

STARACE

STAR TEAM BASIC TRAINING MANUAL



Pacesetter

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I: THE GAME

The CM	2
The Characters	3
Abilities and Skills	3
Scores	3
Checks	3
Adventures, Money, & Kills	4
The Maps	4
Learning to Play	4

CHAPTER II: CHARACTERS

The Character Sheet	5
How to Create a Character	5
Character Sheet	6
The Eight Basic Abilities	7
Ability Checks	9
Player Character Races	10
The Crystal Clones	11
Humans	12
The Kleibor	12
The Traka	13

CHAPTER III: THE STAR TEAMS

What is a Star Team?	15
Star Team Organization	16
The Free Orders and the Star Teams	16
Promotion through the Ranks	16
What is a Kill?	17
Kill Values of Enemy Objectives	17
The Free Order of Spades	17
The Free Order of Hearts	18
The Free Order of Clubs	18
The Free Order of Diamonds	19

CHAPTER IV: BASIC ACTION

Rounds	20
Surprise	20
Field of Vision	20
Sequence of Play	21
Combat Procedure	21
Declaration	22
Who Goes First?	22
Noetic Skills in Combat	23
Missile Combat	23
Movement	27
Melee	28
Damage from Combat	30
Recovery and Healing	31
Special Damage	31
Armor in Combat	32
Vehicles in Action	33
Mounted Action	34

CHAPTER V: SPACECRAFT AND COMBAT

The Maps	35
Space Travel	36
Spacecraft Descriptions	36
Spacecraft Illustrations	37-38
Spacecraft Combat	40

CHAPTER VI: SKILLS

Skill Levels and Scores	44
Acquiring Skills	44
Skill Checks	45
Exclusive Skills	45
Spade Specialty Skills	45
Heart Specialty Skills	48
Diamond Specialty Skills	50
Club Specialty Skills	52
Skills Chart	54-55

CHAPTER VII: EQUIPMENT

Armor	56
Weapons	57
Vehicles	59
Skill Kits	61
Gadgets and Useful Items	61

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STARACE™

Star Team Basic Training Manual



*Your skill shall, like a star i'th' darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.*

Hamlet, Act V, Scene II

Pacesetter

CHAPTER I: THE GAME

Welcome to the last frontier. I'm Commander Corio Fallon, but you can call me "Lightspeed." I'm a Star Ace myself, but I'm not the only one. Fact is, there's always room for another Star Ace, fighting the good fight against those hoodlums that call themselves "The Empire." I'll be your guide through this game rulebook, which we like to call our Star Team Basic Training Manual. Let's start at the beginning—at old ground zero, if you will.

STAR ACE:™ Adventures in Space is a role-playing game that takes you across galaxies and into adventure at speeds faster than light. You're going to run into new worlds, new life forms, and new excitement every time you leave on a mission, or even when you're on furlough from your hidden base on the Wilderness System. Any place can become an instant hot spot, whether you're flying your Star Team fighter, or stopping over in a bar on Stalitsa! As you play the role of a Star Team member, you join a crack organization whose job is to travel through space, sabotaging the Empire's efforts to rule the universe, and keeping whatever riches might happen to fall their way. Of course, your enemies—and they're not just the Empire—always plan to make your mission a tough one.

WHO CAN PLAY?

Anyone who enjoys the mystery, intrigue, and action-packed adventures you find in stories or movies about space-travel will have a good time playing the STAR ACE game. In general, players should be at least 12 years old. Two to nine people can play, but groups of four to seven usually have the most fun.

WHAT IS A ROLE-PLAYING GAME?

Now, as children, most of us played "make believe." We played cowboys and Indians, soldiers and doctors, Tarzans and Janes—whatever we wanted to be. Of course, arguments always came up: Harry said he shot George, but George claimed he

ducked just in time. Except for these little quarrels, "make believe" was a lot of fun.

Well, it's the big time now, folks. Role-playing games offer a more adult way to make believe. You still pretend to be somebody else, but a few rules are added to guide the action and build in fairness. The rules help you decide whether Harry really shot George, or whether he missed.

WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

Before you start traveling through space, you should get familiar with the necessary equipment: the contents of your STAR ACE game. Look over each of the items in the box as you read the following descriptions:

The Star Team Basic Training Manual? You're holding it right now; it contains 64 full pages of information about how to play the game. Read this book first, before you start your mission as a Star Team member.

The Star Team Wilderness Briefing Manual contains 32 pages about people and places...with aliens, politics, and economics thrown in to boot. The Wilderness Region will be your home, and we call it "Wilderness" for good reason. It will be good to get to know it.

The adventure scenario, "Deuces Wild" is a 16-page adventure especially designed to introduce new players to the STAR ACE game system. For now, set the adventure aside; most of it should be read by one special player, whom you'll choose later. (When you're ready for more adventure, be sure to look for other STAR ACE scenarios published separately by those fine folks at Pacesetter, Ltd.)

The game map is printed on both sides to provide the greatest possible playing surface. Both sides will help you in playing "Deuces Wild." The black and white side is a "Battle Board," which keeps all of your battles and movement to scale. The full-color side lets you play all kinds of other adventures, too.

140 cardboard playing pieces represent Star Team members themselves,

plus all the other characters, spacecraft, tanks, and troops that they might meet. During the game, you move the counters around on the map to show where your character is.

The three STAR ACE dice.

USING THE DICE

STAR ACE dice are not your regular dice; they have 10 sides instead of 6. Each side has a number ranging from "0" to "9." Ten-sided dice are used in several different ways; they're light years better than six-siders!

Take a second to roll one of the dice. The number that comes up on top is the number you've rolled. If the number rolled is a "0," read it as "10" instead.

Now roll two or three of the dice and add them together. Remember that any roll of "0" counts as "10," so rolling a "5," a "0," and a "2" gives you a result of 17 (5+10+2=17). These types of rolls are called rolls of d10. The small letter "d" stands for "dice," and the "10" indicates that ten-sided dice are being rolled.

Often, the rules require you to roll "1d10," or "2d10" or "3d10." These abbreviations mean to roll one, two, or all three dice and *add* the results together to get your final result.

The dice can also be used to roll percents—that is, to roll numbers between 1 and 100. When you roll percents, you use only two dice, and you read the results differently: one die is read as the "tens" die and the other is read as the "ones." Rolls of "0" are read as "0," not "10." If both dice come up "0," the result is read as "100."

Try rolling a few percents. First, choose which die will be the tens die and which will be the ones die. Now roll both dice. Say you roll a "5" on the tens die and a "1" on the ones die: you've rolled "51." A roll of "5" on the tens die and "0" on the ones die is "50," while a roll of "0" on the tens die and "5" on the ones die is "05," or just plain "5." Remember, a roll of "00" is read as 100.

THE CM

In every group of players, one player must separate himself from the

others and play a very special role in the game. This player is called the "CM," which stands for "Campaign Master." During a game, the CM doesn't pretend to be one character, as the other players do. Instead, he or she gets to play all the people, aliens, and animals that the other players meet in the adventure. The CM also acts as referee; he or she applies the rules of the game and guides the other players through the adventure. As we say, the CM "runs" the game.

THE CHARACTERS

Every person or alien in the STAR ACE™ game is called a character. Characters portrayed by each player except the CM are called player characters—PCs for short. Characters played by the CM are called nonplayer characters—NPCs for short.

Player characters are people (Human or alien) from throughout the Wilderness Region who are worthy to join the Star Teams. The Star Teams are an elite organization, based in the Wilderness Region, who fight those thugs from the Empire.

The Star Teams themselves are caught between the Empire and the Alliance. They actually fight on the side of the Alliance, but officially, the two organizations aren't connected. Therefore, the Star Teams are left on their own, more or less—patriots without a country or government. They support themselves by privateering and by raiding Imperial vessels; they cut deals with the interplanetary black market, buying and selling what they can to keep up the fight against the Empire. The Empire itself is explained in more detail in the 32 page *Wilderness Briefing Manual*.

ABILITIES AND SKILLS

Every PC in the STAR ACE™ game has eight Basic Abilities: Strength, Dexterity, Agility, Personality, Willpower, Perception, Luck, and Stamina. These Abilities are the core of every character; like human qualities, they tell us what the character is all about. Chapter II tells more about the Basic Abilities.

In addition to Basic Abilities, characters also have skills. Abilities come naturally, but skills must be acquired. Examples include Lasers, Computers, and Disguise.

Characters can also have noetic skills—special mental talents that go far beyond the ordinary. Ignore Pain and Noetic Shock are two examples.

As Star Team members, your characters come by some skills automatically; others they have to learn. See Chapter VI for more information on noetic and other skills.

SCORES

In the real world, people differ; certain qualities are strong, others may be weak. In some things they're experts, in others a little better than average. In the STAR ACE game, characters differ, too. They have scores for each Ability, which tells how strong that Ability is. They also have scores for skills, which show how well the character can use them. Most scores range from about 20 to 100.



CHECKS

During the game, characters put their Abilities and skills to use. Some things they can do automatically, no matter how low their scores may be. But characters can't automatically do *everything* they try; if they could, the game would be no fun. So when Lana the Star Team member wants to leap onto a slowly moving hover scooter, or find a needle in a haystack, she must put her scores to the test, and make a check with the dice. Checks are percent rolls that determine how an action turns out, when the outcome is in doubt.

Here's where scores come in handy. Jumping on the scooter? That's one case where you need Agility. Lana's player rolls the dice, and compares the result to Lana's Agility score: she makes an "Agility check." Finding that hidden needle? That's Perception. Lana's player rolls the dice, and compares the result to Lana's Perception score: she makes a "Perception check." Obviously, dice rolls are important here, so be sure you've read the section above called "Using the Dice."

General Checks

A general check is a percent roll to find out whether a character can do something difficult. It gives yes or no answers: yes, the character does it; no, he or she doesn't. General checks work like this: if the percent roll is higher than the score being checked, the character fails. If the roll is lower than or equal to the score, the character succeeds.

Let's say Lana wants to walk across a narrow beam—an action that requires Agility. The CM thinks that's hard to do, so he or she asks the player to make a general check against the character's (Lana's) Agility score. The player makes a percent roll. If the player rolls a number equal to or less than Lana's Agility score, Lana can walk across the beam. If the player rolls a number higher than the Lana's Agility score, Lana can't walk across the beam; in fact, she falls off!

Specific Checks on the Action Table

Sometimes players need to find a very specific result—such as how much injury an attack causes, or how many clues a character notices. In these cases, a general check isn't enough, and players must make a specific check to find results. Specific checks use the STAR ACE™ Action Table to find the exact outcome of an action. Take a look at the table on the back cover of the *Wilderness Briefing Manual*. Then read the steps below to learn how to make a specific check.

1. Roll a percent and compare it to a score—just as if you're making a general check.

2. If the dice roll is higher than the score, your character fails. If it's equal to or lower than the score, your character succeeds, and you go on to Step 3.

3. Subtract the number rolled on the dice from the value of the score being checked. Then find the difference on the Action Table, in the ranges listed under "Attack Margin." These ranges are printed in red. The row that lies across from the appropriate range will show the result of the check.

5. To find out the exact result, you must find the appropriate defense column. The game rules always tell you which column to use, depending on the check. Checks against Ability scores are usually on Column 2.

6. "Cross-index" the attack row with the defense column. This means that you follow the row found in Step 2 until you reach the column found in Step 5. The letter code that lies in the box shared by each one shows the result of the attack.

7. Finally, the CM finds the meaning of the letter code, using one of the "result keys" in the game. The rules explain which one.

For example, let's say Wayne, another Star Team member, throws a rock at an alien. The CM asks Wayne's player to make a specific check against Dexterity to find out what happens. Wayne's Dexterity score is 72.

First, Wayne's player makes a percent roll with the dice, and rolls 52. The CM subtracts 52 from 72, and finds the difference—20—under the "Attack Margin" heading. The result of the attack lies on the 10-29 row.

According to the rules, this kind of an attack calls for the defender to roll 1d10 to find the defense column, so the CM rolls 1d10. He rolls a 5, so the result lies in the defense column beneath the blue "5."

The CM cross-indexes the 10-29 row with defense column 5, and finds an "M" on the Action Table. In this example, the CM would look for the "M" in the Armed Combat Results Key, and apply the results for a "Medium Wound." Don't worry about using the keys just yet; for now, you just need to understand the basic procedure: rolling a specific check and finding the letter code result on the Action Table.

ADVENTURES, MONEY AND KILLS

In their role as Star Team members, PCs must go on missions to prevent those Imperial goons from gathering up enough military power to invade still another planetary system. Star Teams raid important military installations, or seize precious cargoes destined for Imperial ports. These missions often require more than a little military planning. Each mission is called an adventure.

Often during an adventure, if not always, the Star Team members have to tangle with Imperial spacecraft, tanks and other military vessels. It's important for each Star Team member to keep track of the number of enemy craft shot down, or money and cargo seized during an adventure. The reason for keeping accurate records is explained in Chapter III.

THE MAPS

The maps in the STAR ACE game use six-sided spaces called hexagons, or hexes for short. Road maps use inches to measure distance; their scales tell how many miles each inch on the map represents. In the STAR

ACE game, the hexes measure distance; The hexes on the color map are called *Grand Strategic Sectors*. The hexes on the battleboard are called *Tactical Sectors* when you're playing battles in space.

Maps for personal combat—small scuffles, brawls, and shoot-outs—use scales of 5 feet per hex or 25 feet per hex. Maps for larger battles (involving hover tanks, scooters, and Imperial walkers) use a scale of 100 yards per hex.

Note to miniatures players: players who are familiar with miniatures games and who wish to use miniatures for characters instead of counters should use a scale of 1 inch = 5 feet, or 1 inch = 25 feet on the battleboard only.

LEARNING TO PLAY

Relax: you don't have to memorize everything in this book to learn how to play. Fact is, the best way to learn is to start playing as soon as possible! If you're the CM, take a minute to page through the books, so you know what's where. Then start reading this book. You should understand what you're reading, but there's no need to try to gulp down everything all at once. After you finish reading the *Star Team Basic Training Manual*, take a look at "Deuces Wild," the introductory adventure. Read it through, and see how the game rules work. After that, you're ready to play! If you don't remember a rule, just be sure you know where to look it up.

Players who are playing PCs don't need to know the rules quite as well as the CM. They should concentrate on Chapters I, II, and III, and then find out about their skills and equipment for the introductory adventure. That's about it for starters, because the next thing the players should do is concentrate on having fun playing their characters, and quit worrying about the rules!

CHAPTER II: CHARACTERS

All of the folks in a STAR ACE™ adventure are characters. Characters played by the players are called *player characters*—PCs for short. All the other characters are *nonplayer characters*, or NPCs. Most of the time, the CM plays all NPC roles. NPCs can be minor characters, major villains, or anyone else the PCs meet.

In the last chapter, I told you a little about what goes into making a character: Basic Abilities and skills. Now it's time to explain how to put these things together to create your own character. For now, I'll brief you on the eight Basic Abilities, and on character races, appearance, and background. Listen up: I'm not going over this twice, and it'll help you understand skills later on.

THE CHARACTER SHEET

Well, I might as well put you to work right away. During an adventure, each player keeps track of his or her character on a "character sheet." The next page shows a blank character sheet; you may copy it to use during play. Looking over the character sheet is a good way to learn about characters, since it shows what you need to know during an adventure.

PLAYER. That's you. Write your own name on the sheet; it helps everyone keep track of who's who.

CHARACTER. Write the name of your character here—the Star Team member you're going to play.

STAR TEAM ORDER/RANK. Every Star Team member belongs to one of four Free Orders. Each Free Order has a different specialty, explained in Chapter III. Each Order has 12 ranks. Deuce is the lowest rank, and Ace the highest. Every new player character starts at Deuce rank (hey, you can't get promoted until you do something!). Fill in "Deuce" for now. Fill in your choice of Orders after you read Chapter III.

BACKGROUND. This includes a lot of things: the planet your character comes from, his or her race,

height, weight, age, and personal history. All of these things make a difference in the character you play. After you finish drawing up your character, you can add these touches yourself: make sure they relate to his or her race, Basic Abilities, and skills.

BASIC STATISTICS. These include the eight Basic Abilities, with some special scores thrown in:

Current Stamina. During the game, characters lose Stamina points from fatigue or minor injuries. With a little rest, they can recover these lost points. Stamina points are subtracted and added to the "current Stamina" score—the Ability score stays the same. Current Stamina cannot exceed the original Stamina Ability score.

Recovery rate. This tells how fast your character can regain Stamina by resting.

Current Willpower. Like Stamina, Willpower may rise and fall during the game. Characters lose Willpower points temporarily when they use certain noetic skills or suffer noetic attack. The original Willpower Ability score stays the same during an adventure. Current Willpower cannot exceed the original Willpower Ability Score.

Unskilled Melee Score. This score is a character's base percent chance to attack successfully in hand-to-hand fighting when he or she has no skill in that kind of combat.

WOUNDS. In the STARACE game, wounds are the really bad news—the serious injuries. Every character has a certain number of wound boxes to show the number of wounds he or she can receive before it's lights out for good. (The exact number is based on Stamina.) During the game, players must mark wound boxes to keep track of how many wounds their characters suffer. When the players run out of wound boxes to mark, that's it: the characters die. Luckily, characters can heal wounds with bedrest—if they get to bed in time. Players then erase the marks in the boxes, to show that the wounds have healed. (See Damage and Healing, Chapter IV.)

SKILLS. Skills are learned as a Star Team member moves up through the ranks of his or her Order (see Chapter III). They are the result of military training. All PCs have certain skills automatically. These skills are Spacecraft Piloting skill and Noetic Defense Mode skill. They also have three more skills of their own choosing: two from the Order they join, and one more that can be from any Order. After that, the character has to work to acquire additional skills. (See Chapter VI for all you need to know about skills.)

Spacecraft Piloting allows the user to pilot any craft or vehicle, depending on the skill level.

Noetic Defense Mode allows the user to shield his or her thoughts from any type of thought scanning. The Noetic Defense Mode can be used while performing other tasks or skills. It does not protect the character against other forms of noetic attacks.

EQUIPMENT. Each beginning STAR ACE character receives the following items: A FX-80 Phoenix Starfighter; a Proton Projector Rifle; any 2 other weapons (except the Beta Red Particle Beam); an LSS Body Suit and Helmet; any Kit you have a skill to use; and 10+2d10 chips, which are your galactic money. All this equipment is described in Chapter VII—all except the Starfighter, which you can read about in Chapter V.

