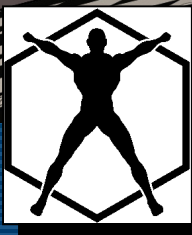


# DIGITAL HERO

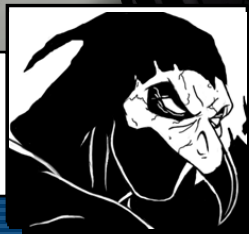
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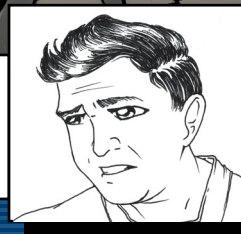


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Issue #38 (July 2006)



# When Last We Left Our Heroes...

by Steven S. Long

As we head into the summer convention season, we've got plenty of great books on the horizon for you! This month I'll touch on the next two upcoming: *Evil Unleashed* and the *Champions 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Edition*.

## EVIL UNLEASHED

In the four years since the publication of the *HERO System 5<sup>th</sup> Edition* rulebook and the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition version of *Champions*, Hero Games has published a lot of supervillains – well up in the triple digits. Many of them have been in books specifically dedicated (entirely or partially) to villains, such as *Conquerors, Killers, And Crooks, Arcane Adversaries, or Champions Worldwide*. Others have appeared in books devoted to the organizations those villains worked for or the locations they're specifically linked to, like *VIPER, DEMON, or Vibora Bay*. And some have debuted in subgenre books devoted to a particular style of superhero play, such as *Galactic Champions* or *Teen Champions*.

Not so the rest. They're scattered here and there among dozens of books as example characters, characters who often visit a specific setting but aren't restricted to it, or characters whose particular "flavor" is best suited to a given book. Thus, if you want to have the complete *Champions Universe* roster at your fingertips, you've got to own a lot of books and keep them all handy.

That's where *Evil Unleashed* comes in – it saves you the effort of carrying a lot of books to the gaming table and the time needed to look through them for the particular villain you want. It collects all those "miscellaneous" villains from other books and puts them between two covers so you only have to refer to one book when you're searching for a superpowered bad guy from a non-villain book. It includes villains from *Champions, Champions Universe, Millennium City, Vibora Bay, Champions Battlegrounds, Sharper Than A Serpent's Tooth, UNTIL, Villainy Amok*, and the *Ultimate* series of sourcebooks. It doesn't necessarily have every villain from each one of those books – for example, some of the villains in *Vibora Bay* are so closely tied to the Queen City that putting them in EU doesn't make sense. But most "miscellaneous" villains make their way into EU with no problems. Some of them have even gotten a bit of a shine and a polish, with a new power added here and there or an old one improved a little.

And since there's no good reason to pass up such a fine opportunity to expand the roster, *Evil Unleashed* adds five all-new villains to the *Champions Universe*: Stareye, Piledriver, and the Cahokian (the members of the supervillain team Merc-Force 1); the mysterious, demonsouled supermage Josiah Brimstone; and Vixen, a swift and seductive cat burglar with other goals on her mind than just robbery. So get ready to jazz up your campaign with some fresh villainy!

## CHAMPIONS 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE EDITION

*Champions* was first published in 1981, and since that was 25 years ago, it's only fitting that we mark the occasion with a special edition of the game. The *Champions 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition* is that book. It essentially combines three books into one with some added goodies, all wrapped up in a fine blue leatherette cover with a silver foil-stamped logo on the cover.

The main contents of the book are the current editions of *Champions* and *Champions Universe*, but there are two all-new sections that won't appear anywhere else but this book. The first, which opens the book, is *The Heroes Speak!*, a chapter of reminiscences, anecdotes, and testimonials about the game from people important to its history. It opens with stories from Steve Peterson, George MacDonald, and Ray Greer (the "Big Three" who created and first marketed *Champions*) talking about the early days of the development and production of the game and how things went from there. After that other game designers and people associated with *Champions* in some respect chime in, telling tales about their favorite *Champions* games or what the game has meant to them. It's a wonderful, fascinating tribute to the best roleplaying game system ever.

The other new section, which concludes the book, is *The Island Of Dr. Destroyer*, a version of the classic adventure updated to the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition rules. It includes a fully mapped-out island, details on Destroyer's plan to launch another orbital weapon into space, four new villain and agent character sheets, vehicles, and other cool stuff. It's a perfect adventure to celebrate the game's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with!

— Steven S. Long  
HERO System Line Developer



# HEROglyphs by Steven S. Long

## Deflection Rejection

### CHANGING HOW MISSILE DEFLECTION WORKS

One of the Powers that I tend to be least happy with is Missile Deflection and Reflection. I think it suffers from a number of problems, and in this column my goal is to discuss them and consider possible solutions that you might implement if you find you agree with me. :)

First, Missile Deflection at its base level is largely meaningless – it involves paying Character Points for what amounts to a weak form of Dodge, a Combat Maneuver characters can use for free already. It doesn't work against attacks like Explosions that Dodge is useless against, and in fact can't even Deflect attacks that Dodge *can* work against, like Entangles and HTH Combat abilities. Sure, you can scale Missile Deflection up to the point where you can use it at Range or Reflect attacks, but that means paying for additional functionality beyond the base level – at its root, Missile Deflection is basically a crippled form of Dodge. You can put it in a Multipower or the like, thus reducing its cost, but that doesn't make it work any better.

Second, the schizophrenic nature of Deflection and Reflection cause some problems. A character can Abort to Deflection or use 2-point OCV Combat Skill Levels with it, but you can't do either with Reflection (though with the GM's permission a character can buy 3-point CSLs that work with either Deflection or Reflection). Deflection can work at Range; Reflection can't. In effect, Deflection functions as a sort of "prerequisite" for buying Reflection, an arrangement found in no other Power.

So, what can we do to solve these problems?

### IMPROVING FUNCTIONALITY

First, let's look at some options for improving the functionality of Missile Deflection. The suggestions below are just that – suggestions – so feel free to accept some, all, or none of them, or come up with your own tweaks.

1. Allow Missile Deflection to work against all Ranged attacks that (a) a character can perceive (see 5ER 209) and (b) which aren't targeted against EGO (*i.e.*, no Mental Powers or BOECV attacks; again, see 5ER 209). This would include Entangles, Area Of Effect/Explosion attacks, and the like. The GM could still exempt certain attacks if desired, and characters could buy a +½ Advantage, *Cannot Be Missile Deflected*, to make their attacks automatically bypass Missile Deflection.

2. Let characters use Missile Deflection *in addition to* Dodging. In other words, when a character declares a Dodge, he automatically gets to roll his Missile Deflection (OCV versus OCV, as usual). If that succeeds, he's still lost the Phase he Aborted, but he's not hit. If it fails, he's still got the increased DCV from Dodging to protect him.

3. Missile Deflection automatically works at Range at the current +½ level – characters can use it to Deflect Ranged attacks directed at themselves or any adjacent hex. By applying the *Ranged* (+½) Advantage, a character can make his Missile Deflection work at any Range up to 5" x Active Points.

4. Have Missile Deflection automatically grant a character a certain OCV bonus so that using the Power is an attractive option compared to Dodging. In this sense, what characters would be paying for when they buy Missile Deflection would be akin to DCV Combat Skill Levels that only apply against certain types of Ranged attacks — it's just that the Levels would affect the OCV versus OCV Deflection roll, rather than the character's DCV in his attacker's standard Attack Roll.

Using this option, Missile Deflection would probably work most smoothly if the cost structure were changed to this: the ability to Deflect Ranged attacks (as described on 5ER 208-09) with +1 OCV to the roll for 5 Character Points; an additional +1 for each +5 Character Points thereafter. At its base level the Power works against *any* Ranged attack; to restrict it to any physical projectile, non-gunpowder projectiles, or only thrown attacks would be a -½, -1, or -2 Limitation, respectively.

Alternately, the GM could keep the same cost structure but just automatically have Missile Deflection grant OCV bonuses for each step *up* on the Missile Deflection Summary Table on 5ER 208. For example, 20 points of Deflection (any Ranged attack) provides no OCV bonus against energy beams and the like, but +1 OCV against bullets and shrapnel (one step up), +2 OCV against non-gunpowder projectiles (two steps up), and +3 OCV against thrown objects. Characters could purchase additional OCV bonuses as 2-point Combat Skill Levels, as usual.

Of these suggestions, I think #3 is probably the best, with #2 a close second. Perhaps both could be applied.



## **ELIMINATING THE DEFLECTION/ REFLECTION DICHOTOMY**

A perhaps trickier issue is how to address the split between Deflection and Reflection. Here are a few suggestions; again, which ones you want to accept (if any) are up to you.

1. Assume that characters can Reflect attacks automatically – change the name of the power to just plain *Missile Reflection*. The cost for Missile Reflection is summarized in the accompanying table. For a -1 Limitation, *Deflection Only*, a character can only Deflect, not Reflect, attacks. (Though as discussed above, this is generally not worth the points unless other changes are made or the Power can be used at Range, which under the standard rules Reflection cannot be). Characters can improve their OCV with Reflection by buying 2-point Combat Skill Levels.

2. Split Missile Deflection and Missile Reflection into two Powers. Missile Deflection would work as described in the book, possibly with one or more of the changes discussed above.

Missile Reflection would be a separate Power – a Defense Power and a Special Power. Its cost would be as outlined in the Optional Missile Reflection Table accompanying suggestion #1, and it would function as described in the rulebook.



### **OPTIONAL MISSILE REFLECTION SUMMARY TABLE**

#### **Cost Missile Reflection (At Attacker Only)**

- 20 Character can Reflect thrown objects
- 30 Character can also Reflect non-gunpowder projectiles (*e.g.*, arrows, sling stones)
- 40 Character can also Reflect bullets and shrapnel (*i.e.*, any physical projectile)
- 50 Character can also Reflect any Ranged attack that can be Reflected (see text)

#### **Cost Missile Reflection (At Any Target)**

- 30 Character can Reflect thrown objects
- 40 Character can also Reflect non-gunpowder projectiles (*e.g.*, arrows, sling stones)
- 50 Character can also Reflect bullets and shrapnel (*i.e.*, any physical projectile)
- 60 Character can also Reflect any Ranged attack that can be Reflected (see text)

# You Gotta Have Character

by Jason Walters

“The idea of being the very best at something, having that thing dropped into mediocrity, and just doing nothing about it – that’s a very disheartening thing.”

— Gerald Bull

Canadian Astrophysicist Gerald Bull was like a figure out of a spy novel. Arguably the most prominent scientist of his day in the fields of artillery and missile research, he became obsessed with a vision of creating a “Supergun” that would allow small payloads to be inexpensively shot into orbit. In the pursuit of this dream he was estranged from his native country and imprisoned in the United States as an illegal arms dealer. Desperate for the money necessary to fulfill his ambitions, he worked with some of the most notorious regimes on earth: apartheid-era South Africa, communist China, and ultimately Saddam Hussein’s Iraq. Indeed, Saddam shared Bull’s dream of cheaply sending payloads into orbit. He also hoped to obliterate Israel with nuclear artillery shells fired from a massive Supergun.

Bull was murdered in Brussels in 1990 shortly before the outbreak of the First Gulf War. Many intelligence experts believe that Israeli agents assassinated him in a desperate attempt to foil the Supergun project. Another theory is that he fell victim to an Iraqi assassin because of Saddam’s suspicions that he was communicating with the Israelis. The real story behind his death is still unknown, but ideas are more durable than hardware or men. Perhaps one day, for good or ill, Gerald Bull’s Supergun will finally be constructed.

**Background/History:** Gerald Bull was born in Ontario, Canada on March 8, 1928. Abandoned by his father after the death of his mother, he endured a loveless childhood of being raised by a maternal aunt. A child prodigy, he was educated by Jesuits at Regiopolis College in Kingston, graduating from high school at the age of 16. He originally planned to be a medical student, but the only department at the University of Toronto that would accept him was Aeronautical Engineering.

Gerald found that he enjoyed the dispassionate, analytical work of engineering. While still in college he began working as a graduate student at the Canadian Armament and Research Development Establishment (or CARDE), a world-class weapons research center that had been moved for security reasons from Britain to Canada during World War Two. An excellent student, he graduated from the

University of Toronto in 1951 with a doctorate in Aerospace Engineering.

At the age of 23, the freshly minted Dr. Bull was the youngest PhD in the history of that university.

After graduation, Bull took a job with CARDE, which was researching supersonic flight.

The wind tunnels used for supersonic testing were very expensive, so Bull invented a new system that fired “sabot” type shells out of artillery guns. Upon leaving the gun, the sabot would fall away allowing the model to fly at incredible speeds. High-speed cameras recorded its behavior during flight. Although this successful system was eventually discarded as wind tunnels became less expensive, it introduced Bull to the world of large artillery.

Opinionated, abrasive, and generally disliked by the other scientists at CARDE, he was nonetheless promoted to head of its astrophysics department in 1958 – effectively becoming the chief aerodynamicist of Canada. But Bull didn’t deal well with the budgetary and bureaucratic constraints of working within the Canadian defense establishment. He constantly complained to his superiors, the press, and other scientists about CARDE’s lack of funding. He left CARDE in 1960 at the age of 33 to become a professor at McGill University, where he quickly inspired the antipathy of its administrators and the dislike of his fellow educators.

But Bull didn’t care. He had already interested the United States government in the idea of using giant artillery pieces to test nosecones for orbital reentry and even send payloads into orbit. Both of these tasks were expensive and time consuming using rockets. With money from the Pentagon and the Canadian Air Force he set up the High Altitude Research Program (or HARP) to study altitude ballistics and large guns. Bull bought a large piece of land on the Quebec-Vermont border, where he conducted tests with 5” and 7” artillery pieces in tunnels for safety reasons. With his basic research complete, Bull transferred HARP operations to a range in Barbados so he could safely fire shells eastward over the Atlantic. He purchased an old 125 ton, 41 cm (16 inch) caliber naval gun with a 20-meter (66 foot) barrel. He then turned it into a 43 cm (17 inch) smoothbore with a barrel length of 36 meters (118 feet). He developed special 180 kg (397 pound) projectiles that were fired with unique mixtures of gunpowder. He could fire these to an altitude of 180 km at a velocity of 3600 m/s

Dr. Bull artwork by Jacob Blackmon  
Supergun artwork by Tim Kirk

## GERALD BULL PLOT SEEDS

### Not-Quite-Day of the Destroyer:

Would Gerald Bull work for Doctor Destroyer? Of course he would!

Unfortunately, the bad doctor hasn’t been returning the weapon scientist’s calls, so Dr. Bull has had to settle for working with the egomaniacal Holocaust. Along with the mercenary Mechassassin, they are planning to launch enough Type-II satellite killers into orbit to cripple the earth’s communication system as part of another one of Holocaust’s “master” plans. Can the PCs stop them from constructing the Supergun in rural Vermont before it’s too late?

### Lost in Lugendu:

Why should the supervillain/dictator Joseph Otanga terrorize one small country when an entire continent is available? Rich beyond the dreams of most men, Otanga has hired Dr. Bull to construct his Supergun in the remote jungles of Lugendu as part of a new African Union “space program.” In reality, the sadistic dictator wants to lob Type-IVa shells down upon Johannesburg, Cairo, and Tripoli



until they make him head of the AU. UNTIL has gotten word of his plan and, with their IC team already occupied, the PCs are called for help.

### Larisagrad

**Calling:** Argent and Larisagrad's KUI (basically the same thing) have decided that Dr. Bull would make a nice addition to their mad scientist city-state. Unfortunately, he turned down their offer of money and facilities, so they've been "forced" to kidnap him. Bull's children -- respectable scientists one and all -- approach the PCs about undertaking a rescue operation. After all, does anyone really want Larisagrad to have a Supergun?

(10,000 ft/s), which is about a third of the escape velocity needed to get into orbit.

While 180 km isn't orbit (it's 20 km shy) and 3600 m/s isn't escape velocity, it showed that his ideas were practical. An enormous "Supergun" *could* launch payloads into orbit. The entire project cost around \$10 million -- chicken feed by the standards of missile research. In 1963 HARP began a new series of tests using specialized sabot rounds containing a finned projectile known as the Martlett-1. By June of that year these had been replaced with a dart shaped shell known as the Martlett-2, which quickly reached altitudes of 100 km. Bull began work on a rocket-powered projectile known as the Martlett-3, while also extending his gun's barrel to 38 m (or 125 feet) in length.

With his newly extended gun and rocket powered artillery shell, Bull fully expected to put a payload into orbit. Unfortunately, enemies within the Canadian defense establishment managed to pull HARP's funding before Bull could test fire the Marlett-3. They disparaged his work, accused HARP of being a front for a clandestine Pentagon weapons research program, and claimed that no satellite could survive acceleration from a gun barrel. The embittered Bull returned to Quebec, where he went into business for himself. Transferring HARP's assets into a privately owned company named Space Research Corporation (or SRC), he reinvented himself as an international arms consultant as way of generating capital for his Supergun project.

Over the next decade SRC worked for a number of (mostly disreputable) governments including the People's Republic of China, Chile, Taiwan, and South Africa. He specialized in increasing the effective range of artillery shells. He improved their aerodynamics, created new propellant mixtures, and added "bleeder" charges to their bottoms that filled the vacuum left behind a shell in flight with gas. SRC's main product was a modified US-standard 155 mm (6 inch) artillery piece that had been transformed into a smoothbore. The result was the Gun, Canada (or GC) 45 howitzer. It fired a specially designed "pointy" shell that was spun up by fins rather than rifling in the barrel, giving it 50% more range than the original. This artillery piece was used with great success by the South African military to stop an attack by the Cuban backed Marxist Angolan military dead in its tracks. For his efforts many in the military establishment, especially the CIA, considered Dr. Bull a hero. Still, he never quite raised enough capital to construct his Supergun.

Unfortunately for all concerned, in 1976 Jimmy Carter was elected president of the United States. South Africa fell out of favor, and Bull was brought up on charges of illegal arms

dealing. On the advice of his lawyer, he pleaded guilty, serving six months in US federal prison in 1980. Upon being released, he was sued in Canadian civilian court and fined \$55,000 for arms dealing. Embittered, with his reputation ruined and his business wrecked, Bull left Canada and moved to Brussels: to this day the uncontested arms dealing capital of the world. SRC operated a subsidiary called European Pounderies Reunies de Belgique in that city. Through it he came into contact with the government of Iraq, which was in the midst of a bloody war with Iran. Saddam Hussein, whose government has already purchased thousands of GC-45 howitzers from South Africa and Austria, was delighted to find the embittered scientist at loose ends. He hired Bull to design and build two artillery pieces: the 210mm *Al Fao* and the 155mm *Majinoonan*, both of where were updated versions of the GC-45. These guns proved particularly lethal when used on the border area between Iraq and Iran where there was no shelter from shell fragments.

Impressed by Bull's work, Saddam was willing to listen when the scientist argued that Iraq would never be a true world power without the capacity for space launches. After all, Israel had already demonstrated that it could place satellites into orbit. He proposed building a vastly enlarged version of his original HARP design as a cheap and impressive way to get payloads into space. Saddam agreed to fund the project, which he named Project Babylon (see above). Models of the cannon were displayed at the Baghdad International Arms Show in May of 1989. After Bull demonstrated a functional test model for the Iraqi dictator, construction of the individual sections of the new Supergun began in England, Spain, Holland, and Switzerland.

Saddam's support wasn't unconditional, however. Project Babylon would proceed only so long as Gerald agreed to assist with the development of Iraq's long range, multi-stage SCUD missile program. The always-reckless Bull agreed, completing many of the nosecone calculations that had been giving their scientists trouble. This may have been what sealed his fate. Realistically, the Israelis had little to fear from Project Babylon -- they could destroy it at any time. Concerned over the safety of his soon to be constructed supercannon, Bull even briefed both the Mossad and MI5 on the non-military nature of the project (this may also be what sealed his fate). But the Iraqi missile program was another matter entirely. If equipped with the chemical and biological weapons Saddam was known to possess, the multistage SCUD posed a genuine security issue for the Jewish state. In all fairness, the Mossad warned Bull not to continue working on the SCUD project. He knew that his life was in danger. He told both friends and family about



threats from the Israeli spy agency. But the desire to finally see his great project complete was too great for him. Bull wouldn't stop working for the Iraqis.

In March of 1990 Dr. Gerald Bull was killed outside of his Brussels apartment by five shots to the back of his head. No one heard the shots, and no one was ever caught. Project Babylon fell apart almost immediately. There were no blueprints or paper records; Bull had kept the details of the project confidential by memorizing them. Three weeks after his murder, British customs agents seized the sections of his gun that were on their soil. SRC closed its doors immediately, its personnel scattering across the globe for their own safety. The Iraqis never did get their missiles to work properly.

The most common theory about Dr. Gerald Bull's death is that the Israeli Mossad was responsible. Indeed, they have uncharacteristically all but claimed responsibility for it. Others, including Bull's son, believe that the Mossad is taking credit for someone else's work. This theory, spelled out in the 1994 movie *Doomsday Gun*, proposes that Bull was murdered by the CIA for threatening to reveal information about their activities in South Africa. A final theory speculates that the always-paranoid Saddam had him murdered upon learning that he had spoken to the Mossad.

**Personality/Motivation:** Gerald Bull is a bitter man. His entire existence revolves around a single, pivotal experience: the cancellation of the HARP program in 1963. He is absolutely certain that the Martlett-3 would have achieved orbital altitude if only his funding hadn't been cut. Everything he has done since then – the arms manufacturing, working with the South Africans, his business relationship with Saddam Hussein – has been a long, slow buildup to pick up where he was forced to leave off.

It isn't good enough just to build his Supergun and succeed, either. Everyone in the world has to know about it. But Bull isn't an egomaniac. He simply wants scientific vindication and the satisfaction of knowing that all of his critics have been proven wrong. His loss of status within the Canadian scientific community and imprisonment by the Carter administration turned him into a "man without a country" for over a quarter century. In his own mind, success will heal that spiritual wound, making him whole once again. Although basically not an evil man, he's willing to do nearly anything for nearly anyone to achieve this goal.

On a personal level, Gerald Bull is a hard-drinking, hard-working, and loud man with the tactlessness typical of engineers. Direct and plain-spoken with little use for superfluous

people, he loathes bureaucracy and inspires immediate hatred in bureaucrats. He works well with other direct, ambitious men with little use for red tape – like military dictators and supervillains, for example. He's also rather generous and thoughtful employer, inspiring loyalty in the staff of SRC and foreign scientists alike.

It isn't widely known, but Gerald is a warm, loving family man with a French-Canadian wife and seven children, several of whom have followed his footsteps into aerospace engineering. He keeps them as far away from his activities as humanly possible.

**Quote:** "I feel more than betrayed. I feel that all of the memories and all the traditions and everything that I thought the country stood for has been betrayed. They think they've degraded me? They haven't. They think they've broken my spirit? They haven't. What I did and what I built, to see it cheapened, to see people trying to degrade me personally as this common criminal – for what?"

**Powers/Tactics:** Despite his great love of artillery, Gerald Bull isn't a violent man. He's never even owned a handgun. Although exceptionally healthy and spry for a man in his mid-70s, he won't be going "toe-to-toe" with the PCs if he can possibly help it. He has been built as a super-intelligent 107-point Competent Normal with no offensive abilities. If threatened, he will simply surrender.

Dr. Bull's talents lie in an entirely different direction than a normal "villain." He is the only man alive with the Knowledge Skills Supergun Propellant Formulas and Supergun Targeting. He is also one of the few people on earth with the right combination of Science Skills to construct a Supergun. Blessed with an Eidetic Memory, he hasn't committed a single word of his research to paper since the cancellation of HARP in 1963. It's all in his head. To put it simply, if you're in the market to build a Supergun the only one phone number in the book is that of Dr. Gerald Bull.

To turn Bull into a supervillain capable of doing battle with superhero PCs, give him significantly more STUN, PD, and ED. Then supply him with a suit of powered armor similar to the one possessed by the super-mercenary Laser on pages 166-167 of *Conquerors, Killer, and Crooks*.

