides a character a +20 bonus to the STR check to avoid being sucked into a maelstrom's vortex. A character with a life jacket will surface one turn after being sucked under. A dralasite with foresight to prepare can spend 10 minutes inflating his body with air pockets that will act like a life jacket.

WATER SPOUT

Not normally as strong as their land counterparts, water spouts are best described as non-supercell tornados over water. They have long been recognized as a serious threat to swimmers, boats, and helicopters. Water spouts are more common in the tropics but have

been observed in temperate latitudes as well as in conjunction with lake effect snow.

A water spout occurs when an updraft column of swirling air forms over water. It does not suck up water but instead condenses water droplets within the column from the surrounding air. Its life cycle follows five stages. A character with the appropriate environmental or meteorological skill has a chance to identify the formation of a water spout by skill check during the first three stages but after that it's obvious what is happening. First stage is a dark spot on the water. The second stage is a spiral pattern on the surface of the water. The third stage is the formation of a spray ring. The fourth stage is the development of the visible condensation funnel. The final stage is decay. A referee has a lot of flexibility in the length of each stage. If the time scale is combat turns then each stage can take several turns. If the time scale is ten minute turns then the water spout can completely form and decay in that time frame. The shortest stage is the decay stage. I would recommend keeping the first three stages brief and getting to stage four which is more dramatic, allow for a variable amount of time for the condensation funnel to last from minutes to hours (d10 minutes or 1-2 hours).

When using the water spout to challenge and threaten player characters, use the grenade bounce table to move it each turn a variable distance 2-20 meters. Characters and boats within 10 meters take 1d10 STA or structural points of damage. Characters or boats hit by the water spout take 2d10 STA or structural points of damage. Helicopters suffer the above effects as well and require a pilot skill check. If the check fails, the helicopter spins out of control losing 40m/turn of height (requires a skill check each turn to recover). Helicopters hit by the water spout take double damage and the pilot skill check is -20%.

RIP TIDE

The proper name is rip current, which is a strong current flowing seaward from the shore. To escape a rip current a swimmer must swim perpendicular to the current or parallel to shore. The rules for swimming and swimming endurance should be reviewed from the rule book though a character with a lifejacket will survive automatically. This challenge is suitable along ocean beaches but a planet without a moon will not have a tidal effect making a rip current unlikely.

HURRICANE

Hurricanes are known by several names depending on their location or strength: typhoon, tropical storm,

cyclonic storm, or tropical depression. They originate in the tropics and can move great distances in a matter of days. The area of a hurricane is divided into the dangerous semicircle and the navigable semicircle based on direction of travel with the right half being the most destructive.

The effects of a hurricane include large waves, heavy rainfall, storm surge, lowered ocean surface temperatures (after it passes), flooding, tornadoes, geomorphology (reshaping the geography of coastal areas), and defoliation of tree canopies as well as stripping bark and limbs which fuels forest fires (one such occurrence led to a 3 month forest fire in 1989).

A hurricane is suitable as a backdrop for an adventure with adjustments made for effects and closeness of the hurricane. It is very likely the players will have prior warning especially on any settled world with satellites. Communication networks will actively keep the population apprised of the situation and an emergency warning from the government is to be expected before the worst effects hit. As a backdrop for an adventure it can add extra flavor and complications. High winds can reduce visibility and degrade the performance of certain weapons. Storm surge can complicate combat or a rescue. Loss of power and other services could hamper the player characters in the pursuit of their mission.

TIDAL WAVE/ TSUNAMI

Tsunami is Japanese for harbor wave. Tsunami's occur when large volumes of water are displaced by earthquakes, mudslides, glacier calving, underwater volcanic eruptions, underwater explosions, or a comet or meteor strike in the ocean.

An early warning sign is the rapid withdrawal of water from the shore line. Within minutes the wave will rise up like a wall as it transverses shallows and flood kilometers inland.