HOW TO CREATE A CHARACTER

Your first Star Ace adventure, "Deuces Wild," gives you 8 ready-made characters to play. Sooner or later, however, you'll want to create your own characters. Here's how to do it:

1. Get together the basic equipment: a pencil, a piece of scratch paper, the three ten-sided dice, and a copy of the character sheet. Write your name on the character sheet next to "Player."
2. Decide the race of character you want to play, choosing from the

STAR ACE™ CHARACTER SHEET

Character: _____

Player: _____

BASIC STATISTICS

Strength _____ Perception _____
 Dexterity _____ Willpower _____
 Agility _____ Luck _____
 Personality _____ Stamina _____
 Penetration Bonus _____ Unskilled Melee _____
 (Str + Agl) ÷ 2

BACKGROUND

Age: _____
 Sex: _____
 Height: _____
 Weight: _____

RACIAL TALENTS

STAR TEAM ORDER/RANK _____/_____

Current Stamina _____
 Current Willpower _____
 Stamina Recovery _____
 Armor _____
 Stamina Loss/Round _____

WOUNDS

□□□□□□□□
 □□□□□□□□

Cumulative
 Kills

AR _____

SKILLS

Name	Base	Level	Score
Spacecraft Piloting	(Pcn+Dex+Agl)÷3	Rookie	_____
Noetic Defense Mode	(Pcn+Wpr)÷2	Rookie	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____	_____

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

PPR _____
 LSS Body Suit _____
 LSS Helmet _____

CURRENT FUNDS _____ Chips

Star Team FX-80 Phoenix Starfighter
 Stress Points: 80 Combat Speed: 10
 VCR: 60 Crew: 1
 Cost: 2,000 C Type: Tactical

Damage Boxes:

Front: laser missile
 Rear: missile
 Drive:
 Control:
 Stress Point Damage _____

Player Character Races described near the end of this chapter.

3. Choose three skills from Chapter VI. These skills are in addition to Spacecraft Piloting and Noetic Defense Mode, which your character has automatically. Two skills must be compatible with your character's chosen Order; the other can be from your own, or any other Order.

After you've chosen your three additional skills, write their names in the space provided on the character sheet. Also, write down the "Base Score" formula for each skill you've chosen, just as it is shown on the Skills Chart in Chapter VI.

4. To determine your character's Basic Ability scores, repeat this procedure eight times: First, roll 3d10 (add the results together). Then multiply the sum by 2. Finally, add 20 to this product. Your final result will be a number between 26 and 80. Write down this number on your scratch paper. (Repeat until you have eight numbers.) If you have three scores of 40 or less, you may roll all such scores again: life's tough in a Star Team, and your character would be hopeless with three scores that low.

5. Assign one of the eight numbers obtained in step 4 to each of the eight Basic Abilities. The number you write down by each Basic Ability on the character sheet is your character's score in that ability.

If you have chosen a nonhuman PC race, find the description of that race near the end of this chapter. Each nonhuman PC race has one Basic Ability score that is restricted. A restricted Basic Ability means that the minimum score for that Basic Ability is 20, and the maximum score is 60.

Find out which one of your character's Basic Abilities is restricted, then subtract 20 from that Ability. If the difference leaves a score of less than 20, then subtract the number required to leave the Basic Ability score at 20 points (the lowest possible Basic Ability score for a nonhuman character). The number that you sub-

tracted from the character's original Basic Ability score can be added to one of the other Basic Ability scores or divided among several of the Basic Ability scores of the nonhuman PC. However, *no Basic Ability score, human or nonhuman, can exceed 80 under any circumstances.*

6. Add your character's Strength and Agility scores together, divide this sum by two and round up any fraction.

Write the result on the character sheet as the character's Unskilled Melee score.

7. Fill in the character's Stamina recovery rate. To determine the rate, find the character's Stamina score in the ranges on top of the STAR ACE™ Action Table. The number of the column below is the number of Stamina points the character can recover per round of rest. (See Chapter IV for more information.)

8. Use your character's Stamina score and the chart below to determine the number of wounds he or she can take before being killed:

Stamina Score	No. of Wounds
26-36	11
37-47	12
48-58	13
59-69	14
70-80	15

There are 15 wound boxes on the character sheet. Each box corresponds to one wound. If your character requires fewer than 15 wounds according to the chart above, draw a line through the extra boxes, and ignore them during play.

9. Find the character's base scores for each skill, using the formulas you wrote down in step 3.

10. Find the character's actual scores by adding 15 to the base scores obtained in step 9.

11. Give your character a background and name. Consider your character's

race when deciding his or her home planet: the PC race descriptions later in this chapter will help you with this decision, as well as giving you some insight into your character's possible personality, and what he or she might have been doing before joining the Star Teams. The best character names reflect the character's background and personality.

THE EIGHT BASIC ABILITIES

Every player character has eight Basic Abilities: Strength, Dexterity, Agility, Personality, Willpower, Perception, Luck, and Stamina. Each Ability has a score. For normal human characters, Basic Ability scores range from a low of 26 to a high of 80. Nonhuman player characters' Basic Ability scores are the same as those of normal humans, except for one Basic Ability score. This one exception has a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 60. (see "Player Character Races" later in this chapter). These scores have all kinds of uses: they help determine how well a character performs certain actions, how good his skills are, and—sometimes—whether he lives or dies.

Strength (STR)

Strength is a character's muscle power. As a rule of thumb, the CM should assume that a character can lift a maximum weight in pounds equal to *five times* his or her Strength score. This doesn't mean that anything less than maximum weight is easy; it just means it's possible.

Strength is used in the following ways in the game:

Feats of Strength. A character's Strength score is his or her base percent chance to perform some action depending on physical strength, such as lifting or moving a boulder, or shouldering down a door. Usually, a general Strength check is required any time a character tries to lift over 100 pounds (or its equivalent, depending on the gravity of the planet). Remember that no character can lift more than five times his Strength score in pounds.

Unskilled Melee Score = $(Strength + Agility) \div 2$. A character's Strength score is averaged with his or her Agility score to produce that character's Unskilled Melee score.

Dexterity (DEX)

Dexterity is a character's hand-eye coordination and nimbleness with his or her fingers. It is used in the following ways in the game:

Throwing and Firing. A character's Dexterity score is his or her base percent chance to hit a target when firing or throwing a weapon. (If the character has a skill with that weapon, however, his or her skill score equals the base chance.)

Hand-eye Coordination. A character's Dexterity score is the character's base percent chance to perform some action that depends upon good hand-eye coordination—catching a ball, for instance.

Agility (AGL)

Agility is a character's ability to control overall body movement. It is used in the game in the following ways:

Nimbleness and Balance. A character's Agility score is the character's base percent chance to perform some difficult or unusual movement, such as climbing a sheer surface or jumping from a moving hovercopter to tackle a fleeing Imperial trooper.

Unskilled Melee score = $(Agility + Strength) \div 2$. A character's Agility score is averaged with his or her Strength score to produce that character's Unskilled Melee score.

Personality (PER)

Personality is a character's ability to get along with and influence the opinions and behavior of others. It is used in the game in the following ways:

Dynamo or Dud? A character's Personality score is that character's base percent chance to obtain a favorable reaction from an NPC when requesting aid or generally trying to establish a friendly relationship.

Deception. A character's Personality score is his or her base percent chance to deceive, mislead, or otherwise use distortions of the truth to influence an NPC's behavior. Although they are good at heart, Star Team members have maintained themselves for many years by smuggling for whoever pays well, and generally living by their wits.

Willpower (WPR)

Willpower is a character's mental courage. It shows his or her staying power in the face of pain, and affects the use of noetic skills or talents. Willpower is used in the game in the following ways:

Running on Empty. A character's current Willpower score is the character's base percent chance to continue action in combat after being critically wounded.

Current Willpower. A character's current Willpower score is temporarily reduced when the character uses noetic skills or talents. Also, characters may temporarily lose Willpower points from noetic attacks that aliens make against them.

Noetic Defense Column. A character's Willpower score determines which defense column on the STAR ACE™ Action Table shows the results of noetic attacks against the character.

Perception (PER)

Perception is a character's ability to notice things around him. This can be particularly important when the environment changes as radically as it does in the strange worlds of our galaxy. Perception is used in the game in the following ways:

Sleuthing. A character's Perception score is his or her base chance to notice small clues or hidden items. For example, Perception would be used to find out if the character notices that the Star Team sentries at your camp are carrying Imperial laser rifles, or that two boots (obviously with some unfriendly feet in them) are peeking out from below a curtain.

Judge of Character. A character's

Perception score equals his or her base chance to judge characters—for example, telling when they're lying or afraid. It is also the base chance to recognize an imposter.

Avoiding Surprise. A character's Perception score is his or her base percent chance to avoid surprise in a combat situation.

Luck (LUCK)

Luck is the random factor which affects the lives of all player characters. *Only player characters have a Luck score; NPCs do not.* Luck is used in the game in the following ways:

Escaping Death. A character's Luck score is the base percent chance that the character is still alive when, according to all other rules of the game, he or she should be dead. For example, a character with a Luck score of 36 has a 36% chance of still being alive (although certainly in terrible shape) after falling thousands of feet from a speeding hovercraft.

Reducing Damage. A character may "permanently" deplete his or her Luck score by one or two points during combat in an attempt to reduce the amount of damage from certain attacks (see Chapter IV).

Lucky Breaks. The CM can use a character's Luck score to make checks when the character wants a lucky break, and no other Basic Ability, extrasensory ability, or skill score applies to the situation.

For example, suppose a character is being chased by Imperial guards through an Imperial military installation. The player tells the CM his character is desperately looking for some sort of flying craft that he could operate. The CM might decide to use the character's Luck score as the percent chance of finding such a craft in time to get away from his enemies.

Optional Luck Uses

In addition to the normal uses of Luck, the CM may decide to use Luck in either of the two ways below. At the start of an adventure, the CM must tell the players whether he or she plans to use these options. The decis-

ion stands until the adventure is over; the CM can't change his or her mind during the adventure.

The optional uses of Luck are:

Saved by the Bell. When a character is about to be killed, his or her Luck score equals the base chance that some small stroke of luck will come about, offering a second chance. In these cases, the character doesn't get what he asks for; he gets what the CM decides would be a minimum lucky event.

For example, let's say PC Star Team member David Rigel is fighting on an alien planet. He's critically wounded, and close to death. His opponent, a Gorlon mercenary, hisses and gets ready to make the final blow. But suddenly (the CM rolls a successful general check against David's Luck score) a dusty wind rises and gusts into the eyes of David's opponent, distracting him. David now has a few precious seconds of free time; what he does with it is his own decision.

Coincidental Rolls. Whenever a player makes a percent roll (for any reason), and the result equals his Luck score exactly, something moderately lucky happens for the character.

Example: David is making a general Perception check during play. The dice roll equals his Luck score. The CM decides that our lucky Star Team member suddenly notices an extra clue. (Or if David has no weapon, the CM might decide that he finds a beam saber; the CM can choose almost anything!)

Stamina (STA)

Stamina is a character's ability to take damage and undergo sustained, strenuous activity. Stamina is used in the game in the following ways:

Passing Out. A character's Stamina score is the exact number of *damage* points that he or she can receive before being knocked unconscious.

During the game, players keep track of damage with their character's *current* Stamina. In the beginning, current Stamina equals the original Stamina score. But when the character takes damage, his or her current

Stamina drops. Damage is never recorded against original Stamina; that score stays listed under Basic Abilities to show the character's "normal" state.

Wounds. A character's original Stamina score determines the number of wounds the character can take before dying. (See the chart in Step 8 of "How To Create A Character.")

Recovery Rate. A character's original Stamina score determines how quickly the character can recover lost Stamina points. (See Step 7 in "How To Create A Character.")

ABILITY CHECKS

Ability checks can be either specific or general; they are called Ability checks because the check is rolled against a Basic Ability score.

Like all checks, Ability checks are required whenever a character tries to do something that is clearly not a sure thing. For example, let's say that Star Team member Susan Leo is running from an angry group of Imperial Marines, across a narrow bridge in a well-lit area of the Tamillan mines. Normally, she wouldn't have to make a check for this action. But this time, she unexpectedly must dodge a rock-fall that tumbles across the bridge ahead of her. Now there is reasonable doubt that Susan can stay on the bridge; the CM asks Susan's player to roll a general check against her Agility. If Susan fails the check, she falls off.

A general Ability check can handle most situations that arise during an adventure. In Susan's case, either she falls off the bridge or she doesn't; we don't need to know anything more (except, of course, how far she falls). If the CM wants to add detail to the game, however, or is dealing with a complex situation, then he or she should use specific Ability checks, too.

Column 2 on the Action Table applies to all specific Ability checks. Use the key below to interpret the Ability check results.

ABILITY CHECK RESULTS KEY

L = *Limited success.* The character

can barely perform the desired action. He or she may suffer damage if the action is dangerous.

M = *Moderate success.* The character can perform the desired action moderately well. He or she may still suffer some damage if the action is dangerous.

H = *High success.* The character completes the action very well. He or she suffers only minor damage if the action is dangerous.

C = *Complete success.* Everything exactly right, achieving exactly the desired effects. He or she suffers no damage, even if the action is dangerous.

K = *Not applicable.* "K" results don't apply to Ability checks; just ignore this code.

(Use the combat results keys below the Action Table as a guide for assigning damage. See also "Damage" in Chapter IV.)

Example: Using Ability Checks

Sometimes, characters want to do some crazy things; that's half the fun of a STARACE™ adventure! In many cases, the CM simply uses good judgment and common sense to decide which Ability checks to use, and then how to apply the results. Be fair. The example below shows how I think a good CM might handle a complex situation with Ability checks.

A group of PCs have landed on a border planet and have decided to stop into a local dive for a drink and the chance to scout things out. After sitting down at an upstairs balcony table with a tall, ice-cold yatvada, they find themselves in the midst of an old-fashioned tavern brawl. One character grabs onto a chandelier as he stands on the balcony railing above the barroom. He wants to swing out over the room, reach down in mid-swing to catch a rug with his beam saber, yank the rug in order to topple the snouted, fat alien who's standing on it...then continue the swing, arcing upward, releasing the chandelier at just the right moment to



crash feet-first through a window and land upright on the street outside, all before any Imperial guards arrive. Now *that's* no cakewalk! But if all goes well, the beam saber will still have a rug dangling off the tip, and the poor sucker who was standing on that carpet will be sprawled on the tavern floor.

The CM decides that this complex set of actions requires three Ability checks: a general Agility check for swinging on the chandelier without falling, a specific Dexterity check for catching the rug with the end of the saber, and a specific Agility check for letting go, crashing through the window, landing properly, and taking no damage from the broken glass.

The character (let's use David Rigel as an example again) has an Agility score of 64 and a Dexterity score of 56.

First David must make a general Agility check for swinging from the chandelier. David (actually, the player playing the Star Team member) rolls a percent and gets a result of 17. The roll is lower than his score, so

David passes the check and swings off the balcony with ease.

Next, David must make a specific Dexterity check to see if he can catch the rug with his Beam Saber. His player rolls a 50. Subtracting 50 from David's Dexterity score of 56, the CM sees that the Attack Margin is 6, and the row on the Action Table to use is the "5-9" row. Ability checks are almost always on column 2. Cross-indexing on column 2, the CM finds that David has an "MK" result. The "M" indicates moderate success; the "K" is ignored. (See "Specific Checks on the Action Table" in Chapter I.)

Now the CM must decide what "moderate success" means in this situation. Clearly, David hooked the rug with his weapon, but also clearly, he hasn't done it as well as he had hoped. The CM thinks for a moment, then tells young Mr. Rigel (or David's player, really) that he has hooked the rug, but that the lightbeam of the sword is cutting through it as he continues his swing. David's opponent, who is standing on the rug, gets to

make a general Agility check to see if he can keep his footing. The CM quickly rolls a general Agility check for the NPC alien, and finds that even though the rug is being yanked, the big creature is still standing. David, meanwhile, is swinging toward the window, his saber cutting through carpet as he flies.

Now our young acrobat must make a specific Agility check to see if he can crash through the window, land on his feet, and take no damage from the broken glass. He rolls a 64, the exact score of his Agility. His Attack Margin for this check is "0." Cross-indexing to column 2, we find an "L," or "Limited Success" result. Because his check was not a failure, David gets through the window, but just barely. The CM tells David that his timing was a little off; he hit the side of the window, cutting himself badly as he fell through, so that he lands in a bloody heap on the street outside. Meanwhile, the big alien inside runs toward the window, wearing a nasty scowl, and drawing a crude and deadly laser-pistol....

PLAYER CHARACTER RACES

One of the most exciting ways to adventure in a Star Team is to play the role of a nonhuman alien. Player characters in Star Ace belong to one of four separate races. One race is, of course, the human race, who, if they aren't Earthlings, trace their ancestry to Earth. But other races are just as important to the Alliance, and each is just as important to the Star Teams because of the richness and quality of their talents.

THE CRYSTAL CLONES

This race is a cross race of the Crystal Folk of the planet Ruoka and the human race.

Soon after humans first arrived on Ruoka, it was discovered that contact between these highly charged aliens and a human cell causes a cloning of sorts. Human explorers who searched for Ruoka's famed Xantium crystals reported feeling a strange surge of energy pass through them, as a slight



distortion in the air, shimmering much like heat waves off rising from hot asphalt, passed through them. These hour-glass shaped waves of energy were, as we know now, the Crystal Folk, and after these strange but harmless encounters, the humans were surprised to find other humanoid beings coming from nowhere to greet them, or sometimes just to watch them.

What had happened was this: by a method unknown to anyone but the Crystal Folk, these bizarre living waves of energy had acquired a cell from the human they passed through, and begun a cloning process. The resulting alien was more human in appearance and physical make-up than its Crystal Folk ancestors. But the diet and behavior of the new race was decidedly "Crystal." It was impossible for these creatures to fit into Crystal society, and they were not welcomed into general human society for other, unfortunate reasons.

Appearance and Behavior

These aliens appear thin and frail compared to their human "ancestors." They are about six inches shorter than the average human. They have arms, legs, and hair, just as humans do. The Crystal Clones are pale blue, almost white; their hair is white or light yellow, and always very straight and limp. Their eyebrows are raised and their ears pointed. Because of the physical appearance of the Crystal Clones, earlier humans coined the insulting term "thin rock" when referring to them. The Empire, never known for racial tolerance, has gone so far as to officially name this race the "thin rock race."

The half-humans are very quiet. They don't tend to socialize, and avoid contact with humans whenever possible, considering their first unpleasant encounters. When they do have to deal with us, they're withdrawn and quiet; sometimes you can barely get a simple "yes" or "no" out of them, and they very seldom engage in small talk or friendly chatter.