**Campaign Use:** Dr. Gerald Bull is just the sort of minion that an ambitious Champions supervillain or dictator seeks out. Capable, amoral, and obsessed with proving his scientific theories to the world, Dr. Bull is willing to overlook the "eccentricities" of a Dr. Destroyer, Saddam Hussein, Warlord, or the Sultan of

## GERALD BULL QUOTES

"Dr. Bull, he was a very outspoken man. He was an interesting character. He emptied a bottle of whisky so fast you couldn't compete with him. On the other hand, he certainly was – as far as artillery equipment was concerned – an absolute technical genius."

— Peter Unterweger,  
Former Arms  
Manufacturer

"He wanted to build things. He wanted to do things other people couldn't do. He wanted to promise to do things that people said couldn't be done."

— Charles Murphy,  
Scientist

"What had he left you? What could he do here? The Press made him look like a Dr. Strangelove, like a mad, evil person, you know. He really had nothing left here."

— Michel Bull, son

"The guy is saying, sir, if you carry on, we will have to take harsh action against you, your companies, and the people who work with you. Basically, he walked away from the meeting. I mean, he said, I don't want to listen, I heard enough. For Bull, it was a lost case. His fate was sealed."

— David Halevy,  
Israeli intelligence  
expert



## OTHER SUPERGUNS

### The Columbiad:

Early science fiction writer Jules Verne described this fictional gun in his 1865 novel *From the Earth to the Moon*. It consisted of a 274-meter cannon with a bore of 2.74 meters cast inside of a vertical well in (interestingly) Florida. The first 61 meters of the barrel was filled with 122 tons of guncotton which, when ignited, propelled an aluminum capsule containing three men and two dogs to the moon.

**The Paris Gun:** A supercannon used to bombard Paris from the woods of Crepy in World War One. It was a weapon like none before it, capable of hurling 94kg shells some 130km at a maximum altitude of 40km. It weighed more than 256 tons had a 28 meter long, 210mm caliber barrel.

**V-3:** The third in a series of Nazi “vengeance” weapons, it was a 140 meter supercannon capable of sending a 140kg shell some 165km! Constructed at Mimoyecques, France for the explicit purpose of shelling London, it was damaged beyond repair by an Allied bombing raid in 1944.



Awad – so long as he is given the funding and resources to construct Project Babylon (or whatever his employer wants to call it). Correspondingly, he is more of a plot device than an opponent. The construction or the use of a Supergun will be centerpiece of any adventure that includes Gerald Bull, rather than man himself.

Dr. Bull’s motives are actually quite benign: he wants to make the colonization of space easier by perfecting a cheap and easy way of putting payloads into orbit. Many scientists throughout the world share his goals; but unlike Bull they aren’t willing to associate with genocidal madmen to achieve them. Of course, the real life Gerald Bull paid the ultimate price for his lack of scruples. A modern day campaign involving him would presume that he somehow outwitted his would-be assassin back in 1989. If he didn’t, perhaps one of his several scientist children has contracted his obsession out of a desire to vindicate their father’s work.

**Genre-By-Genre:** This fictional version of Dr. Gerald Bull is intended for use as a plot device, “McGuffin,” or minor NPC in a Champions campaign involving world threatening supervillains. Conversely, a benign government or NPC might hire him to construct a Supergun for strictly peaceful civilian purposes, thereby giving the PCs access to a useful fleet of Type-III personal spacecraft. He could also perform the same service for a superhero team with sufficient financial resources.

Yet Gerald Bull’s usefulness need not be restricted to the world of epic superheroism. As a weapons researcher and dealer Bull would be right at home in the shadowy world of a Dark Champions espionage campaign. A unit of Special Forces PCs might find themselves called upon to destroy a Supergun facility in an unstable third world country, killing or capturing Dr. Bull in the process. Since basic physics remain the same no matter what era a hero finds himself in, a group of Pulp Hero characters might have to stop a mad Dr. Bull (plus a good number of agents) from holding the world’s capitals hostage with his awesome creation. Golden Age heroes might have to stop a German version of Gerald Bull from constructing a weapon large enough to shell New York from Occupied Europe. A group of Star Hero characters might be called upon to infiltrate an orbital facility where Bull is constructing a world-shattering weapon, while a group of hapless Fantasy Hero characters might find themselves dispatched by the King on a mission to prevent the creation of... the first cannon!

**Appearance:** Dr. Gerald Bull is a tall, plain looking man with a memorably large nose and wavy, jet-black hair. Unconcerned about his appearance, his typical outfit consists of well-worn coveralls and a dirty laboratory coat with pens in the front pocket. When he forced to appear in public or attend a business meeting, he wears the white short-sleeved-shirt-with-black-tie combination beloved by engineers everywhere.

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**Dr. Gerald Bull**



**SHARP:** The Super High Altitude Research Project is a light-gas gun developed by Lawrence Livermore Laboratory as a possible antimissile defense weapon. It uses a complex L-shaped barrel configuration to shoot 5kg projectiles at Mach 9 using methane, air, and hydrogen. Project leader John Hunter later founded the Jules Verne Launcher Company in an unsuccessful attempt to raise capital for a commercial satellite-launching version.

**Dr. Gerald Bull**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	100 kg, 2d6 HTH [2]
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
13	CON	6	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
21	INT	11	13-	PER Roll: 13-
17	EGO	14	12-	ECV: 6
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
2	PD	0		Total: 2 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	0		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
2	SPD	0		Phases: 6, 12
5	REC	0		
26	END	0		
24	STUN	0		

**Total Characteristic Cost: 40**

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"  
 Leaping: 2"/4"  
 Swimming: 2"/4"

**Cost Perks**

- 5 Money: Well Off
- 1 Reputation: Famous Expert on Artillery and Missiles (small to medium sized group) 14-, +1/+1d6

**Talents**

- 5 Eidetic Memory
- 3 Lightning Calculator

**Skills**

- 1 Bureaucratics 8-
- 6 Computer Programming (Computer Networks, Personal Computers, Military Computers) 13-
- 1 Conversation 8-
- 3 Demolitions 13-
- 3 Electronics 13-
- 5 KS: Supergun Propellant Formulas 15-
- 5 KS: Supergun Targeting 15-
- 3 Language: French (Fluent)
- 3 Mechanics 13-
- 3 Weaponsmith (Firearms, Missiles & Rockets) 13-
- 3 Scientist
  - 2 1) SS: Aeronautical Engineering 13-
  - 2 2) SS: Ballistics 13-
  - 2 3) SS: Mechanical Engineering 13-
  - 2 4) SS: Metallurgy 13-
  - 2 5) SS: Chemistry 13-
- 3 Traveler
  - 1 1) AK: The Bahamas 11-
  - 1 2) AK: Quebec 11-
  - 2 3) CK: Brussels 13-

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 67**

**Total Cost: 107**

**50+ Disadvantages**

- 10 Hunted: Interpol 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Hatred of Bureaucrats (Uncommon, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Outspoken and Tactless (Common, Moderate)
- 15 Reputation: Amoral Weapons Designer, 14- (Extreme, Small Group)
- 5 Social Limitation: Convicted Felon (Occasionally, Major, Not Limiting in Some Cultures)
- 7 Experience Points

**Total Disadvantage Points: 107**



## Project Babylon

The Project Babylon Supergun is literally the largest artillery piece ever created. The brainchild of Dr. Gerald Bull, it has a barrel 150 meters (450 feet) long with a bore of 1 meter (3 feet). At the breech the barrel walls are 30 cm (12 inches) thick. It is capable of placing a 2000 kg (4,400 lb) projectile into a low Earth orbit of between 200-1200 km (124-726 miles). At 2134 metric tons (2100 tons) it is also immobile, and can only fire 14 projectiles before its massive barrel has to be replaced. It is also vulnerable to air attack and slow to reload - it takes 20 minutes for a skilled crew of eight to chamber a new projectile. For these reasons, the Supergun is generally considered to be unsuitable as a military weapon.

The Supergun can be adjusted for a firing arc of anywhere between 90 and 23 degrees, allowing it to either hurl shells into space or onto an earthbound target. It fires four different categories of projectiles, codenamed Hammurabi Types I through IV, using special propellants designed by Dr. Bull. All four of these projectile types are comically inexpensive to produce when compared to conventional missiles.

Types H-I and H-II operate on the same basic principle. A sabot round is fired from the Supergun. At a preprogrammed altitude the outer shell discards, allowing a slender, single stage missile to emerge. Its onboard computer makes some quick calculations, after which it fires a small rocket engine that allows it to reach an escape velocity of 10,800 m/s (24,159 mph). Upon reaching orbit, however, the two versions behave very differently. The H-I is designed to deploy small communication satellites. Once it reaches the appropriate orbital altitude, the missile divides allowing a satellite to emerge. The H-II, on the other hand, is a satellite hunter/killer. Its missile achieves a stable, predetermined orbit and then waits for a suitable target to come into range. When its prey comes within 120 meters (360 feet) it explodes in a spray of deadly shrapnel.

Both the H-III and H-IV are aerodynamic, “pointy” shells with fins that allow them to “spin up” for accuracy once they leave the barrel of the Supergun. They also have “bleeder” technology built into the bottom of the shells. This emits a gas that fills up the vacuum left behind them in flight; which not only makes them more stable, but increases their range and accuracy as well. The difference between the two types is essentially payload related.

The H-III is basically a one-man orbital spaceship designed to carry a single human pilot into orbit. The pilot squeezes into a .76 meter (2.5 foot) by 3-meter (9 foot) cylindrical chamber that is subsequently filled with a

gelatinous substance that prevents the forces associated with the Supergun from harming him. He is able to breathe using a special mouthpiece that slowly converts the gelatin into breathable air, giving him a two-day reserve. He is then fired into orbit, where the H-III can be maneuvered using small built-in rockets and exterior cameras. There are currently two versions of the H-III. The H-IIIa, which is designed for satellite repair and retrieval, has a pair of robotic arms and a small cargo bay. The H-IIIb, which is designed for orbital warfare, has a laser and a missile launcher. Both versions return to earth by entering the atmosphere and “splashing down” in the ocean using a parachute.

The power of the Project Babylon Supergun is so great that, with enough time to make the calculations, it can land an artillery shell anywhere on earth! Simply put, the H-IV is a massive 2000 kg (4,400 lb) artillery shell that comes in three varieties. The H-IVa is a conventional explosive shell that contains 1000 kg (2,200 lb) of pentolite (a TNT and PETN compound). It produces an awe-inspiring RKA 10d6 Armor Piercing over an area of one square kilometer, suitable for knocking down most buildings or “busting” a military bunker. The H-IVb is a terror weapon. It contains a more meager 500kg (1,100 lb) of cyclotol (a TNT and RDX compound) that is mixed with an equal amount of radioactive material. Thus the H-IVb is capable of producing an RKA 5d6 Armor Piercing detonation that spreads poisonous radioactivity over an area of one square kilometer. The H-IVc contains the most feared weapon in the Supergun’s arsenal: a devastating 1mg (megaton) thermonuclear warhead. Once exploded, this device causes a RKA 20d6 explosion with a radius of 20 kilometers (12.4 miles). It also causes a *Change Environment: create radiation of 300 rads* with a radius of 50 kilometers (31.1 miles).

## HISTORICAL VS. FICTIONAL PROJECT BABYLON

There are some small but significant historical differences between the Project Babylon Supergun presented in this article and the one commissioned by the government of Saddam Hussein. The most important of these is a lack of adjustment. The fictional Supergun, while immobile, has a pivoting base, an adjustable arc of fire, and unlimited terrestrial range. In essence, it is an artillery piece the size of a skyscraper. Saddam’s gun would have been pointed in a specific direction with a fixed arc of fire and a range of just over 800 km (500 miles). Buried into a mountainside, it would have in many ways resembled Nazi Germany’s VIII project. Actually, the former dictator had three guns planned: one to fire shells into Tel Aviv, one to fire them into Tehran, and a third to fire primitive hunter/killer satellites of the type I have described into orbit against Western spy satellites. Saddam also viewed his Superguns as basically disposable, fire-and-forget items that would be (logically enough) destroyed hours after

he used them. The fictional Dr. Bull defiantly won't have the same attitude toward "his" Supergun.

Obviously Saddam's Iraq didn't possess the technology necessary to create a Type H-III one-man spacecraft. Every other Hammurabi type projectile, however, is within the realm of possibility. Iraq defiantly had the ability to rain conventional explosives and dirty bombs down upon Israel and Iran. They probably had the ability to launch satellites, albeit primitive ones. Given a few years they *might* have had the ability to create one-megaton thermonuclear artillery shells, although some experts have hotly contested this idea.

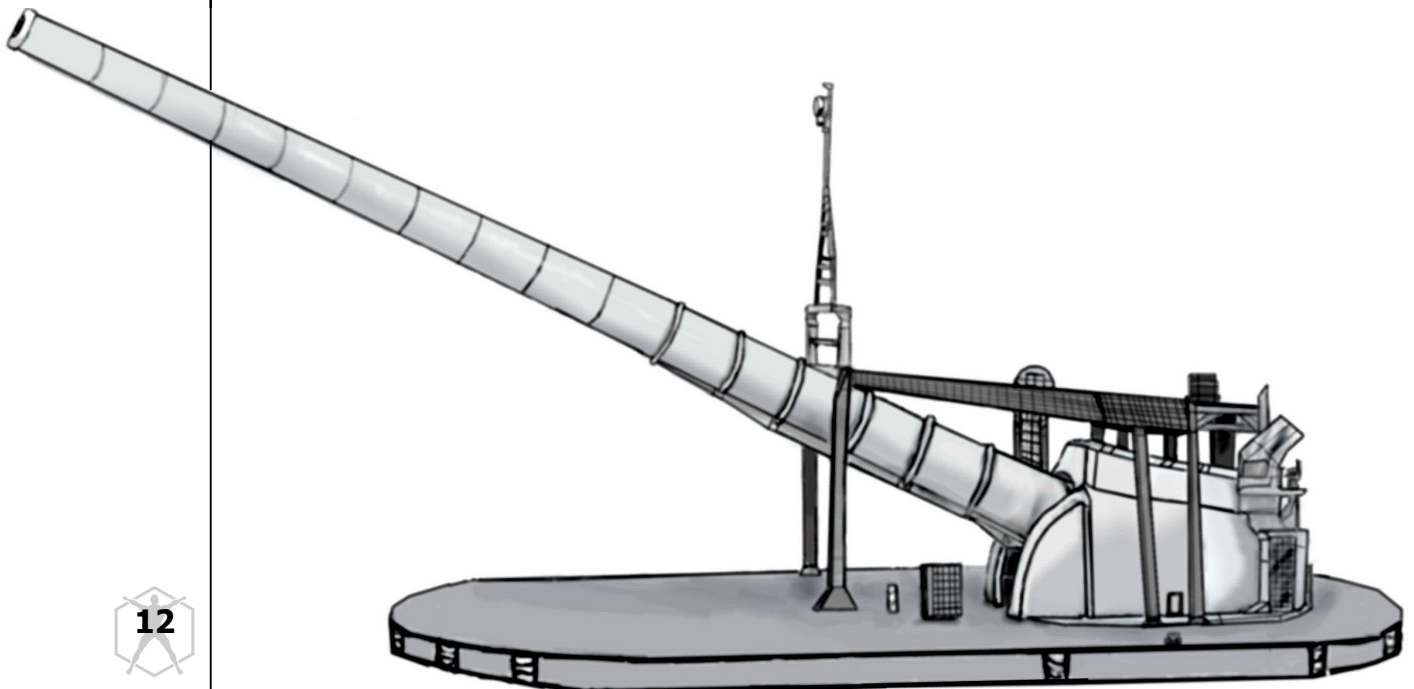
## Project Babylon Supergun

### Cost Powers

- 32 *The Project Babylon Supergun:* 100 STR, Side Effects (massive sonic boom every time Supergun is fired, +0), MegaScale (1" = 1000 km, +1), Invisible Power Effects (Fully Invisible, +1) (300 Active Points); Extra Time (20 Minutes to reload, -2½), OAF Immobile (-2), Can only be used to "throw" special projectiles in one direction with no control after projectile is launched (-1½), Side Effects (Does STR damage to every projectile it fires, -1), Crew-Served (8 people, -¾), Real Weapon (-¼), 14 Charges (-¼) [14]
- 11 *Supergun Targeting System:* Detect Supergun's Target 14-, Range, Targeting, MegaScale (1" = 10,000 km, +1¼) (40 Active Points); Extra Time (1 Day to calculate, Character May Take No Other Actions, -4¼), Requires a Supergun Targeting Roll (-½) 0

## Project Babylon "Hammurabi" Projectiles

**Description:** This represents a typical example of the kind of satellite the Supergun could fire into orbit. As it must survive the shock of being shot into orbit using high explosives, the Type-I is fairly sturdy; but it's still fired with less force than the other types of projectiles to protect its many delicate electronic components. Thus, it has a single charge booster rocket that allows it to move from the bottom of near earth orbit (200km) to the edge of outer earth orbit (1200km). It's unintelligent and must rely on ground control to make all of its decisions. The Type-I has a small reserve of hydrogen fuel that can be used for maneuvering once in orbit, but it lacks the ability to fly over great distances. It can facilitate ground communications, act as a GPS satellite, and take accurate photographs of the earth's surface. The satellite has a solar charged battery that is good for 25 years.



## DIGITAL HERO #38

### HAMMURABI TYPE-I SATELLITE PROJECTILE

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
1	SIZE	5	1¼" x ¾", Mass 200 kg
0	STR	-15	Lift 25 kg, 0d6 HTH [0]
11	DEX	3	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
13	BODY	2	
13	DEF	33	
3	SPD	9	Phases: 4, 8, 12

**Total Characteristics Cost: 37**

**Movement:** Flight: 10"/20"

Cost	Powers	END
6	<i>Booster Rocket:</i> Leaping 10", MegaScale (1" = 100 km, +¾); 1 Charge (-2)	[1]
12	<i>Communication System:</i> High Range Radio Perception (Radio Group), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 25 Years (+0)	0
10	<i>Long Range Camera:</i> Eidetic Memory, Ranged (+½), Line Of Sight (+½)	0
12	<i>Maneuvering Rockets:</i> Flight 10", Position Shift, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge Lasting 6 Hours (+0); Only Works in Space (-1)	[1cc]
50	<i>Radar:</i> Radar (Radio Group), Increased Arc of Perception (360°), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge Lasting 25 Years (+0), Ranged (+½), MegaScale (1" = 1,000 km, +1)	0
-12	<i>Spacecraft:</i> Ground Movement -6" (0" Total)	

**Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 78**

**Total Vehicle Cost: 115**

Val	Disadvantages
20	Physical Limitation: Remote Controlled (Frequently, Fully Impairing)

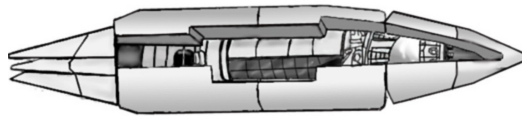
**Total Disadvantage Points: 20**

**Total Cost: 95/5 = 19**



### HAMMURABI TYPE-II HUNTER/KILLER SATELLITE PROJECTILE

40	<i>Hammurabi Type-II Hunter/Killer Satellite Projectile:</i> RKA 5d6, Trigger (when target comes within 60", +¼), Increased Maximum Range (6,100", +¼), Armor Piercing (+½), Area Of Effect (60" Radius, +1½); 1 Charge which Never Recovers (-4), OAF Bulky (-1½)	[1]
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**THE HAMMURABI TYPE-III ONE-MAN ORBITAL SPACESHIP**

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
2	SIZE	10	1½" x ¾", Mass 400 kg
0	STR	-15	Lift 2.5 kg, 0d6
12	DEX	6	OCV: 4/DCV: 3
13	BODY	1	
13	DEF	33	
3	SPD	8	Phases: 4, 8, 12

**Total Characteristics Cost: 43**

**Movement:** Flight: 15"/30"

**Cost Powers** **END**

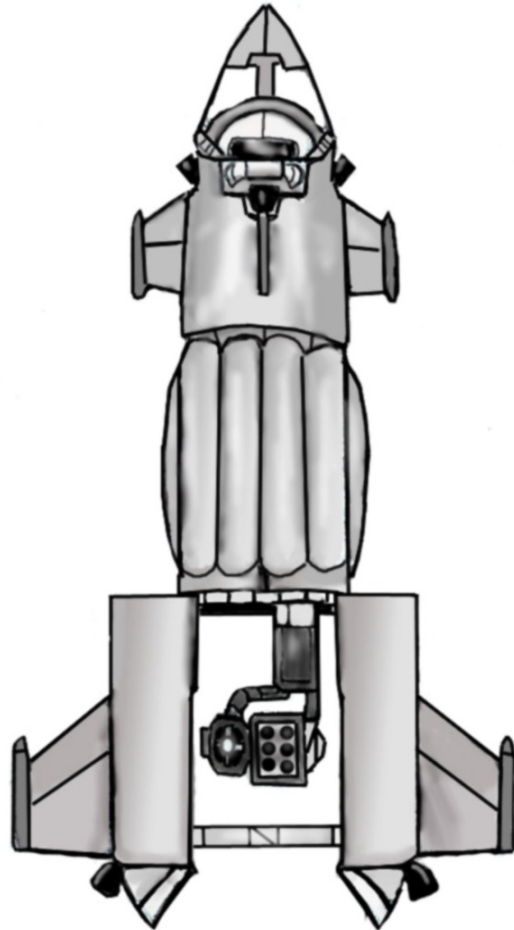
- 20 *Breathable Gelatin:* Life Support (Safe in Cold, Heat, High Pressure, Radiation, Vacuum, Zero Gravity, Self-Contained Breathing), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge Lasting 2 Days (+0) [1cc]
- 10 *Exterior Cameras:* Eidetic Memory, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge Lasting 1 Day (+0), Ranged (+½), Line Of Sight (+½) [1cc]
- 12 *Maneuvering Rockets:* Flight 10", Position Shift, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge Lasting 6 Hours (+0); Limited Power (Only Works in Space, -1) [1cc]
- 12 *Communication System:* High Range Radio Perception (Radio Group), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge Lasting 1 Day (+0) [1cc]
- 30 *Radar:* Radar (Radio Group), Increased Arc of Perception (360°), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge Lasting 1 Day (+0), Ranged (+½) [1cc]
- 8 *Parachute:* Gliding 12"; Cannot Gain Altitude and Has No Control (-½) 0
- 12 *Spacecraft:* Ground Movement -6" (0" Total) 0
- 48 *Telescoping Robot Arms:* Telekinesis (20 STR), Fine Manipulation, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge Lasting 1 Day (+½); Limited Range (-¼) [1cc]

**Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 128**

**Total Vehicle Cost: 171**

**Total Cost: 171/5 = 34**

**Description:** The H-IIIa is designed for satellite repair and retrieval. It has a pair of telescoping robotic arms, a small cargo bay, and powerful exterior cameras. Its batteries contain enough power to function for a single day. The H-IIIa's small maneuvering rockets have just enough fuel for 6 hours of continuous use, after which it must descend into the atmosphere and deploys its parachute.