Tsunamis are incredibly destructive killing hundreds of thousands and destroying property indiscriminately. For this reason they are unsuitable to unleash directly on the player characters but can be used as a plot device. If player characters are on a ship when a tsunami hits they can be driven inland and the ship beached on a hill, building or some other geographic feature. If far enough out at sea the ship may weather the wave but the player characters may be called on to render assistance to survivors on shore. A classic option but likely unrealistic, would be if a ship was capsized by a tidal wave, as in the movie "The Poseidon Adventure", requiring the players to effect their escape from the ship before it eventually sinks.

STORM SURGE

Storm surge occurs when strong storm winds cause the oceans tide to pile up higher than the normal tide and flood onto land. The area of flooding will largely be determined by the topography of the coast but a referee can roll 1d10 up to 5d10 for the number of meters that the surge floods. Or if his judgment is that the topography of his map dictates a particular effect, he can simply go with his best judgment.

The effect will flood coastal areas and damage buildings and vehicles. Do not neglect the effects of salt water to cause long term problems with vehicles and equipment. Characters caught in the flooding of the storm surge could be required to make a DEX check to maintain their footing or be swept 2-10 meters either inland or out to sea (determine direction randomly at first then alternate direction each turn). If they have been swept off their feet they need to make a DEX check at -10 each turn to regain them and cannot act normally until they do. Alternately a character may make a RS check to grab a fixed object and halt his movement then the next turn he may make DEX check at +10 to regain his feet. In addition any character that has managed to grab a fixed object can opt to shoot a weapon at -10 instead of standing immediately. If swept out to sea they must swim for shore but risk being driven into objects on land with the next surge (1d10 STA hits if this happens).

This challenge is less of a threat and more of a hindrance to the character. It's best used as an added complication while other things are happening like combat.

ROGUE WAVE

Once thought to be myth, rogue waves are now known to occur in all the world's oceans, seas, and in the Great Lakes. They typically occur far out at sea spontaneously and move against the expected flow of the prevailing currents. Waves in mid ocean storms can range from 7-15 meters but a rogue wave can reach

35 meters (115 ft.). Ships encountering such waves are unlikely to survive due to the pressure the breaking wave exerts (142 PSI). It would be expected that a ship caught by this wave will sink in minutes.

In game terms, there would be little to no notice before the wave struck and the characters on board a ship would have up to 10 minutes to escape. Since it is bad form to just kill player characters without giving them a chance to survive, I recommend giving some notice even if it's a non-player character screaming into the intercom, "Rogue WAVE!" The event can also be foreshadowed by a crusty old sailor telling tall tales about killer waves to put the players on notice.

There is no point in giving a damage statistic for what the wave will do other than simply saying that it sinks ships, period. Then again, miracles have been known to happen so giving a large ocean going ship a percentage chance to survive is probably not inappropriate in a role playing game. However, the chance should be small, around 5-25%. The rogue wave is a drastic measure and probably best reserved as a plot device instead of a real challenge. Characters escaping a ship going down in this situation will be scattered about and unlikely to link up at all and this will result in a split party. One option would be for the player characters to respond to a ship in distress and when they get there by helicopter the wave takes down

the ship and the players must rescue crew in the water.

CONCLUSION

Some weather and environment effects are suitable as an added layer of challenge for the player characters during the course of a regular adventure. Others result in such a level of devastation that they are only suitable as plot devices and backdrop for the adventure. They are all presented here as tools for the game master to change up a game or throw a monkey wrench at the players. So often the challenge in a game is combat based but dealing with hostile weather can play a role as a challenge especially when it's necessary to limit violence, particularly when gaming with children.



[She Fell In](#) – Caitlin Turpin ([Alice-chan](#) on Deviant Art)



PUBLICATION DETAILS

The Frontier Explorer will be a quarterly magazine, with a new issue out every three months. The magazine will be primarily distributed electronically in PDF format but we plan on making a printed version available also. The goal is to keep each issue relatively small, less than 50 pages. This is to keep both our editorial work down for each issue as well as to limit the cost of the print version if you want it in that format.