Even when provoked, the Clones try to avoid fighting, but don't corner

one or push him around: in those situations, they're fierce indeed, flying into an almost uncontrollable rage. Correction: there's no "almost" about it—they let the human monster out of the cage, and couple it with a cold, Crystal Folk intelligence. Many a human has mistaken the frail body for that of a weakling, and afterward regretted calling a Crystal Clone "thin rock" to his face. "Thin rock," indeed! They may be thin, but they're some of the toughest fighters and best techs I've ever had the privilege to serve with.

Surprisingly, although they don't like socializing with humans, Crystal Clones have a fondness for loud and crowded situations: it's not as much the company as the loud noises and bright lights. Although seldom loud themselves, the Clones make a great audience for bizarre music and flashy light shows.

Crystal Clones are very protective of their "home" planet: seems that when the Crystal Folk create them, they create them for a specific reason, giving each Clone all the knowledge he or she needs to carry out that duty. Well, the Clones inherit the gender and the ability in some skills of their human parent, but they take what they call "the Crystal Purpose" very seriously: it's an overwhelming drive, and they have no real human passions that distract them from the Purpose.

This Purpose varied through the ages. At first the Crystal Folk seemed bent on helping the human visitors by keeping both them and their machines in repair. This might account for the Clones' skill in both technology and medicine. But soon it became clear that those famous Xantium crystals (with their technological and military uses) were what those humans were after, and that they didn't give a Gorlon's skin for the wellbeing of the Crystal Clones or the Folk who produced them. We like to think that those humans in the Alliance and the neutral systems have changed in their attitude. The Empire surely hasn't, and the Clones soon considered the Imperial forces as the greater evil. The Crystal Pur-

pose has become the defense of the Planet Ruoka against the Empire—at all costs.

Therefore, because of the racial policies of the Empire, its potential threat to their home planet, and the chance to live away from human settlements (and, I suspect, in the midst of loud noises and flashing lights—the heart and soul of deep space combat!), many Crystal Clones find their way into the ranks of the Star Teams. They prefer this service to positions in the regular Alliance military because of the smallness and tight organization of the Star Teams—ideal for the Crystal Clone’s desire for less talk and more order. Because these aliens don’t bother anyone, and are exceptionally talented in certain areas, the Crystal Clones are always welcomed by the Star Teams.

Abilities

A player who creates a Crystal Clone as his or her PC should follow the steps outlined earlier in this chapter (“How to Create a Character”). All Basic Ability scores for the Crystal Clone are figured normally with the exception of Personality, the Crystal Clone’s restricted Ability score. Suggested Abilities to increase at the expense of this Personality restriction are Dexterity, Perception, or Luck. *Remember: none of these scores may exceed 80!*

The Crystal Clone’s Personality score is always between 20 and 60. It can never rise above 60.

Crystal Clones usually become the Technicians or “Techs” (Free Order of Hearts) in the Star Teams because of their racial talents. But a PC Crystal Clone is free to choose any skills and Order in the Star Teams. No matter what Order the Clones choose, they still fly their own craft and join in all forms of combat.

These aliens have a unique racial talent: there’s no such thing as an unarmed Crystal Clone! Immediately, and without concentration, he or she can generate a beam which fires out of the clone’s hand. Treat the beam exactly as a laser pistol in regard to range, damage, and called shots.

Each use of this unique talent costs the character 10 points of Willpower.

Crystal Clones do not reproduce, so there can only be half-human Crystal Clones.

Crystal Clones speak Universal and Crystalline. They may also serve as translators for the Crystal Folk. (Only electrically based communication between Crystal Folk and Humans has worked in the past, and this type of communication does not permit accurate translation.)

The average life expectancy of a Crystal Clone is 70 Earth Years.

HUMANS

Humans originated on the planet Earth, and now populate many planets in the galaxy, including Asfalia, Sepa Green, and Tamilla. PC Star Team members come from many planets, quite a few of which are under Imperial control. (See the *Wilderness Briefing Manual*.)

Most humans look upon the Star Teams as a band of untrustworthy renegades, out only for a good fight. Humans who once were protected by the Alliance consider Star Team members the Robin Hoods of outer space.

Appearance and Attitudes

Humans in 3512 look and act basically the same as they have for several thousand years, with a few important distinctions.

Humans average about 4 inches taller than the average Human of, say, the late 20th Century. (In 3512, men average 6’3”, and women 5’9”.) Weights also increase proportionately.

Now, when alien races were discovered, much of the nationalism, racism, and other forms of hatred that divided humans on Earth came to an end. Humans came to realize that they belonged to a single race: compared to the Imperial Gorlons, it didn’t matter what color you were, or what part of Earth you were born in. The result was the end to national borders and the end of recognizable races. People united against the Empire; Blacks, Indians, Asians, and

Whites were no longer distinguishable, and the common language became “Universal.”

Abilities

Human characters are created exactly as described earlier in this chapter. They have no restricted Basic Ability scores. Humans have excelled in all Orders of the Star Teams, but seem to shine a bit brighter in the Order of Spades as combat specialists.

The average life expectancy of a Human is 100 Earth Years.

THE KLEIBOR

The surface of the planet Emniyet is hidden beneath a thick blanket of snow and ice. This planet was a long-standing source of raw goods for the Alliance, but has recently fallen under the harsh controls of the Empire. But the Empire got more than it bargained for; in fact, it’s having a tough time squelching both the cold and the Kleibor.

The Kleibor are one of the oldest races in the galaxy—so old, in fact, that even they know little of their origins; their contact with humans in the 22nd Century helped that smaller race to rise from the ashes of its holocaust. I guess if the Kleibor taught man anything, they taught him optimism and a fierce joy in life.

Appearance and Attitude

The Kleibor look a lot like huge, intelligent polar bears, much larger than their human allies. Both males and females grow to an average height of 12’ when standing on their hind legs (the stance they prefer). They weigh about 1200 pounds.

The Kleibor are covered in long, silky white fur. Their noses are coal black, their eyes a clear ice-blue. Their ears, snout, and teeth are exactly like those of polar bears. The Kleibor, however, cannot use their hands as bears or as humans. Their huge, mittlike hands have a huge thumb, but no nails or fingers. The Kleibor’s feet are shaped basically

the same as their hands, but better suited for walking and running.

The Kleibor live in mazes deep underground, in groups called bod-rums, which contain 4-40 members. Kleibor parents are very protective, which may account for the Kleibor's friendliness (and clumsiness) as adults.

Kleibor are very playful, but their great enthusiasm and slight awkwardness often cause minor accidents, especially when a Kleibor forgets his own strength. I remember a time when Yag, the "Brain" on my own Star Team, recognized an old Trakan friend of his at a party on Stalitsa. Rather than shouting out a greeting, Yag lumbered over chairs and tables, leapt upon the unlucky Trakan, and gave him an affectionate hug. You could hear the ribs cracking from across the room. The poor fellow spent 12 weeks in the infirmary.

As smothering as a friendship with a Kleibor can be, he or she is a rough enemy. The Kleibor are just as high-spirited and enthusiastic in a fight. Other races may shy away from certain types of combat; a Kleibor itches for a brawl, leaping into its midst with a rumbling battle cry of "EEEEEE-HAAAA!" (a call that terrorizes friend and enemy alike).

Although most Kleibor characters look forward to hand-to-hand combat, they aren't as likely to use pistols, or rifles; those mittlike hands usually make Dexterity one of their weak suits. So they usually fight and survive by other Abilities.

Kleibor philosophy centers on one idea: "have fun." They particularly enjoy surprising and playing practical jokes on friends and acquaintances. They love a nice swim in what others find to be painfully icy waters. But most of all, they simply love a good time. And the best good time in the universe is a trip to a Trakan city on Stalitsa: Kleibor seem to love being duped, fleeced, and charmed by their Trakan neighbors (and the Trakans love to see the suckers coming!). Many a Kleibor returns from Stalitsa with an empty wallet and a broken heart, but bragging about every moment of the adven-



ture. As they say on Emniyet, in the Star Teams and throughout the galaxy, "EEEEEE-HAAAA!"

Abilities

A player who creates a Kleibor as his or her PC should follow the steps outlined earlier in this chapter ("How to Create a Character"). All Basic Ability scores for the Kleibor are figured normally except Dexterity, the Kleibor's restricted Ability score. Suggested Abilities to increase at the expense of this Dexterity restriction are Personality, Perception, or Willpower. *Remember: none of these scores may exceed 80!*

The Kleibor's Dexterity score is always between 20 and 60. It never rises above 60.

The Kleibor are more likely to become the Noetics or "Brains" in the Star Teams (see Free Order of Clubs in Chapter III) because of their racial talents, but a PC Kleibor can choose his or her own skills and Order in the Star Teams. No matter what Order the Kleibor choose, they still fly their

own craft and engage in all forms of combat.

All Kleibor speak Universal, and their native language, Kelime. Also, because of unique noetic racial talents, any Kleibor can penetrate the mind of any living being who uses a normal language (this, of course, counts out races such as the Crystal Folk, who communicate by tones and whistles; the Crystal Clones, however, are fair game). Within 1d10 rounds of first, using this talent, the Kleibor can speak the language of the being whose mind he or she has penetrated. As a result, I've known Kleibor who are fluent in hundreds of languages!

A Kleibor can also send telepathic messages to other characters at the cost of one point of Willpower per word. The character receiving the telepathic message cannot respond unless the receiving character is also a Kleibor. The range of the message is only within one star system, but that's quite a distance when you think about it.

Finally, the Kleibor can automatically transfer their own Stamina points to a wounded character. The transfer takes one round per point of Stamina transferred. The Kleibor can transfer as much Stamina as desired, until his or her own current Stamina reaches 20. The transfer rate is one to one, one point per round: that is, when a Kleibor transfers five points of his own current Stamina score to a wounded character, the transfer takes five rounds.

The average life expectancy of a Kleibor is 150 Earth Years.

THE TRAKA

The Stalitsa System (the planet Stalitsa in particular) carries the reputation for being the rowdiest place in this end of the galaxy. You can buy anything here, if you are willing to pay the price. And it is the native race, the Traka, who run the boom town economy.

The presence of an Alliance Naval base, the planet's closeness to the borders of the Empire and Xantium-rich Ruoka, and Trakan nature itself

have all helped to make Stalitsa into an underworld playground. A large black market is headquartered here with the full knowledge (and approval) of the Traka. Once a race that lazed around Stalitsa, spending their time in play and leisure, the Trakans now profit greatly from the black market; but then, they always turn a profit.

The Stalitsan streets bustle with gambling casinos, currency exchanges, souvenir shops, rundown hotels, dance halls, jails, overpriced “duty free” liquor stores, and sleazy dives. The Trakans themselves run most of the establishments. Despite the “open city” climate on Stalitsa, there is very little violent crime.

As you’ll quickly discover after a brief walk through the smoky and loud Stalitsan streets, order is not the way of Trakan life. Indeed, they seem to do quite well without it.

Appearance and Attitude

By all galactic standards, the Traka are an extremely beautiful race. The males stand 6’4” on average, and the females stand about 6’1”. Trakans are always slim, sleek and graceful. Their arms and legs are slightly longer than the average human’s, giving them an even greater appearance of grace. Their fingernails are long and pointed.

The faces of these creatures are equally attractive, in an exotic, feline manner. The eyes are almond shaped and catlike. Their cheekbones are high, and their lips full and soft. They love bright, colorful clothing, which draws even more attention to their beauty.

Trakans frequently use their good looks to outwit unknowing aliens. Although they cannot breed with other races, both male and female Trakans are famous for their courtesy (not to mention their outrageous flirting) with members of the opposite sex. More than a few aliens on leave from the Alliance naval base leave broken hearts and a small fortune on Stalitsa. Just ask the Kleibor!

Of all the member races of the Star Teams, the Traka are the most cunning. They quickly recognize an ad-



vantage, and are equally quick to take it. Trakans respect and admire anyone or anything that is clever, cunning, and successful. They scorn direct violence, which is why most violent crime on Stalitsa is committed by foreigners. If they have to fight, Trakans prefer daring and flashy combat: their sense of style draws many of them to the Star Teams.

Trakan careers start early: parents are not responsible for child-rearing (nor for much of anything else), and the Trakan young are given rather haphazard care until the ripe age of eight. Then they begin their own small businesses or rackets (anything from “running errands” to shell games on Stalitsan streets). By 13, a Trakan is ready to launch a career in “private enterprise.”

The purpose of this “career” is to find a way to play or con your way into fortune. Trakans are thieves, not robbers (robbery is *far* too easy and clumsy!). They scorn assassination, enjoying embarrassing their enemies rather than killing them.

Because of their backgrounds,

many Trakans have unusual professions: singers, dancers, sleight of hand artists, bookies, arms dealers, storytellers, diplomats, ambassadors—sometimes even Star Team members.

Abilities

A player who creates a Trakan as his or her PC should follow the steps outlined earlier in this chapter (“How to Create a Character”). Figure all Basic Ability scores for the Trakan normally, except Stamina, the Trakan’s restricted Ability score. Suggested Abilities to increase at the expense of Stamina are Luck, Dexterity, or Personality. *Remember: none of these scores may exceed 80!*

The Trakan’s Stamina score is always between 20 and 60. It never rises above 60.

The Traka are more likely to become the “Ducks” in the Star Teams because of their racial talents (see Free Order of Diamonds in Chapter III). But a player character Trakan can choose his or her own skills and Order in the Star Teams. No matter what Order the Trakans choose, they still fly their own craft and can join in all forms of combat.

Most Trakan characters try to avoid direct combat, because their Stamina scores are usually low.

Trakans have two unique racial talents:

They have excellent night vision, and can see and move in the dark at no penalty.

They can move at normal rates without making a noise or drawing attention to themselves. The player who is playing a Trakan PC announces the character’s intent to move quietly or sneak. The CM then rolls a secret general Agility check for the character. If the character passes the check, he or she succeeds. If the character fails the check, those nearby somehow perceive the sneaking Trakan, and probably react.

All Traka speak Universal and Oblako, the Trakan native tongue. Many, because of the nature of a “border planet,” speak more than ten languages.

The average life expectancy of a Trakan is estimated at 60 years (although few die of “natural causes”).

CHAPTER III: THE STAR TEAMS

Back during the Four Hundred Years' War, when the Alliance was strong, the Star Teams were its crack squadrons—small bands of highly skilled and loyal warriors. We were the shock troops, the elite forces, of the Alliance military. Our record was clean: the Star Teams had never suffered a major defeat at the hands of the Imperial forces. Keeping up this flawless record had become a sacred tradition for generations of Star Team members.

So it was, that when the Empire crushed the Alliance in the Battle of Sol, the Star Team members refused to surrender or admit Imperial victory. After all, the Star Teams were not at the Battle of Sol; we were whipping an Imperial support fleet over in the Tamillan system, and the intelligence reports reached us too late to allow us to join the major battle. It's been 40 Earth Years since the defeat at Sol, but a lot of us believe that, had the Star Teams joined in the battle, today the Empire might be a two-planet tinhorn dictatorship at the fringe of a free and allied galaxy.

Rather than submitting to the Empire (and almost certainly to slavery, imprisonment, or death), most of the Star Teams escaped the Imperial forces, carrying everything they could, and set up bases in the Wilderness system, an area everybody had thought was uninhabitable (see the STAR ACE™ map, and the section on the system in the *Wilderness Region Briefing Manual*). It's possible that still more Star Teams escaped to other planets in other locations or systems. But to date, we have no evidence that other Star Teams are based elsewhere.

At first, the strange vegetation and diseases on Wilderness took their toll: many Star Team members died shortly after arriving on the planet. But some survived the hostile environment, and gradually began to adapt to the bizarre and threatening world of Wilderness.

The Empire still believes that no colony or base could survive in the Wilderness sector, so Imperial ignorance keeps our bases relatively safe. Even if they were to suspect that we're based in the Wilderness system, the

Empire would still have a rough time finding us. First of all, there are a large number of densely clustered systems within what is called "the Wilderness sector": makes for a large number of places to look, not to mention some tricky navigational problems for larger spacecraft. Furthermore, the region has more than its share of cosmic storms and radiation belts. Perhaps the Empire's belief that the Star Teams aren't in the Wilderness sector is as much wishful thinking as it is ignorance. At any rate, very few Imperial ships pursue our fighters into the Wilderness sector; those that do can't bargain on returning. For the Imperial ship, it's like trying to navigate through a house of mirrors where your enemy has the floorplan memorized.

WHAT IS A STAR TEAM?

First of all, the term "Star Team" refers to both the overall military organization and the various "teams" that make up the larger group. Let me explain. I'm sure you're familiar with the Kleibor game of Dort. As you know, a dort "team" is made up of several smaller units that are also called "teams," such as the bashing team, the bounding team, and the noetic noisemaker team. When a Kleibor talks about his favorite Dort team, he is referring to all of these smaller teams at once.

Survival on Wilderness has changed the Star Teams. They're certainly not as disorganized as a Dort team, but they aren't nearly the spit-and-polish, disciplined military units they once were. The truth is, the Star Team members are some of the most "unmilitary" military men in the history of the galaxy. They've really become more like privateers and marauders these days. Rank is more a symbol of battle success than a chain of command. Each base does have a commander, a person who has earned the respect of his or her fellow Star Team members. But the commander never actually leaves the Star Team base. Instead, he or she maintains some degree of mission planning, and of general order. Although the com-

mand is not official, the respect is so strong for a base commander that to go against his or her wishes and orders is asking for trouble from every other Star Team member on the base. Only one case of flat-out disobedience has taken place in the entire history of the Star Team: the renegade didn't live an hour after disobeying his first (and last) command.

Another clear difference from the former military days is that the old supply lines have been broken. No more quartermaster divisions sending the best supplies to elite divisions—the Star Teams survive on talent, skill, a little Alliance funding, and a lot of privateering and black market dealings. We get funds, weapons, ammunition, and spare parts by running blockades, smuggling illegal cargoes, and, on occasion, even selling weapons to the enemy for profit (we make them pay through the teeth, mind you!).

We have our own set of values in the Star Teams. Not only should you be loyal to your commander, but you'd better take care of the guy next to you, too! Turning tail and running away, leaving your comrades in the midst of battle, is about as low as you can get. Rest assured that if you desert your buddies in combat, they'll make sure you pay for it the next time they run into you.

Perhaps the most valuable thing to a Star Team member is tradition. If you fight for no other reason, you fight for the tradition of the Star Teams. No Star Team member has ever surrendered to the Empire. Above all else, be proud of your position in the Star Team! You're part of the best, the brightest, and the most skilled squadrons in the galaxy. You don't take a back seat or answer to anyone.