## DIGITAL HERO #38

### THE HAMMURABI TYPE-IIIB ONE-MAN ORBITAL SPACESHIP

Val	Char	Cost	Notes
2	SIZE	10	1½" x ¾", Mass 400 kg
0	STR	-15	Lift 2.5 kg, 0d6
12	DEX	6	OCV: 4/DCV: 3
13	BODY	1	
13	DEF	33	
3	SPD	8	Phases: 4, 8, 12

**Total Characteristics Cost: 43**

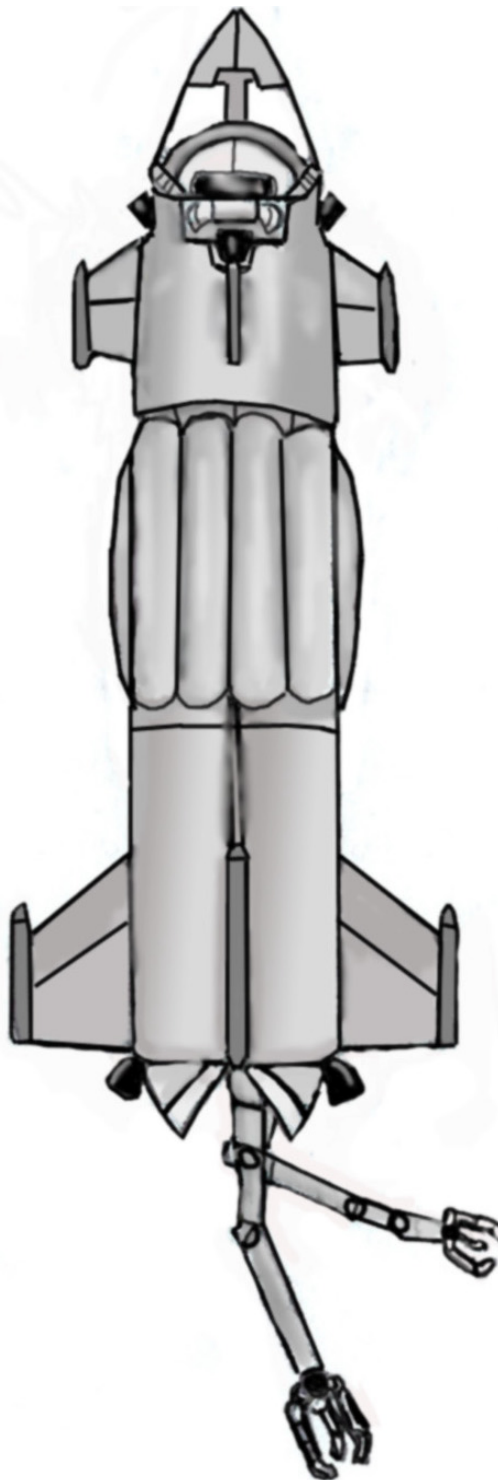
**Movement:** Flight: 15"/30"

Cost	Powers	END
20	<i>Breathable Gelatin:</i> Life Support (Safe in Cold, Heat, High Pressure, Radiation, Vacuum, Zero Gravity, Self-Contained Breathing), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge Lasting 2 Days (+0)	[1cc]
20	<i>Combat Laser:</i> RKA 2d6+1; 8 Charges (-1/2), Beam (-1/4)	[8]
30	<i>Combat Missiles:</i> Multipower, 60-point reserve; OIF (Bulky, -1)	[6]
3u	1) <i>Exploding Rockets:</i> RKA 3d6-1, Explosion (+½); 6 Charges (-¾)	[6]
6u	2) <i>Penetrating Rockets:</i> RKA 2d6, Armor Piercing (+½), Penetrating (+½); 6 Charges (-¾)	[6]
12	<i>Communication System:</i> High Range Radio Perception (Radio Group), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge Lasting 1 Day (+0)	[1cc]
15	<i>Defensive Force Field:</i> Force Field (10 PD/10 ED); 1 Continuing Fuel Charge Lasting 5 Minutes (-½)	[1cc]
10	<i>Exterior Cameras:</i> Eidetic Memory, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge Lasting 1 Day (+0), Ranged (+½), Line Of Sight (+½)	[1cc]
12	<i>Maneuvering Rockets:</i> Flight 10", Position Shift, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 6 Hours (+0); Limited Power (Only Works in Space, -1)	[1cc]
8	<i>Parachute:</i> Gliding 12" (12 Active Points); Cannot Gain Altitude and Has No Control (-½)	0
30	<i>Radar:</i> Radar (Radio Group), Increased Arc Of Perception (360°), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge Lasting 1 Day (+0), Ranged (+½)	[1cc]
-12	<i>Spacecraft:</i> Ground Movement -6" (0" Total)	0
10	<i>Targeting Computer:</i> +2 with All Ranged Combat	0

**Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 146**

**Total Vehicle Cost: 189**

**Total Cost: 189/5 = 38**



**Description:** The Type-IIIb is a tiny but powerful one-man war machine intended for use in the earth's lower orbital plane. Solidly built and shielded with a force field, it is armed with two different types of missiles and a laser. Easy to produce and cheap to put into space, the Type-IIIb's is perfect for ambushing unarmed astronauts or protecting a valuable satellite from attack. Unfortunately, like its unarmed cousin the Type-IIIA, the Type-IIIb's small maneuvering rockets have just enough fuel for 6 hours of continuous use, after which it must descend into the atmosphere and deploys its parachute.

**HAMMURABI TYPE-IV PROJECTILES**

- 54 *Hammurabi Type-IVa Conventional Artillery Shell:* RKA 10d6, MegaScale (1 km, +1/4), Armor Piercing (+1/2), Area Of Effect (One Hex, +1/2) (337 Active Points); 1 Charge (Never Recovers, -4), OIF (Bulky, -1), Range Based on Strength (-1/4) [1]
- 23 *Hammurabi Type-IVb "Dirty Bomb" Artillery Shell:* RKA 5d6, MegaScale (1 km, +1/4), Armor Piercing (+1/2), Area Of Effect (One Hex, +1/2) (169 Active Points); 1 Charge (Never Recovers, -4), OIF (Bulky, -1), Range Based on Strength (-1/4) [1]
- 9 *Hammurabi Type-IVb "Dirty Bomb" Artillery Shell:* RKA 1/2d6, MegaScale (1 km, +1/4), Area Of Effect (One Hex, +1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2), No Normal Defense (Radiation Resistance, +1), Continuous (+1) (42 Active Points); No Conscious Control (-2) 0
- 92 *Hammurabi Type-IVc Thermonuclear Artillery Shell:* RKA 20d6, Explosion (+1/2), MegaScale (10 km, +1/2) (600 Active Points); 1 Charge (Never Recovers, -4), OIF (Bulky, -1), Range Based on STR (-1/2) [1]
- 38 *Hammurabi Type-IVc Thermonuclear Artillery Shell:* Change Environment, Create Radiation of 300 rads 50" Radius, MegaScale (1 km, +1/4), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2), Persistent (+1/2) (115 Active Points); No Conscious Control (-2) 0

**Notes:** The circumference of the earth is 24,909 miles (40,087 kilometers). The Supergun is essentially strong enough to "throw" projectiles around its curvature, allowing them to land at whatever point Gerald Bull chooses. He is able to do this by rotating the Supergun on its base, adjusting its arc of fire, and selecting the

appropriate amount and type of propellant. Before doing this he needs to spend a full day making calculations using the Supergun's Targeting System: a specialized computer programmed with enough topographical information to allow unmodified targeting anywhere on earth. The Targeting System has 7 BODY and 2 DEF. The Supergun itself has 31 BODY and 5 DEF.

The enormous cannon is (typically) built into the top of a small mountain that has had its top removed with explosives and replaced with a 19 BODY, 10 DEF steel turret to protect the majority of the Supergun's components. The barrel is replaceable, though it takes a day to perform the procedure. Typically an installation is constructed below the Supergun to house its targeting system, projectiles, replacement barrels, and personnel. Manufacturing typically occurs elsewhere for security reasons. Both Supergun and installation are easily detectible by spy satellites, reconnaissance aircraft, and good old-fashioned ground surveillance. This is its primary weakness.

The destruction visited upon a target by the 1-megaton warhead carried by the Type-IVc shell is of apocalyptic proportions. The metric statistics for its blast are radius 20km, diameter 40km, circumference 126km, and area of affects 1,256 sq km. The metric statistics for radiation and fallout are radius 50km, diameter 100km, circumference 315km, and area of affects 7,885 sq km. The effects of fallout will very wildly. Radiation levels near the outside of the area of the affect will return to normal within a few days, while levels near the center will remain fatal for centuries. Weather patterns can scatter radioactive material from either a true nuclear bomb or a "dirty" bomb over some distance. For more information on the effects of atomic explosions, please consult pages 131-135 of the HERO System Equipment Guide. For information on the effects of radiation on the human body, please consult pages 282-283 of Star Hero.

If you wish to purchase the Supergun on a point basis, assume that it has two of each Hammurabi Type projectiles available at any given time. This represents the maximum number (14) that can be fired before its enormous barrel has to be replaced due to metal fatigue. The total cost is 735 points: or 756 if you include DR. Gerald Bull as a 21-point follower. Naturally, the Supergun can't be constructed or fired without him!



# Building a Better Mythology

by Rodney Ruff

Each society on Earth has its own unique history, shaped by its people and their surroundings. Within that history, however, are stories of its people and their understandings of their surroundings: doers of great deeds, wielders of great power, and the interaction between gods and men. Taken together, these stories compose that society's mythology.

Although mythology is usually thought of as the exclusive domain of past societies, mythologies are built with every new story that is told. John Wayne and Superman hold nearly the same stature in the modern world that Hercules did to the ancient Greeks, while James T. Kirk's command of the starship *Enterprise* is not much different from that of Jason leading the Argonauts in their quest for the Golden Fleece.

Mythology provides a means to understand a society's values, as well as a reflection of its development both historically and philosophically. It provides the "back story" for a society until its recorded history is created, and afterward, it provides a psychological history for that society.

Mythology has traditionally been used in role-playing adventures as a source for player character and NPC origins, as well as a source of monsters and other creatures to populate the campaign world. What I propose to do is to show how to tailor a mythology to your campaign world so that the elements of it your player characters encounter fit into that world instead of simply being grafted from whatever modules and supplements you as GM have handy.

Although mythology-building is most likely to be used in creating fantasy adventures, it is appropriate for any setting where stories can be told and a means exists to pass them from one generation to the next and to others within the same generation. Radio and television, in this regard, are basically extensions of the campfire story group and the Greek amphitheater, with the main difference that they reach a much wider audience.

In the course of this article, I will use examples from the mythologies I know, as well as folklore, legend, comic books, and science fiction. I will also blur the lines between mythology and religion in citing my examples; this is not meant as an insult to any religion or practice of religion.

## Common Mythic Elements

Although the mythologies of the world differ from one another in many respects, they also have many things in common with one another. Following are some of these common elements.

## A CREATION STORY

One of the most basic questions is "Where did I come from?" Answering this question leads to both birth myths such as being delivered by the stork or being found in a cabbage patch as well as world creation stories involving a cosmic egg or a primordial ocean.

The cosmic egg appears in the creation legends of the Aztecs, the Dogon tribe of Mali, the Chinese, and many Pacific tribes. The cosmic egg can be an actual egg or something similar, such as the cosmic coconut of the Mangaian people of the Cook Islands, and may either contain a creator being or be used to form the earth and sky. (In Chinese myth, the eggshell is made into the earth and sky by the hatched Pan Ku, while in Maori myth, Rangi, the sky, and Papa, the earth, are forced apart by their unborn offspring.)

The primordial ocean appears in Hindu, Mesopotamian, and Japanese myth, as well as in some versions of Egyptian creation myth. Often, the primordial ocean is home to some creature, such as a giant serpent or tortoise, which either makes the creation possible in some way or prevents it until slain by another being. (In Japanese myth, however, the creators Inazagi and Inazumi stir up the ocean from outside it to bring forth the first island, from which they create everything else.)

Sometimes, instead of a cosmic egg or primordial ocean, the creation myth revolves around a primordial being or beings. In one Egyptian creation myth, Atum created himself from nothing, as did the Ungambikula of the Australian aborigines. In other myths, the creator existed independent of his creation, such as Viracocha of the Incas.

Some creation myths have aspects of more than one of these origin types. The Chinese creator god Pan Ku was hatched from the cosmic egg and then spent the next 18,000 years chiseling and sculpting the rest of creation. The Greeks believed that a cosmic egg was laid by Nyx (Night) and fell onto the primordial ocean, where it was hatched by the serpent Ophion. From this egg sprang Uranus (the sky) and Gaea (the earth), who sired the Titans, who in turn sired the gods. Likewise, the Norse creation myth begins with a block of ice formed between the cold of Niflheim and the warmth of Muspelheim, from which sprang the giant Ymir and the cow Audhumbla, who then licked free from the ice Buri, who then sired Bor, who then sired Odin, Vili, and Ve, who then created everything else.

## SUNNY SIDE UP

The cosmic egg origin myth is similar to the Big Bang theory of the universe, which states that all matter in the universe was originally condensed into an infinitely dense point.

## WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE

The primordial ocean origin myth also has its parallels in science. The entire surface of Earth was supposedly covered by water prior to the appearance of the supercontinent Pangaea. Also, one of the lost manuscripts from the library of Alexandria was a theory by Anaxamander that all life on Earth evolved from fish.

Note also that the primordial ocean appears prevalent in part because so much of Earth's surface is covered by water. A race that sprang from a planet with more land than ocean would be less likely to have a primordial ocean as part of its creation myth.

## LAND OF THE GIANTS

This, too, has its scientific parallels. Modern mammals were preceded by giant mammals such as the mammoth, mastodon, and megalotherm, many of which were hunted to extinction by primitive man, while both primitive man and giant mammals were preceded by the dinosaurs.

## GETTING MOONED

On a world with multiple moons, each moon could have its own deity. In the John Carter books, the Martian moon Deimos was known as Cluros, considered male, and described as “stately” because of its slow progression across the sky. The moon Phobos was known as Thuria, considered female, and to be the mate of Cluros.

While the creation story of Genesis happened over six days, most creation stories take place over a longer period of time, often requiring a fair number of gods to come into existence to make the earth habitable for their creations. Often humanity comes into being very late in the process, usually preceded by giants or giant creatures of some sort.

Norse myth is populated with frost giants and storm giants, while the Greeks had the Titans and monsters such as Typhon and the Cyclopes. Hindu myth has its share of demons, while Japanese mythology includes the Oni, who could either take human form or possess people as they wished.

## DEITIES

Most mythologies have at least one and usually more deities as part of it. Some mythologies begin with primal forces, such as Night and Chaos of the Greeks or the Hindu Brahman force, and progress toward discrete beings. Others start with a discrete creator or creator, such as Viracoccha of the Incas or Inazagi and Inazumi of Japanese myth, who may or may not become part of the pantheon that succeeds him. Still others revolve around spirits that never take a discrete form, such as the creative force Wakan-Tanka of the Lakota.

A pantheon of deities usually includes gods for the sky, sun, moon, and weather. In most cases, the sky god will be the chief deity, but in hot climates, the sun god, such as Ra (when identified with Atum) for the Egyptians, and Tsohanai of the Navajo will be the chief god. In nearly every mythology that represents them as beings, the sun and moon are of different sexes, with the sun usually male and the moon female, although the Japanese and Inuit both had a goddess for the sun and a god for the moon.

The land and sea also are often represented by deities, either by a single entity for each or individual deities representing individual trees, hills, mountains, and bodies and properties of water. The principal sea god is usually depicted as tempestuous, particularly for maritime civilizations like the Greeks and the island civilizations of the Pacific islands. Many sea deities could also change their shape, such as the Greek Proteus, or color, such as the Hindu Tara.

Most mythologies also include fertility deities, both for the growing of crops and for the propagation of the worshippers themselves. Some crop deities, like the Greek Demeter, apply to all crops, while other deities, like Mondamin in *The Song of Hiawatha* or the Corn Woman of Pawnee legend, were in charge of a single staple crop. Love deities were similarly arranged, with both general love goddesses like Aphrodite, Venus, Freyja, and Ishtar, and deities devoted to such special duties as overseeing marriage (the

Greek Hymen), childbirth (the Egyptian Hathor and the Greek Erytheia), and sexuality (the Greek Eros and the Egyptian Min).

Many mythologies include local deities of one sort or another. Usually, these are minor in importance, such as the household Lares and Penates of Roman mythology, although they can rise to considerable prominence according to the area they represent, such as Marduk of the Babylonians rising to become a chief deity as Babylon itself became a great empire.

## DOERS OF GREAT DEEDS

All mythologies have stories of characters who through their actions either bring great benefit or great tragedy to their people. Still others seem content to play tricks on men and gods, switching sides as it suits their purposes.

Sometimes the doers of great deeds are gods, as with Thor battling the giants in Norse mythology or the Titan Prometheus obtaining fire for mankind and tricking Zeus into accepting fat and bones as the primary content of burnt offerings. Sometimes the doers of great deeds are men working with the aid of the gods, such as Diomedes, with Athena guiding his spear, wounding Aphrodite and Ares during the Trojan War. Most doers of great deeds, however, are the offspring of gods and humans, such as Perseus and Hercules for the Greeks, Cuchulain for the Irish, and Romulus and Remus for the Romans.

Hindu myth, however, has a special twist, in that many of its doers of great deeds were gods taking on the forms of humans. Most famous are the ten avatars of Vishnu, including Rama, Krishna, and the Buddha, but the goddess Devi also took several incarnations, such as Sati, Parvati, and the warrior Durga.

Many doers had great physical prowess, such as the strength of Hercules or Cuchulain or the wrestling skill of Theseus. Others possessed great mental cunning, most notably Odysseus, who thought up the Trojan Horse and tricked the Cyclops Polyphemus. Sometimes a strong hero could be smart, as when Hercules cleaned the Augean stables by diverting two rivers, or a smart hero could be strong, as only Odysseus could string his bow.

Nearly all the mythologies of the world immortalized their greatest doers of great deeds in the night sky by naming either a star or constellation after them. Many of the constellation names we use today come from Greek mythology (Hercules, Perseus, Andromeda, Pegasus, Orion) or represent someone in mythology (Gemini representing the twins Castor and Polydeuces, or Pollux). In another mythology, however, the constellation we know as Hercules was called Pacala, after a doer of great deeds who plowed the sky and outwitted the Devil, while the constellations

Eridanus and Delphinus are sometimes called the River Jordan and Job's Coffin, respectively.

### MONSTERS AND FABULOUS CREATURES

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Dragons are probably the best known and most nearly universal mythical creature. Dragons of one sort or another appear in most mythologies, with European dragons tending to be fire-breathers with wings and bulky bodies guarding treasure in caves, while Asian dragons tend to be serpentine with treasures of wisdom instead of gold and are often found in the water.

Merfolk are almost as universal as dragons. The Sirens and Nereids of Greek myth are both variations of the mermaid, as is the Lorelei. The Greek god Poseidon and his son Triton are also often depicted as having fishlike lower extremities.

Most other fabulous creatures are special versions of animals native to the area or hybrids of several such creatures, such as centaurs, griffins, and the Chimera. Those creatures that stood out in the minds of the people who observed them became gods or gave their aspects to gods: the Assyrian sky god Ashur was depicted with wings, while many Egyptian deities had the heads of native birds, cattle, or crocodiles. Sometimes, a creature's aspect was a perceived similarity to something else; the Hindu thunder god Indra rode an elephant because its trumpeting sounded like thunder, while other thunder deities rode bulls.

Many other creatures give shape to primal fears. Creatures of the darkness such as vampires and werewolves come chiefly from latitudes far from the equator, where nights can be significantly longer than days. A variation on the werewolf is the Akhlut of the Inuit, which is a killer whale while in the water and a wolf while on the land.

### THE END OF EVERYTHING

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Just as all mythologies explain how everything began, (nearly) all of them explain how it ends. A major part of Norse mythology involves preparing for the final battle of Ragnarok, when the warriors of Valhalla join the gods in a fight against the giants, after which the entire world is destroyed and then reborn.

Other mythologies feature a cycle of destruction and rebirth. The Aztecs believed that four worlds had existed before theirs: the first destroyed by jaguars, the second by a hurricane, the third by fire, the fourth by flood, and that their own world would be destroyed by an earthquake. Other North American Indian mythologies believed that new worlds were created on top of old worlds and that survivors of the old world's death had to climb up to reach the new one.

Even when the world wasn't destroyed, there were often disasters that came close to destroying it. Nearly every mythology includes some form of flood story; the Biblical Noah has such counterparts as the Babylonian Utnapishtim and the Greek Deucalion, the latter of whom re-peopled the world by throwing stones over his shoulder. Most such disasters were a means to purge the world of evil.

Just as important as the end of the world was the end of individual life. Egyptian mythology was as devoted to the afterlife as Norse mythology was to the end of the world, with elaborate mummification rituals and a detailed underworld with deities for each step of the process. Other mythologies required a physical journey in the lands of the dead; the Greeks buried their dead with an *obol* to pay their way across the Styx before they could be judged and go on to their final reward.

Still other mythologies treated the afterlife as a temporary rest between lives on Earth. Many African cultures, as well as those of India, believed that souls came back in different bodies, either as part of a cycle of development toward an ultimate reward (Nirvana) or simply to fulfill a desire to return. (Later Greek myths also incorporated reincarnation, as described in one of Plato's dialogues.)

### Shaping the Elements

While every mythology includes the elements of creation, gods, heroes, monsters, and the end times, the exact nature of these elements varies with the individual society that mythology belongs to and is shaped by that society just as that society is shaped by it. Following is a list of the things that shape the elements of myth.

### ENVIRONMENT

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The physical environment in which a society develops has a profound effect on shaping that society. A society cannot become an agricultural society if its soil will not support food crops. It cannot develop metalworking unless there are sufficient ores present to be shaped. It cannot be a seafaring society in a landlocked environment.

By the same token, the deities of that society's mythology must be representative of the environment the society finds itself in. Every mythology has one or more sky deities because everyone can see the sky from Earth's surface. A society that lives underground would not have sky deities, while a society living in an underwater environment above the maximum depth light could penetrate could have a sky ("upper water") deity in its pantheon, possibly with blue skin because blue light penetrates the furthest underwater. A society on a cloud-shrouded planet could conceive of a sky deity covered head to toe in a burqa-like garment so

### YES, COMMISSIONER?

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In David Brin's novel *The Uplift War*, the Earthpeople who colonized the planet Garth named one of their constellations after Batman; the constellation is described as having a red star representing the buckle of the Caped Crusader's utility belt.

### SOMETHING FISHY

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The manatee, or sea cow, is considered by some to be the origin of the mermaid legend.

### DEJA VU

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In addition to common mythic elements, some actual stories are common to various mythologies, for example:

- Both Greek mythology and the legends of the Bella Coola Indians have tales of the sun god having a son who, in claiming his heritage, takes over his father's duties and nearly destroys the world in doing so.
- Both the Greek Eros and the Hindu Kama shot arrows to make their targets fall in love.
- Both Odin and King Arthur carried lances that would always hit their target, no matter how poorly they were thrown.

- Both Greek and Norse mythology believed that three female deities determined the fate of individuals (the Fates and Norns, respectively).

- Both the Norse Sigurd and the Celtic Finn had the opportunity to gain great wisdom and knowledge through cooking and eating a special food (Fafnir's heart and the Salmon of Knowledge, respectively), but neither gained the full benefits of this knowledge.

### UP A TREE

In the Green Lantern story "The Planet of Doomed Men," when the Emerald Gladiator arrives on the planet Calor to save a small tribe of cavemen from a giant gorilla-like creature, he finds them worshipping a lone, bare tree that has grown up in otherwise inhospitable volcanic soil. On seeing him, the men regard him as having been sent by the tree spirit Ka-Ma.

### PASSING THE B'AR

A more recent example of a real person who attained such legendary status is Davy Crockett, the frontiersman, pioneer, soldier, and legislator from Tennessee, thanks to the Crockett

that its body could not be seen. (This society would probably not have a sun deity, or if the sun ever did break through the clouds, it might be regarded similar to how a solar eclipse was regarded in primitive Earth myths.)

The mythic world in which gods and heroes interact should be based in part on the geography of the real world surroundings of the society that created it. The Greeks put their gods on Mount Olympus, which is the highest mountain in Greece. The Norse mythic world was divided into the cold Niflheim, the habitable Midgard, and the fiery Muspelheim, roughly paralleling the climate of Iceland, with a mostly habitable climate, but also areas of ice and volcanoes and geysers.

The amount of land area the society occupies and its variety should make its way into the mythic world. A society confined to a very small area, such as a valley ringed by mountains, should have a very small mythic world, possibly having its gods making their homes on the surrounding mountains and looking down on their creation for their amusement. Such a society probably also will have few members, thus limiting the number of tellers of tales that form its mythology.

A large and highly mobile society, on the other hand, will develop a rich mythology set in a large mythic world. The Greeks, being a seafaring society, incorporated the entire area of the Mediterranean and Black Seas: the Rock of Gibraltar (one of the Pillars of Hercules), North Africa (where Atlas held the world on his shoulders and was later transformed to Mt. Atlas), Italy (where Aeneas and Diomedes both went after the Trojan War), Egypt (where the gods went when fleeing in disguise from Typhon), and Turkey (where the Argonauts went to retrieve the Golden Fleece from the city of Colchis).

Often, the mythic world and real world can intertwine, with real-world place names taken from mythology. The Aegean Sea takes its name from King Aegeus, father of Theseus, who threw himself into the sea thinking his son had died fighting the Minotaur. Likewise, the Assyrians named their country and their original capital, Assur, after their chief deity, Ashur.