In addition, we plan on doing at least one "special" issue each year, either a full up module, a special themed issue or some other item that doesn't fit into the standard format. If the support from the community allows, both in terms of editorial help and submissions, we will increase the frequency of releases.

The Frontier Explorer will be available both from our website (PDF version only) or from the DriveThruRPG website (<http://rpg.drivethroughstuff.com>) which will have both the PDF and print versions.

GENERAL CONTENT

Each issue will have a variety of content although not every type of content will appear in every issue. The only "regular" features will be the Letter from the Editors on the Table of Contents page, the Frontier News page and the back cover comic. Beyond that anything is possible. There will be ship deck plans, adventure locations, optional rules, and general gaming articles like you found here in issue 1. Additional types of articles will include general astronomy articles, character archetypes, NPC characters, and anything else you or we can think of.

SPECIAL ISSUES

One of the things we're excited about is the "Special Issues". Often these will be collections of articles and/or fiction focused on a specific topic. An example could be "Ships of the Rim" which would contain a number of articles with complete deck plans and specifications for several new ship designs, possibly unique to the races of the Rim, that could be added to your campaign. We have a couple of ideas for these

issues already, plus the one above I just pulled out of the air as I was writing this. If you have suggestions or ideas, please let us know.

Another type of "special issue" that we will be producing is full modules. The *Mooks Without Number* article (p15) is actually the first of a series of related adventures and encounters set on the CMFS Venture. Other adventures in the series that continue the story will come in later issues. Once they are all done, we'll take the set, compile it into a single volume, clean up any details if needed, and make it available as a complete adventure module. If you have ideas for module and would like to produce it in this format, let us know and we'll work out the details with you on getting it into the magazine and into print.

FEEDBACK

We want to hear from you. Let us know what you liked and what didn't work in this issue and in issues to come. You can reach us via the contact form on the website or by posting in the discussion forums on the site as well. Finally you can also just send an e-mail to editors@frontierexplorer.org. Future issues will have some sort of "letters to the editor" section if there is enough response and comments to warrant it so feel free to sound off.

THE WEBSITE

You've probably already found the magazine's website in order to download issue 1. If not, you can find it at <http://frontierexplorer.org>. In addition to providing download links for the various issues, the site allows you to submit new content and provides several additional resources.

FORUMS

There are forums for discussing the articles and providing feedback. These are public discussion forums but they do require you to be registered with the site in order to post. The forums are organized by issue type (magazine, module, special issue) and by issue. Plus there is a forum for general discussions as well.

ON-LINE VERSION

In addition to the PDF version of the magazine available for download, we have each issue of the magazine in HTML format for referencing on-line and linking to from other sites. Each article will be on its own page and these will be organized into on-line books for you to browse. In addition, where appropriate, these articles will be cross linked, wiki style.

HIGH RESOLUTION DOWNLOADS

The website also contains a special hi-res download section. Many of the maps, diagrams, and images that end up in the magazine can't be reproduced at their full resolution or size and have to be scaled down to fit on the page. Many of these maps are designed to be printed and used with counters or miniatures. And sometimes you just want the full resolution picture. The hi-res download section of the web site will provide the full sized version of each item so that you can get it in all its glory.

SITE REGISTRATION

Unless you want to post in the forums, you don't actually need to register at the magazine website to enjoy the magazine. The issues are free to anyone. However besides providing the ability to post in the forums, registration has a few additional benefits. By registering, you gain a "subscription" to the magazine. This means you will receive an e-mail whenever a new issue of the magazine or special issue is available. Now, I don't like getting lots of random e-mails any more than you do and this subscription channel that you are automatically signed up for will only be used to announce new issues. Plus you will be able to opt out from your user profile page if you really don't want to be informed about new issues.