As much as we hate the Empire, life with the Alliance is not always a happy marriage, if you ask me. After all, they turned belly up and submitted when the Empire declared the terms of armistice, and they still don't stand up for their basic rights and freedoms. Sure, they still fund the Star Teams, but they do it on the sly, as though they're doing something

wrong, simply because they're nervous about possible Imperial invasion.

Even with the under the table funding, the official position of the Alliance is that "the Star Teams do not represent the interests of the Alliance; the Alliance is in no way connected with, and cannot be held accountable for, roving bands of cutthroats and renegades." How's that for confidence? You see why we have to support ourselves any way we can.

STAR TEAM ORGANIZATION

Currently, we recruit Star Team members from various resistance forces on various planetary systems, as well as picking up a few good soldiers from the Alliance regulars. Recruits are always contacted by the Star Teams, never the other way around. If the prospective recruit agrees to join, he or she is assigned Horizon Watch duty as a "Joker." Jokers work as liaisons between resistance groups and the Star Teams. Intelligence information is exchanged with Jokers through the Communications Relay Points (CRP) network established by the Star Teams. (See Communications Relay Points in Chapter 3, *Wilderness Briefing Manual*.)

After proving himself or herself as a Joker by supplying accurate intelligence and passing certain piloting tests (CM's discretion), the recruit may become a Deuce in one of the four Free Orders of the Star Teams.

THE FREE ORDERS AND THE STAR TEAMS

All military missions, from raids to sieges, are handled by various teams within the Star Team. Some Star Team missions require one or two Star Team Members in a single vessel, while other missions might require a virtual fleet. These missions all draw on certain specialized skills—skills taught by the Free Orders. Each Star Team member belongs to one of the four Free Orders of the Star Teams.

Each of the four Free Orders re-

presents a separate skilled area of combat within the Star Team system: Warrior skills, Noetic skills, Technical skills and Decoy skills. In other words, each Free Order of the Star Teams specializes in a different set of combat skills, and members of an Order can acquire higher scores in those skills in which their Order specializes.

But don't get the idea that the four Free Orders are mutually exclusive of each other. Depending upon the nature of the mission, Star Teams are made up of various combinations of these specialty groups. One raid might require a Warrior and a Technician to fly a two man fighter into combat, while a second mission might require a commando team made up of all four specialty areas to fly an eight-man vessel to an Imperially controlled planet. When it comes right down to it, the Orders are a team.

Each starting player character begins at Deuce rank in one of the Free Orders of the Star Teams, named for the suits in a deck of cards: Hearts, Spades, Diamonds, or Clubs. Once you choose an Order, the choice is final. If you've become a Deuce of Hearts, you can't say "just kidding," and become a Diamond. Indecision is frowned upon in the Star Teams!

The ranks in each Order correspond to the cards in a suit. Deuce, where you begin, is the lowest; Ace, where I've ended up, is the highest. Now remember, ranks have nothing to do with chain of command, but simply serve as a level of prowess or achievement in a particular Order. For example, even though a Trey of Spades outranks a Deuce of Spades, the Trey cannot give the Deuce a direct order. But that doesn't mean he or she can't teach the Deuce a trick or two.

PROMOTION THROUGH THE RANKS

Well, the Star Team is a lot like other organizations of talented folks; nobody wants to stay at the bottom of the deck. Once you've drawn up your character and chosen his or her

Order and skills, the character is a Deuce in the order. That's simple. The hard part is next: it's time for the character to get on the stick and register as many confirmed kills as possible, because that's how you progress through the ranks of the Order. As characters rise through the ranks, they gain additional skills and become more and more adept at their combat specialties. Here's how a character benefits from promotion:

Ranks Deuce through Five: The character may have skills at Rookie level only. Upon promotion to each new rank, he or she may do one of the following things:

1. Add a new Order-related skill (Rookie level) at no cost.
2. Add 3 points to any Basic Ability score.

Ranks Six through Ten: The character may have skills at Rookie or Vet levels only. Upon promotion to each new rank, he or she may do one of the following things:

1. Add a new Order-related skill (Rookie level) at no cost.
2. Add 3 points to any Basic Ability score.
3. Raise an existing Order-related skill from Rookie level to Vet level at no cost.

Ranks Jack through Ace: The character may have skills at any level. Upon promotion to each new rank, he or she may do one of the following things:

1. Add a new Order-related skill (Rookie level) at no cost.
2. Add 3 points to any Basic Ability score.
3. Raise two existing Order-related skills from Rookie level to Vet level at no cost.
4. Raise one existing Order-related skill from Vet level to Ace level at no cost.

Each Order requires a different number of "kills" in order to progress or be promoted to the next rank. Promotion through the ranks continues in this manner until your character becomes an Ace. Of course, the benefits don't stop after a character becomes an Ace; if they did, we'd probably lose



some of our best and most ambitious members. After he becomes an Ace, a character continues to receive the "Jack through Ace" benefits listed above, choosing one option each time he makes a certain number of kills (10-12, depending on the Order), just as though he's still being promoted a rank.

WHAT IS A KILL?

A "kill" is recorded when a character does one of the following things:

1. Destroys an enemy vessel or vehicle.
2. Overruns an enemy base or encampment. This is basically forcing the surrender of a base, then seizing or destroying its equipment, supplies, and personnel. Prisoners are usually sold to the Alliance or (at a very steep ransom) back to the Empire.

A kill must be witnessed and confirmed by another Star Team member in order count toward promotion. This comes in handy: one of our

Trakan members in a one-man fighter claimed an unconfirmed takeover of the Imperial palace on Cairn. It wasn't that funny when three of our Kleibors on leave landed in the middle of the large Imperial garrison there, looking for "the ruins of the Palace."

Now remember: "kill" is a slang term and does not mean that Star Team members should shoot at everything that moves. Taking prisoners and seizing vessels count just as much toward promotion, and sometimes live enemies give valuable information—at least as good as the information you get from dead ones.

If more than one Star Team member helps in a kill, the kill is divided between the participants, all fractions rounded down.

This chart explains how many kills an objective is worth:

KILL VALUES OF ENEMY OBJECTIVES

Objective	Kill Value
Vessels Imperial Interceptors	½

Imperial Fighters	1
CRP/Stations	10
Destroyers	20
ICE Frigates	30
Cruisers	40
Dreadnoughts	50
Vehicles IM Tank	1
Imperial Troop Transport	1
IH Tank	2
Imperial Walker	2
Ground Installations*	
Garrison 25-50	5
Garrison 51-100	8
Garrison 101-250	10
Garrison 251-500	15
Garrison 501-1000	20
Garrison 1001+	30 +
	CM's discretion

* Ground installations must be overrun as defined above.

THE FREE ORDER OF SPADES

The Free Order of Spades contains the weapons specialists. The members of this Order can use all of the normal weapons of the Star Teams,

as well as archaic weapons and newly developed test weapons. Obviously, their opposition to the Empire takes the least subtle form of all the Orders.

Over the history of the Star Teams, it seems that humans are best suited for this Order, because their Basic Ability scores are not restricted, and perhaps their nature is a bit more violent than that of the other races. However, Crystal Clones, Traka, and Kleibor are also well represented in this Order. Any player character can become a member of the Order of Spades, or "Blade," if he or she chooses.

Regardless of race, a character should have Basic Ability scores of at least 50 in Strength, Agility, and Stamina in order to have a fighting chance in the Free Order of Spades. Characters who do not have the Basic Ability scores listed above can still become Blades, but their chances of survival are not what you'd call promising.

A character is promoted a rank in the Order of Spades after every 12 kills, as shown on the chart below:

Total No. of kills	Rank
0-11	Deuce of Spades
12-23	Trey of Spades
24-35	Spade Four
36-47	Spade Five
48-59	Spade Six
60-71	Spade Seven
72-83	Spade Eight
84-95	Spade Nine
96-107	Spade Ten
108-119	Jack of Spades
120-131	Royal Spade
132+	Ace of Spades

Though he or she has reached the highest rank in the Star Teams, an Ace of Spades continues to receive benefits of promotion after every 12 confirmed kills: for example, after kill 144, 156, 168, and so on.

THE FREE ORDER OF HEARTS

The Free Order of Hearts is the technical Order of the Star Teams. These

Star Team members are skilled in mechanics, electrical sciences, medicine, computer systems and programming, demolitions, and operating special devices that pertain to this order.

Over the long history of the Star Teams, we've discovered that Crystal Clones are best suited for this Order, because they tend to have higher Basic Ability scores in Dexterity, Perception, and Luck. They also seem to enjoy the privacy of highly technical work, perhaps because their restricted Personality scores make public activities less appealing to them, and their fascination with bright lights and strange noises helps them enjoy their work. However, it is important to point out that Kleibor, Traka, and Humans are all well represented in the Order of Hearts. Any player character can become a Technician or "Tech" if he or she chooses.

Regardless of race, a character should have Basic Ability scores of at least 50 in Dexterity, Perception, and Luck in order to have a solid chance as a member of the Free Order of Hearts. Even if the player character does not have the scores listed above, he can still become a member of the Free Order of Hearts; however, his chance of survival and success will not be very good.

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

Total No. of kills	Rank
0-10	Deuce of Hearts
11-21	Trey of Hearts
22-32	Heart Four
33-43	Heart Five
44-54	Heart Six
55-65	Heart Seven
66-76	Heart Eight
77-87	Heart Nine
88-98	Heart Ten
99-109	Jack of Hearts
110-120	Royal Heart
121+	Ace of Hearts

Though he or she has reached the highest rank in the Star Teams, an Ace of Hearts continues to receive

benefits of promotion after every 11 confirmed kills: for example, after kill 132, 143, 154, and so on.

THE FREE ORDER OF CLUBS

The Free Order of Clubs specializes in noetic skills—skills that allow the user to employ mental energies and powers in highly unusual ways. Although they have the necessary skills to fight in "normal" combat, each member of the Free Order of Clubs has been trained to use these noetic skills.

Over the long history of the Star Teams, we've discovered that the natural talents of the Kleibor are best suited to become Noetic "Brains." First of all, the Kleibor already possess certain noetic racial talents. Also, they usually have high Basic Ability scores in Perception, Willpower, and Personality, which give them an edge in using noetic skills. They prefer these skills in combat, rather than the use of traditional Star Team ranged weapons, perhaps because of their restricted Dexterity scores. Despite Kleibor abilities, the Traka, Crystal Clones, and Humans are all well represented in the Order of Clubs. Any player character can become a member of this Order if he or she wishes.

Regardless of race, a player character should have Basic Ability scores of at least 50 in Perception, Willpower, and Personality in order to have a solid chance as a member of the Free Order of Clubs. Even if the player character does not have the Basic Ability scores listed above, he can still become a member of the Free Order of Clubs; however, his chance of survival will not be very good.

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

Total No. of kills	Rank
0-10	Deuce of Clubs
11-21	Trey of Clubs
22-32	Club Four
33-43	Club Five



44-54
55-65
66-76
77-87
88-98
99-109
110-120
121+

Club Six
Club Seven
Club Eight
Club Nine
Club Ten
Jack of Clubs
Royal Club
Ace of Clubs

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

THE FREE ORDER OF DIAMONDS

The Free Order of Diamonds comprises the group of Star Team members who specialize in Decoy Activities. Although these "Ducks" have the necessary skills to fight in normal combat, each member of the Free Order of Diamonds has become highly trained in areas of deception and stealth.

Over the long history of the Star

Teams, we've discovered that the natural talents of the Traka are best suited for service in this particular Order. Trakans usually have high Basic Ability scores in Luck, Dexterity, and Personality, which gives them an edge in the Basic Abilities required to perform the necessary skills as a Decoy (they also shun hand-to-hand fighting, because of their restricted Stamina). Furthermore, Trakans are natural talkers, and relish the style and glamor of this particular Order. However, Kleibor, Crystal Clones, and Humans are all well represented in the Free Order of Diamonds. Any player character can become a member of this Order if he or she wishes.

Regardless of race, a player character should have Basic Ability scores of at least 50 in Luck, Personality, and Dexterity in order to have a solid chance as a member of the Free Order of Diamonds. Even if the player character does not have the Basic Ability scores listed above, he can still become a member of the Free Order of Diamonds, although his chance

of survival will not be very good.

A character is promoted a rank in the Order of Diamonds after every 10 kills, as shown on the chart below:

Total No. of kills	Rank
0-9	Deuce of Diamonds
10-19	Trey of Diamonds
20-29	Diamond Four
30-39	Diamond Five
40-49	Diamond Six
50-59	Diamond Seven
60-69	Diamond Eight
70-79	Diamond Nine
80-89	Diamond Ten
90-99	Jack of Diamonds
100-109	Royal Diamonds
110+	Ace of Diamonds

Though he or she has reached the highest rank in the Star Teams, an Ace of Diamonds continues to receive benefits of promotion after every 11 confirmed kills: for example, after kill 120, 130, 140, and so on.

CHAPTER IV: BASIC ACTION

ROUNDS

We all know time passes for people in the real world; it passes for folks in a STAR ACE™ game, too. The CM has to keep track of two different kinds of time: *game time* represents the time that passes for the characters, while *real time* is the time that passes for the players.

Often you'll find that the amount of real time that passes is different from the amount of game time that passes. For example, players may take 30 minutes to plan their characters' attack against an Imperial base, and then to put that plan into action. But only a few minutes of game time pass for the characters during the fight. An encounter that takes 30 minutes in real time might represent only a few minutes (or even seconds) of game time.

The CM controls the passage of game time, depending upon what the characters are doing. If they spend a rather eventless day (for example, gathering provisions or traveling between systems) the CM can measure game time in days or hours. When the going gets tough, however, the CM has to measure game time very carefully—breaking hours into minutes, and minutes into rounds.

A round of game time equals 5 seconds of time for the characters. Use rounds whenever the characters fight something, or whenever they try to avoid fighting something that wants to fight them. In other words, use rounds to measure time in any "fight or flight" situation.

At times, you may want to group the rounds together into minutes, to measure something less precisely than you would measure combat. For example, if characters are hot on the trail of an enemy, use minutes to handle the pursuit, and switch to rounds when they actually encounter him. *One minute equals 12 rounds.*

SURPRISE

Whether the characters barge into a situation like a Kleibor into a good brawl, or whether they plan out every move in detail, they can't control the

unexpected; sooner or later, something will take them by surprise. Surprise is important in an adventure, especially during a fight. It can stop players dead in their tracks, and cause even the best plans to fail.

Surprise Checks

A surprise check is simply a general check against Perception. The surprise check determines whether a character can respond at once to an unexpected situation, or whether he stands there gawking and frozen in place.

Usually, characters check for surprise only in threatening situations; they don't have to make a surprise check every time a stranger passes by on a Stalitsan street! A character must make a surprise check *immediately* whenever:

1. An unexpected person, alien or animal suddenly comes into view, or is suddenly sensed by the character.

2. Someone or something ambushes the character, attacking him from cover.

3. An unexpected situation arises, and the CM decides it requires a surprise check.

The CM should make sure that all surprise checks are made the instant any of these things take place. Immediately, all action must stop. If the character must check for surprise while he's moving, then he must stop moving until the surprise check is resolved. If he passes the check, he finishes the movement as if nothing ever happened. If he fails the check, here's what takes place:

1. He freezes on the spot, remaining in the place where he failed the check. He can't take any other action for the rest of the round—that means no combat, no skill use, no running away...nothing.

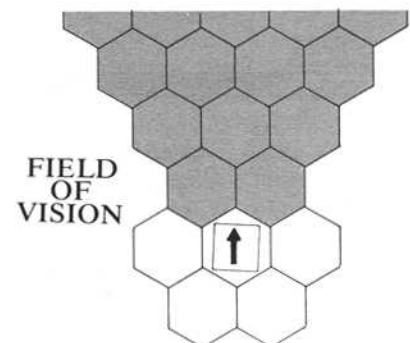
2. His Unskilled Melee score becomes zero for the rest of the round.

Surprised characters can, however, make use of defense rolls during missile attack, and they can use Luck to modify that roll. You'll learn about all these things in a minute, when we get to actual combat.

FIELD OF VISION

In the STAR ACE™ game, your field of vision defines the area you can see under normal conditions without turning your body. It's important to know this area for two reasons. First, if you can't see something, you can't fire or throw a weapon and hit it. Second, if something suddenly jumps into your field of vision, you must check for surprise.

The diagram below shows a character's field of vision. If the character turns to face another direction, he sees a different area, but it has the same dimensions as the first one. Sometimes, though, a character's field of vision is blocked. Buildings get in the way; so do crowds and other things. Darkness can make it hard to see much of anything. The CM should use his or her judgement to determine how much a character can see.



Watching Behind

If (as a player) you say that your character is "watching behind," you can increase your character's field of vision to a full circle (360 degrees). If your character is moving, he or she has to slow down, since characters must stop and turn around to look behind them. Characters cannot run (or sprint) while watching behind, and if they're walking, they must subtract 10 feet from the distance they can normally cover each round.

The CM should allow "watching behind" only when characters (and not just the players) have reason to keep close watch of the world all around them. Use a general Perception check to resolve any question of whether a character has a reason to

watch behind: characters who pass the check can watch behind.

SEQUENCE OF PLAY DURING A ROUND

In a game that can span the galaxies, one round (five game seconds) may not seem like very much time. But a lot can go on in a round: someone fires a weapon, someone punches an enemy, characters flee, characters fall, and others stand gaping in surprise—you name it, it can happen! Fortunately, the rules of the game provide a system for creating order from chaos: the Sequence of Play.

The *Sequence of Play* determines the order in which events must take place in a round. If you follow the Sequence of Play, you can determine the outcome of each action quickly, and players can concentrate on the adventure instead of worrying about the rules.

Three combat forms can take place in a round: noetic, ranged, or melee. Noetic combat just means the character uses a noetic skill. Ranged combat means throwing or firing a weapon, and melee is hand-to-hand fighting. Each player may choose one (and only one) of these to use in a round. Once the player chooses one of these three, his or her character cannot use any other combat form that round.

The rest of this chapter describes how the Sequence of Play works. For now, look over the steps below, and try to keep them in mind. During play, you'll probably want to refer to the list on the back cover, below the Action Table.

The Sequence Of Play

1. CM declares NPC and animal actions, including movement, combat form, and first attack.

2. Players declare their PCs' actions, including movement, combat form, and first attack.

3. Both sides roll for initiative, to determine who goes first.

4. Side A (the side that wins initiative) uses noetic skills.

5. Side A throws or fires ranged weapons.

6. Side A moves.

7. Side B fires or throws ranged weapons in defense. (To do so, they must have declared ranged weapon combat in step 1 or 2).