### HISTORY

The history of a society shapes its mythology in several ways. Many times heroes of a particular mythology were in fact real personages; Hiawatha was actually a 12th century Mohawk Indian chief, and the real King Arthur is thought to have been a sixth century Welsh chieftain. Over time, their real deeds of greatness were embellished to give them legendary status.

How long a history a society has also shapes its mythology. A society with a long history has many legends told by many storytellers, and the more storytellers there are, the more variations there are in their stories. According to one version of Greek mythology, Perseus was the grandfather of Hercules' mother, Alcmena, while in another story, it was Perseus who turned Atlas into a mountain by showing him the head of Medusa sometime after Hercules had gotten the golden apples of Atlas' daughters, the Hesperides. (Still another version resolves the conflict by saying it was the goddess Athena who used Medusa's head to turn Atlas to stone after Zeus felt the Titan had suffered enough for being forced to hold up the sky.)

However, a society need not have been around for a long period of time in order to create legends. America has been a nation for only 230 years and a people for only another 160 years before that. Yet it has spawned such folk heroes as Paul Bunyan, John Henry, Pecos Bill, Fiebold Fieboldson, Mike Fink, and Joe Magrac, as well as creating legends around such real people as Washington, Lincoln, and Crockett.

Nor does an event have to have occurred in the distant past for a legend to arise around it. The creation of Reelfoot Lake in Tennessee by an earthquake in 1803 was explained in an Indian legend as lovers from two tribes who were swallowed up by the earth.

How much interaction a society has had with other societies also shapes its mythology. Many deities in one mythology actually came originally from another society's mythology, either due to travelers sharing stories with people or explorers bringing back favorite stories from the area they visited. The Chinese goddess of mercy, Kuan Yin, was originally a Buddhist deity from India whom the Chinese worshipped for healing the sick and helping couples conceive children.

Sometimes, a society's mythology expanded by co-opting the mythology of another society as one society conquered another. As the Roman Empire spread, the Romans took gods from the Etruscans and identified them with the gods of the Greeks, the Egyptians, and the Celts: Jupiter was considered equal to the Greek Zeus, the Egyptian Ammon, and the Celtic Taranis.

Many times, the deities and heroes of the conquered mythology didn't fare very well when brought over to their new mythology. Ariadne, the daughter of King Minos in the Greek myth of Theseus, was originally a goddess in her own right, but was reduced to being a spurned lover and eventually the bride of a god, Dionysus.

### SKILLS AND TECHNOLOGY

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How a society lives is often reflected in its mythology. The Chinese pantheon is organized as a celestial bureaucracy resembling the structure of the Chinese state of emperors, generals, and sages. Many other societies' mythologies feature gods that represent their particular skills. Many African tribes are skilled metalworkers, and their mythologies feature metalworking gods in an important role in their pantheons. A woodworking society would likely have deities devoted to trees and the tools of their craft.

As most societies on Earth were originally agrarian to one extent or another, each of their mythologies included at least one deity devoted to agriculture. Those with a fairly broad range of crops might have a deity devoted to agriculture in general, such as the Greek Demeter or the Roman Ceres. Those with fewer staple crops might devote a deity to a specific crop, such as the Japanese rice goddess Ukemochi. Those with only a single staple crop might devote several deities to that crop, such as the Aztec corn gods Chicomecoatl, who represented corn seed, and Cinteotl, who could appear in either male or female forms and presumably represented the pollination of the corn plant.

Societies that raise animals will give those animals significant roles in their mythology. As the cow is the most common source of milk, cows play a prominent role in both Greek and Norse mythology, with a cow in Greek mythology (Amalthea) suckling the infant Zeus and a cow in Norse myth (Audhumbla) licking the first creatures into being and then feeding them. Likewise, the goddess Hathor in Egyptian myth, a protector of women in childbirth, is depicted with a cow's head. In a society where milk comes primarily from other animals, such as goats, those animals could instead play the mothering role.

A society's level of scientific and technological sophistication will also have an impact on its mythology. Scientific knowledge does not immediately displace mythic belief, but changes it gradually over time. In the earliest Greek myths, the sun and moon were represented by horse-drawn chariots in which Helios/Apollo and Selene/Artemis rode. Later, as the Greeks observed the disc-like shape of the sun and moon and developed a better understanding of their true nature, they viewed the sun and moon as rolling globes guided by the will of the sun and moon deities.

### CULTURAL VALUES

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A society's mythology is representative not only of who they believe in, but what they believe in as well. America has long valued individual achievement, so many of its heroes

are either individuals, like Superman or Wonder Woman, or heroes who stand out from their teams, such as Doc Savage being described as knowing more about the subjects his Brain Trust were experts in than the Amazing Five themselves did.

A society that values diversity produces a mythology of diversity. India, which is a hodgepodge of cultures and dialects, has produced a large pantheon with a variety of legends with many variations. There are several overall Hindu deities, but also a good many local deities, each important to its area but practically unknown outside of it.

A mythology's afterlife is also shaped by what its society values most. Because the Norsemen valued combat prowess, their Valhalla was a place where soldiers chosen from the battlefield could spend their days fighting one another and be magically healed of their wounds at the end of the day. Many other societies believed the best possible reward was an end of strife, as evidenced by the Elysian Fields of the Greeks.

In general, what a society values most will appear most in its mythology and what it values least will appear least. The Egyptians went to great lengths to prepare their dead for the afterlife, developing a sophisticated mummification process and a god, Anubis, to oversee it. Consistent with this, their underworld of Duat had no less than 42 inquisitor gods to determine the fitness of the dead for the afterlife. Furthermore, the chief god of the underworld, Osiris, had to die himself in order to go to the underworld and rule it. In contrast, the Greeks had a panel of only three judges to determine the resting place of their dead, and their god of the underworld, Hades, got his job by drawing lots with brothers Zeus and Poseidon.

### Adventure Ideas

A working knowledge of how to structure a mythology provides not just a background for the society in which the campaign will take place, but can also provide ideas for specific adventures.

### TAKE MY GODDESS... PLEASE!

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As noted earlier, many pantheons are actually hodgepodes of the mythologies of several earlier societies. A group of player characters could be part of a society whose main deities are depicted as a bickering husband and wife. It could be that the female deity was actually the main deity of a society that had been conquered by that of the player characters at some time in the past. If they encounter the wife at any time in their adventures, they could find her quite angry about the loss of her worshippers and ready to take it out on the PCs.

Almanacs published just prior to and after his death in 1836. One folktale tells of a day so cold that the sun froze in its place in the sky. Crockett got the sun moving again by lubricating the earth's axis with bear grease, and just before the sun got moving again, he lit his pipe from its topknot.

In reality, Crockett went by "David," not "Davy."

### NEW GODS FOR OLD

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A variation of this is replacing the houses of worship for deities of one religion with those for deities of another who have similar attributes. The Romans initially tried to stop the spread of Christianity by building temples in the places where Christians gathered, while Christians later replaced those temples with shrines to saints, such as the Virgin Mary displacing the maiden goddess Athena or St. Demetrius displacing Demeter.

## THE JOY OF SECTS

Forcing a deity's believers not to worship may seem like an easy solution, but it could backfire. The god-hero of A.E. Van Vogt's *Ptath* triumphs because his worshippers, when forbidden to worship him by edict, worship him all the more.

## ABUSING MY RELIGION

The bond between deity and worshipper could be such that the deity takes on whatever form and abilities its worshippers believe it has and is limited in its actions to only those things its believers believe it can do.

A group of PCs in trouble could be forced to turn to a local deity for help, only to find that deity virtually powerless until the PCs get that deity's worshippers to believe that the deity can perform the task the heroes need to have performed. Likewise, heroes could stop a powerful deity they are in combat with by getting that deity's believers to stop believing.

Another scenario would be to have the heroes encounter a warrior who had sold his soul to an evil deity and was on a quest to destroy all of that deity's worshippers in order to free his soul. Depending on how the GM views this, astute players could realize that this is a hopeless quest in that, by selling his soul to that deity, the warrior had effectively become a believer in that deity.

The possibilities for using mythology in a role-playing adventure aren't limited strictly to battling the monster *du jour*. With a working understanding of the elements of mythology, some observation, and some imagination, it is possible to produce a mythology that fits the campaign world and is a source for adventures within it.

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## You Gotta Have Culture: Khasi

by Joshua Keezer

The Khasi Hills are an area well talked about around the Meghalaya region of northeast India. Located just north of Bangladesh, the Khasi have remained fairly isolated. Most contact with the outside world has been through Christian missionaries. The first documented occurrence was Thomas Jones, a Calvinistic Methodist. Before his death in 1849, he had adopted the Khasi dialect so that it could be written down. This paved the way for future Presbyterian missionaries to begin converting the Khasi from their Animalistic religion to Christianity.

The spreading of Christianity has not stopped the traditional religious ceremonies of the Khasi. The Khasi have numerous gods and goddesses that they worship. They believe that each god influences both good and evil in humans depending on whether the appropriate sacrifices have been made to that god. For example, the god Ka Ram Shandi is the Khasi god of war. After a warrior has successfully defeated his enemy in battle, he is to sacrifice a cock and place the cock's head upon the end of a spear. The god of the State, U'lei Muluk, the god of water, U'lei Umtong, and the god of wealth, U'lei Longspah, are all given an annual sacrifice of a goat and a cock so that their way of life will prosper.

Not all gods are given sacrifices to continue to bring good favor to the Khasi. The god Ka Rih is the god of malarial fever and is sacrificed to leave the Khasi alone. Despite the slow creeping Christian influence, the Khasi continue to sacrifice for Ka Rih as well numerous other ill bearing gods. Some of these gods include Ka Khlam who is said to bring cholera and Ka Duba who brings fever.

None of the gods that the Khasi follow demand a human sacrifice. It is the evil creature known as the U Thlen that requires a human sacrifice to appease. U Thlen is not a god the Khasi worship. It is, in fact, a demonic, giant serpent that resides within the Khasi Hills. It is said that long ago, the serpent preyed upon the Khasi and nothing could quench its appetite. One man, under the advice of the god U Suid-noh, took with him a herd of goats to sacrifice to the demon. As the demon feasted on the goats, the man taught the snake their language. Through U Thlen, they learned that to appease the snake, it must be fed human flesh in small pieces over time. The U Thlen may become hungry at any time without warning. Unable to know exactly when the U Thlen will become hungry next, they make a human sacrifice once a year. The usually use convicted murders but if they have none available and no one volunteers, it is not

unknown for the Khasi to kidnap a complete stranger for the sacrifice.

The U Thlen has never been seen outside of its sacrifice. The Khasi believe that U Thlen takes the form of a small snake when it is no longer hungry. U Thlen is permitted to go and reside where he wants. It is strictly forbidden to displace a snake from your residence, and the snake must simply be let go when it is ready. The Khasi also strictly prohibit eating snake meat. Similarly, the dog is not allowed to be eaten by the Khasi. This is because the Khasi view dogs as Friends of Man. All other animals are permitted to be eaten.

The Khasi have countless rituals they perform for unique circumstances. For example, if two Khasis are in dispute, they can settle the dispute with the Ka Ngam Um, or water ordeal. The two Khasi fix a spear deep below the surface of a pool. They then dive under and hold onto the spear. Whoever remains onto his spear the longest wins the dispute. In many cases the winner would be near death from drowning in order to prove his case. The Ka Ngam Um can be used to both settle disputes but to also convince another party that a course of action is worth undertaking.

Another ordeal used by the Khasi is the Ordeal of the U Klong. This ritual is rarely invoked and is feared by the Khasi, but is used when it is the only way to truly prove the truth. It is said that those that undertake the Ordeal on the slightest falsehood will die. To invoke the ritual, the undertaker must swear an oath in front of the judge, at the preparation of the U Klong gourd, the fermented rice, and finally an arrowhead. The fermented rice is then poured into the gourd and the arrow is stuck into its center. The judge takes the gourd and recites one final oath, upon the head of the oath taker. The oath taker repeats this oath. If the oath taker has lied about the oath, he will die before the judge with the final oath. Because the Khasi view this as the ultimate testament of truth, those who have undergone the Ordeal of the U Klong do not need to undergo any legal trials.

**Ordeal by U Klong:** HKA 4d6, NND (LS: Diminished Eating or Not Invoking the Ritual of the U Klong while Drinking It, +1), Does BODY (+1) (180 Active Points); OAF (-1), Incantations Throughout (-½), Extra Time (5 Minutes, -2), Only Effects Those Who Undertake Ordeal of U Klong on a Lie (-1). Total Cost: 33 points.

Two common methods of divination are the Shanam and the Khan-Sla. The Shanam ritual is usually conducted by a Khasi diviner (called a Nongkhan) holding a lime-case and asking it a question. If the lime-case swings, the Nongkhan has received an affirmative answer. The Shanam can also be conducted by the Nongkhan dipping his hand into a bag or basket full of rice. If the number of grains is odd, the question is also affirmative. The Khan-Sla divination involves the Nongkhan dropping two leaves into water. Depending on how the leaves answer, the Nongkhan can determine if good or evil is the primary force involved in the answer.

**Shanam Divination:** Clairsentience (Sight Group), Precognition (40 Active Points); OAF (-1), Concentration (½ DCV throughout, -½), Extra Time (1 Minute; -1½), No Range (-½), Requires a Khasi Divination Roll (-½), Precognition Only (-1), Vague and Unclear (-½). Total Cost: 6 points.

**Options:**

- 1) *Rice Shanam Divination:* Change to Extra Time (5 Minutes, -2). Total Cost: 6 points.
- 2) *Nongkhan Divination:* Remove Extra Time. Total Cost: 8 points.

All Khasi religious ceremonies are performed by a priest known as a Lyngdohs. However, priests cannot perform any rituals without a female priestess known as a Ka Lyngdoh first gathering all of the articles necessary for sacrifice. The Ka Lyngdoh must hand the materials directly to the Lyngdoh before the ritual can be properly conducted.

The Khasi possess a unique feature in their society that distinguishes them from other cultures. The Khasi are a matriarchal society. The eldest female of a family is the most respected member of that family. She is the one responsible for making all family decisions. A show of disrespect to the eldest female is an insult on the entire family and perhaps even the entire tribe. In fact, within the Khasi, only mothers are allowed to hold property.

Even in death, females are given special status. When a Khasi dies, an elaborate ritual is performed with the body. After the ritual is complete, a large funeral procession is held to place the remains within a tomb. After a full day, the priests go to the tomb and perform a sacrifice. The remains are put into a burial bowl and are taken to the family home. After another full day, the bones are buried and a memorial stone is placed over the spot that the person is buried. Memorial stones are placed near roads and other high traffic areas. A flat table stone is placed either in front, or surrounded by tall vertical stones. The flat table stones are for the

mother, and the tall stones represent brothers and sons of the mother. A memorial stone typically can be anywhere from a meter to four meters tall. Some stones have been as high as 8 meters tall. The memorial stones are what most outsiders recall the most of the Khasi.

As hunters and warriors, the Khasi can be extremely deadly. While they make use of swords, spears, and shields, they are extremely proficient with the bow. However, it is quite fortunate for the strangers that come through and even into the Khasi territory, that the Khasi are generally peaceful. However, should they be forced to do battle, they are incredibly lethal.

**KHASI HUNTER PACKAGE DEAL**

**Cost Ability**

- 2 +2 STR
- 4 +2 CON
- 4 +2 with Khasi Bows
- 2 Land Navigation
- 3 Tracking
- 3 Stealth
- 1 Survival (Tropical Forests)
- 4 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons

**Total Cost of Package Abilities: 23**

**KHASI PRIESTESS PACKAGE DEAL**

**Cost Ability**

- 4 +4 INT
- 1 +2 COM
- 2 PS: Khasi Priestess
- 5 KS: Khasi Rituals (INT Roll + 2)
- 1 Language: Hindustani (Basic Conversation; Khasi is native)

**Total Cost of Package Abilities: 13**

**Options:**

- 9+ *Diviner:* The character is a Khasi Diviner as well as a Priestess. Buy her Khasi Divination Power Skill and at least 6 points worth of Divination abilities.
- 2 *Snake Protector:* This character secretly protects the sleeping form of U Thlen. Buy her Animal Handler (Reptiles) and Social Limitation: Harmful Secret.

## DIGITAL HERO #38

### U Thlen

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
50	STR	70	19-	25 tons; 10d6 HTH [5]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
25	CON	40	14-	
23	BODY	32	14-	
8	INT	-2	11-	PER Roll: 11-
5	EGO	-10	10-	ECV: 2
30	PRE	30	15-	PRE Attack: 6d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
15	PD	10		Total: 15 PD (9 rPD)
11	ED	9		Total: 11 ED (9 rED)
3	SPD	6		Phases: 4, 8, 12
15	REC	0		
50	END	0		
61	STUN	0		

**Total Characteristic Cost: 186**

**Movement:** Running: 18"/36"  
Leaping: 0"/0"  
Swimming: 14"/28"

Cost	Powers	END
25	<i>Bite:</i> HKA 1½d6 (3d6+1 with STR)	2
9	<i>Thick Scaled Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (9 PD/9 ED)	0
24	<i>Heavy:</i> Knockback Resistance -12"	0
24	<i>Long Body:</i> Running +12" (18" Total)	2
12	<i>Long Body:</i> Swimming +12" (14" Total)	1
34	<i>Reach:</i> Stretching 8", Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); No Noncombat Stretching (-¼), Always Direct (-¼), No Velocity Damage (-¼)	0
60	<i>U Thlen's Slumbering Form:</i> Multiform (200 Character Points in the most expensive form) (16x Number Of Forms)	0

#### Skills

- 2 Concealment 12-; Self Only (-½)
- 3 Language: Khasi (Fluent)
- 3 Stealth 12-

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 196**

**Total Cost: 382**

#### 75+ Disadvantages

- 20 Accidental Change: Fed a Human Sacrifice (Uncommon, Always)
- 0 Normal Characteristic Maxima
- 15 Physical Limitation: Gigantic (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 15 Physical Limitation: Limited Manipulation (Frequently, Greatly)
- 10 Physical Limitation: Reduced Leap, Cannot Leap (Infrequently, Slightly)
- 247 Experience Points

**Total Disadvantage Points: 382**

**Description:** U Thlen in his normal form is horrific monster with an endless appetite. If he is fed a human sacrifice, he will randomly change into his sleeping form, that of one of any variety of local snakes.



# The Quick and the KO'ed

by Jason Wedel

In combat there are two types of characters, the quick and the knocked out. Being able to move quickly in combat while still fighting is a distinctive advantage. What follows is a look into maneuvers for characters that are fast and agile, or more specifically maneuvers that allow characters to use their full movement while still fighting.

## COMBAT RUNNING (*DARK CHAMPIONS* PG 130)

Combat Running from *Dark Champions* shows us that you can model this ability by buying enough of a movement power to double your normal movement with the limitation of “Only to make Half Moves in combat (-1)”. To expand on this idea a character should be able to take a greater limitation on the movement by decreasing the type of attacks he can use it with. The table below describes a guideline to use, however as with all things, a GM should watch out for possible abuses.

<u>Limitation</u>	<u>Value</u>
Only to Half Move in Combat	-1
Only to Half Move in Combat while making a (Ranged or Melee) Attack	-1¼
Only to Half Move in Combat while making an attack with a Tight group	-1½
Only to Half Move in Combat while making a Single Attack	-2

The main benefit to this system is that the character suffers no negative modifiers for using the ability and pays a reasonable amount of points for it. However it does have a couple of negatives. First the more types of movements the character has the more he has to spend on it. The other problem with it is that only characters who have bought the ability can use it.

## COMBAT MANEUVERS

There are a few combat maneuvers that can be used by characters trying to make a full move and still attack; some examples are Move By, Grab By, and Move Through. The two main advantages of these moves are anyone can use them and they can be strung together. However, they also have drawbacks. First, there are a limited number of things you can do with them (Damage and Grab), plus the penalties can be quite severe, especially if you target more than one opponent. Finally, there is no combat maneuver to allow a full movement with a ranged attack, although a nice GM might allow a Move By or Move Through at zero range.

## NEW (OPTIONAL) COMBAT MANEUVERS

The following maneuvers will help to give more options to characters wanting to just use Combat Maneuvers.

**Running Disarm (-4 OCV, -2 DCV):** This maneuver simply combines the rules for a Move By with those of a Disarm. The character can make multiple Running Disarms at a -2 penalty per disarm after the first. As with a move by the character should plot out the movement he plans on taking first. This maneuver can be combined with other movement based maneuvers. The character receives 1 point of STR per inch of velocity for the Disarm.

**Running Shot (-2 OCV, -2 DCV):** With a Running Shot the character can make a ranged attack while using his full movement, in the same manner as a Move By. Range Modifiers are figured from the point in the movement that the attack is made. The character can make multiple Running Shots at a -2 penalty per additional target, or combined it with any of the other movement based maneuvers. The character gets no additional damage when using a Running Shot. Running Shot can be used with any ranged attack power (such as Entangles, Flashes, etc.). Maneuvers such as Aim or Set cannot be used with Running Shot.

**Running Attack (-2 OCV, -2 DCV):** With this maneuver a character can use a no range attack that does not include Strength (such as most adjustment powers, and powers that take the no range Limitation) while moving. As with all movement based attacks, you can make multiple attacks with this maneuver at a -2 per additional target and can combine it with other movement based attacks.

## DIGITAL HERO #38

### MARTIAL ARTS

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Martial Arts Maneuvers that include the FMove element also allow for a full move to be made while making an attack. The advantages are that the penalties are not normally as high as the normal combat maneuvers and the damage or effect is normally higher. The limitations are that once again you can not use it for ranged combat, and once again you are paying Character Points for the privilege.

As stated earlier an FMove can not be used with ranged attacks. However, anyone who has a first run of the *Ultimate Martial Artist* for 5<sup>th</sup> edition can tell you that there is a maneuver on the ranged table called Moving Shot (this maneuver was later removed). But thanks to backwards engineering we can figure that for ranged maneuvers the FMove element would have cost 6 points, requiring negative elements to be taken for putting it on any maneuver. Below are three martial maneuvers using this FMove Element. This should definitely be considered a Stop Sign ability that GM's approval is required for.

<p><b>Moving Shot:</b> -1 OCV, -0 DCV, -0 RMod, Strike, FMove</p> <p><b>Moving Disarm:</b> -2 OCV, -1 DCV, -0 RMod, Disarm +10 STR, FMove</p> <p><b>Moving Trip:</b> -1 OCV, -2 DCV, -0 RMod, Strike + Target Falls, FMove</p>
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As we can once again see there are many ways to do the same thing in the HERO System, each with small advantages and disadvantages.



## PROFESSOR PRIMATE

Created by the famous scientist Dr. Moreau in his ongoing attempts to discover the secrets of evolution, Professor Primate is a silverback ape of prodigious size and intelligence to match. Captured by Hegemony forces raiding Dr. Moreau's labs to steal his secrets, the ape quickly impressed his captors with his brilliance and was given an excellent education. He absorbed advanced sciences like a sponge, and eventually was given his freedom along with a powerful position as the Director of Exploratory Science, a key billet in the Ministry of Scientific Expansion.

## THE CONQUERORS

Lead by the merciless Destroyer, the Conquerors are the primary Regional Defense Team responsible for the North-Central Region of the Hegemony. It was Destroyer who gave the order to raze Old Detroit to the ground in an attempt to kill Dr. Democracy over a decade ago.

The power armored Destroyer and magically talented Cameo are the most brutal members of the team, along with the



# Through a Mirror Darkly by Ed Hastings

## Adventure Overview

*Through a Mirror Darkly* is a fast paced adventure intended to serve several roles. It can be run as a one-off or convention-style adventure with pregenerated characters, or as either stand-alone adventure or a reoccurring source for adventures in an existing campaign.

The primary focus of the adventure is on an alternate dimension very similar to the Champions Universe, but darker. To sum up the differences, while most of the notable characters of the Champions Universe exist, the moral thermometer of the dimension is essentially reversed.

In place of the United States of America there is the Combined Hegemony of Vinland; instead of the Champions there are the state-controlled enforcers called the Conquerors; instead of Dr. Destroyer there is the virtuous Dr. Democracy, and so on.