If you do want a few more e-mails about other news and special events, there is also an optional news list that you can subscribe to as well when registering (or afterwards if you change your mind later). This list might see a bit more traffic but the volume will still be very low. The last thing we want is for you to consider us a spam source.

Finally, and maybe the biggest perk of registering, is advanced access to the upcoming issue. The e-mail to subscribers will actually go out a week before the issue "hits the newsstand". The issue, possibly sans the final covers or with something to denote it is an early edition, will be available for download to registered users only. The reason for this is twofold. The first is to reward our loyal readers with the edition a little

early. The second is a little more prosaic. We know some of you are amateur (and maybe professional) editors at heart and it never fails that despite our best efforts, mistakes creep in. By releasing a little early to dedicated readers, some of those errors will be found and communicated back to us. This will allow us to fix them before the official public release of the magazine and submission of files to the printer for the print version.

SUBMISSIONS

The Frontier Explorer is a community magazine. That means it will only truly flourish through community contributions. While the editors will also be writing a lot of content and have a lot of ideas for things they want to publish, we both want and need input from our readership to really make the magazine the best it can be. We don't have all, or even necessarily the best, ideas. We welcome and encourage submissions from our readers. These can be articles related to gaming, descriptions of encounters, locations, creatures, or equipment, fiction, art pieces, or anything else you can think of.

If you have something to submit, head over to the website. At the top of the left hand column on every page is a big gold "Submit New Content" button. Click on it and you will be taken to the submission form. If you want to talk to us about any issues or concerns related to your submission before sending it in, feel free to use the contact form on the site or send an e-mail to editors@frontierexplorer.org.

We only have a few absolute requirements for publication. The first is that you have permission to submit the work for publication. This usually means that it is your own creative endeavor and not something you've just found. Or that you have obtained permission from the original author to make the submission. In either case, you assume full responsibility for the content of the submission.

Second, the material must not have been published elsewhere in a copyrighted format such that we can't use it. If it is your work and you've published it before and want to publish it again here, we can do that as long as there are no copyright issues with the previous publication. Beyond that, everything is fair game and we look forward to helping you get your material out to the community.

While those are the only *requirements*, we do have some guidelines (see below). And while you don't have to follow the guidelines, doing so will both improve the probability of getting the material published as well as

speed up the publication process. Our time is limited. The more you can do to help get your article or art ready for publication, the easier it will be for us to include it, and the more likely it will be published sooner rather than later.

ATTRIBUTION AND COPYRIGHT

One of the goals of the magazine is to provide a venue for authors and artists to showcase their work. We want to give you credit for the work you've done. Part of the submission process is to provide us with the information we need to properly credit your efforts. We will publish your work under whatever byline you wish, either your real name or a pen name if you prefer.

Although Frontier Explorer is publishing the material, you retain the copyright to the material itself. We don't require you to give that up. The magazine will hold the copyright on the actual printed form and layout of the particular publication but you retain all rights to the actual words and/or images and can reprint it elsewhere if you desire.

If the material is not your own but you have permission from the copyright holder to make the submission, please include that permission with your submission. We don't want to have any issues along these lines and if there is any doubt it will delay the publication of the material until we get it figured out.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Full details on what is and isn't acceptable content can be found on the magazine's website in the submission guidelines document (linked from the submissions page). However the basic rule is keep it clean and remember that this is a family friendly magazine. Many long time players (including the editors) play with their kids. If it is something we wouldn't want them seeing or reading, it probably won't make it into print.

ARTICLE GUIDELINES

Submissions should be in an editable format, ideally a Word or Open Office document but even a simple text file would work. If you are using a word processor to prepare the document, just use the default fonts (unless the special font is part of the article's content) and use heading levels 2, 3, 4, etc. for the headings of the various sections of the article. We'll take care of getting it into the final layout but just following those rules will save us a lot of work. Full details for article formats and submission guidelines can be found on the website in our submission guideline document.