8. Side A melees.

9. Side B uses noetic skills.

10. Side B fires or throws ranged weapons.

11. Side B moves.

12. Side A fires or throws ranged weapons in defense (To do so, they must have declared ranged weapon combat in step 1 or 2).

13. Side B melees.

14. Stamina Loss and Recovery.

Note: Surprise checks may be made during any step of a round, as called for by the situation.

COMBAT PROCEDURE

As you can see by looking at the list above, most of the Sequence of Play revolves around the three forms of combat: noetic, ranged weapons, and melee. Remember: *In any given round, a character may use only one form of combat, which must be specified during the declaration step.*

Any time combat occurs, players must follow combat procedure. The combat procedure doesn't change the Sequence of Play; it expands it, allowing you to determine the outcome of any attack as soon as it happens.

The following steps make up the combat procedure:

Combat Procedure

1. *Attack Declaration.* This step applies only to characters who can make more than one attack each round—fire more than one shot, punch more than once, etc. Only skilled characters can make more than one attack. Every character's first attack is always declared during steps 1 or 2 in the Sequence of Play. When the character is making a subsequent attack (including defensive ranged weapon fire), he or she declares it now. Be sure to specify your target.

2. *Base Chance Determination.* In this step, you must figure out the attacker's base chance to attack successfully—his chance before modifiers are applied. The base chance depends upon the attack form:

a. *Noetic skill* = *Noetic skill score.*

b. *Ranged weapon* = *Skill score or Dexterity.* If the attacker is using a weapon skill, the base chance is his skill score. If the attacker doesn't have skill with the weapon, use his Dexterity score.

c. *Melee Attacks* = *Skill or Unskilled Melee score.* As with ranged weapon attacks, if the attacker is using a skill, his base chance for success is his skill score. If the character isn't using a melee skill, his base chance for success equals his Unskilled Melee score.

3. *Strike Number Determination.* The strike number is the attacker's exact chance for success. It is simply the base chance with a few adjustments to reflect the attack at hand: for example, how far away the target is, whether the target is moving, or whether the attacker is moving. The upcoming sections list the modifiers for each combat form; subtract these modifiers from (or add them to) the base chance to figure out the strike number. There are no modifiers for Noetic skills.

4. *Defender Luck Use (ranged weapon attacks only).* If the defender is a player character, and a ranged weapon attack is in progress, he or she may now "spend" up to 2 Luck points from his or her Luck score. The points lessen the injury he or she takes *if the attack succeeds*. Of course, at this point, no one has rolled dice to see if the attack succeeds, so the outcome is still in question. Even if the attack fails, the Luck points are gone *forever*. Step 5 explains how to use Luck points to reduce injury from a successful attack.

5. *Roll to Strike.* Roll a specific check against the attacker's strike number. If the attack fails, combat procedure is over. If the attack succeeds, subtract the result of the roll from the strike number, and find the difference on

DEFENSE COLUMN CHART

Attack Type	Defense Column
Ranged Weapon Attack	Defender rolls 1d10 and adds any luck spent to the die roll. Resulting number is number of the Defense Column (10 maximum).
Melee Attack: Defender has declared use of a melee skill as action for the round.	Use column beneath the range of numbers that contains the defender's skill score
Melee Attack Defender	Use Column 1.
Melee Attack; Defender doing none of the above.	Use column beneath the range of numbers that contains the defender's Unskilled Melee score.

the Action Table, under "Attack Margin." As in any specific check, this determines which row contains your combat result. The defense column varies according to the attack and how much Luck the defender spent in step 4. See the chart below to figure out which defense column to read.

6. *Apply the Results.* To find the result of the attack, cross-index the attack row with the defense column. Then read the result on the proper key. If the character attacked with a weapon, use the Armed Combat Results Key. If he attacked only with his body, use the Unarmed Combat Results Key. Both of these keys are beneath the Action Table. Keys for Noetic skills are listed in Chapter VI. After you find the result, apply the effects immediately, including wounds and damage. (Wounds and damage are explained later in this chapter, after the descriptions of each combat form.)

Called Shots in Combat

When characters "call a shot," they declare what outcome they'd like their actions to have. "C" results on the Action Table always mean success. In ranged weapon and melee attacks, called shots usually tell two things: 1) location ("I'd like to shoot

him in the leg"), and 2) approximate amount of injury. This does not mean that attackers may say, "He should lose six Stamina points and die." It only means that attackers can request that their attacks cause the damage listed under "S," "L," "M," "H" or "C" on the results key.

Here's an example: Let's say that Belki, a Kleibor Star Team member, wants to punch a nasty Imperial NPC in the face, but he only wants to inflict "M" ("Medium") damage, not "C" damage. He declares all of this in his called shot. If the attack result is a "C" on the Action Table, then Belki's wish comes true. He unloads the punch, and the CM follows the instructions under the "M" result to find out exactly how much damage the blow caused.

Note: No character may make called shots for Noetic attacks.

Helpless Defenders

Sometimes, a defender can't defend himself at all: he's unconscious, bound, or otherwise helpless. In these cases, the attacker always succeeds with a ranged weapon or melee attack, no dice roll needed. In this instance, and this instance only, characters may make "killing" a called shot.

If the defender is a PC, he can make a Luck check, as explained later in "Damage From Combat."

LEARNING THE SEQUENCE OF PLAY

DECLARATION

Steps 1 and 2 in the Sequence of Play are called the "declaration steps" of the round. Both the CM and players declare what movement and combat action they plan to take—even though they still have no idea which side gets to go first. After the CM or a player declares an action, he can't change his mind; characters must make every effort to carry out declared actions. Of course, an *opponent* may make that declared action impossible later on—but then, that's the way combat goes, isn't it?

Follow the instructions below during every declaration phase.

All players, including CM: Declare what movement, if any, your character will make, and declare which combat form your character will use, if any. Choose from Noetic, ranged weapon, or melee. Declare your first attack, and specify the target. (Many characters only get one attack, but if they can make multiple attacks in a round, they can wait for the appropriate attack steps to choose and declare the other attacks.) If your first attack includes a called shot, you must declare the called shot during the declaration step of the round.

CM only: Follow the instructions above, but describe only what the PCs see, sense, or notice; don't give the players information that their characters wouldn't have during combat. Make mental or written notes of anything you don't describe; you still have to make a declaration and stick to it, even if part of your declaration is secret. If an opponent makes a Noetic attack, tell the players that the opponent is standing still, in a trance-like state. Don't say whom he's attacking, or which Noetic skill he's using.

WHO GOES FIRST?

Within Each Round: Initiative

Initiative determines which side gets to go first during a round—the char-

acters controlled by the players, or those controlled by the CM.

To determine initiative, each side rolls 1d10. (Players choose one “roller” among themselves.) The side that rolls the highest number wins. In case of a tie, roll again. In the Sequence of Play, the side that wins initiative is called Side A. The side that loses is called Side B.

Within Each Step

During any given step of the round, the CM determines who goes first. For example, when the Sequence of Play calls for Side A to resolve ranged weapon combat, and two players on Side A have declared missile combat for their characters, then the CM decides the order in which the characters fire or throw their weapons. If a dispute arises, the CM should declare that the character who has the highest Willpower score goes first. If any character is firing (or throwing) more than one ranged weapon that round, then he or she must fire them all before another character acts. The rules in this example apply to all three combat forms: the CM determines the order in which the PCs attack, and each PC finishes his attacks before the next PC begins.

NOETIC SKILLS IN COMBAT

Noetic skills play a special role in combat. Unlike the other two combat forms, Noetic combat is usually non-aggressive. For example, the noetic skill Ignore Pain affects the user, not the opponent. (In contrast, you would probably never fire a weapon against yourself, or punch your own face in combat.) A few noetic skills do affect opponents directly.

Noetic combat is special for another reason: it requires total concentration, characters can do almost nothing else during the round—they can’t move or fight. Characters who elect to use a noetic skill during a round do not declare movement. They can, however, continue to drive or fly straight ahead in a vehicle.

Refer to Chapter VI for more about how these skills work.

Willpower Loss

Noetic skills relate strongly to Willpower. Like Stamina, Willpower has a current value, which can rise and fall during play. Characters must spend Willpower points to use noetic skills, and some noetic attacks cause the defender to lose Willpower. Like Stamina, Willpower can be regenerated, but a severe loss of Willpower means problems for the character.

Characters whose current Willpower drops to 20 or below refuse to fight and try at once to move to the nearest place of safety. This reaction must take place; the CM should never allow players to break this rule.

A character whose current Willpower drops to zero is completely confused. He or she cannot fight or interact with other characters. He or she can’t do anything at all without simple directions from others which take no more than 1 round to complete, such as, “Get up,” “Come over here,” or “Sit in this chair.”

MISSILE COMBAT

Any time a character throws or fires a weapon at a target, he is attacking with a *ranged weapon*. Ranged weapons include laser or particle beams, bullets, spears, and rocks—just to name a few.

Skilled vs. Unskilled Attacks

Unskilled characters may only make one ranged weapon attack per round (the same applies to melee). Skilled characters can often make more ranged weapon attacks, each round, depending on their weapon and level of skill. For instance, characters who have firearms skills gain one extra shot per level of skill, up to the maximum possible for the weapon. Skilled characters also have a better chance to hit their targets; they use their skill score, while unskilled characters use Dexterity.



Sighting

Of course, you can't make a successful ranged weapon attack against targets you can't see. It's that simple. Refer to the section on Field of Vision to determine whether characters can see their targets. During ranged weapon fire steps, characters can turn to face targets that used to be outside their fields of vision, with one provision: they must have a valid reason for turning. (Be careful CM: players may know where a target is, while their characters do not! Use a general Perception check to settle any doubtful cases.)

There is one exception to the "If you can't see it, you can't hit it" rule: grenades. Characters can throw or launch grenades into an area where they *know* an enemy is lurking, even if the enemy is hidden from view.

In crowds or traffic, characters may have only a brief glimpse of a target at best. Dense foliage can create the same effect. In these cases, the CM might have the character pass a general Luck check to determine if the target is in view.

Ranged Weapon Attack Modifiers

An attacker's chance to succeed in using a ranged weapon equals a base score plus or minus certain *modifiers*. Modifiers are numbers that show how the characters' actions in combat affect their chances of success. For instance, if the target is moving, the attacker's chance to hit it should decrease. Therefore, a modifier is subtracted from the base chance, to reflect the target's movement.

The table below lists all the modifiers for ranged weapon combat. To figure out an attacker's Strike Number (Step 3 in Combat Procedure), look over this table and pick out the modifiers that fit the ranged weapon attack. The modifiers are cumulative; if more than one applies, add (or subtract) all of them together.

Defensive Ranged Weapon Attacks

Steps 7 and 12 in the Sequence of Play are reserved for defensive ranged

RANGED WEAPON ATTACK MODIFIERS

Target's Declared Action or Situation This Round		Attacker's Declared Actions or Situation This Round	
Walking	-10	Walking	-10
Running	-20	Running	-20
Sprinting	-30	Sprinting	-30
Falling/Diving	-40	Falling/Diving	-40
Going to cover	-20	Going to cover	-20
Behind cover	-30	In slow vehicle	-10
		In fast vehicle	-30
Prone	-10	Getting up, and/or turning more than 90 degrees	-20
Flying	-30	Drawing this round	-20
Swimming	-30	Firing more than one weapon	-20
		*Aiming a single shot	+10
		Firing a burst	+30
		Second shot in a round	-10
		Third shot in a round	-20
		Fourth shot in a round	-30
		Unskilled riding	-40
		<i>Range modifier</i>	<i>Varies</i>

See Weapons Chart

* Applies only to characters skilled with the ranged weapon, and who choose to fire only one shot this round.

Notes:

Falling/Diving: An attacker may fire only when leaping intentionally from a height of 10 feet or less; the attacker may not fire while unintentionally falling. In either case, the attacker suffers normal falling damage.

Going to cover: A character is "going to cover" if he or she does not begin the round behind cover and ends the round behind cover or moves from one covered location to another covered location and is fully visible at any point along the move. Use the modifier for running or sprinting instead of this modifier if the character was running or sprinting to go behind cover.

Behind cover: Use this modifier if the target keeps at least half of its body behind cover for the whole round.

In slow vehicle: Any vehicle moving 20 m.p.h. or less is a slow moving vehicle. Note that a target in such a vehicle will probably also be behind cover. See "Vehicles in Action".

In fast vehicle: Any vehicle moving faster than 20 m.p.h. is a fast vehicle. Note that a target in such a vehicle is probably also behind cover. See "Vehicles in Action".

Prone: This modifier applies only if the attacker is not 10 feet or more higher in elevation than the defender. Otherwise, the defender gains no benefit for being prone.

Being charged or melee attacked: Any character being charged or melee attacked this round, regardless of initiative or any other previous results, suffers this modifier on all ranged weapon attacks during the round.

Firing burst: A burst is a special type of fire from an automatic weapon. Bursts are explained in detail in the section on weapon descriptions.

weapon attacks. Characters who make attacks during these steps must have declared ranged weapon combat as their action for the round. They must also have at least one attack

remaining. Unskilled characters, who make only one attack in a round, may choose to hold that attack until their defensive ranged weapon attack step.

RANGED WEAPONS

Type	Range Modifier	Ammo	ROF	RL	Mounted Use?
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SHORT RANGE WEAPONS

THROWN WEAPONS

Axe/Tomahawk	-30	NA	1	NA	Yes
Dagger/Knife	-20	NA	1	NA	Yes
Javelin	-05	NA	1	NA	Yes
Shuriken	-25	NA	4	NA	Yes
Sling/bullet	-05	UL	1	NA	No
Spear	-20	NA	1	NA	Yes
Hand Grenade	-30	NA	1	NA	Yes

SHORT RANGE FIREARMS

Antique pistol	-15	1	1	4	Yes
Revolver	-07	6	4	2*	Yes
Automatic pistol	-12	8	4	1	Yes
Shotgun, (double barrel)	-04/120	2	2	1	Yes
Shotgun, pump	-04/120	5	4	2	Yes

LONG RANGE WEAPONS

LONG RANGE FIREARMS

Musket	-02/50	1	1	+++	No
Rifle	-5/15	1-10**	1-4**	1	Yes
Automatic rifle	-5/15	1-20	4***	1	yes
Grenade launcher	-02/50	1	1	4	No
Proton Projector rifle (PPR)	NA/-01	1-50	4***	1	No

BOWS AND ARROWS

Crossbow	-02/50	1	1	++	No
Shortbow	-05/150	1	1	++	yes
Longbow	-02/50	1	1	++	No

BEAM WEAPONS

Laser Pistol	-05/150	20	4	1	Yes
Laser Rifle	-5/10	50	4	2	No
Beta-red particle beam rifle	-5/10	4	4	6	No
Vehicle Lasers	-5/10	50	4	2	No

Notes:

Range modifiers for short-range weapons apply for every 10 feet of range beyond the first 10. To calculate the actual modifier, therefore, divide the range in feet by 10, rounding up any fraction, and subtract 1. Multiply the number obtained by the modifier shown on the table.

Long range weapons (and shotguns) have two modifiers separated by a slash. The number to the left of the slash is for every 10 feet beyond the first 10. The number to the right of the slash is the modifier for every 100 yards when players are using maps with 10-yard or 100 yard-scales.

Ammo - The number of rounds of ammunition carried in the weapon. Do not confuse this with the number of rounds carried by the person using the weapon, which can vary from scenario to scenario.

ROF - Rate of Fire, the maximum number of times the weapon can be fired in one round. Characters without skill with a weapon can fire the weapon only once per round (at most) regardless of the rate of fire.

RL - The minimum number of rounds required to reload the weapon.

Mounted use - This column tells whether or not the weapon can be used while the character is mounted.

* - Can be reloaded with 3 bullets in one round.

** - Rifles vary a great deal in the number of bullets carried in their clip and in their maximum rates of fire. Specific values are given in each adventure scenario for the types of rifles available in that scenario. An average 20th Century World War II combat rifle had a clip of five bullets and a maximum ROF of 4.

*** - Automatic rifles and PPRs can fire either a maximum of 4 single shots per round or one automatic burst per round. A burst depletes the ammo of the weapon by 10 per round.

++ - Reload rates for these weapons vary with the skill of the user. See the Bow skills in Chapter VI: "Skills."

+++ - reload rates for these weapons vary with the skill of the user. See the Firearms skills in Chapter VI: "Skills."

UL - Unlimited.

NA - Not applicable. When applied to reload rates, this means the weapon can be used every round.

Characters may make one, and only one, defensive ranged weapon attack, regardless of their skill or lack of one. This attack does count against the number of attacks they are allowed in a round.

Ranged Weapons into Melee

Melee is hand-to-hand fighting, which can occur when opponents are within 5' of one another. Firing or throwing a weapon into that kind of mess is risky business; you can miss your target and hit someone else—maybe the person you wanted to help!



Whenever an attacker fires into melee, a “hit” on the Action Table indicates only that someone in the melee was hit—it doesn’t tell who the victim is. Roll percent dice to determine the victim: a roll of 0-50 means it’s the right target; 51-100 means it’s the wrong one. If the wrong victim is indicated by the dice, and there is more than one wrong victim to choose from, the CM should assign equal chances to each victim and roll

again to see which one is hit.

Note: “C” results are handled differently; the attacker can make hitting his target a called shot, in which case any “C” result means that he hit the correct target in whatever manner he declared.

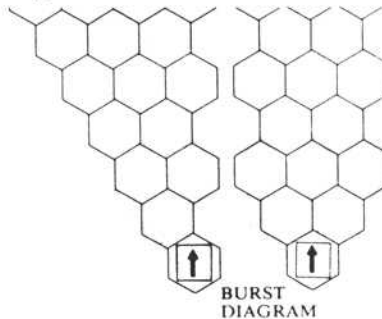
Automatic Rifles

Automatic rifles (including all kinds of guns from the proton projector rifle to the old 20th century sub-machine gun) have two modes of fire: single-shot and burst.

Automatic rifles firing single-shot have a maximum rate of fire of 4 shots per round: a character who has Ace level skill with this weapon could fire 4 single shots in a round.

A burst is a spray of 10 bullets or projectiles. A character can fire only one burst in a round, regardless of his or her skill level. This attack receives a +30 modifier, and all modifiers listed on the Ranged Weapon Attack Modifiers Chart under the heading “Target’s Declared Action or Situation This Round” are ignored. All other modifiers apply normally.

A burst covers the entire area an attacker specifies, within the maximum area shown by the Burst Diagram.



An attacker firing a burst rolls only once against his or her strike number. If the attack succeeds, each defender in the area covered by the burst makes his or her own separate roll of 1d10 for a defense column.