The material can also be used in conjunction with a non-Champions Universe campaign as well; a section below details how a GM can retool characters from their setting to serve in this regard instead.

## Background

Professor Primate, a hyper-intelligent ape scientist and very powerful member of the Hegemony's Ministry of Scientific Expansion, has built a trans-dimensional gate, and in testing it discovered a dimension ripe for occupation and inclusion into the Combined Hegemony of Vinland – the Champions Universe!

The Hegemony wasted no time, and formed a Special Services Squad (S3) to investigate the matter from one of their most dependable Regional Defense Teams, the superteam known as the Conquerors. The flinty servants of the state known as Destroyer, Cameo, Hardcase, Indigo, Pisk, and Volatile under the control of the formidable Professor Primate were sent through the gate, using their unique knowledge of the Champions' true identities to easily capture them, ferry them back to their own dimension, and assume their places.

However Dr. Silverback, Professor Primate's counterpart, proved to be too discerning for the same tricks, and escaped the Conquerors. Forced to flee, Dr. Silverback initiated a desperate plan.

Never one to leave things to chance, the clever ape-man had already considered the possibility that the Champions might be either replaced or controlled and had a contingency plan prepared. Wasting no time, he put it into effect.

Silverback gathered a new team of superheroes with which to oppose the Conquerors, rescue the Champions, and fend off the threat of the Hegemony of Vinland! (If running the adventure as a convention or one-off, Dr. Silverback contacted the pregenerated PCs as part of the back story and they agreed to help him. If using the adventure as part of a standard campaign, he contacts the PCs instead.)

## Adventure Information

*Through a Mirror Darkly* is an adventure designed to challenge four to six 350-point characters, and can be easily scaled to challenge more powerful characters.

### AS A STANDALONE ADVENTURE

*Through a Mirror Darkly* is easily used as a standalone or for a convention game. Six pregenerated characters are provided for this purpose.

### NON-CHAMPIONS UNIVERSE

*Through a Mirror Darkly* is also easily used in conjunction with other campaign settings. Simply replace Dr. Silverback with a suitable "brainy scientist" type from the relevant campaign setting, and replace the Conquerors with a "dark version" of some team of superheroes native to that setting.

### DARK REFLECTIONS

To transition heroes and villains in a given campaign setting into counterparts in the Hegemony dimension, imagine an individual character's "moral scale," and simply reverse it.

Thus characters that are exceptionally pure and virtuous in the campaign setting are exceptionally vile and twisted in the Hegemony dimension and vice versa, while characters that are darker, or more "practical" in the campaign setting are generally pretty similar in the Hegemony dimension.

Characters that are sanctioned or work closely with the government in the campaign setting likely are tools of the state in the Hegemony-verse, while characters that are solo or loners are likely considered rebels or anarchists.

If you find it easier to reuse the character names then do so, but it's more fun to give characters' alternate versions variant names reflecting their altered outlooks.

**THE HEGEMONY OF VINLAND**

The Hegemony dimension is very similar to the Champions Universe, save that it is darker and dystopian. Instead of a United States of America based upon democracy and freedom, there is the Combined Hegemony of Vinland, which consists of what would be America, Canada, Greenland, Iceland, the Caribbean, the Philippines, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia in the Champions Universe. The Hegemony is an oppressive totalitarian police state.

The Hegemony was originally a combined colony of the Empire known as Isles, which at that time was formed from sixteen counties in North America, and Iceland. Learning of the New World from Icelandic lore, the Empire of Isles was the first world power to the shores of Vinland. However other European nations such as Lyonne and Castille soon attempted colonies as well. The Isles-men eventually established dominance of the northern continent after decades of intermittent wars and border conflicts, but Castille controlled most of the southern continent.

Isles had originally established an iron-handed central governing body over the New World colony composed of five Ministries responsible for various concerns, and their power was nearly absolute. However, eventually the Ministers decided they didn't need meddling from Emperor George of Isles or his taxmen and issued a Declaration of Sovereignty in 1775 penned by the then Minister of Harmonious Thought, Thomas Jefferson, and signed by the other four Ministers and many highly placed Directors and Sub-directors. Even the somewhat divisive entrepreneur Benjamin Franklin signed the document, and was later key in securing assistance from Lyonne in supporting the separatist state.

A bloody war followed, but in the end, with a little help from Franklin's allies in Lyonne, the Combined Hegemony of Vinland won their sovereignty in 1776, controlling thirteen of the fifteen mainland counties.

Though somewhat modest in power and influence in their first decades, in 1812 the Hegemony wrested control of the remaining counties in Canada and Iceland, and Greenland as well from Isles, and gave them a good beating in the process. After that the Ministry of Manifest Destiny was founded and directed unceasing efforts to expand the borders of the Hegemony as far west as possible, eventually claiming the entirety of the North American continent.

In the centuries since, further wars of expansion were fought, including two attempts to conquer Europe that were barely stopped by the combined efforts of Isles, the EA mainstay of

Germania, and their assorted allies, as well as wars in the Far East opposing Hanese and Leninist expansion.

The Hegemony's primary opposition over the years has come from the Empire of Isles, the European Alliance, the Unified Leninist Free States, and the Peoples Commonwealth of Han, but with the collapse of the Leninist Free States a few decades ago and more recently a breakdown in diplomacy between the Empire of Isles and Han has left the Hegemony standing supreme and largely unchallenged for over a decade as the dominant world power. The Hegemony has taken the opportunity to effectively annex large portions of the Middle East and choice pieces of Africa and South America.

With each passing year the Hegemony becomes more dominant and expands its control a little further.

**THE SEVEN MINISTRIES**

The Hegemony is ruled by seven Ministries (expanded from the original five); they are:

- **The Ministry of Harmonious Thought:** Ideology and Control (and Propaganda, of course)
- **The Ministry of the Interior:** Militia, Law Enforcement, Criminal Matters, Commerce
- **The Ministry of Governing Rule:** Administration, Law
- **The Ministry of Truthfinding:** Internal Police
- **The Ministry of Manifest Destiny:** Military, Foreign Affairs; added in 1816
- **The Ministry of Scientific Expansion:** Science, Medicine, Technology; added in 1910

The Ministers of each Ministry sit on the Ruling Council, which has absolute power. Among the Council, the Ministers of Manifest Destiny and Governing Rule traditionally wield the most power, but the Minister of Scientific Expansion has become ever-more influential with each passing decade. The Ministers of Harmonious Thought, Interior, and Truthfinding typically ally, if for no other reason than for self protection versus the periodic attempts by the other Ministers to combine their Ministries into one larger organization due to the overlap between them.

Each Ministry controls various Departments and Agencies responsible for specific areas. Some of the most important or visible include:

alien arena-killer  
 Hardcase. The energy projecting mutant  
 Indigo is mostly in it for the recognition,  
 while the speedster Volatile mostly just likes to fight and show off. The martial artist and inventor Pisk is kept under close observation since he is commonly viewed as being soft on anarchists.

**SAMPLE ALTERNATE NAMES**

- Mechanon =  
 Mechagaurdian  
 Cavalier = Knight  
 Errant  
 Nightwind = Tempest  
 Kodiak = Grizzly  
 Technique =  
 Teknikality  
 Kevin Poe =  
 Nevermore

## DOCTOR DEMOCRACY

In the Hegemony dimension, the greatest proponent of human rights and protector of the little people is Albert Zerstoiten, Dr. Democracy.

He has been the Hegemony's Public Enemy Number One for decades and for good reason; no one person has done more to disrupt and oppose the Hegemony in the last 50 years.

Though the Hegemony destroyed Detroit in an attempt to kill Dr. D once and for all a little over a decade ago, he has recently emerged even more powerful than before and continues to oppose the Hegemony both directly and indirectly.

## ARMY OF DEMOCRACY

Founded over forty years ago by Public Enemy Number One, Dr. Democracy, the organization was originally intended as a 5<sup>th</sup> Column to sabotage the Hegemony's war efforts in the Far East. However the organization expanded over time into more widespread activities.

Their most insidious attacks on the Hegemony involve causing the eye of the Ministry of Truthfinding to fall upon Ministry



**ZED (Zero Enemy Division):** an Agency in the Ministry of Internal Security whose primary purpose is using superhumans to fight other superhumans, and anarchs in general. In addition to normal Agents and sanctioned superhumans, ZED also has ARGENT Agents bestowed with superhuman abilities via a secret treatment and used for particularly dangerous missions such as infiltrations and deep-cover plants among anarch groups.

ZED works closely with the Ministry of Scientific Expansion and is well supplied with R&D scientists in a joint Ministry arrangement, ensuring that they get the best toys.

**HBI (Hegemony Bureau of Inquiry):** an Agency in the Ministry of Truthfinding primarily responsible for investigating crimes – particularly crimes against the State.

**CID (Combined Intelligence Directorate):** an Agency of the Ministry of Manifest Destiny responsible for Intelligence collection and analysis across the world theatre.

**SSA (State Security Agency):** an Agency of the Ministry of Harmonious Thought so secret that they weren't even known about until a few decades ago. The agency is responsible for surveillance and monitoring of the general populace.

## ECONOMY

The Hegemony maintains a wartime economy, even when it's not currently involved in a war. There are constant shortages, quotas, and rations in effect, and the many factories strewn from coast to coast give a heavy priority to wartime materiel over consumer goods.

Almost all businesses are State-owned and operated by the Ministry of the Interior, and the few independently operated businesses (allowed to exist at all because they tend to be more efficient than state-run facilities) are at constant risk of being absorbed by the State. People are assigned to positions based upon their state-funded educations and regular proficiency reviews.

The government is by far the leading employer; over 90% of the working population is on the government payroll.

People are issued credits based on a flat pay-grade schedule and adjusted by specific amounts for various considerations. Most currency in the modern era is electronic, which makes it easier for the government to track spending and works as a powerful deterrent to black market activities.

The standard workday is 12 hours, from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. with a 30 minute lunch break, six days a week from Sunday to Friday. Highly placed Ministry employees receive special dispensation, of course.

## RESISTANCE

As with most police states, there are those who resist the totalitarian rule of the Hegemony. Resistance takes many forms, ranging from the overt to the covert, from individuals to more organized groups, from virtuous to selfish.

The most common form of "resistance" is the black market trade and distribution of the many banned items such as non-approved music and literature, as well as items that are frequently in short supply such as razors and toiletries. This form of "resistance" is the least severely policed, particularly since even Ministry employees are sometimes forced to resort to the black market for some goods. The most significant groups of black marketers include the high-tech international group known as ARGENT as well as criminal cartels.

More significant forms of resistance include superhuman groups and individuals such as "The Ultimate Hope" and FREE. These groups are heavily opposed by ZED.

There are also more passive resistance oriented organizations such as the Children of Liberty, and various religious groups (the practice of religion is outlawed in the Hegemony).

Other groups at odds with the Hegemony include the mystically oriented groups ANGEL and the Red Ring of Luna.

However, the most significant groups of rebels include the paramilitary organization known as SNAKE, and the Army of Democracy.

SNAKE is a well-led and well-trained force of freedom fighters identified by their distinctive "Don't Tread on Me" icon, which can be seen spray painted on walls everywhere across the Hegemony despite the Ministry of the Interior's best attempts to clean them up.

The Army of Democracy is organized into resistance cells across the Hegemony and operates covertly and indirectly; they typically use sabotage and the natural inefficiency of the totalitarian system to their advantage to slow down and interfere with Hegemony efforts.



## Dr. Silverback's Appeal

The genesis of the adventure is that Dr. Silverback contacts each of the PCs and appeals to them for assistance in opposing the fake Champions from another dimension and rescuing the real Champions.

This can be handled "off screen" prior to the game starting, either as exposition or played out in character as preferred by the GM.

Either way Dr. Silverback's appeal is simple; the world is at dire risk, and only the PCs can act quickly enough to save it!

Dr. Silverback reveals that he has been following the exploits of the PCs for some time, offers suitable compliments, and is upbeat about the situation, but will be most insistent that the group he has assembled act decisively.

His position is that matters must be handled quickly and covertly, lest the many villains normally kept in check by the Champions discover that they are missing and run amok.

While the PCs face the Conquerors, Dr. Silverback will use the opportunity to get back into his labs and figure out either how to find and use the portal created by his counterpart, or make one and find the invaders' dimension.

## Facing the Conquerors

Assuming the PCs acquiesce to assist, Dr. Silverback's plan is to quietly but firmly attack the fake Champions at their usurped base, Homestead.

Simply use the Homestead description and write up to set the battle ground.

## THE CONQUERORS

The Conquerors are dark versions of the Champions (including Kinetik), and are extremely similar to them in abilities, though their personalities differ. Simply use the Champions write-ups, save for a few minor changes where noted below.

Defender's counterpart is **Destroyer**. Where Defender is fearlessly heroic and would never kill, Destroyer is brutal and merciless. The only mechanical difference between the two characters is that Destroyer's "Overload Blast" has no Limitations on it, and is frequently used.

Ironclad's counterpart is **Hardcase**. Where Ironclad is a generally genial giant, Hardcase is an aggressive, selfish jerk. He only cares about himself, and is an unforgiving opponent, who goes for the kill every time. There is no mechanical difference between the two.

Nighthawk's counterpart is **Pisk**. The two are actually quite similar, but whereas Nighthawk is the edgiest and darkest member of the Champions, Pisk is the most conservative and least violent member of the Conquerors. He frequently tries to curb the more rampant

excesses of his teammates and is kept under close observation as a possible risk.

Mechanically, they are identical.

Sapphire's counterpart is **Indigo**. Where Sapphire is well-meaning, Indigo is simple a glory hound and a total diva. She prioritizes her actions according to whatever she thinks will make her look the best. She will kill casually, but she doesn't get off on it like Destroyer and Cameo do. Mechanically, they are identical.

Witchcraft's counterpart is **Cameo**. Where Witchcraft is demure and kind-hearted, Cameo is brazen and wicked. She delights in causing as much pain and suffering as possible, and enjoys toying with victims before killing them.

Mechanically, they are the same, save that her Man Into Frog Spell is a Man Into Newt Spell... just because.

Kinetik's counterpart is **Volatile**. Where Kinetik is a relaxed and fun-loving guy, Volatile is edgy and unhinged, prone to sudden and violent action. Replace Kinetik's Code Versus Killing and Public Perception Psychological Limitations with Enraged in Combat (Common, Go 11-, Recover 11-) and Enraged when Bored (Common, Go 8-, Recover 11-).

## THE BATTLE

The initial battle with the Conquerors can be paced as suits individual GMs, but in the end the PCs are intended to capture the Conquerors without too much difficulty or injuries that might discourage the group from pressing on to the Hegemony dimension.

In a convention or one-off environment, the Conqueror fight shouldn't take any more than two hours real time to resolve. This should prove to be long enough for the players to learn their character's capabilities, but not so long that the rest of the adventure has to be rushed or left unfinished.

In any event, the PCs should be able to defeat the Conquerors in this initial conflict since they have the element of surprise on their side. If this adventure is run as part of an ongoing series, the GM might want to stack the deck a bit for the Conquerors with reinforcements or perhaps a counter-trap in order to stretch the encounter into a more significant event.

## Crossing Over

Once the PCs have beaten the Conquerors, Dr. Silverback will arrive or otherwise make contact with the group again. He has, of course, determined how to open the portal to the other dimension from the Champions Universe side.

The withdrawal plan for getting back can vary as suits the GM's plans; in a time-limited convention style game it is possible to state that the portal will only remain open for a unknown

officials; this is particularly effective tactic in the paranoid environment of the Hegemony since it ties up resources of the internal police and disrupts other Ministries at the same time.

Though the group suffered a serious setback with the disappearance of Dr. D after the destruction of Detroit, with his reemergence the group has been invigorated again in recent years.

## DR. SILVERBACK

Dr. Silverback appears in the *Millennium City* sourcebook on page 48.

## DR. SILVERBACK'S GATE MAKER

Dr. Silverback uses this device in his *Assorted Devices* VPP.

**To Distant Places More Tranquil:** Teleportation 1", 4x Increased Mass, Usable By Other (+1/4), Safe Blind Teleport (+1/4), Area Of Effect (One Hex, +1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2), Continuous (+1), MegaScale (1" = 10,000 km, +1/4), Can Be Scaled Down 1" = 1km (+1/4) (60 Active Points); OAF (Teleport Gadget, -1), Gate (-1/2)

**THE CHAMPIONS**

The Champions appear in the *Champions* genre book starting on page 180. Homestead is detailed in the same supplement on page 193. Kinetik appears in the *Champions Universe* sourcebook on page 80.

**TROUBLE-SHOOTING:  
LACK OF SKILLS**

If none of the PCs have a computer related skill, substitute a simple paper day planner, note, or Primate's phone message (triggered by a convenient call from a flunky) to convey that he is at ZED HQ.

If your players are a tad slow on the uptake, you might throw in a tidbit that makes it clear the Champions are there too, such as noting that Prof. Primate is at the interrogation facility at ZED HQ, specifically.

duration of time, putting the PCs on a clock coinciding with the available play time. Alternately Dr. Silverback might give the PCs a device with which to signal him trans-dimensionally to reopen the gate, or perhaps Dr. Silverback tells them that he will open the gate for 5 minutes on the hour, or some other option. Whatever generates the most drama without tying the GM's hands too tightly works fine in this regard.

If the PCs agree to press on into the portal to attempt to rescue the Champions, they emerge into Professor Primate's lab, but the evil ape is currently out and the large, high-tech facility is vacant.

However, accessing one of his computers and opening his computerized day planner indicates that he is currently at ZED Headquarters.

Finally, the equipment and costumes of the Champions are scattered around the lab. The mundane costumes are piled up on a counter, but interesting bits such as pieces of Defender's armor and Nighthawk's toys are situated in various vices in fancy testing equipment, and in some cases partially disassembled. It's up to the PCs if they want to take some or all of this gear along with them.

**The Millennial Reserve**

Professor Primate is based out of the Ministry of Scientific Expansion's compound located in the Millennial Reserve north of Mill Town, built among the ruins of the satellite bombardment intended to kill Dr. Democracy in the '80s.

The Reserve occupies roughly the area of old Detroit and is surrounded by a high wall with controlled access via patrolled gates. The Reserve is guarded by ARES Units (detailed below), and all persons entering and moving about the Reserve must have permits and are also tracked electronically.

Reconstruction efforts have been constant since the destruction of Detroit, but typically inefficient and hampered by the paranoid security precautions in effect for the Reserve. Thus, the net result is a handful of governmental buildings scattered sparsely throughout miles of ruins, with only a few major roads repaired sufficiently for normal use.

In addition to the Ministry of Scientific Expansion's field office, the Reserve also contains several other governmental buildings, most notably the ZED Regional HQ building, ensuring that patrols of ZED Flying Cars (detailed below) are frequently seen overhead.

Nearby "Mill Town" is a bastion of industrial might for the Hegemony, and is thus a cornerstone of the Ministry's of Scientific Expansion's powerbase; the other six Ministries

have structures either planned or partially built, but none of them have demonstrated any rush to complete and subsequently staff facilities in the grim ruin surrounded on all sides save the lakeside by industrial sprawl.

There are also ARES Precincts scattered throughout the broken streets and ruined buildings, and sporadic ARES Patrols are kept out roaming the areas unreachable by vehicle around the clock.

**THE MINISTRY OF SCIENTIFIC EXPANSION**

The Ministry building is a large 18-story structure, post-modern metal and glass on the outside, and containing a variety of special purpose labs and research theatres in addition to offices and facilities.

Professor Primate's combination Lab and office occupies the top floor, with roof access to a helipad.

Clerks and scientists of lesser stature occupy the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> floors, diligently working away at their appointed tasks. The 1<sup>st</sup> floor is a secured lobby, with an ARES Contingent.

**ZED HQ**

Located near the polluted lakeside, a 20-story tall reinforced concrete building rises upward from a large modern-styled concrete courtyard. It has an underground parking garage, with a single entrance and exit guarded by Agents of ZED and is for "Authorized Access Only."

There is a gated compound to the north side of the building that serves as a ground vehicle motor pool and general storage area, also guarded by Agents of ZED.

At ground level, the north, east, and west sides are without doors or windows, and the southern face contains a pair of large bullet-proof glass doors. There is also a portcullis style set of metal blast doors above and in front of the glass doors for added security if needed. The ZED crest is embossed in the concrete above the doors.

The main entrance has a security setup similar to courthouses and other government buildings, but more high-tech looking and run by ZED Agents rather than cops. Past this area, around a blast wall, is a spare lobby undecorated except for two large Hegemony flags (lateral black, white, and green stripes) hanging from floor to ceiling along the north wall of the lobby.

Along the east wall is an enclosed reception counter manned by one or more ZED employees, depending upon the time of day.

Through a large arch in the north wall, flanked by the two Hegemony flags are two banks of elevators that are operated by the front desk, or with a security key.

Above street level, near the top of the building the structure is cantilevered, with a separate smaller stack creating a square veranda around the upper portion of the high-rise. Incongruously the result looks like the parking lot of a maintenance garage complete with multiple bays with roll-up security doors in the side of the superstructure.

The deck of this area sports 5 orange triangles with an “H” in the middle per side. Also an angled metal security “net” runs along beneath the edge of the building similar to that on an aircraft carrier.

At each of the four corners of the veranda a small sub-tower structure supports Phalanx CWIS units (auto-firing mini-guns). In short the structure looks more like an aircraft carrier deck than anything else. This is because it is used as the landing dock for the various ZED Hover vehicles, most particularly the “Flying Cars.”

The upper super structure above the Hover Deck bays primarily houses advanced communication antennae facilities and communications center.

Between the ground floor and the hover deck are 17 stories housing a wide variety of offices, barracks, training areas, cafeterias, and labs in addition to operational and enforcement related facilities.

Among other things the HQ houses the so-called “War Room,” more officially called the “Ops Center,” various analytical sections, R&D, and the offices of the ZED officer commanding the facility, Commandant Mayte Sanchez on the 15<sup>th</sup> floor.

The Prisoner Holding and Interrogation complex is contained in the basement 15 feet below the underground parking complex, and it is here that the Champions are being held along with a few other inconsequential prisoners (the GM can have some of these prisoners be counterparts to various villains of the Champions Universe, who are virtuous in this dimension).

### Finding ZED

Arriving at the ZED HQ can be a mini-adventure unto itself if the GM wishes. Directions can be gained by computer access where appropriate, or by capturing and questioning some poor minion of the Ministry of Scientific Expansion outside of Primate’s lab, or by wandering out into the “brave new world” and hoping to randomly stumble across it. Being one of the relatively few intact structures in the Millennial Reserve and very visible it’s not hard to find; but it can be hard to get to.

The area between the Professor Primate’s offices and ZED HQ is approximately 14 miles of razed ruin, with a single intact hardtop winding between them (and branching off at

places to eventually connect with other government buildings).

Government vehicles of various sorts sporadically travel these roads during the day, and include ARES Patrols on the ground and ZED Flying Car Patrols in the air. Thus en route to ZED HQ incautious characters risk being detected and interdicted.

Once the PCs reach ZED HQ if they have managed to maintain the element of surprise they might be able to storm the guards at either the front or garage entrance, gaining access to the building before an alarm can be raised and the building locked down.

However, if the jig is up and ZED is locked down, the PCs will have to find an alternate means of entry.

### TROUBLESHOOTING: ALTERNATE MEANS OF ENTRY

ZED is protected from both Teleport and Desolidification (but this can be circumvented with Armor Piercing).

Characters could theoretically gain access to the building via the Hover Deck, but would have to pull off some trick (like capturing a Hover Car and fooling Flight Ops with proper landing codes) to avoid being fired upon by the Phalanx defense turrets and causing the bays to be locked down quickly.

Some characters might attempt to masquerade as agents of ZED. A good deal of biometrics equipment is used to identify agents, but depending upon the nature of a character’s masquerade, he might be able to circumvent them in whole or in part.

But ultimately, it doesn’t really matter how they get into the building aside from pacing and for purposes of determining the initial level of resistance the PCs encounter. So if the players come up with something clever, the GM should give them the benefit of heroic edge.

Some groups of players can get hung up on scenarios like this, over-planning or being unable to come to a decision among themselves on which of several options to employ. If your PCs get stuck on this stage of the adventure, consider throwing them an assist of some sort to help ease them past their deadlock, such as a garage bay being opened to allow a returning patrol in, or some similar plot device.