ART GUIDELINES

Art for The Frontier Explorer should be science fiction themed leaning more toward hard science than fantasy. While the primary audience for the magazine is adult, we have a goal of producing a family friendly magazine. Or at least one that we are not worried about our kids finding. To that end graphic depictions of sex, violence, or gore will be probably be rejected.

What crosses the line will be based on the subjective judgment of the editors – a famous quote from a Supreme Court case concerning obscenity comes to mind, "I know obscenity when I see it." This is not to say that all sexy characters and depictions of violence will be banned, but that individual submissions may be rejected if they feel unsuitable to the editors. If there is a question as to whether a particular piece of art is suitable please contact us via the website's contact form or e-mail us at editors@frontierexplorer.org. We will be more than happy to work with you.

As for style, we are open to just about anything. The Frontier Explorer will primarily be distributed in full color electronic PDF format. Although we will have a print version, it will be full color as well. As such we can print just about any type of artwork in the pages of the magazine. Our only caution is that in our experience with other publications, some computer rendered graphics tend to be dark and may not reproduce as well as desired or may be hard to read for those viewing the magazine on e-ink readers such as the Kindle and Nook. Keep that in mind as you are creating your art and you should be fine.

FINAL THOUGHTS

We hope you enjoyed this inaugural issue and are as excited about the new Frontier Explorer magazine as we are. We have a lot of great things planned and look forward to exploring the various frontiers we discover with you.





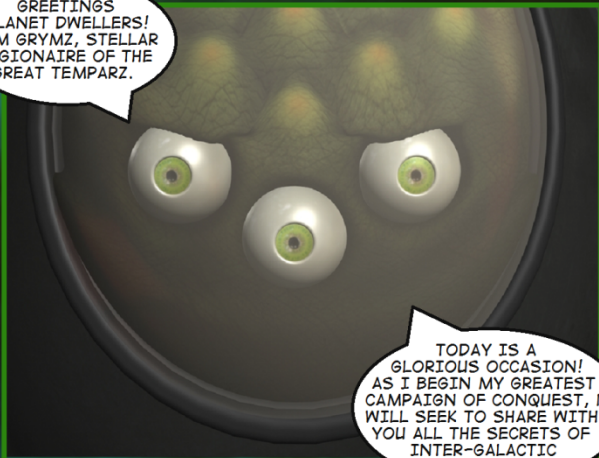
GRYMZ

GUIDE TO INTERGALACTIC CONQUEST



LESSON #1: LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION!

GREETINGS
PLANET DWELLERS!
I AM GRYMZ, STELLAR
LEGIONAIRE OF THE
GREAT TEMPARZ.



TODAY IS A
GLORIOUS OCCASION!
AS I BEGIN MY GREATEST
CAMPAIGN OF CONQUEST, I
WILL SEEK TO SHARE WITH
YOU ALL THE SECRETS OF
INTER-GALACTIC
DOMINATION!

ONE SECRET
OF COMPLETE
DOMINATION
IS, LOCATION.



YOU HAVE TO
BE ABLE TO FIND
THE RIGHT PLACE AT
JUST THE RIGHT TIME
TO ACHIEVE TOTAL
VICTORY!

TAKE FOR
EXAMPLE THIS OLD
ABANDONED ALIEN
SPACECRAFT. THIS IS
A PERFECT LOCATION
TO BEGIN MY GREAT
CAMPAIGN.

HERE INSIDE
THE GREAT DOORS
OF ITS ANCIENT HULL
LIES EVERYTHING
I WILL NEED.



...OR
AT LEAST
ENUF SCRAP
SALVAGE TO
PAY FOR THE
TRIP.

HMMMM?
IT'S USUALLY
THE RED BUTTON



CLICK!
CLICK!
CLICK!

CRAP!



BEHOLD...



CLICK!

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