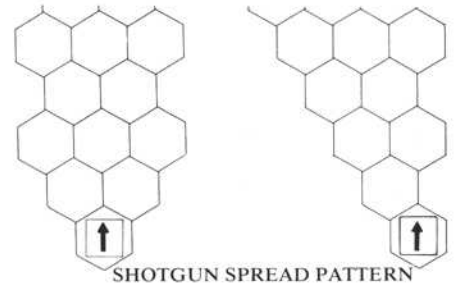
Shotguns

Shotguns fire a spray of pellets that can hit more than one target in an area. A hit with a shotgun means all

characters in the spread pattern (see the accompanying diagram) are hit.

A shotgun doesn’t distinguish between friends and enemies: each character in the spread pattern makes a separate defense roll, just as in the case of automatic rifle fire.

When firing a shotgun, the attacker uses the set of modifiers for the characters most likely to be hit.



An attacker who misses with a shotgun misses all targets in the spread pattern.

There are two types of shotguns commonly used: double barreled shotguns and pump action shotguns. Any character, skilled or unskilled, can fire both barrels of a double barreled shotgun with one, single missile attack. The damage caused by this attack is doubled. Pump action shotguns fire 1 shell per attack, and can fire up to 4 shots per round.

Grenades

Grenades are small explosive devices. Most 20th century grenades were crude metal balls filled with explosives. The user pulled a pin on the ball (which triggered a timed fuse), then tossed the weapon. Most 36th century grenades are equipped with a dial: the user adjusts the dial so the grenade explodes after a certain time, or so it explodes on impact. Furthermore, there are more types of grenades today than the fragmentation grenade so popular in the 20th century: light, sonic, and glitter grenades may show up in any STAR ACE™ adventure.

Although characters can acquire a skill for grenades (Thrown weapons skills), they don’t need this skill to throw one. As with all ranged weap-

ons, unskilled characters use Dexterity score as their base chance to succeed. Thrown grenades hit their target on any successful check result. If the character fails the check, the grenade lands 1 to 5 (1d10÷2, round up) hexes beyond the target on a 5' scale, or in an adjacent hex on the 25' scale. The CM may roll dice for the direction in which the grenade misses, or simply assign the direction according to the situation.

Regardless of where fragmentation grenades land, they cause 75% catastrophic damage to each character within a 15' radius. (See "Special Damage" below.) When using the 25' scale, the CM may simplify this rule and apply damage only to characters in the hex where the grenade lands.

Other grenades have the same area of effect as fragmentation grenades, but the types of damage they cause are different.

Light grenades cause blindness; successful use blinds any character within range (whose eyes are unprotected) for 1d10 rounds.

Sonic grenades cause damage just as the fragmentation grenade above; furthermore, they deafen anyone within range for 1d10 rounds.

Finally, the glitter grenade is a defensive weapon, used much as a smoke bomb was in the 20th century. Its added advantage is its ability to refract laser beams. Any successful result deflects all beam weapons within or passing through the ranged area (beam sabers are negated entirely within the glitter cloud). The glitter grenade also makes it more difficult to hit with other ranged weapons; ranged weapon fire at a target in the glitter cloud, or ranged weapon fire through the glitter cloud at a target, suffers a -25 modifier.

Miscellaneous Thrown Weapons

Resourceful characters can—and will—throw just about anything in combat. Rocks, mugs, lamps, small chairs—anything you can throw can be a ranged weapon. To determine success, use the character's Dexterity score as his base chance to hit, and modify it for the bulk or clumsiness of

the object. Use the situation itself as a guide. In general, characters shouldn't be able to hit a target with a miscellaneous thrown object at ranges of more than 30 feet.

MOVEMENT

Keeping Track of Movement

You should always use maps to keep track of everyone's location during combat. This becomes especially important during the movement step of a round. No character likes to find out—too late—that the opponent he intended to punch is just beyond his reach, sporting a laser pistol and a grin.

In the STAR ACE™ game, each character is represented by a counter on the map. Just move the counters on the map whenever the characters move. In this way, you'll always be certain where your character stands—and where his enemies stand, too.

Experienced players may want to use miniature figures instead of counters to represent their characters. When playing scenarios of the CM's own design, such players may want to use their figures on a tabletop instead of a map, using any handy items to stand for buildings, trees, walls, and so on. When using miniatures, a scale of 1"= 5 feet or 1"= 25 feet is recommended.

Movement Rates

Characters can only move so far, so fast—and that's it. The chart below shows the limits to character movement during a round, according to the type of movement declared. The only exceptions to these limits are defined in Chapter VI, Noetic Skills.

CHARACTER MOVEMENT IN ONE ROUND

Declared Move	Distance in feet	5' Hexes	25' Hexes
Crawl	15	3	1/2*
Walk	25	5	1
Run	75	15	3
Sprint	150	30	6
Swim	15	3	1/2*
Climb	5	1	1/5*

* = Character moves 1 space on this scale for every 2 or 5 rounds, as shown on the chart.

Sprinting is all-out running, and costs the character 3 current Stamina points per round. Characters who sprint may take no other action. Characters in metal armor cannot sprint.

Swimming rates may vary if the CM wants to adjust them according to currents, tides, etc.

Climbing in the chart above refers to mountains, cliffs, ladders, and ropes—not stairways.

Gravity and Movement

Understanding gravity and its effects is simple. All things are affected equally by gravity—including movement, range, weight, etc. The only important thing to remember when playing in scenarios where gravity might differ from that of Earth, is that the scale remains the same, regardless of gravity. Therefore, CMs can figure out the precise numbers in each individual circumstance, or avoid headaches and play as though gravity is the same as on Earth, since all of the reductions or additions are to scale.

Hindered Movement

Often, a character wants to take some kind of action while moving; for example, closing the door in the face of his pursuer, or turning around from time to time to fire his gun. Actions such as these slow movement.

Obstacles and terrain, especially on Wilderness, may slow a character, too. Characters can't walk up stairs or over furniture as quickly as they cross an empty room. And they can't cross a swamp as fast as they cover flat ground.

The chart on the next page shows how actions and obstacles can hinder movement. Use the chart as a guideline to determine a character's actual movement rate during combat.

HINDERED MOVEMENT

Obstacle	Effect	Action	Effect/Comments
Normal Obstacles			
Doors, closed	-10 feet	Firing or throwing ranged weapon	Deduct 5 feet from total walking movement for each weapon fired or thrown before movement. Deduct triple this amount from running distance.
Stairs	-10 feet per flight		
Entering or leaving a vehicle	-20	Firing bow	No movement allowed in same round.
Dangerous Obstacles*		Standing up	Deduct 10 feet from total walking movement, 30 feet from total running movement. Sprinting not possible in the same round.
Vehicles	-15		
Furniture	-10	Placing obstacle	Deduct 5 feet from total walking movement, 15 feet from total running movement; limit one obstacle per round.
Placed Obstacle	-10 feet	Watching behind	Deduct 10 feet from total walking movement; running and sprinting not allowed.
*Modifiers do not apply if characters walk around the obstacle. If characters climb over, or jump across, they need to make a general Agility check. If they fail, the characters fall down.			
Terrain	Effect	Notes:	
Heavy Woods	-10 feet	<i>Placing Obstacle:</i> Quickly grabbing something (such as a chair) directly ahead and flipping it behind to foil pursuit.	
Light Wood	- 5 feet	<i>Watching Behind:</i> Keeping a watch behind while moving forward.	
Broken (rough terrain)	-15 feet		
Swamp	-20 feet		

Multiple Characters in One Space

When using a map with 5' scale, it's best not to allow more than two characters in one space. Characters engaged in melee can occupy adjacent hexes. (Sometimes, special movements may force opponents to be in the same space, but that's unusual.)

Any conscious character who isn't held or helpless can automatically force another character to stop upon entering his space (or coming within 1" when using miniatures). This requires no dice roll or declaration; the rule applies only when using 5' scale.

Leaping and Jumping

When a character wants to leap over an obstacle or jump up and grab something, his base chance to do so equals his Agility score. Most humans can't reach an object higher than 10', and they can't make a running leap much over 15' without losing balance. As a general guideline,

subtract 25% from the character's Agility score for each foot over these maximums the character tries to jump or leap. The check is a general Agility check.

MELEE

Melee—hand-to-hand combat—occurs in two forms: armed and unarmed. Melee with weapons—such as beam sabers, clubs, and knives—is called armed melee. Melee without weapons—other than teeth, fists, and feet, etc.—is called unarmed melee.

To engage in melee, the attacker must be within 5' of his or her target at the beginning of the Melee step of the round.

Characters without a melee skill can make only one melee attack per round. Some, but not all, melee skills allow a character to make more than one attack per round.

Skilled Melee

Characters can acquire skills in both armed and unarmed melee. (See

Chapter VI for a list and description of skills.) Armed melee skills are usually defined by a particular type of weapon; for instance, Dagger and Sword are two different skills. Unarmed melee skills reflect a particular class of fighting; Boxing and Wrestling are also separate skills.

Whenever a character uses a skill in melee, his or her skill score is the base chance to strike an opponent successfully.

Unskilled Melee

Characters don't need melee skills to hold their own in hand-to-hand combat. Almost anyone can do *something* in a scuffle—kick, bite, punch, scratch—even slash or club. Such actions may be crude, but that doesn't mean they can't do the job. Both armed and unarmed attacks are possible.

Whenever a character uses unskilled melee, his base chance for success equals his Unskilled Melee score.

Unskilled Holds. If a character without a Wrestling skill wants to secure his opponent in a hold, he must declare that he intends to grab or jump on his opponent, and make the hold a called shot. A "C" result indicates a successful hold with normal "C" damage.

A defender who is held can't do anything until he breaks the hold. To do so, the defender must gain initiative and make a successful melee attack in a subsequent round. He cannot declare a called shot for the attack, but any successful attack breaks the hold *and* inflict normal damage.

The attacker doesn't have to make a check to maintain the hold; it's automatic from round to round, until the defender breaks it. During the first round, the hold inflicts normal "C" damage on the defender, according to the results for unarmed combat. In each following round, the hold inflicts 1d10 points of Stamina damage.

All of the above assumes that no one steps in on the two wrestling characters we've described. If anyone, or anything, scores a successful attack of *any kind* on the character maintaining the hold, the hold is automatically broken. The character who lost his grip takes normal damage from the attack.

Strangling. Treat strangling as a special kind of hold in which the attacker has the defender by the throat (see above). The results and rules are the same, with one addition: at the end of every round, the defender must pass a general check against his current Stamina. If he fails the check, the defender falls unconscious and his current Stamina drops to zero immediately.

Remember that the CM can declare *called shots* impossible, if they're too far-fetched. This rule may apply whenever the character wants to strangle a large alien. For instance, most characters could strangle an Imperial trooper or a Gorlon, but very few of them could get their hands around a Kleibor's neck!

Melee Modifiers

Melee modifiers are numbers added

MELEE ATTACK MODIFIERS

Situation	Mod.
Attacker on ground	-40
Attacker getting up	-20
Attacker moved to close this round	-20
Attacker charging with long weapon	+20
Attacker attacking from behind	+20
Charging on mount	+30

Notes:

Moved to close this round: This modifier applies if the attacker did not begin the round within 5 feet of the defender and the defender did not declare any movement for this round. Ignore this modifier if the attacker is charging with a long weapon.

Charging with long weapon: This modifier applies if the attacker moved at least 25 feet in the same round before attacking. The attacker must be armed with a thrusting weapon at least 6 feet long. If the defender won initiative and is fleeing faster than the attacker is charging, do not apply this modifier.

Attacking from behind: This modifier applies to any attack from behind the defender. A defender who wins initiative can only be attacked from behind if surprised, or if trapped by two or more attackers.

Unless specified otherwise, all melee attack modifiers are cumulative—added or subtracted together.

to or subtracted from a character's base chance to hit his opponent in melee. They work in melee just like ranged weapon combat modifiers work in ranged weapon combat. To find a character's strike number for a melee attack, go through the list of melee modifiers and add or subtract those that apply to the melee at hand.

Escaping from Melee

The following rule applies when any characters start the round within 5 feet of one another, and melee is declared. If one of the characters intends to run instead of melee, then follow these rules:

As long as the fleeing character was not fleeing in the previous round, no attacker may run after him and engage in melee in the current round. The attacker can declare "I'm chasing," or "I'm hitting," but not both. If the fleeing character wins initiative, everything's OK; he runs before the attacker can hit him. But if the fleeing character loses initiative, and the

attacker declared either melee or pursuit, the attacker strikes before the defender can move. Also, the attacker strikes with two large modifiers: First, the attacker automatically adds +10 to his base chance to hit, just for winning initiative against someone who declared flight. Second, the attacker adds +20 (for a total of +30) if the defender declared he was running away; this modifier applies because the fleeing defender is automatically being hit from behind. As you can see, running from melee doesn't assure your safety!

Melee Restrictions

1. **Multiple Attackers.** No more than 3 attackers can strike one Human-sized or Kleibor-sized defender during the same round.

The CM must determine what's appropriate for defenders of other sizes, but these examples should help: during a single round, up to 6 Humans can strike a horse, and up to 12 rats can strike a Human.

2. **Knockouts.** Knockouts are not



allowed as called shots in melee unless the attacker uses Boxing or Blackjack skills. (A defender does fall unconscious, however, whenever his current Stamina reaches zero. See “Damage and Healing.”)

DAMAGE FROM COMBAT

In game terms, damage is physical injury to any character or animal. Damage always causes the character’s current Stamina to drop; that shows that he’s tired, and maybe bruised or battered. If damage is more severe, then the character may also have to check a “wound box” on his character sheet; that shows that he’s suffered some kind of serious injury, too. So we know that damage results in two things: Stamina loss and, sometimes, wounds.

Notice there are two different result keys below the Action Table: one for unarmed combat, and one for armed combat. Weapons are more dangerous than fists, so the armed combat key always calls for wounds. The unarmed combat key only calls for

wounds in the most severe cases (“H” or “C” results). Both keys call for Stamina loss.

How to record Stamina loss:

1. Determine the amount of Stamina lost by rolling one or more ten-sided dice. The results key tells you how many dice to roll. Add up the numbers rolled. (Many results call for this sum to be multiplied by two.) The result is the amount of Stamina lost.

2. Subtract the lost Stamina from your current Stamina score—the original Ability score for Stamina stays the same.

How to record wounds:

1. See how many wounds are indicated in the results key. There may be none, or there may be as many as five.

2. Check off the appropriate number of wound boxes on your character sheet.

Effects of Damage

Damage can lead to two things: unconsciousness and death. When a character’s current Stamina drops to zero, he passes out. When he has no wound boxes left to check off, he dies.

Unconsciousness: As soon as a character’s current Stamina drops to zero, he passes out for 1d100 minutes (the CM rolls a secret percent). Unconscious characters cannot take any action.

If someone administers smelling salts, or ammonia, to an unconscious character, or shakes him gently, the character awakens immediately. As soon as the character comes to, he regains one current Stamina point.

Death: As soon as a character has taken all the wounds he can take (so that he has no wound boxes left to mark on his character sheet), he dies. Player characters can make a Luck check against death. A successful check means the character falls into a

coma instead of dying. The character may immediately erase one wound box to show that he has one wound box left. He remains unconscious for 1d10 days (CM rolls secretly), with a current Stamina of zero. While in a coma, the character heals normally, but he does not awaken and cannot be awakened.

Critical Wounds

Characters are critically wounded when they have three or fewer wound boxes left to mark. As soon as they reach this level of wound damage, they must make a general Willpower check. Those who fail the check can take *no* further action that round; the pain is just too great. If they pass the check they can continue to fight.

Critically wounded characters must continue to make a general Willpower check before the declaration step of each round until: 1) they receive 2 rounds of treatment from a character with Medical skill, or 2) they use the noetic skill Ignore Pain successfully, or 3) they heal wounds and have four boxes unmarked.

RECOVERY AND HEALING

Characters heal damage in two ways. One, they must rest briefly to *recover* lost Stamina. And two, they must have bedrest to heal wounds.

Recovering Stamina

To recover lost Stamina, a character simply takes a breather and rests for a few rounds. To determine a character's recovery rate, find his original Stamina score in the ranges along the top of the Action Table. The number of the defense column below is the number of Stamina points he can recover during each round of rest. (Mark that number on your character sheet, next to "Recovery Rate.")

For example, Belki's original Stamina score is 70. That number falls in the 61-75 range, above column 5. Therefore, Belki can regenerate 5 points of current Stamina for every round of rest.

A character can take no action during rounds of rest. If anyone attacks a character during a round, the character has not rested, even if the attack fails. Lost Stamina is regenerated at the *end* of every round.

Healing Wounds

It takes more time to heal wounds than it does to recover Stamina. The character must spend one day in bed to heal 2 wounds. After a day of bedrest, the player can erase the marks in two wound boxes on the character sheet. If a character with Medical skill treats the wounded character daily, then the character can heal four wounds a day instead of one.

SPECIAL DAMAGE

Most damage comes from combat—but not all. Characters can be their own worst enemies: like real people, they fall off cliffs, remove their helmets in a poisonous atmosphere, or forget to run before the grenade goes off. Old Mother Nature can be even

more dangerous: she brings on storms, zaps the earth with lightning, and causes cities to shake. All of these things can damage a character, just as combat does.

Fire. Fire causes two kinds of damage: burns and smoke inhalation. When a character catches on fire he takes three wounds per round until the flames are extinguished. Characters catch on fire when exposed to open flames for one round, or in other circumstances at the CM's discretion. If a character must breathe while in a smoke-filled area, he takes two wounds per round.

Falling. Characters take damage if they fall more than 10 feet. Follow combat procedure to determine the amount of damage, treating the fall as a ranged weapon attack against the character (the character can spend Luck points). The strike number equals 90 plus the number of feet fallen. For example, if the character falls 15 feet, the strike number is 105; (90+15+105). Characters never suffer more than "C" damage from falls of less than 100 feet. Unfortunately, falls from elevations of 100 feet or more always kill characters. (Luck checks still apply.)

Catastrophic Damage. Catastrophes include explosions, collapsing buildings, avalanches, natural disasters, and the like. Follow combat procedure, treating the catastrophe as a ranged weapon attack just as you would in a fall. The strike number is calculated differently, however: use a base chance of 100, and add modifiers according to the guidelines below.

Modifiers. Keep in mind that a strike number of 100 is likely to inflict heavy or crippling damage. If you think that characters have a good chance of surviving, subtract a few points from the base chance. (A forest fire, for instance could have a strike number of 95.) If characters have blundered into a situation where death is highly probable, add some points to the base chance. (For instance, if they're standing on top of a



dam when it collapses, use a strike number of about 175.)