Another option is for the PCs to be captured (either voluntarily or not) and thus be taken directly to the very same prison area the Champions are held in. While this plan has its advantages, it has significant downsides for characters that use Foci, and also there is the small matter of the Restraint Collars ZED uses on superhumans (see sidebar).

### ZED RESTRAINT COLLARS

#### ZED Restraint

**Collars:** Entangle 4d6, 8 DEF (Stops Mental Group), Entangle and Character Both Take Damage (+1/4), Cannot Be Escaped With Teleportation (+1/4), Invisible Power Effects, SFX Only (Fully Invisible, +1/2), Based on ECV (+1) (210 Active Points); 1 Recoverable Charge (-1/4), Extra Time (1 Turn (Post-Segment 12), Only to Activate, -3/4), No Range (-1/2), OIF (Restraint Collar, -1/2), Vulnerable (Uncommon, Restraint Collar Removal, -1/4), Cannot Form Barriers (-1/4).

These high-tech collars emit neurologically disruptive pulses into the brain of the person they are attached to, preventing them from moving under their own volition. They can be frog-marched and manhandled around by guards, however, since only the neck is actually restrained.

**GETTING BACK**

If this adventure is being used as part of an ongoing campaign then getting back to the Ministry of Scientific Expansion can be a mini-adventure in itself. The PCs could even be stranded in this dimension for some time, either before or after freeing the Champions, and have the opportunity to interact with many other alternate universe characters. This kind of a scenario is a lot of fun for many players, though they can be difficult for a GM to prepare for.

**Break Out**

Once the PCs manage to find and gain access to ZED HQ, they should seek out the imprisoned Champions and endeavor to free them.

Depending on how much time is available, this could be a process of a running battle through the halls and offices of ZED HQ, or a fairly easy skip to the end scenario and is left to the GM's discretion. The interior of the HQ was broadly described earlier, and can be expanded upon as needed to fill out the session.

At any rate it is assumed that once the PCs have gotten this far they should inevitably be able to find and release the Champions before any threat more creditable than ZED Agents can react.

Professor Primate himself is nowhere to be found, but the Champions are incarcerated in a basement cell complex.

**LOCKDOWN**

There are three cellblocks with ten cells, five to a side, in a "finger" arrangement; the Champions are in cellblock B. To get into the cell block, there is a double-gated entryway on the inner end of the block, with a control room between the gates and accessible from outside of the gates.

The gates are DEF 9 and have 12 BODY for purposes of busting enough of a hole to completely remove them (6 BODY will make a large enough hole for normal sized characters to squeeze through).

The control room has a wrap around reinforced glass window, and is accessible from outside the first gate by a metal fire door with a 5-button cipher lock (combination 3-5-1). The door is DEF 5 and has 5 BODY. There is a guard inside the control room, manning a computerized control panel for the cell block's various doors, gates, cameras, and other security features. A character could use Security Systems, or at a penalty either Computer Programming or System Operation to manipulate the controls in this room.

Once past the gates, the cell doors are DEF 12 and have 8 BODY each. They are "pocket" style doors, meaning that they slide into the wall rather than swinging on hinges.

The locks are electronic/magnetic, with a 10-key combination punch. The doors can also be opened from the cell block's control room. The locks are considered to have 9 DEF and 9 BODY for purposes of "breaking" them open, though the controls themselves are only DEF 4 and 3 BODY.

**FREE AT LAST**

The Champions are found sans costumes in prison attire, and with any foci and equipment missing. With the exception of Ironclad, the Champions all look fairly worn and wan, and Nighthawk bears numerous welts and bruises.

Some opportunity should be taken for the Champions to interact with the PCs at this point, and to drop some key information. They were all interrogated separately by Professor Primate a little earlier that day, but he departed earlier in response to a flunky delivering an urgent message (approximately the time the PCs' existence was detected). Primate wanted to know more about their dimension, and Dr. Silverback especially.

When the exposition and interaction is over it's time to beat feet back to home.

If the PCs were thoughtful enough to bring some or all of the Champions' gear they found in Professor Primate's labs along, then the equipment-oriented Champions can assist the PCs as they make their collective egress, otherwise they will need to be helped along.

Regardless, the goal at this point is for the PCs and the Champions to depart ZED and rendezvous with Dr. Silverback's portal back at Professor Primate's labs as previously agreed upon.

Getting back to the Professor Primate's lab at the Ministry of Scientific Expansion should likely be facilitated to move the story along unless the GM prefers to make an ordeal out of it (see sidebar).

The PCs could be allowed to steal a Flying Car or other vehicle, or else proceed with a minimum of fuss via editorial fast-forwarding. This can be portrayed as the law enforcement being overwhelmed or slow to react to the PCs' actions (they don't know where they're going after all) or whatever is convenient.

**CLASS DISMISSED**

Once the PCs have found their way back to the lab, there are several options for the GM to consider.

If time is running out for the session, they can just cross back over into the Champions Universe without difficulty to get kudos from Dr. Silverback and any in-game attaboys you care to tender, such as provisional membership as auxiliary Champions, undying thanks of the Champions, gold stars on their report cards, etc.

However, if time is available, then the Lab is an excellent place for one final encounter. Professor Primate is unlikely to be able to take on all of the PCs plus the Champions by himself, but perhaps the Conquerors escaped from Dr. Silverback's imprisonment with Professor Primate's help. When the PCs cross over they might be met by Dr. Silverback – but it's really

Professor Primate masquerading as the good doctor, lulling them into a false sense of ease only to spring a trap on them! Can the PCs fight back and turn the tables again?

Or perhaps a good old slugathon is in order, and Professor Primate has called in some other superhuman resources serving the Hegemony, such as Grizzly, Teknikality, and Agent Sanchez? Or perhaps Dilemma, Overwatch, and Payload (Taurus, Eagle-Eye, and Hardpoint from *HERO System 5<sup>th</sup> Edition Revised*) have been called in to assist. Basically any collection of what are normally good guys that the GM wants to throw at the PCs could be cobbled together.

In the event of a final battle, the Professor can be expected to have devices in his gear pool specifically designed to interfere with the Champions (and perhaps he booby trapped the equipment he had taken from them previously), largely neutralizing the erstwhile heroes and leaving the onus on the PCs to win the day.

### Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs are successful, Dr. Silverback will send the Conquerors back to their own dimension (to maintain “inter-dimensional sub-variant harmonic balance” or some such), close the portal, and turn on a “dimensional shunting flare stabilizer” which he claims will deter future attempts by the Hegemony to reopen portals into the Champions Universe... for a while.

Finally Dr. Silverback and the Champions give the PCs a big round of accolades, which can take whatever form of in-game reward the GM feels appropriate.

In a one-off game, experience is inconsequential, so hopefully the game was an enjoyable enough experience to be its own reward.

However, if used as part of an ongoing campaign the scenario can easily lead into many other adventure opportunities for the PCs. Further encounters with the Hegemony dimension are likely, but also having won the trust of the Champions and Dr. Silverback the PCs might be asked to assist them again in the future, leading to further adventure.

## Character Write-Ups

Several character write ups are provided to assist with this adventure; however most of the write ups for the characters described in the adventure are simply alternate versions of previously published characters. Ambitious GMs can obviously extend this idea to include counterparts for any Champions Universe or homebrewed character they would like to use in their version of the Hegemony.

### PREGENERATED CHARACTERS

Six pregenerated characters are presented for use with the adventure to assist with using it as a one-off on the fly, for convention play, or similar use.

Answerman is a traditional flying brick, suitable for play by inexperienced players. Myrmidon and Sportsfreak are basically scrappers suitable for use by more adept or faster learning players. Warbride is a straightforward blaster suitable for play by all levels of player. ERG-9 and Glow are more complicated or demanding characters appropriate for more experienced players.

Sportsfreak and Glow start with more points than the other pregen PCs because the other characters are built with OIHID or Foci, which are unlikely to be truly disadvantageous in the context of a one-off or convention style game. The extra points are intended to make the two roughly comparable with the other characters in the context of the adventure.

### FORCES OF ZED

Write ups are provided for elite ARES Agents, normal ZED Agents, and ZED Flying Cars. Also of use would be any write up for PRIMUS personnel from the Champions Universe; ZED being a dark reflection of PRIMUS.

Destroyer





杜克大伟

Pisk



杜克大伟



Indigo



杜克大伟

Cameo



Volatile



杜克大伟

Professor Primate



杜克大伟

### Answerman

**Background/History:** All his life Allen has been a loner. An outsider. A geek. Never accepted by his peers. Picked on. Ignored. Eventually he came to prefer it that way.

He found solace from his isolated existence in comics, following the exploits of superheroes. He developed a deep seated desire to be a superhuman himself. It became an obsession; a quiet desperate obsession. He dreamed about it; he daydreamed about it; he thought about it; finally he wrote stories about it.

When he became a theoretical adult he broadened his general supers obsession into a career as a comic book writer, landing a job as a filler writer for WONDER Comics. He moved out of his mom's small apartment in Peoria into a small apartment in New York City. He usually was allowed to work from home, and would often stay in working for a week or more at a time, bereft of human contact.

His daydreams became more intense, sometimes lasting for hours. He had ever more vivid adventures as Answerman!, his imaginary alter ego.

And then on one of his infrequent grocery runs, he saw Answerman on the first page of the *Times*. At first he was furious! Some yutz had stolen his character concept and used it!!! But as he read the article, an account of a bank robbery stopped by the mysterious new hero Answerman, Allen realized it exactly matched one of his "daydreams" from earlier in the week.

After a time of soul-searching, Allen realized that somehow he was becoming Answerman. His daydreams were not actually daydreams – they were real! With effort he learned to control the experience, and embarked on a sporadic campaign of superheroic action as Answerman! Unfortunately, he can't completely control the change, and more importantly he can't stay in Answerman form indefinitely; he starts taking damage from it over time.

**Personality/Motivation:** Allen is a mild mannered intellectual. Answerman is an over-the-top true-blue all-American superhero – he is the epitome of everything Allen thinks a Superhero should be.

**Quote:** "Answerman is the answer to all your supervillainous problems!"

**Powers/Tactics:** Answerman is super-durable, super-strong, and can fly super-fast! In addition he has incredibly good vision.

In combat, he will typically perform devastating move bys before sweeping in and going toe to toe with opponents.

Answerman aside, actually, Allen is an incredibly strong psychic with an extremely potent reality warping ability. If he ever learned how to master his true ability, he would become a much more powerful superhuman. Only time will tell if he ever unlocks his true potential.

**Appearance:** Allen is a small, timid looking man with oily black hair and indifferent skin. Allen usually wears wrinkled and well-worn sweats and t-shirts. He slouches in at 5'8" and around 145 wiry pounds.

Answerman is large, barrel-chested, athletic, and radiates confidence. He wears a simple Red, White, and Blue costume with half mask, bearing a bold red "A" on the chest.

Answerman



## DIGITAL HERO #38

### Answerman

Val	CHA	Cost	Roll	Notes
8/50	STR	*32	19-	Lift 25 t; 10d6 HTH [3]
8/20	DEX	*23	13-	OCV: 3/7/DCV: 3/7
8/20	CON	*15	13-	
8/20	BODY	*15	13-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll: 12-/14-
8/20	EGO	*15	13-	ECV: 3/7
8/20	PRE	*8	13-	PRE Attack: 1½d6/4d6
8/20	COM	*4	13-	
2/40	PD	0		T: 2/40 PD (0/30 rPD)
3/30	ED	1		T: 3/30 ED (0/25 rED)
2/5	SPD	*18		Phases: 6, 12
5/15	REC	2		(3, 5, 8, 10, 12)
16/40	END	0		
16/55	STUN	0		* OIHID (-¼)

**Total Characteristics Cost: 138**

Movement:	Running:	6"/12"
	Leaping:	1½"/3"
	Swimming:	2"/4"
	Flight:	15"/240"

Cost	Powers	END
36	<i>Answerman Powers</i> : Elemental Control, 90-point Powers; OIHID (-¼)	0
36	1) <i>Shield of Conviction</i> : Force Field (20 PD/20 ED), Hardened (+¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½); OIHID (-¼)	0
36	2) <i>Arial Answer</i> : Flight 15", 16x Noncombat, Variable Advantage (+¼ Advantages, +½), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); OIHID (-¼)	0
18	3) <i>Unstoppable Truth</i> : Healing 3 BODY, Resurrection, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½); Extra Time (Regeneration-Only) 1 Turn (Post-Segment 12, -1¼), Self Only (-½), OIHID (-¼)	0
8	<i>Answer-Finding Vision</i> : +1 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group; OIHID (-¼) <b>plus</b> +2 PER with Sight Group; OIHID (-¼) <b>plus</b> Nightvision; OIHID (-¼)	0
4	<i>Perfect Answer</i> : Lack Of Weakness (-1) for Normal Defense, Resistant Defense, Mental Defense, and Power Defense; OIHID (-¼)	0
3	<i>Unshakeable Response</i> : Knockback Resistance -2"; OIHID (-¼)	0
22	<i>Body of Evidence</i> : Armor (10 PD/5 ED), Hardened (+¼); OIHID (-¼)	0
8	<i>Resilient</i> : Power Defense (10 points); OIHID (-¼)	0
5	<i>Mentally Impregnable</i> : Mental Defense (10 points total); OIHID (-¼)	0
8	Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼) on 42 STR; OIHID (-¼)	2

### Skills

4	+1 with Hand-to-Hand Combat; OIHID (-¼)
2	Acrobatics 11-(13-); OIHID (-¼)
2	Breakfall 11-(13-); OIHID (-¼)
8	Defense Maneuver IV; OIHID (-¼)
2	KS: Comic Book Literature 12-; Only in <i>Secret ID</i> (-¼)
2	PS: Comic Book Writer 12-; Only in <i>Secret ID</i> (-¼)
4	KS: Superhuman World 13-; OIHID (-¼)
2	Oratory 11-(13-); OIHID (-¼)

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 210**

**Total Cost: 348**

### 200+ Disadvantages

20	Normal Characteristic Maxima
20	Psychological Limitation: Code of the Hero (Very Common, Strong)

### Allen

4	Accidental Change to Hero ID: When Frightened 8- (Uncommon); OISID (-¼)
12	Psychological Limitation: Low Self Esteem (Common, Strong); OISID (-¼)
12	Psychological Limitation: Timid and Unassuming (Common, Strong); OISID (-¼)
8	Distinctive Features: Mutant (Not Concealable, Major, Unusual Senses); OISID (-¼)

### Answerman

4	Accidental Change to Secret ID: When Knocked Unconscious 8- (Uncommon); OIHID (-¼)
12	Psychological Limitation: Overconfident (Common, Strong); OIHID (-¼)
12	Reputation: Mysterious Somewhat Undependable Solo Hero, 14-; OIHID (-¼)
12	Social Limitation: Secret ID (Frequently, Major); OIHID (-¼)
24	Susceptibility: 3d6 Damage per Segment from Dispels (Uncommon); OIHID (-¼)
8	Susceptibility: 3d6 Damage per Hour from Hero ID (Very Common); OIHID (-¼)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 348**

## ERG-9

**Background/History:** Young Jimmy Ingram is the son of noted scientist Albert Ingram, Professor at MIT and on retainer to several prominent technology companies as a consultant. Unfortunately Jimmy's acorn fell rather far from his father's tree; where his father was brilliant, Jimmy was somewhat dim. Where his father was ambitious, motivated, focused, and prolific, Jimmy was unmotivated and underachieving. Where his father was handsome, cultured, and adroit, Jimmy was average looking, unworldly, and geeky. In short, Jimmy just never measured up to the long shadow cast by his illustrious and respected sire.

Nevertheless, Albert loved his only son and maintained a constant encouraging paternal interest in the boy, despite his many flaws. And Jimmy tried his best; he wanted to please his father, but he was just ill-equipped to do so. After squeaking through high school, Jimmy basically just hung around his father's mansion, helping out in his personal lab, playing video games, and being his usual slacker self.

Then his father began working with the superhero called Zapper, an astronaut that had been bombarded by bizarre energy in space and transformed into a being of pure energy. Albert was fascinated by the scientific ramifications intrinsic to Zapper's state of being, and it soon became the primary focus of his research efforts. In addition to his scientific interest, Albert also expressed admiration for Zapper's heroic activities. Over the next several years Albert worked on several parallel technologies to assist Zapper; the two primary ones being a containment suit that would enable the ephemeral hero to interact with the physical world, and another was a possible cure designed to convert him back into his physical form.

For the first time Jimmy felt jealousy, and slowly an urge to supplant Zapper and regain his father's attention gripped Jimmy. Finally five years into the project Jimmy's chance arose. Zapper was in Professor Albert's personal lab for continued testing of both the newest containment suit model, the ERG-9 Suit (Energy Regulating Gear, 9th iteration), as well as running diagnostics on the prototype energy to matter converter. Zapper tested out the suit, which worked excellently, and then entered the testing chamber for the converter diagnostic tests. The tests took several hours to conduct, and Albert stepped out of the lab to take a phone call in his office, leaving the diagnostics running.

Seizing the opportunity, Jimmy turned the dial on the control panel from "Diagnostic" to "Process," and let himself into a containment chamber intended to capture energy spill off. In a blinding flash of energy, the startled Zapper was

converted back into his physical form, and his ambient energy was drawn from him into the containment chamber where Jimmy waited, transforming him from his lackluster human form into pure glorious energy!

Zapper was ecstatic; he could return to his normal life, try to patch things up with his wife, and get back into the space program! Jimmy was similarly ecstatic; finally he was capable of doing something useful and could gain the respect of his father! However, when the good professor returned to the lab to discover his subject returned to his human form he was reservedly content with the situation, until he discovered that his son had absorbed the energy and was now an energy form himself. The risk Jimmy had taken alone was enough to give Albert heart palpitations – it should have fried the foolish boy crispier than a tater tot.

Professor Albert was determined to reverse the process immediately to return Jimmy to normal, but Jimmy refused to undergo the process, insisting that he be given a chance to prove himself. Reluctantly Professor Albert agreed and Jimmy began his crimefighting career, originally under the tutelage of Roger Alcott, the former Zapper. Jimmy took to the work (it was like a super-realistic videogame in some respects, which he could relate to), and much to his father's surprise has done well as a hero so far.

Jimmy took the name of the containment suit his father had originally made for Zapper as his *nom du héros*, and thus ERG-9 joined the ranks of superherodom.

**Personality/Motivation:** For the first time in his life Jimmy is able to do something useful, and gain some respect. He's determined not to screw it up.

**Quote:** "Best to give up now, villain; you really don't want to make me use my High Intensity blast!"

**Powers/Tactics:** ERG-9's powers revolve around his energy body; he has no normal physical functions, floats around in mid-air like ball lightning, lacks mass or density, and being composed of pure energy damages anything that comes into contact with him, though at a slow rate. In combat, his only real option is to collide with opponents, exposing them to the slow effect of his energy form.

However, the Containment Suit created by his father expands his options significantly. Although no longer able to fly around colliding with things and passing thru solid objects while in the Containment Suit, ERG-9 is able to interact with physical objects via the suit's servo limbs. Additionally, the "face plate" of the suit focuses ERG-9's energy, allowing him to project



ERG-9



**ERG-9**

Val	CHA	Cost	Roll	Notes
0	STR	-10	9-	Lift 25 kg; 0d6 HTH [0]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
10	CON	0	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll: 11-
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
0	COM	-5	9-	
2	PD	2		Total: 10 PD (8 rPD)
2	ED	0		Total: 10 ED (8 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
2	REC	0		
0	END	-10		
20	STUN	5		

**Total Characteristic Cost: 10**

**Movement:**

Running:	6"/12"
Leaping:	0"/0"
Swimming:	2"/4"
Flight:	15"/30"

Cost	Powers	END
30	<i>Energy Body:</i> Elemental Control, 90-point powers; Always On (-1/2)	0
45	1) <i>Energy Exposure:</i> RKA 1d6 (versus ED), Affects Physical World (+2), Continuous (+1), Damage Shield (Offensive, +3/4), Inherent (+1/4), Penetrating (3x, +1 1/2), Persistent (+1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); Always On (-1/2)	0
43	2) <i>Energy Exposure:</i> Energy Blast 3d6 (versus ED), Affects Physical World (+2), Continuous (+1), Damage Shield (+1/2), Inherent (+1/4), Penetrating (3x, +1 1/2), Persistent (+1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); Always On (-1/2)	0
30	3) <i>Energy Field:</i> Force Field (8 PD/8 ED/8 Mental Defense/8 Power Defense/8 Flash Defense: Sight Group), Inherent (+1/4), Persistent (+1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); Always On (-1/2)	0
30	4) <i>Energy Form:</i> Desolidification, Inherent (+1/4), Persistent (+1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); Always On (-1/2)	0
34	5) <i>Energy Flow:</i> Flight 15", Position Shift, Inherent (+1/4), Persistent (+1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2), Variable Advantage (+1/4 Advantages, +1/2); Always On (-1/2)	0

- 42 *Inorganic Entity:* Life Support (Does Not Breathe, Eat, Nor Sleep; Immune to All Terrestrial Biologicals, Chemicals, Diseases, and Poisons; Safe in Cold, Heat, and Radiation), Inherent (+1/4); Visible (-1/4) 0
- 2 *Uplink:* Mind Link with ERG-9 Containment Suit [Machine Class of Minds]; Only With Others Who Have Mind Link (-1), No Range (-1/2) 0

**Perks**

- 55 *Containment Suit:* ERG-9 (Vehicle)
- 12 *Father:* Contact: Professor Albert Ingram (Extremely Useful, Institutions, Contacts, Very Good Relationship) 14-

**Skills**

- Martial Arts: Flowing Form  
Maneuver OCVDCV Notes
- 5 Flying Dodge — +4 Dodge, Abort, FMove
  - 5 Flying Pass +2 +0 Strike, FMove
  - 2 +1 with Flying Pass
  - 2 KS: Videogames 11-
  - 2 PS: Lab Assistant 11-
  - 1 TF: Anthropomorphic Mecha

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 340**

**Total Cost: 350**

**200+ Disadvantages**

- 25 Distinctive Features: Energy Being (Not Concealable, Extreme Reaction)
- 5 Distinctive Features: Highly Visible to Radar and Other Energy Detects (Not Concealable, Unusual Senses)
- 20 Normal Characteristic Maxima
- 25 Physical Limitation: No Physical Manipulation (All the Time, Fully Impairing)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Driven to be a Hero (Common, Strong)
- 10 Social Limitation: Lacks Normal Body (Frequently, Major, Not Limiting in Some Cultures)
- 15 Susceptibility: 1d6 Damage per Phase from Magnetic Fields (Uncommon)
- 10 Susceptibility: 2d6 Instant Damage from Unexpected Suit Breach (Uncommon)
- 10 Susceptibility: 2d6 Instant Damage from Using Damage Shield versus Opponent with Energy Absorption (Uncommon)
- 15 Unluck: 3d6

**Total Disadvantage Points: 350**

## DIGITAL HERO #38

### ERG-9 Containment Suit

Val	CHA	Cost	Notes
0	SIZE	0	1" x 1/2", 100 kg, KB -0"
30	STR	20	6d6 HTH [3]
20	DEX	30	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
20	BODY	10	
15	DEF	39	
4	SPD	10	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12

**Total Characteristic Cost: 115**

Movement:	Running:	10"/20"
	Leaping:	0"/0"
	Swimming:	2"/4"

#### Cost Weapons Systems END

54	<i>ERG-9 Energy Harness:</i> Multipower, 90-point Reserve, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); OIF Bulky (-1), Limited Arc of Fire (60°, -1/2)	0
3u	1) <i>Beam:</i> EB 12d6 (versus ED), Armor Piercing (+1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); Beam (-1/4), Cannot Be Bounced (-1/4), Limited Arc of Fire (60°, -1/2), OIF Bulky (-1)	0
3u	2) <i>Broadbeam:</i> EB 12d6 (versus ED), Explosion (Cone, -1 DC/2", +1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); Limited Arc of Fire (60°, -1/2), No Range (-1/2), OIF Bulky (-1)	0
3u	3) <i>Concentrated Beam:</i> EB 12d6 (versus ED), Line Of Sight (+1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); Beam (-1/4), Cannot Be Bounced (-1/4), Limited Arc of Fire (60°, -1/2), OIF Bulky (-1)	0
3u	4) <i>Focused Beam:</i> RKA 6d6 (versus ED), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); Beam (-1/4), Cannot Be Bounced (-1/4), Limited Arc of Fire (60°, -1/2), OIF Bulky (-1)	0
4u	5) <i>High Intensity:</i> EB 18d6 (versus ED), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); Limited Arc of Fire (60°, -1/2), OIF Bulky (-1)	0
4u	6) <i>Sustained Blast:</i> EB 9d6 (versus ED), Continuous (+1), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); Limited Arc of Fire (60°, -1/2), OIF Bulky (-1)	0
4u	7) <i>Pulse:</i> EB 9d6 (versus ED), Autofire (5 Shots, +1/2), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1); Limited Arc of Fire (60°, -1/2), OIF Bulky (-1)	0

#### Defense Systems

22	<i>Ruggedized:</i> Hardened (2x, +1/2) applied to DEF	0
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#### Operations Systems

6	<i>Communications Systems:</i> High Range Radio Perception (Radio Group), Concealed (-4 with High Range Radio Perception PER Rolls); Affected as	
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	Hearing Group as Well as Radio Group (-1/2), OIF Bulky (-1)	0
2	<i>Nightsight System:</i> Infrared Perception (Sight Group); OIF Bulky (-1)	0
2	<i>Nightsight System:</i> Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group); OIF Bulky (-1)	0
16	<i>Sensors:</i> Radar (Radio Group), +1 to PER Roll, Discriminatory, Analyze, Increased Arc of Perception (360°), Telescopic (+4 versus Range Modifier); OIF Bulky (-1)	0
17	<i>Stealth Tech:</i> Change Environment 1" Radius, -8 to Radio Group PER Rolls, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); No Range (-1/2), OIF Bulky (-1)	0
2	<i>Uplink:</i> Mind Link [Human Class of Minds], One Specific Mind (Jimmy Ingram); Only With Others Who Have Mind Link (-1), No Range (-1/2)	0

#### Skills

4	<i>Maneuverable:</i> +2 with Ground Movement	
11	<i>Maneuverable:</i> Combat Piloting 17-	

**Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 160**

**Total Vehicle Cost: 275**

#### Val Disadvantages

0	Can Only Be Operated Via Mind Link	
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**Total Disadvantage Points: 0**

**Total Cost: 275/5 = 55**

blasts with a broad range of control, making him a creditable blaster while wearing the suit. The suit also has a comms suite and a radar array.

The containment suit is very rugged, runs off of ERG-9's own energy, and is controlled via a highly advanced harmonic-resonance link, which allows ERG-9 to "steer" the system by regulating his own energy field to communicate with the on-board piloting computer.

**Appearance:** ERG-9 is an entity composed purely of energy; appearing as a brightly glowing emanation of purplish light. His containment suit is a robotic construct that has a special energy harness to carry ERG-9 in where a head would normally be; the front and sides of which are a high-strength clear crystalline matrix which acts to focus ERG-9's energy and allow him to project bolts of energy at range.

## Glow

**Background/History:** Born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia, Gloria was always a sensitive child. Her mother Gail had a difficult childbirth, suffering complications and slipping into a coma; she was barely kept alive by life support equipment. Thus Gloria was raised by her father due to her mother's extended hospital stay.

Her father George became increasingly bitter and disaffected from his only child, and Gloria's life was unhappy as a result. Her father visited his comatose wife every day after work until visiting hours were over, and insisted that Gloria be there as well as soon as she was old enough. The staff of the hospital became very fond of the precocious young girl with the grim father, and she was tolerated to be in areas she shouldn't have been allowed in. Thus she became extremely familiar with the hospital and its many unwell denizens, developing a fascination with the subject of illness perhaps unhealthy in one so young. She developed very strong ideas about the sanctity of life, and the importance of good health.

When she was 13 she accidentally healed an elderly man she had befriended in the ICU. The old man had a heart condition and was hanging on by the thinnest of threads. Gloria patted his hand and told him very sincerely "You're going to be okay; you *have* to be okay." And with that, a golden glow spread from her hand to the patients, and with a blip his heart monitor indicated nice strong beats where before only a tremulous wiggle indicated continued life. The elderly man's heart had been returned to perfect working order.

No one saw it happen, but over the next several weeks Gloria healed several other lost causes, and the staff began to take notice. She was eventually caught doing it by a nurse and she told Gloria's father. At first George did not believe what he was being told, but he asked Gloria and she admitted that she could "help others." George demanded that she heal her mother, but when Gloria told him that she couldn't heal minds he became highly irate. Of course she could heal her mother! She just didn't want to! It was Gloria's fault her mother was in a coma in the first place! And then his mind settled on the sick certainty that Gloria had deliberately stolen her mother's life when she was born, and was using it to heal others. He became violent and had to be restrained by orderlies.

Horried and hysterical, Gloria fled the hospital and kept going. Wandering the streets of Atlanta, she decided that she could never go home and bought a bus ticket to the first place a bus was leaving to at the nearby Dash-Hound bus station with the little bit of money she had in her pockets. She ended up in Vibora Bay.

The last few years have been difficult for Gloria, but she has grown up a lot by necessity. She found lodging at a halfway house downtown, and has learned how to use her gift for all kinds of useful things. She manages to earn a marginal living with a minimum wage part time job at a nearby state clinic. Donning a simple costume at night, she has become Glow, a protector of the neighborhood. She uses her gifts to heal the needy and protect the helpless.

**Personality/Motivation:** Help, heal, and protect people.

**Quote:** "Ahm here ta help folks; ya'll can help out if you want."

**Powers/Tactics:** Glow is a Mutant with the ability to heal the flesh and invigorate the life forces of others. She also has the ability to deplete other's life forces to make her own temporarily stronger. Further, when her "Glow Effect" is on she heals damage so quickly that the naked eye doesn't even register its effect on her (Force Field), and more extensive damage disappears in seconds (Regeneration).

Glow rarely gets into combat as such, but when she does she will either assist any allies or deplete whatever opponent seems to be the leader.

**Appearance:** Gloria is a beautiful teenaged girl. With limited resources, she dresses cheaply in Goodwill attire, but her natural attractiveness makes it work for her. As Glow she wears an expensive but simple green dress with orange hemming she found in a Goodwill bin, cast off by some wealthy donator. She matched it up with a pair of soft orange "pleather" boots and some bangles. The outfit has no significance in and of itself; it's just the nicest thing she owns and she thinks it's important to look her best as Glow.

When she uses her powers she is surrounded by a soft golden glow that is soothing to look upon.

**Glow**



**Glow**

Val	CHA	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH [1]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
15	CON	10	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll: 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
18	COM	4	13-	
3	PD	1		T: 3/30 PD (0/27 rPD)
3	ED	0		T: 3/30 ED (0/27 rED)
4	SPD	17		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	REC	0		
30	END	0		
30	STUN	7		

**Total Characteristic Cost: 48**

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"  
Leaping: 2"/4"  
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
33	<i>The Glow Effect:</i> Multipower, 50-point Reserve; Others Only (-½)	0
3u	1) <i>Variable Healing:</i> Healing 3d6+1, Any Characteristic, One at a Time (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼)	2
3u	2) <i>Flash Healing:</i> Healing (Flash Damage) 3d6+1, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½)	0
3u	3) <i>Simple Healing:</i> Healing (Simplified) 3d6+1, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½)	0
3u	4) <i>Invigorate:</i> Aid 4d6, Any Characteristic, One at a Time (+¼)	0
3u	5) <i>Boost:</i> Succor STR, DEX, CON, and EGO 3½d6 (Standard Effect: 10 points), Reduced Endurance (½ END, +¼), Uncontrolled (+½), Variable Effect (Four Characteristics at Once, +1)	2
65	<i>The Glow Effect:</i> Elemental Control, 130-point Powers	0
62	1) <i>Tap:</i> Transfer Characteristics 1d6, Can Transfer Maximum Of 20 Points, Ranged (+½), Penetrating (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), To and From All Characteristics Simultaneously (+4); Concentration (½ DCV, -¼)	0
68	2) <i>Self Healing:</i> Force Field (27 PD/27 ED/5 Flash Defense: Sight Group), Hardened (+¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½)	0
24	3) <i>Self Healing:</i> Healing 4 BODY, Can Heal Limbs, Resurrection, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½); Extra Time (Regeneration-Only)	

1 Turn (Post-Segment 12) (-¼), Self Only (-½)	0
20 <i>Self Healing:</i> Power Defense (20 points)	0
18 <i>Mental Recovery:</i> Mental Defense (20 points Total)	0

**Skills**

8	+4 with Transfer
2	CK: Vibora Bay 11-
2	KS: Overheard Medicine 11-

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 317**

**Total Cost: 365**

**200+ Disadvantages**

10	Distinctive Features: Georgia Peach Accent (Concealable)
10	Distinctive Features: Mutant (Not Concealable, Extreme, Unusual Senses, Not Distinctive in Some Cultures)
5	Hunted: Father 8- (Less Pow, Capture)
5	Money: Poor
20	Normal Characteristic Maxima
20	Psychological Limitation: Code Versus Killing (Very Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Driven to Help Those in Need (Common, Strong)
20	Psychological Limitation: Naïve (Very Common, Strong)
5	Reputation: Mutant Healer, 8-
10	Social Limitation: Underage Runaway (Frequently, Minor)
10	Susceptibility: 2d6 Instant Damage from Healing (Uncommon)
10	Vulnerability: 2x Effect from Transfers (Uncommon)
25	Experience Points

**Total Disadvantage Points: 365**

## Myrmidon

**Background/History:** Nicholas Reynolds has always had a fascination with Ancient Greece, ever since reading the *Illiad* as a boy. His obsession with the subject led him to study Archaeology at Purdue, and after he finished his degree he departed immediately for Greece, where he followed up on his peculiar obsession with the Myrmidons of Thessaly who followed first Peleus and later his son Achilles.

Said to be created from ants, or else to be descendants of Zeus, or both, the Myrmidons were a mythical army of legendary fighters. They were essentially unique in Greek mythology, and yet no one had ever researched whether there was some factual basis for the mythological remnants of the tale. Nicholas was determined to be the first.

His research, funded sporadically by grants and run on a shoe string budget, led the young archaeologist from one end of Ancient Greece to the other including land that once had Greek colonies long ago but are of Greece no longer. Frequently his forays bore no fruit, but he managed to unearth enough clues to keep moving forward.

Three years later, at the end of his finances, his tourist visa due to expire soon, and after a long dry spout between leads Nicholas found a blackened shield in remarkably good condition with an Ancient Grecian inscription along the inside edge that read “Myrmecidones Aionas” at a dig near ancient Thessaly.

Nicholas was ecstatic; he was convinced that he had found the shield of an actual Myrmidon and spent the next several weeks feverishly excavating the entire area. Finally after weeks of searching he uncovered what appeared to be the remains of an ancient funeral pyre, somehow covered over by a millennia’s worth of topsoil and protected from time’s toll. Among the ancient remains he found a spear, a helm, greaves, and a suit of ancient armor all miraculously well preserved. After snapping many pictures with his Polaroid, Nicholas carefully excavated the find.

However, as soon as he touched the corroded shell of the crested helm he was compelled to put it on his head, and with a flash was knocked instantly unconscious. When he awoke, the armor, shield, and spear were mystically renewed, and further he was fully attired in it. He felt invigorated in a way that defied description; strength and power veritably flowed thru his veins, and a tacit comprehension of the fighting arts was his to command!

At a loss for what to do, Nicholas spent the next day figuring out the ramifications of his newfound gifts. Eventually he figured out that if he concentrated a certain way the armor and regalia would disappear, while concentrating a

different way would bring them back again. It was like a dream come true for Nick; his life long obsession with the Myrmidons was vindicated and in a way that defied explanation! He was ecstatic until he realized that if he told anyone about it, they might take the armor away from him; the Greek government almost certainly wouldn’t let him leave the country with it. And that was unacceptable!

Therefore Nick decided to keep it a secret, to return to the States and do further research into the meaning of it all, and that’s exactly what he did. However, back stateside he felt peculiar urges to use the armor, and felt an increasing desire to do battle with worthy opponents. Within two months of returning home, he was driven to use the armor to fight crime, helping police stop a bank heist that he happened across. Ever since then the new adventurer known as the Myrmidon has been increasingly active as a superheroic crimefighter.

Meanwhile, Nick still searches for more answers and insights into the mysteries of the Myrmidons.

**Personality/Motivation:** Nicholas is a driven scholar, but is becoming increasingly militant and warrior-esque.

**Quote:** “Fear not, for by Apollo, while I yet live to look upon the face of the earth I shall shield thee from all harm.”

**Powers/Tactics:** As Myrmidon, Nick is a finely tuned, superbly gifted athlete and warrior, simply poetry in motion and capable of rapid foot movement and prodigious leaps. In addition to athleticism, the mystic armor provides moderate protection from physical harm, and allows Myrmidon to heal quickly. Finally, the mystic shield provides excellent additional protection from harm (in addition to being usable for shield bashes), and the mystic spear is a fell weapon.

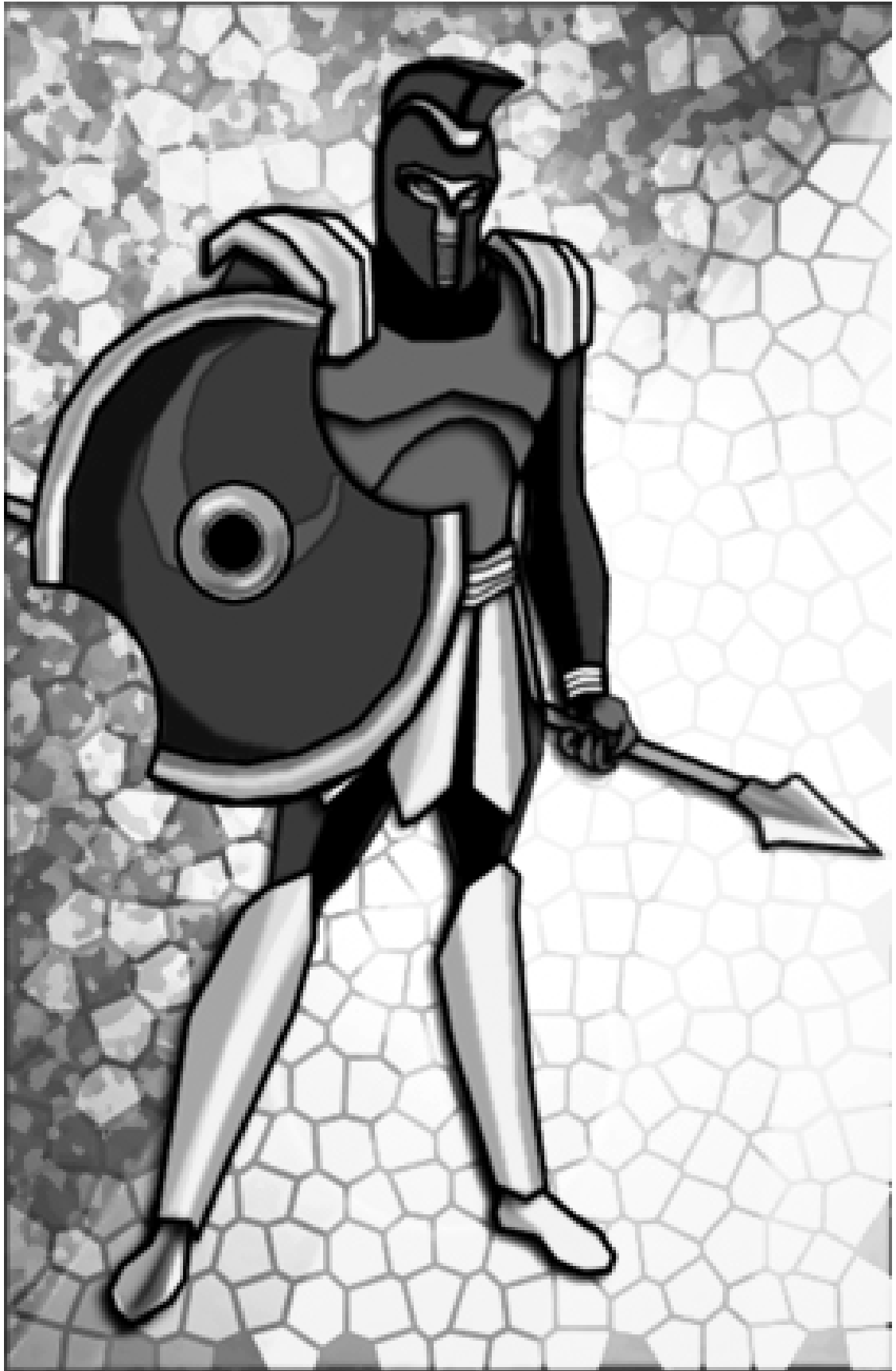
Further, Myrmidon has a recognizable style of fighting both with and without his spear, which is both fluid and deadly.

**Appearance:** Nick is a tall, sturdy man with rugged good looks and strong features. He carries himself well, and walks with a brisk stride developed by traipsing across Greece.

As Myrmidon, he is a darkly armored and imposing warrior. The helm includes a face guard which obscures his features entirely. He moves like a dangerous great cat, tensed to pounce yet languid all at the same time.

While adventuring as Myrmidon, Nicholas finds himself easily falling into character, with a tendency to spout off lofty phrases and namedrop mythical Greek characters. However, he can shake this habit off by paying attention to his speech and curbing it.

**Myrmidon**





## DIGITAL HERO #38

### Myrmidon

Val	CHA	Cost	Roll	Notes
10/25	STR	*12	14-	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 HTH [2]
10/25	DEX	*36	14-	OCV: 3/8/DCV: 3/8
10/25	CON	*24	14-	
10/25	BOD	*24	14-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll: 12-
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4
10/20	PRE	*8	13-	PRE Attack: 2d6/4d6
18	COM	4	13-	
2/15	PD	0		T: 2/15 PD (0/10 rPD)
2/15	ED	0		T: 2/15 ED (0/10 rED)
3/5	SPD	*18		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4/10	REC	0		(3, 5, 8, 10, 12)
20/50	END	0		
20/60	STUN	*9		* OIHID (-1/4)

**Total Characteristic Cost: 140**

Movement:	Running:	8"(15")/16"(30")
	Leaping:	2"(15")/4"(30")
	Swimming:	2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
54	<i>Mystic Myrmidon Spear</i> : Multipower, 45-point reserve, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); all slots Only in Heroic Identity (-1/4)	0
3u	1) <i>Haft</i> : HA +9d6 (14d6 with STR); HA (-1/2)	0
4u	2) <i>Stab</i> : HKA 3d6 (4 1/2d6 with STR)	0
3u	3) <i>Throw</i> : RKA 3d6; Lockout (-1/2)	0
8	<i>Mystic Myrmidon Armor</i> : Elemental Control, 20-point Powers; OIHID (-1/4)	0
3	1) <i>Life-Giving</i> : Healing 1 BODY, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2), Persistent (+1/2); Extra Time (Regeneration-Only) 1 Turn (Post-Segment 12) (-1/4), OIHID (-1/4), Self Only (-1/2)	0
10	2) <i>Pounce</i> : Leaping +10" (15" Total), Accurate, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); OIHID (-1/4)	0
9	3) <i>Run</i> : Running +7" (15" Total), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); OIHID (-1/4)	0
16	<i>Mystic Myrmidon Shield</i> : Multipower, 20-point Reserve; OIHID (-1/4)	0
2u	1) <i>Deflect</i> : Missile Deflection (Any); OIHID (-1/4)	0
1u	2) <i>Smash</i> : HA +4d6 (9d6 with STR); HA (-1/2), OIHID (-1/4)	2
2u	3) <i>Ward</i> : +4 with DCV; OIHID (-1/4)	0
24	Armor (10 PD/10 ED); OIHID (-1/4)	0

#### Skills

3	KS: Greek Myth 12-
4	Language: Ancient Greek (Fluent, Literate)
3	PS: Archaeology 12-

### Myrmidon Memories:

	Myrmidon Arts; all slots OIHID (-1/4)
	Maneuver OCV DCV Notes
4	Flying Dodge — +4 Dodge, Abort, FMove
3	Block +2 +2 Block, Abort
3	Escape +0 +0 40 STR Escape
3	Root +0 +0 40 STR Resist, Block, Abort
3	Lunge +2 -2 +v/5, FMove
3	Shove +0 +0 40 STR Shove
4	Takeaway +0 +0 35 STR Grab Weapon
3	Use Art with Blades, Empty Hand, Shield, Spear
16	1) +2 Overall; OIHID (-1/4)
4	2) +1 with HTH Combat; OIHID (-1/4)
2	3) Acrobatics 14-; OIHID (-1/4)
2	4) Breakfall 14-; OIHID (-1/4)
8	5) Defense Maneuver IV; OIHID (-1/4)
3	6) WF: Common Melee, Common Missile; OIHID (-1/4)

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 210**

**Total Cost: 350**

### 200+ Disadvantages

10	Accidental Change: Into Hero ID When Endangered, Frightened, Startled, Angered 8- (Common)
5	Distinctive Features: Archaic Speech (Easily Concealed)
5	Distinctive Features: Mystic Armor (Concealable, Unusual Senses)
5	Distinctive Features: Fighting Style (Concealable, Large Group)
20	Enraged: Archaeological Items Damaged (Uncommon, Go 11-, Recover 8-)
20	Enraged: Disrespected (Uncommon, Go 11-, Recover 8-)
5	Money: Poor
20	Normal Characteristic Maxima
15	Psychological Limitation: Aggressive (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Honorbound (Common, Strong)
10	Rivalry: Weaponmasters (Professional, Mo Pow, Group, Seek to Outdo, Unaware)
10	Social Limitation: Secret ID (Frequently, Minor)
10	Vulnerability: 1 1/2x BODY and STUN from Magic (Uncommon)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 350**

## Sportsfreak

**Background/History:** Son of Czech immigrants, Steven was always fantastic at everything he did. Fully inculcated as an All-American kid, he was outstanding in every respect, universally lauded and respected by his peers from pre-school thru high school. In addition to being an excellent student, Steven was also a great athlete, playing every sport there was a team for. After graduating high school he went to Princeton on both scholastic and athletic scholarships. He not only played football, baseball, tennis, soccer, basketball, and lacrosse, he was also the most valuable player each year on each team. All while maintaining a 3.8 GPA.

After College he had his pick of professional sports careers, and signed up to play for the Millennium City Lions on a very fat contract. Steven played for several years as a star running back, and though he originally enjoyed the fame and accolades he eventually grew bored with it. He was meant for greater things; catching a ball was so insignificant compared to saving the world and fighting supervillains!

Finally, he made his decision. Steven decided that he would quit playing football and begin fighting crime! At the end of the third season he announced his retirement to a shocked and angry fan base and a highly irate management. He was in his prime! He was a star player!

Despite the unhappiness of all involved, Steven did it anyway. A few weeks later a new superhero hit the mean streets of the Greater Millennium City area; Sportsfreak! Dressed in an armored football-influenced costume the blue and gold clad hero proceeded to fight street crime and right wrong doings most nights of the week.

So far he hasn't faced a creditable super-threat, but he's training for it and he's confident that when the time comes he'll give a 110%!

**Personality/Motivation:** Used to being the best at whatever he feels like doing, Steven never hesitates in either his Public or Secret IDs.

**Quote:** "Things aren't so bad! And besides, I always was a clutch player!"

**Powers/Tactics:** Sportsfreak has no actual powers; he is "merely" a very talented human athlete with natural physical abilities that allow him to move and fight impressively. Many opponents have been taken off guard by his devastatingly effective scrapping ability. Further, he seldom fails at any task he puts his mind to, and is amazingly nimble, able to dance out of the way of most serious harm.

**Appearance:** Steven is an athletically handsome, unusually tall young man that dresses nicely in general, save when wearing sports attire.

Sportsfreak wears a blue and gold football-inspired outfit with a bold "SF" on the front and back and "SPORTSFREAK" across the back of his jersey where an athlete's last name would be on a real uniform.