Exposure. Characters without appropriate clothing or equipment suffer exposure damage when they spend 24 or more hours outside in very bad weather or other harsh conditions, such as desert heat. To determine the amount of damage, roll a specific check against 99 (the strike number), and use column 5 as the defense column. Use the armed combat key to read the results. Make one check for every 24-hour period spent outdoors. Outdoor Survival skill can help characters avoid exposure damage.

Crazy Stunts. Most characters can't resist trying stunts. Remember our man who swung on a chandelier and crashed through the window in Chapter II? In cases such as these, the CM must use his own judgement to apply damage. The combat results keys and the examples above are useful guidelines.

POISONS

In the STAR ACE™ game, poisoning is only allowed as the result of direct contact with alien plantlife or animals. All characters must make a general check against current Stamina when they come in contact with a poison. If they pass the check, they're unaffected. If they fail the check, they die, or suffer other damage as specified in the scenario. Player characters may still make a Luck check against death, and characters with Medical skill can administer an antidote to keep the victim alive.

ARMOR IN COMBAT

In many different eras of history, men have tried to protect themselves in battle by wearing some type of body armor. This hasn't changed in the 36th century: armor is available for members of the Star Teams, as well as for Alliance and Imperial troopers. This section of the rules explains how body armor affects basic combat.

How Armor Works

Armor doesn't change how combat takes place, but it may change the outcome—how much damage a character receives. When characters fight in armor, follow normal combat procedure. If a strike against an armored character fails, then ignore the armor. If the strike succeeds, find the result as usual and follow these steps to see if the armor protects the wearer:

1. First, find out where the blow (or shot) hit. Armor rarely covers the whole body and offers no protection to areas that it doesn't cover. If the attack result is a "C" or "CK," and the attacker made a called shot against a particular spot, then that's where the blow lands. If another result occurs, roll dice and use the chart below to find the hit location.

HIT LOCATIONS

Dice Roll	Location Hit
01—09	Head
10—27	Upper torso
28—44	Abdomen/lower back
45—53	Right leg
54—62	Left leg
63—71	Right arm
72—80	Left arm
81—85	Right hand
86—90	Left hand
91—95	Right foot
96—00	Left foot

2. Now you know where the blow or shot struck. If the attacker hits a location that isn't protected by armor, the defender takes normal damage. If the attacker hits armor, that's another story.

All armor protects characters against damage from unarmed attacks ("K" results—knockdowns—still apply). Kicks and punches, for example, do nothing against armor. Armed attacks have an effect, however, if they can penetrate the armor.

3. To penetrate armor, an attack must be "stronger" than that armor. All armor has a value called the Armor Rating, or "AR." The higher the rating, the stronger the armor. The table below lists the AR for

general armor types and notes any exceptions to the penetration rules.

The strength of an attack equals the amount of Stamina loss called for by the results key. Roll for Stamina loss as usual. If the number of Stamina points lost is equal to or higher than the Armor Rating, then the attack penetrates the armor. The defender takes full damage—wounds and all. If the amount of Stamina points lost is less than the Armor Rating, then the attack has no effect (see "Hits to the Head").

GENERAL ARMOR GUIDE

		Immunity
Helmet	15	A
Reflector Plates	45	B
Flak Vest	15	C
LSS Body Suit	30	C
Force Field Armor	45	B or C

Notes

AR: Armor Rating

A: withstands all attacks from slings, short bows, and thrown weapons.

B: withstands all attacks from beam weapons, slings, short bows, and thrown weapons.

C: withstands most melee weapon attacks (exception: beam saber), and most ranged weapons (exception: beam weapons).

Firearms automatically penetrate any type of armor except C.

Crumpled Armor

After armor is penetrated, it becomes worthless against future attacks to the same hit location.

Penetration Bonuses

Strong characters get bonuses to penetrate armor when they attack with normal melee or thrown weapons. Look at the table below, and add the bonus to the Stamina damage before you determine if a hit has penetrated. If the hit penetrates, drop the bonus and apply normal damage. The bonus makes it easier to penetrate, but it doesn't change the amount of damage a successful hit inflicts.

Note: Penetration bonuses do not

apply to attacks with slings or fired weapons.

STRENGTH AND PENETRATION BONUS

Character's STR	Penetration Bonus
50—59	+5
60—69	+10
70—79	+15
80	+20

Hits to the Arm or Hand

Characters may be in trouble if they receive a wound in an arm or hand that carries a weapon: if the wound is less than "crippling," (a "C" result according to the armed combat results key) they must make an immediate general Dexterity check. If they fail the check, they drop the weapon. If the wound is "crippling," they must make a general Willpower check to continue using the hand or arm at all. They must make a new Willpower check at the beginning of each round until: 1) a character with Medical skill treats them for 2 rounds; 2) they use the talent "Ignore Pain" successfully; or 3) they heal one wound box and are not critically wounded.

Hits to the Head

No armor offers full protection against blows to the head. When a character is hit in the head, he takes normal Stamina damage, even if the blow doesn't penetrate his helmet.

Many helmets only cover part of the head, or leave the face unshielded. If a hit against this type of helmet occurs, roll a percent. 01-50 indicates that the blow struck the defender in an unshielded area; the defender suffers full damage, including wounds. 51-00 indicates that the blow struck the helmet; the defender suffers normal Stamina loss, but no wounds.

Called Shots Against Armor

Characters may make hitting an armored character in the head, or in a body location not protected by armor, a called shot.

VEHICLES IN ACTION

Not all characters fight their battles while standing in the open; quite a few of them take to the road. When a character takes off in a vehicle traveling 10 mph or faster, use the table below to determine the distance that he covers each round. Vehicles include hover tanks and walkers: remember to use a 100 yard per hex scale for these large combat vehicles.

VEHICLE SPEED CHART

Speed	Ft/ rds	5' hex	25' hex	100 yd hexes
10 mph	75	15	3	¼
20 mph	150	30	6	½
30 mph	225	45	9	¾
40 mph	300	60	12	1
50 mph	375	75	15	1¼
60 mph	450	90	18	1½
70 mph	525	105	21	1¾
80 mph	600	120	24	2
90 mph	675	135	27	2¼
100 mph	750	150	30	2½

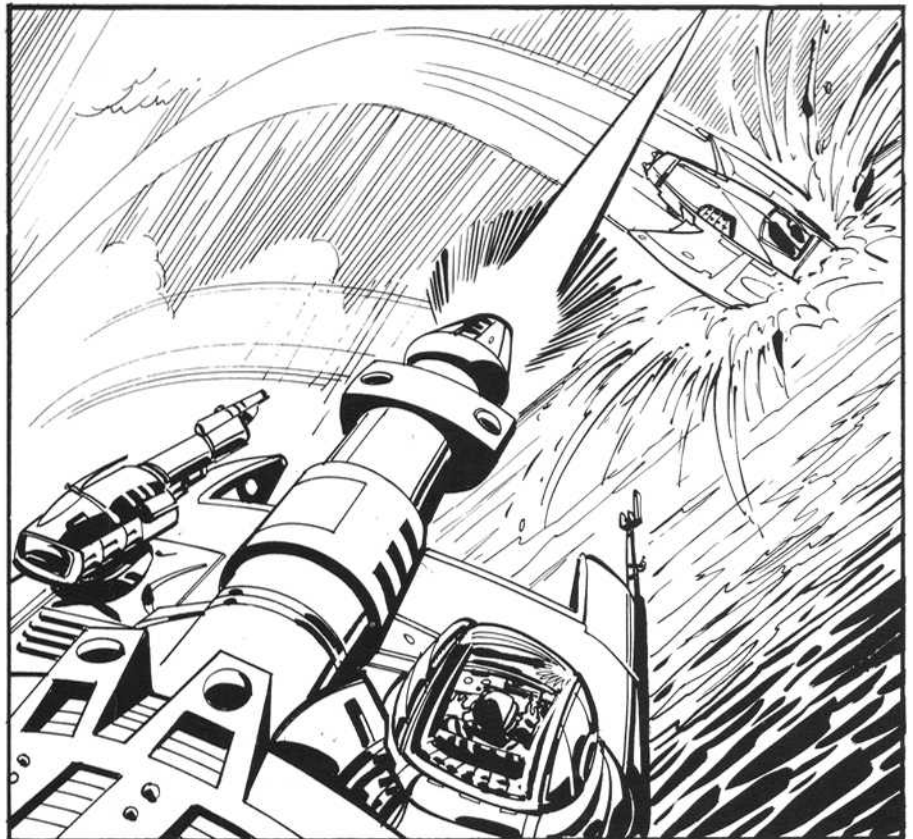
If a vehicle is traveling less than 10 mph, it covers 1.5 hexes per round per mph on a 5' scale map.

Driving Capability

All Star Team members can drive land vehicles that are common to the Wilderness region. Player characters receive this ability as a result of their Spacecraft Piloting skill. Although most of the vehicles used in the galaxy are hover type craft (vehicles that don't touch the surface of the planet when they travel), player characters will undoubtedly find archaic modes of transportation on other planets and systems. Such transportation forms would include cars, pickup trucks, jeeps—even tanks and armored cars. A character's basic capability to drive any such vehicle equals the sum of his Perception and Dexterity scores, divided by 2. Characters with Stunt Driving skill have more exceptional talents behind the wheel.

Accidents

Accidents do happen, especially in shoot-outs and high-speed chases.



The characters have accidents when they fail a driving check (against their basic capability or a Stunt Driving skill score). The CM should call for a general check against a character's driving capability when:

1. The character fails a surprise check while operating a vehicle.
2. The character operates the vehicle at an unsafe speed (including animal-drawn vehicles). Make one check for every 5th round of unsafe speed. The chart below gives speed guidelines which apply in most time periods.
3. The character receives more than one wound from a single attack.

SAFE VEHICLE SPEEDS

Condition	Max. Safe Speed
Rush hour or downtown	20 mph
Moderate city traffic	30 mph
Sharp curves	60 mph
Highway drive	160 mph
Light fog	40 mph—day 30 mph—night
Heavy fog	20 mph
Dense fog	10 mph

When characters fail driving checks, use the situation at hand to determine what kind of accident occurs. Perhaps the driver hits another vehicle, or swerves and runs off the road. Or perhaps the driver runs into a building. Regardless of the accident, each character in the vehicle must check for damage as follows:

1. Roll a percent and subtract it from 100. This determines the attack margin on the Action Table.
2. Use the speed of the vehicle to determine the defense column. Column 10 is for 10 mph, 9 is for 20 mph, 8 is for 30 mph, etc. (Shift one column to the left for every 10 mph: column 1 is for 100 mph and faster.)
3. Find the result. Use the Armed Combat results key to determine damage.

MOUNTED ACTION

All characters can ride wilderhogs, horses, camels, and other animals that

a basic level; their score equals Agility divided by 2. Characters can also have Riding skill, which gives them more advantages on "horseback."

Use the following table to determine movement for mounts each round:

MOUNTED MOVEMENT PER ROUND

Type Move	Distance in feet	5' Hex	25' Hex
Walk	50	10	2
Trot	100	20	4
Canter	175	35	7
Gallop	250	50	10

Fatigue: Mounts in combat can gallop (move at charging speed) for no more than 6 consecutive rounds. At the end of this time, they must slow to at least a canter for 12 rounds. Mounts in continuous combat action for more than 20 minutes are winded and must rest for 30 minutes before they can be used in combat again.

Obstacles To Mounted Movement

Numerous obstacles can impede mounted movement: ditches, ravines, fences, walls low enough to jump, rough terrain, and so on. Usually, animals cannot gallop over terrain that isn't flat, and thus they cannot charge over any type of obstruction.

Horses can jump obstacles, but their success is measured by the Riding skill of their rider, not their own physical build. Normally, horses can jump over an obstacle up to 5 feet high. For each foot over this height, subtract 25 from the skill score of the rider. This means that no horse—no matter how good his rider is—can jump obstacles over 10 feet high. Wilderhogs and camels cannot jump while being ridden.

Horses can normally leap across ditches, ravines or chasms up to 10 feet wide. For each additional foot of width, subtract 25 from the riding score of the rider.

Riders may sometime be surprised by the sudden appearance of obstacles. In such cases, their horses will

automatically balk, and the riders must make a riding check. If they fail the check, they fall off.

Mounted Fighting

Use the chart below whenever mounts are involved in combat:

Animal	Capacity	Wnds
Horse		
Light	AR 30; one rider	10
Medium	AR 45 or 2 riders	13
Heavy	AR 60 or 2 riders	15
Wilderhog	AR 60; 2 riders	15
Camel	AR 45 or 2 riders	13

Notes: AR refers to the Armor Rating of the rider which may be carried. Medium and Heavy horses may carry two unarmored riders. Wilderhogs can carry two armored riders. "Wounds" is the number of wound boxes an animal can have checked off before being killed.

Characters with Riding skill and mounted combat skills fight mounted as explained in those skill descriptions (see Chapter VI). Characters without these skills may still attack from horseback, but do so with a -40 missile and melee modifier (in addition to all other modifiers).

Losing your seat: Mounted characters with Riding skill use the defense column that corresponds to their riding score when other characters try to drag or push them to the ground. (Look for the skill score in the ranges above the column numbers.) If the mounted character has no skill, he defends on column 1. Characters on the ground can pull a rider from his mount by making the action a called shot.

Charging: Mounted characters are charging when their mounts gallop (move only through their front hexes with no turns) toward a target. Charging characters usually get a +30 melee modifier. They lose this bonus if another character wins initiative and charges them first.

Chapter V: SPACECRAFT AND COMBAT

Characters will quickly find that advancement and long-term success depend upon winning ship-to-ship combat. The Star Team promotion system is based upon the number of "kills" a member registers. In this chapter, I'll explain all you need to know to run space combat: space travel, spacecraft types, and spacecraft combat.

THE MAPS

STAR ACE has two large maps: a color map of the galaxy's Wilderness Region, and, on the opposite side of the sheet, a black and white "Battle-Board." Each map has a grid of six-sided spaces called hexagons, or "Hexes."

Each hex on the Wilderness Region map represents one *Grand Strategic Sector* (GSS). Each GSS contains one million star systems. These star systems may be crowded close together or spread far apart, so the distance across Grand Strategic Sectors will not be uniform. Imperial Command has divided the galaxy into Grand Strategic Sectors because whether the distance involved is great or small, it requires the same amount of time to cross any area containing one million star systems. (I'll explain why in "Space Travel" below.)

The Battle-Board on the reverse of the Wilderness Region map uses Tactical Sectors (TS). Each TS is about 42,500 miles across. This seems like a huge amount of distance, until you realize that a common Phoenix fighter travels two Tactical Sectors a second! In the Earth system, the distance from the Sun to the edge of the Solar System is about 85,400 TS. As you can see, each GSS contains billions of Tactical Sectors.

SPACE TRAVEL

There are two basic types of space travel in the STAR ACE™ game: sublight and translight travel. Sublight is slower-than-light travel, and translight is faster-than-light travel. Most spacecraft can travel at either sublight or translight speeds.

Sublight Travel

Spacecraft must use sublight travel to enter, leave, or travel within a solar system. All combat takes place at sublight speeds. A craft's sublight speed (called its "Combat Speed") is the number of Tactical Sectors the ship can move in one round. For example, a ship with a Combat Speed of 10 may move up to ten hexes per round on the Battle-Board.

A spacecraft traveling at a rate of 10 TS per round is traveling 7200 TS per hour, or 306,250,000 miles per hour! As a guideline for figuring travel times within a system, keep in mind that it would take 12 hours for a ship with a Combat Speed of 10 to travel from the center of Earth's solar system to its edge.

This means that a fast craft based near a system center can travel to most points in the system within 12 hours. Of course, it also requires about 15 minutes for a planet-based ship to climb into space.

Translight Travel

Most craft can also travel faster than light. Faster-than-light travel is called translight travel, hyperspace travel, or hyperspace jumping. Spacecraft use translight travel to move from one system to another system up to 10 GSS away. No craft can jump more than 10 GSS or less than 100,000 TS. While it is possible to jump from one system to another within the same GSS, the terrible accelerations and decelerations associated with such short jumps place as much strain on the ship as the longest jumps. It is usually wiser to jump into the next GSS and back again when traveling from system to system in the same Grand Strategic Sector.

Follow the following procedure when PCs use translight travel:

1. Determine the Pilot's present GSS, and find the GSS he wants to travel to on the Wilderness Area Map. Remember, this distance cannot be greater than ten hexes.

2. Secretly roll 1d10 to determine the number of rounds the computer requires to calculate the translight

route and activate the translight drive. Do not reveal this number to the players.

3. The spacecraft must maintain straight flight until the computer activates the translight drive. If it does not, the computer must determine a new translight course and this attempt to reach translight speed is aborted. Go back to Step 2.

4. After the craft maintains straight flight for the required number of rounds, it jumps to translight speed.

5. Secretly roll 1d10 and multiply the result by the number of Grand Strategic Sectors the pilot is crossing. The result is the number of hours the craft is in hyperspace. At the end of this time, it emerges at its destination. Although the computer can plot a destination within a solar system, smart pilots rarely take this grave risk (see "Navigational Hazards" below).

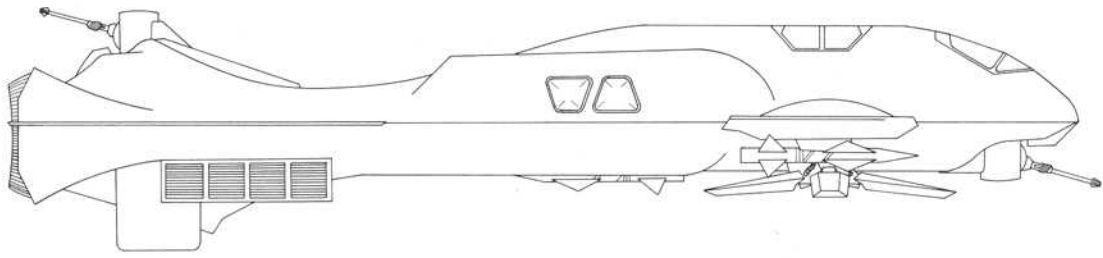
Do not tell the PCs how long they will be in translight travel. Simply announce the elapsed time when the ship arrives at its destination. Craft cannot engage in combat or be located by any type of sensors while in translight travel. Characters cannot exit the craft while it is in translight travel.

6. The piloting character must roll a specific check against his Pilot skill to determine how much stress damage the ship suffers from the translight jump (see "Translight Damage" below).