**Sportsfreak**

Val	CHA	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 HTH [2]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
20	CON	20	13-	
20	BODY	20	13-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll: 12-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
16	COM	3	12-	
8	PD	4		Total: 32 PD (24 rPD)
8	ED	4		Total: 32 ED (24 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
10	REC	4		
40	END	0		
50	STUN	10		

**Total Characteristic Cost: 150**

**Movement:** Running: 10"/20"  
 Leaping: 5"/10"  
 Swimming: 3"/6"

Cost	Powers	END
6	<i>Agile:</i> Knockback Resistance -4"; Nonpersistent (-1/4)	0
6	<i>Armored Costume:</i> Armor (3 PD/3 ED); OIF (-1/2)	0
42	<i>Nimble:</i> Combat Luck (21 PD/21 ED)	0

**Talents**

5 Rapid Healing

**Skills**

- 30 +3 Overall Levels
- 15 +3 with Hand-to-Hand Combat
- 9 +3 with Martial Arts
- 3 Acrobatics 13-
- 3 Breakfall 13-
- 3 Climbing 13-
- 10 Defense Maneuver IV
- 3 Hoist 12-
- 3 KS: Classical Education 12-
- 3 KS: Sports 12-
- 3 Language: Czech (Conversation, Literate)
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 3 Streetwise 13-
- 3 Teamwork 13-
- 2 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles

Martial Arts: Super-leet Scrappin Style  
 Maneuver OCV DCV Notes

4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
5	Flying Dodge	—	+4	Dodge, Abort, FMove
5	Flying Grab	-2	-1	60 STR Grab 2 Limbs, FMove
3	Flying Tackle	+0	-1	10d6 + v/5, Both Fall, FMove
5	Kick	-2	+1	14d6 Strike
4	Punch	+0	+2	12d6 Strike
4	Reversal	-1	-2	65 STR Escape, Two Limbs
4	Root	+0	+0	65 STR Resist, Block, Abort
4	Shove	+0	+0	65 STR Shove
3	Throw	+0	+1	10d6 + v/5, Target Falls
24	+6 Damage Classes (added in)			

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 220**

**Total Cost: 370**

**200+ Disadvantages**

- 25 Enraged: When Chips Are Down (Uncommon, Go 14-, Recover 8-)
- 20 Normal Characteristic Maxima
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Adrenaline Junkie (Common, Strong)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Code of the Hero (Very Common, Strong)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Overconfidence (Very Common, Strong)
- 15 Reputation: Controversial Football Player, 14-
- 10 Rivalry: Other Trained Normal Supers, Martial Artists, and Similar (Professional, Mo Pow, Group, Seek to Outdo, Unaware)
- 10 Social Limitation: Public ID (Occasionally, Major)
- 10 Social Limitation: Secret ID (Occasionally, Major)
- 25 Experience Points

**Total Disadvantage Points: 370**

## Warbride

**Background/History:** Born an only child to a military family stationed in Biloxi, Mississippi, Janine grew up surrounded by the US Army. Both her parents served, her father an officer in the infantry, her mother a military nurse; all her friends were other military brats; her schools were all on post. She was inundated with all things Army, and she absolutely loved it; joining the Army herself was all Janine ever wanted to do. Even at a young age she was fascinated by guns and ordinance, and could rattle off the specs on both Warsaw Pact hardware as well as US MilSpec.

When she turned 18, she immediately enlisted and was shipped off to boot camp. She wanted to go into the infantry, but her gender denied her that dream, so instead she did the next best thing; she became an armorer tech. She served three years in near-perfect bliss, until her unit was deployed to support field troops in Sarajevo. After being in country for two months, the base camp her field armory was located at was hit by mortar rounds and subsequently raided. Loss of life was high, claiming all of the other armorer techs Janine worked with as well as many other support personnel. Janine herself was wounded by shrapnel, but managed to crawl off into the bushes to avoid the raiders. While hiding in the bushes, she saw several uniformed persons directing the locals; later she put a name to them – they were members of the Warlord’s Shadow Army!

After the raiders left, Janine went back to the base camp. The raiders had taken all of the working arsenal, so Janine built a couple of guns from spare parts, patched herself up as best she could, and took off into the bushes on her own to wreak some revenge on the jerks that blew up her friends. Miraculously she survived her initial engagement, though she was forced to break off and retreat. Undeterred, she continued her fight against the large force of militants. Meanwhile, in the aftermath of the camp raid, the Army believed her to be KIA and notified her parents and the IRS of such.

She put up a good fight on her own, hitting and running the large group of Shadow Army advised militia for weeks. An annoyance at first, she did enough damage to garner special attention, and was eventually tricked into a trap and captured. Rather than kill her however, she was offered a chance to be recruited into the Warlord’s organization. Faced with that or death, she accepted.

After proving herself in the Shadow Army in various engagements for six years, she was promoted into the elite; she was inducted into the War Machine as Warbride. However, Janine was just biding her time, and inevitably after proving

herself further she was eventually entrusted with command of a mission of her own. Free from constant direct observation for the first time in almost seven years, leading a Shadow Army bolstered insurgent force in Garzakistan, she maneuvered the unit into an ambush and made good her escape.

Returning to the states via a circuitous route she ended up in Atlanta. After laying low for a while she got the old itch to fight again and started taking to the streets of Atlanta to fight crime, using the Warbride equipment (suitably modified by her own expertise).

**Personality/Motivation:** A naturally aggressive person, Warbride needs an outlet for her aggressions and finds crimefighting a convenient semi-legal option. Her primary motivation is to “win.”

**Quote:** “Hoo-yah!”

**Powers/Tactics:** Warbride is a skilled marksman, who uses her twin blasters to unleash a good deal of accurate punishment on her opposition. She also carries smoke pellets that she uses to harass and confuse. In addition to her hardware and natural skill, Warbride wears a relatively simple armor suit that provides protection as well augmenting her reflexes to superhuman levels and with powered servos and hydraulics in the legs that give her a bit of a boost when running and jumping. Finally, her helmet has some built in sensory pickups, a UV filter, and some sensory protection. In combat Warbride will usually keep to the edges, skirting the opposition and finding cover where possible, while Finding Weakness and using her Rapid Attack and TWF skills to shoot at least twice each Phase.

**Appearance:** Janine is an attractive, very athletic black woman that looks to be in her late twenties or early thirties. She wears her hair very short, and dresses in t-shirts (frequently olive green) and wears somewhat loose cargo pants (frequently khaki). She’s most comfortable in fatigues, but doesn’t want to look *too* “military.”

The Warbride suit is dark olive green and black, a little shiny, and with a generally sleek appearance. The helmet is fully enclosed with a green visor, the torso is fully armor plated, and a sturdy green parka-like duster provides additional protection. Janine is not very feminine, and in her armor it’s not immediately obvious that she is a woman, though it becomes more apparent when she moves. Her two “boom sticks” are cross holstered over her shoulders, grips outward for easier drawing. She also wears a belt that carries 6 orb-shaped smoke grenades around the front and sides, and has a “butt pack” attached to the back.

**Warbride**

The “boom-sticks” are identical in appearance save that one is left-handed and the other is right-handed. They are flat-black, approximately 2 feet long, and most closely resemble high-tech riot shotguns with flat drums of ammo and a thumb operated selector switch for various settings. They fire shotgun-like ammunition.

## DIGITAL HERO #38

### Warbride

Val	CHA	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH [1]
20/30	DEX	*50	13-/15-	OCV: 7/10/DCV: 7/10
13	CON	6	12-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 14-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
16	COM	3	12-	
5	PD	3		Total: 25 PD (20 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 25 ED (20 rED)
4/5	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	REC	0		3, 5, 8, 10, 12
26	END	0		
25	STUN	0		*OIF (Battlesuit, -1/2)

**Total Characteristic Cost: 94**

**Movement:** Running: 6"(8")/12"(16")  
Leaping: 2"(4")/4"(8")  
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
30	<i>Boom-Stick:</i> Multipower, 60-point reserve; OAF (-1)	0
3u	1) <i>Impact Shot:</i> EB 12d6 (versus PD), 4 Clips of 12 Charges (+0); Beam (-1/4), OAF (-1)	[12]
3u	2) <i>Explosive Shot:</i> EB 8d6 (versus PD), 4 Clips of 12 Charges (+0), Explosion (+1/2); OAF (-1)	[12]
2u	3) <i>Precise Shot:</i> EB 8d6 (versus PD), 4 Clips of 12 Charges (+0), Armor Piercing (+1/2); No Knockback (-1/4), Beam (-1/4), OAF (-1)	[12]
2u	4) <i>Sweeper Shot:</i> EB 8d6 (versus PD), 4 Clips of 12 Charges (+0), Explosion (Cone, -1 DC/2", +1/2); No Range (-1/2), OAF (-1)	[12]
5	<i>Two Boom-sticks:</i> Another Boom-Stick	0
35	<i>Crack Shot:</i> Find Weakness 14- with Guns	0
13	<i>Smoke Bombs:</i> Darkness to Sight Group 3" Radius; 6 Charges (-3/4), OIF (Belt, -1/2)	[6]
16	<i>Armor:</i> Armor (8 PD/8 ED); OIF (Battlesuit, -1/2)	0
24	<i>Trained Reflexes:</i> Combat Luck (12 PD/12 ED)	0
6	<i>Hydraulic Assist:</i> Running +2" plus Leaping +2" (4" Total), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); OIF (Battlesuit, -1/2)	0
4	<i>Built In Sensors:</i> +2 PER with all Sense Groups; OIF (Helmet, -1/2)	0
3	<i>Ear Plugs:</i> Hearing Group Flash Defense (5 points); OIF (Helmet, -1/2)	0
3	<i>Visor:</i> Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points); OIF (Helmet, -1/2)	0
3	<i>Visor:</i> Nightvision; OIF (Helmet, -1/2)	0

3 *Visor:* Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group); OIF (Helmet, -1/2) 0

### Skills

10	+1 Overall Levels
5	+1 with Ranged Combat
4	+2 versus Range Modifier with Guns
3	Armorsmith 13- (15-)
3	Breakfall 13- (15-)
3	Climbing 13- (15-)
3	Concealment 12-
10	Defense Maneuver IV
3	Fast Draw 13- (15-)
3	Interrogation 12-
3	Inventor 12-
3	KS: Guns 12-
3	KS: Military Life 12-
3	Parachuting 13- (15-)
3	Paramedics 12-
3	PS: Soldier 12-
5	Rapid Attack (Ranged)
3	Shadowing 12-
3	Stealth 13- (15-)
3	Survival 12-
3	Tactics 12-
3	TF: Parachuting, Advanced, Parachuting, Basic, Wheeled Military Vehicles
10	Two-Weapon Fighting (Ranged)
3	Weaponsmith (Firearms, Grenades) 12-
3	WF: Small Arms, Grenade Launchers

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 256**

**Total Cost: 350**

### 200+ Disadvantages

5	Distinctive Features: Shrapnel Scars On Back and Side (Easily Concealed)
20	Enraged: Outgunned or Outmaneuvered (Common, Go 11-, Recover 11-)
10	Hunted: Warlord and the War Machine 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
20	Normal Characteristic Maxima
20	Psychological Limitation: Aggressive (Very Common, Strong)
20	Psychological Limitation: Bullet-Headed, Thinks Everything Can be Solved by Force (Very Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Dislikes Bureaucracy and Red Tape (Uncommon, Total)
5	Reputation: Violent Superhero, 8-
10	Rivalry: Militant Supers (Professional, Mo Pow, Group, Seek to Outdo, Unaware)
10	Social Limitation: Secret ID (Believed to Be KIA) (Occasionally, Severe, Not Limiting in Some Cultures)
15	Unluck: 3d6

**Total Disadvantage Points: 350**

**ZED Agent**

Val	CHA	Cost	Roll	Notes
12	STR	2	11-	Lift 130 kg; 2d6 HTH [1]
12	DEX	6	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
12	CON	4	11-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
12	INT	2	11-	PER Roll: 11-
12	EGO	4	11-	ECV: 4
12	PRE	2	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
12	COM	1	11-	
3	PD	1		Total: 11 PD (8 rPD)
3	ED	1		Total: 11 ED (8 rED)
3	SPD	8		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	REC	0		
24	END	0		
25	STUN	1		

**Total Characteristic Cost: 36**

**Movement:** Running: 6"/12"  
Leaping: 2"/4"  
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
26	<i>Issued Sidearm:</i> Multipower, 45-point Reserve; OIF (-1/2), Beam (-1/4)	0
3u	1) <i>Phase Blaster:</i> EB 6d6 (versus ED), 64 Charges (+1/2); OIF (-1/2), Beam (-1/4)	[64]
3u	2) <i>Overcharged Blast:</i> RKA 3d6 (versus ED), 16 Charges (+0); OIF (-1/2), Beam (-1/4)	[16]
12	<i>Armored Vest:</i> Armor (8 PD/8 ED); OIF (-1/2), Activation Roll 14- (-1/2)	0
<b>Perks</b>		
8	Fringe Benefit: International Police Powers, Membership (ZED)	
1	Reputation: ZED Agent (Hegemony of Vinland) 11-, +1/+1d6	

**Skills**

Martial Arts: ZED Training			
3	Maneuver	OCV/DCV	Notes
3	Aikido Throw	+0 +1	2d6 + v/5, Target Falls
4	Boxing Cross	+2 +0	4d6 Strike
4	Escape	+0 +0	27 STR Escape
4	Hold	-1 -1	22 STR Grab Three Limbs
4	Judo Disarm	-1 +1	22 STR Disarm
4	Kung Fu Block	+2 +2	Block, Abort
8	+1 with All Combat		
6	+2 with Sidearm		
3	Combat Driving 11-		
3	Combat Piloting 11-		
3	KS: Hegemony Law Enforcement 11-		
3	PS: ZED Agent 11-		
3	Security Systems 11-		
3	Systems Operation 11-		
3	Tactics 11-		
3	Teamwork 11-		

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 114**

**Total Cost: 150**

**200+ Disadvantages**

20	Normal Characteristic Maxima
15	Psychological Limitation: Servant of the Hegemony (Common, Strong)
20	Psychological Limitation: Obeys Authority (Very Common, Strong)
5	Social Limitation: Government Employee (Frequently, Minor, Not Limiting in Some Cultures)
20	Watched: ZED 14- (Mo Pow, NCI, Limited Area, PC Very Easy to Find, Watching)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 150**

**ZED Agent**

**Background/History:** ZED Agents equipped with standard gear.

**Personality/Motivation:** Furthering their careers as privileged servants of the Hegemony.

**Quote:** "Hands in the air!"

**Powers/Tactics:** Trained ZED Agents

**Appearance:** Clad in black and grey uniforms, with an armored vest and a sidearm. Typically deployed in groups of 10. They have some access to better equipment if needed, such as vehicles and bigger guns.

**ARES Agent**

**Background/History:** ZED Agents equipped with advanced fighting suits and trained to be a crack mobile response unit.

**Personality/Motivation:** Furthering their careers as privileged servants of the Hegemony.

**Quote:** "Hands in the air!"

**Powers/Tactics:** Highly trained and well-equipped ARES Agents

**Appearance:** Clad in black and grey armored exoskeletons with dome helmets, with a jet pack on back and armed with a large rifle, the ARES Agents are elite members of ZED (Zero Enemy Division). They typically form flying patrols in groups of three-man fire teams.



# DIGITAL HERO #38

## ARES Agent

Val	CHA	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	150 kg; 2 1/2d6 HTH [1]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
13	CON	6	12-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2 1/2d6
12	COM	1	11-	
4	PD	1		Total: 14 PD (10 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 14 ED (10 rED)
4	SPD	17		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
26	END	0		
30	STUN	3		

**Total Characteristic Cost: 59**

**Movement:**

Running:	6"/12"
Leaping:	2 1/2"/5"
Swimming:	2"/4"
Flight:	15"/30"

Cost	Powers	END
27	<i>Multipurpose Modular Battle Rifle:</i> Multipower, 60-point Reserve; Two-Handed (-1/2), OIF (-1/2), Beam (-1/4)	0
3u	1) <i>Blaster Volley:</i> EB 6 1/2d6 (versus ED), Autofire (3 shots, +1/4), 64 Charges (+1/2); Two-Handed (-1/2), OIF (-1/2), Beam (-1/4)	[64]
3u	2) <i>Phase Blaster:</i> EB 12d6 (versus ED), 16 Charges (+0); Two-Handed (-1/2), OIF (-1/2), Beam (-1/4)	[16]
3u	3) <i>Overcharged Blast:</i> RKA 4d6 (versus ED), 16 Charges (+0); Two-Handed (-1/2), OIF (-1/2), Beam (-1/4)	[16]
3u	4) <i>Focused White Noise Pulsar:</i> Sight, Hearing and Radio Groups Flash 1 1d6, 16 Charges (+0); Two-Handed (-1/2), OIF (-1/2), Beam (-1/4)	[16]
45	<i>Heavy Assault Armor:</i> Armor (10 PD/10 ED), Hardened (+1/4); OIF (-1/2) <b>plus</b> Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25%; OIF Durable (-1/2)	0
26	<i>Flight Harness, Long Range Sustained:</i> Flight 15", Combat Acceleration/Deceleration (+1/4), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); Restrained (-1/2), OIF (-1/2)	0
18	<i>Advanced Situational Awareness Helmet:</i> +1 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group; OIF (-1/2) <b>plus</b> +1 PER with Sight Group; OIF (-1/2) <b>plus</b> +1 with Ranged Combat; OIF (-1/2) <b>plus</b> Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points); OIF (-1/2) <b>plus</b> Increased Arc Of Perception (360°) with Sight Group; OIF (-1/2) <b>plus</b> Infrared Perception	

	(Sight Group); OIF (-1/2), Extra Time (Full Phase to Activate, Delayed Phase, -1/2) <b>plus</b> Nightvision; OIF (-1/2), Extra Time (Full Phase to Activate, Delayed Phase, -1/2)	0
8	<i>Signal Scanner/Microburst Transmitter:</i> High Range Radio Perception (Radio Group), Concealed -1, Discriminatory, Sense; Requires a Systems Operation Skill Roll (-1/2), OIF (-1/2), Affected as Radio and Hearing (-1/2)	0
7	<i>Surface Cohesion Boots:</i> Clinging; OIF (-1/2)	0

### Perks

8	Fringe Benefit: International Police Powers, Membership (ZED)
2	Reputation: ARES Agent (Hegemony of Vinland) 11-, +2/+2d6

### Skills

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
3	Aikido Throw	+0 +1	2 1/2d6 + v/5, Target Falls
4	Boxing Cross	+2 +0	4 1/2d6 Strike
4	Escape	+0 +0	28 STR Escape
4	Hold	-1 -1	23 STR Grab Three Limbs
4	Judo Disarm	-1 +1	23 STR Disarm
4	Kung Fu Block	+2 +2	Block, Abort
8	+1 with All Combat		
6	+2 with Multipurpose Modular Battle Rifle		
3	Combat Driving	12-	
3	Combat Piloting	12-	
3	KS: Hegemony Law Enforcement	12-	
2	Navigation (Air)	12-	
3	PS: ARES Agent	12-	
3	Security Systems	12-	
3	Systems Operation	12-	
3	Tactics	12-	
3	Teamwork	12-	

**Total Powers & Skill Cost: 216**

**Total Cost: 275**

### 200+ Disadvantages

20	Normal Characteristic Maxima
15	Psychological Limitation: Servant of the Hegemony (Common, Strong)
20	Psychological Limitation: Obeys Authority (Very Common, Strong)
5	Social Limitation: Government Employee (Frequently, Minor, Not Limiting in Some Cultures)
20	Watched: ZED 14- (Mo Pow, NCI, Limited Area, Very Easy to Find, Watching)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 275**

**ZED Hovercar**

Val	CHA	Cost	Notes
3	SIZE	15	2" x 1", 800 kg, KB -3"
15	STR	-10	Lift 200 kg, 3d6 HTH [1]
20	DEX	30	OCV: 7/DCV: 5
20	BODY	7	
15	DEF	39	
4	SPD	10	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12

**Total Characteristic Cost: 117**

**Movement:** Running: 20"/40"  
 Leaping: 0"/0"  
 Swimming: 20"/65"

Cost	Weapons Systems	END
22	<i>Weapons Array:</i> Multipower, 45-point Reserve; OIF (Bulky, -1)	0
2	1) <i>Explosive Missiles:</i> RKA 2d6 (versus ED), Explosion (+1/2); 8 Boostable Charges (-1/4), OIF (Bulky, -1)	[8bc]
2	2) <i>AT Missiles:</i> RKA 2d6 (versus ED), Penetrating (+1/2); 8 Boostable Charges (-1/4), OIF (Bulky, -1)	[8bc]
2	3) <i>Strobe Projector:</i> Sight Group Flash 4d6, 12 Boostable Charges (+0), Area Of Effect (9" Cone, +1 1/4); No Range (-1/2), OIF (Bulky, -1)	[12bc]
1	4) <i>High Intensity Spotlight:</i> Dispel Darkness 15d6, 16 Charges (+0); OIF (Bulky, -1), Only versus Sight Based Darkness (-1)	[16]
2	5) <i>Pulsar Blasts:</i> EB 6d6 (versus ED), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +1/2); OIF (Bulky, -1)	0
14	<i>Weapons Array Pulsar Blast Supercharger:</i> EB +8d6 (versus ED) to Pulsar Blasts, 16 Charges (+0); OIF (Bulky, -1), Linked (Pulsar Blasts, -3/4)	[16]
11	<i>Solid Construction:</i> Hardened (+1/4) on 15 DEF	0
42	<i>Anti-Gravitic Generator and Hover-JETS:</i> Flight 15", 4x Noncombat Movement, 3 Continuing Fuel Charges lasting 1 Hour Each (Fuel is Difficult to obtain, +0), Sideways Maneuverability (+1/2); OIHID (-1/4)	[3cc]
	<b>Notes:</b> To use this power, the car goes through some physical alterations, the tires flip down, stabilizer wings and flaps extend, and the jets pop out from concealed hatches in flanks of the car.	
4	<i>After Burners:</i> Flight +5"; 3 Continuing Charges lasting 1 Minute Each (-1/2), OIHID (-1/4), No Noncombat Movement (-1/4), Linked (Anti-Gravitic Generator and Hover-Jets, -1/4)	[3cc]

11	<i>Comm Suite:</i> Radar (Radio Group), Increased Arc Of Perception (360°); OIF (-1/2), Restrainable (by Jamming, Interference, -1/4)	0
7	<i>Comm Suite:</i> Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group), Concealed -9; Affected as Hearing and Radio (-1/2), OIF (-1/2), Restrainable (by Jamming, Interference, -1/4), Requires a Systems Operation Skill Roll (-1/2)	0
20	<i>Megaphone &amp; Sirens:</i> Aid PRE 5d6; OIF Bulky (-1), Only to Give "Cop Commands" (-1/2)	0
	<b>Notes:</b> Standard Effect Rule, +15 PRE	
5	<i>Spotlight:</i> Sight Group Images 2" Radius (+1/4), Conforming (+1/2); Only to Create Light (-1), IIF (Bulky Fragile, -1), Limited Arc of Fire (60°, -1/2)	2
	<b>Notes:</b> The headlights of the car have a "spotlight" setting. The lamps are on pivots allowing a small amount of lateral and horizontal movement, similar to a rearview mirror.	

**Talents**

- 3 Absolute Range Sense
- 3 Absolute Time Sense
- 3 Bump Of Direction

**Skills**

- 3 +1 to Combat Driving, Combat Piloting

**Total Abilities & Equipment Cost: 157**

**Total Vehicle Cost: 274**

**Val Disadvantages**

5	<i>Accidental Change:</i> From Fly Mode to Drive Mode when Encountering Abnormal Gravity Field or Electrical Interference (Infrequently, Uncommon)
5	<i>Dependence:</i> Requires Regular Tune-Ups (-30 Active Points from Affected Power, Difficult To Obtain, 1 Week)
10	<i>Distinctive Features:</i> ZED Hover Car (Concealable)
5	<i>Physical Limitation:</i> Requires Special Technicians to Repair (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
15	<i>Reputation:</i> Vehicle Used by Top ZED Agents (Criminals Will Hide or Attack), 14-
13	<i>Susceptibility:</i> Gravity Fields, 1d6 per Segment (Uncommon, Only When Flying)
6	<i>Vulnerability:</i> 2x Effect from Telekinesis (Uncommon, Only When Flying)

**Total Disadvantage Points: 59**

**Total Cost: 215/5 = 43**