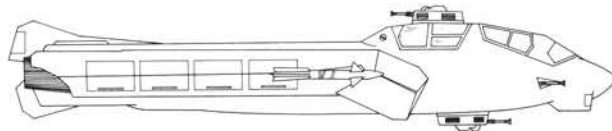
Translight Damage

Translight travel causes *stress damage* to spacecraft. Every time a craft uses translight travel, the pilot must make a specific check against his Pilot score. (NPC craft use their "VCR." VCR is explained below in "Spacecraft Descriptions.") Use the Action Table defense column equal to the number of GSS's being jumped to obtain the result of this check. (If the number of GSS's being jumped is 0, use column 10; very short jumps are as hard on spacecraft as very long jumps.) Read the results on the key below:

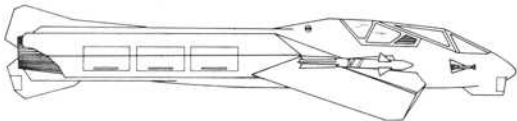
Failure = Craft suffers 3d10x2 points of stress damage.



Hawk 80'



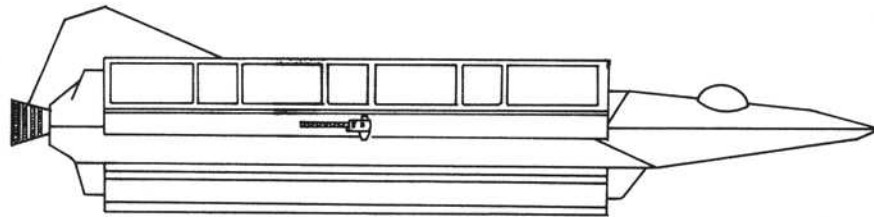
Griffin 45'



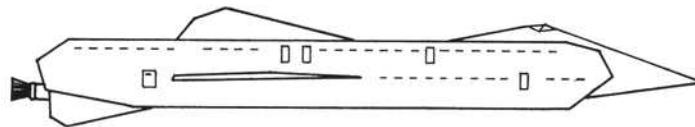
Saberfox 35'



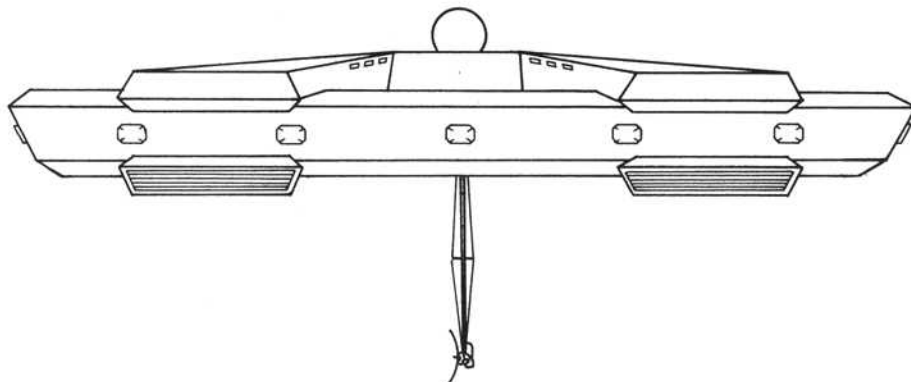
Phoenix 25'



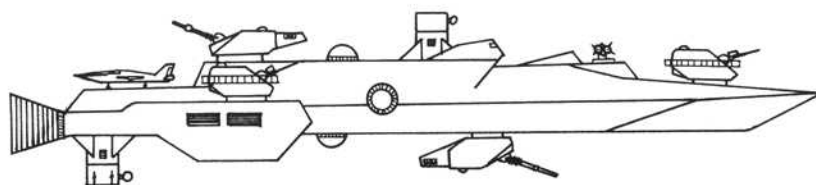
Cargo Vessel 500'



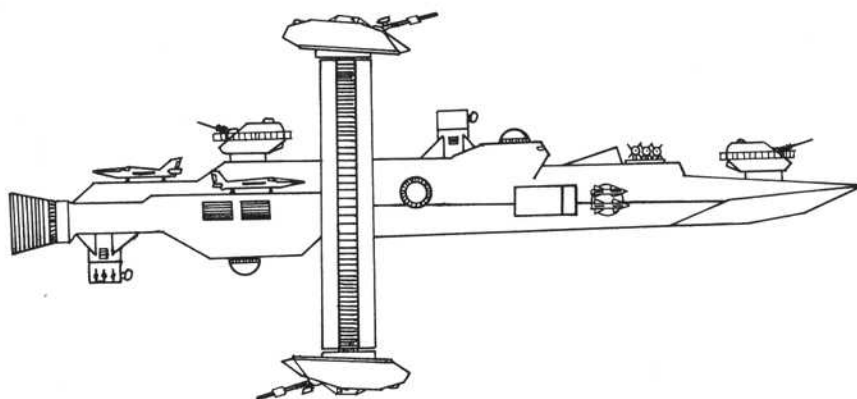
Passenger Liner 350'



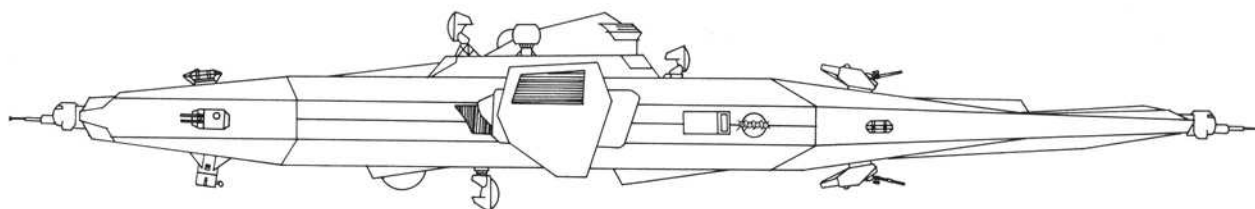
CRP Station 1000'



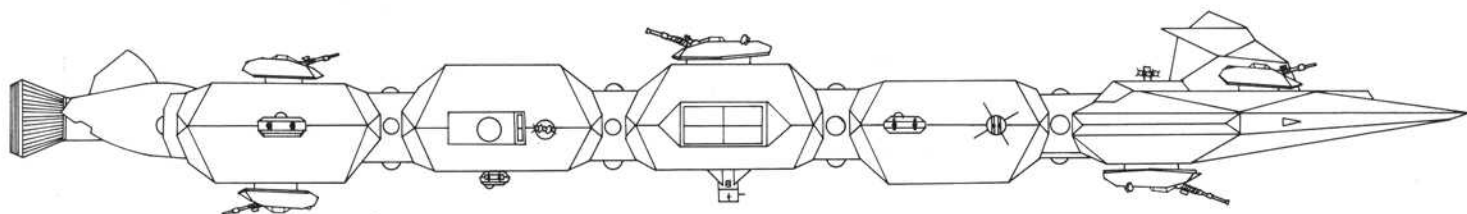
Destroyer 450'



ICE Frigate 480'



Cruiser 1000'



Dreadnought 1250



Imp 25'

S = Serious stress: Craft suffers 2d10x2 points of stress damage.

L = Limited stress: Craft suffers 2d10 points of stress damage.

M = Minor stress: Craft suffers 1d10 points of stress damage.

H = High success: Craft suffers only 1d10/2 (rounded up) points of stress damage.

C = Complete success: Craft suffers only 1 or 2 points of stress damage. Roll 1d10; 1-5 = 1 point, 6-10 = 2 points.

Stress damage is explained in "Spacecraft Descriptions" below.

Navigational Hazards

Gas storms, asteroid belts, and cosmic debris all pose hazards to travel in space.

Gas storms affect translight navigation. Whenever a craft jumps through (or into or out of) a gas storm, there is a 50% chance the ship's computer will err during the translight flight. If this happens, place the craft 1d10 GSS away from its intended destination (your choice of direction).

Pilots may attempt translight travel into or out of a solar system, but only at great risk. Because of the margin of error when dealing with translight distances, the pilot must make a general Luck check in addition to all other normal translight procedures. Success means the ship enters the system in the desired location. Failure means the ship collides with a planet, star, or other astronomical body. The craft explodes immediately and all characters aboard are killed. Do not allow any further Luck checks in this case. (You Deuces had better leave this kind of fancy flying to us old timers.)

Asteroids, meteor storms, and other debris present hazards to sublight travel. You may introduce such hazards at any time. Rate these hazards on a scale from 1-10, with 10 being the most difficult. (For example, the sparse asteroid belt of Earth's system would be a "1", while a "10" would include at least one asteroid in each cubic mile of space.)

Pilots must make a general check

against their Pilot skill scores when navigating through such hazards. Multiply the rating you gave the hazard by -10, and apply this modifier to the PC's Pilot skill check. Any pilot who fails this check collides with the hazard and destroys his ship. Characters on board may make a general Luck check to see if they survived the crash and are drifting through space in their suits. Characters making such a Luck check will die if not rescued within an hour.

SPACECRAFT DESCRIPTIONS

Every spacecraft in the STAR ACE™ game has several ratings: vessel type, cost, crew, carrying capacity, stress points, vessel combat rating, combat speed, weapons, and systems damage boxes.

Vessel Type. There are three basic types of spacecraft: tactical, strategic, and mixed. Tactical craft are primarily short range fighters, used for dogfighting and light attacks upon ground installations. Strategic craft are large fleet vessels such as destroyers or cruisers. They battle other fleet vessels and conduct massive firepower attacks against ground targets. Mixed craft can dogfight like tactical craft, but also carry some of the heavier firepower of strategic craft.

Cost. The fixed price, in Chips, of that model of craft.

Crew. The number of crew members necessary to run the craft at maximum combat efficiency. Any type of tactical craft requires only one pilot; ship descriptions detail the roles of other crew members.

Carrying Capacity. The number of cargo units the vessel can carry. (See Chapter 6 in the *Wilderness Briefing Manual* for details on cargo units.)

Stress Points. The number of points of stress damage the craft can suffer before it disintegrates. A craft disintegrates the instant it suffers stress damage equal to its stress point rating.

Vessel Combat Rating. The minimum Pilot skill score assigned to any character flying that craft. If a character's Pilot skill score is lower than the Vessel Combat Rating (VCR), the character uses the VCR instead of his skill score. (This applies to all characters aboard, not just the pilot.) The VCR reflects the fact that a technologically advanced spacecraft has a certain minimum effectiveness, regardless of the operator's ability. Craft crewed by NPCs use the VCR as the Pilot skill score for all NPCs aboard, unless you wish to create special NPCs for certain situations. NPCs also use the VCR instead of skill scores for Emergency Spacecraft Repair and Deep Space Navigation.

Combat Speed. The maximum number of Tactical Sectors (Battle-Board hexes) the craft may move in one round.

Weapons. Spacecraft have three basic weapon types: lasers, missiles, and plasma guns. These weapons and their effects are summarized on the Spacecraft Weapons chart.

Some weapons cause damage *in addition to the results obtained on the Action Table. These weapons have an additional damage modifier.* The additional damage modifier is shown as a plus sign followed by a number. When the weapon hits, add the additional damage modifier to the damage inflicted according to the Action Table. For example, a +10 laser always does 10 points of extra stress damage when it hits the target.

Each weapon also has a field of fire. The field of fire (listed under "Weapons" in the Ship Description) is either front, rear, left or right side, front & side, or rear & side. Weapons with "front & side" or "rear & side" are mounted on revolving turrets which allow them to fire to either side as well as the front or rear. Weapons with only "left side" or "right side" may fire only to the specified side. Fields of fire are illustrated in the accompanying diagram.

Control

Crew

Capacity: 6 cargo units plus crew
Note: Carries 4 "Imp" Imperial fighters with a VCR of 80 instead of the standard VCR of 60.

Imperial Cruiser

Stress Points: 900 *Combat Speed:* 4
VCR: 80 *Crew:* 450
Cost: 500,000 C *Type:* Strategic

Weapons and Damage Boxes:

Front: 4 +30 lasers

Front & side: +50 plasma gun

+50 plasma gun

Rear & side: +50 plasma gun

+50 plasma gun

Left side: 4 +20 lasers

6 lasers

4 missile launchers

Right side: 4 +20 lasers

6 lasers

4 missile launchers

Rear: 4 +30 lasers

Drive

Control

Crew

Capacity: 12 cargo units plus crew

Note: Carries four "Imp" Imperial fighters.

Imperial Dreadnought

Stress Points: 1500 *Combat Speed:* 3
VCR: 80 *Crew:* 800
Cost: 2 million C *Type:* Strategic

Weapons and Damage Systems:

Front: 4 +40 lasers

Front & side: +80 plasma gun

+80 plasma gun

Rear & side: +80 plasma gun

+80 plasma gun

Left side: +50 plasma gun

+50 plasma gun

4 +30 lasers

6 +10 lasers

6 missile launchers

Right side: +50 plasma gun

+50 plasma gun

4 +30 lasers

6 +10 lasers

6 missile launchers

Rear: 4 +40 lasers

Drive

Control

Crew

Capacity: 24 cargo units plus crew

Note: Carries eight "Imp" Imperial fighters.

Standard Passenger Liner

Stress Points: 150 *Combat Speed:* 4
VCR: 60 *Crew:* 4
Cost: 10,000 C *Type:* Strategic

Weapons: None

Capacity: 200 passengers or 2 cargo units

Damage Boxes: Drive

Control

Standard Cargo Vessel

Stress Points: 200 *Combat Speed:* 4
VCR: 40 *Crew:* 4
Cost: 15,000 C *Type:* Strategic

Weapons and Damage Boxes:

Front: (Crewman 1 or 2) laser

Rear: (Crewman 3 or 4) laser

Drive *Control*

Capacity: 12 cargo units

Imperial CRP Station

Stress Points: 1000 *Combat Speed:* 0
VCR: 60 *Crew:* 500
Cost: 1 million C *Type:* Strategic

Weapons and Damage Boxes:

Front: +30 laser

Front & side: +30 laser

Rear & side: +30 laser

Rear: +30 laser

Control:

Crew:

Capacity: 12 cargo units plus crew

Note: Does not move. Serves as protection for Communications Relay Points and as a fleet base. Imperial craft can find repair services and supplies of all kinds here.

Designing Other Ships

At your discretion, characters may modify the craft above or design ad-

ditional models. They will need Engineering skill to design and build such modifications. Generally, do not allow ships to carry weaponry heavier than what is listed on that model's description. Allow PCs to rearrange weaponry on their own ships, however, or to replace weapons with others of a similar size. For example, a PC might reasonably replace a laser with a missile.

Use the costs of standard ships, repairs, and weapons as a guideline in determining how much to charge characters for new designs and alterations.

SPACECRAFT COMBAT

Spacecraft combat is the heart of the STAR ACE™ game. The rules below explain dogfights, the role of strategic vessels in combat, and attacks against ground installations.

When resolving spacecraft combat, use the Tactical Sectors on the Battle-Board. Use a ship counter to represent each craft.

Dogfighting

A Dogfight is a combat between tactical and/or mixed craft. The sequence of play for dogfighting is similar to the normal sequence of play, except attackers are not required to declare ranged weapon attacks, and the melee steps of the round are replaced with another ranged weapon step:

Dogfighting Sequence of Play

1. CM declaration
2. PC declaration
3. Initiative determination
4. Side A uses noetics
5. Side A fires ranged weapons
6. Side A moves (and uses Emergency Spacecraft Repair skill)
7. Side B defensive fire
8. Side A fires again
9. Side B uses noetics
10. Side B fires
11. Side B moves (and uses Emergency Spacecraft Repair skill)
12. Side A defensive fire
13. Side B fires again

A dogfight begins when hostile craft move to within 20 TS of one another. Sighting occurs automatically; because of the high-tech sensory devices aboard all spacecraft, there is no surprise in a dogfight. (Under special circumstances, such as coming out of translight drive, you may wish to use the surprise rule in Chapter IV. Surprised pilots may take no action except straight flight until no longer surprised.)

Dogfighting Options

During a dogfight, pilots must declare one of the following options in the declaration step of the round:

Raise Shields. At the start of combat, wise pilots take a moment to raise their shields. Unfortunately, no crew member (including the pilot) can raise shields and fire weapons during the same round. If a ship has more than one crew member, the pilot can fire weapons while somebody else raises the shields. The craft remains unshielded until the beginning of the next round.

After 120 rounds, shielded craft lose one stress point per round due to the severe energy drain required to keep the shields up.

Shields absorb about half the damage (from any weapon) a craft would normally suffer. If the shields are up, ignore any multipliers called for by the Anti-Spacecraft Results Key (see below). If a craft suffers an "S" result (which calls for 1d10 stress points of damage), divide the result by two, rounding fractions up. Finally, divide additional damage modifiers (such as from a +40 laser) by two before applying damage loss to a shielded craft.

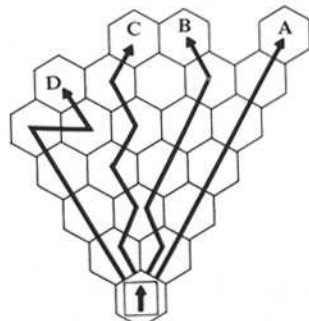
For example, if an ICE Frigate hits a shielded fighter with a +40 laser and gets a "M" result, the Anti-Spacecraft Fire Results Key calls for 2d10 x 2 stress points of damage. Because the craft was shielded, however, ignore the x 2 multiplier and simply roll 2d10 stress points of damage. In addition, the heavy laser's +40 additional damage modifier is divided by two, so only 20 stress points of

additional damage are applied. As you can see, shields can save a small fighter from some devastating attacks.

No craft can have more than one shield, regardless of its size. The noetic skill Shield Ship has no effect on a craft which has a functioning shield.

Shields collapse whenever the opponent obtains a "K" result on the Action Table. The craft begins taking full damage with the hit that collapses its shields. Shields cannot be repaired until after combat.

Straight Flight. When a pilot declares straight flight, he moves straight ahead, as shown in the diagram. The pilot may make one 60 degree turn (one hex vertex) at any point.



A, B, C indicate straight flight
D indicates a turn

Maneuver. A maneuvering pilot is circling, accelerating, decelerating, and turning to get a shot at an enemy craft. A pilot may maneuver against only one craft each round, and must be within 10 TS of the craft at the beginning of the round. Once he has declared maneuver, the pilot must complete the maneuver even if his target is destroyed before he moves (in this case, he maneuvers against the last hex the target occupied).

Maneuver takes place during the Movement step of the round. The pilot rolls a specific check against his Pilot skill score. Cross-index the result on the Action Table column beneath the Pilot skill score of the Dogfight Maneuver Results Key.

DOGFIGHT MANEUVER RESULTS

Failure = Maneuvering pilot must use straight flight option this round.

S = Maneuvering pilot ends move 1d10 hexes directly ahead of enemy craft.

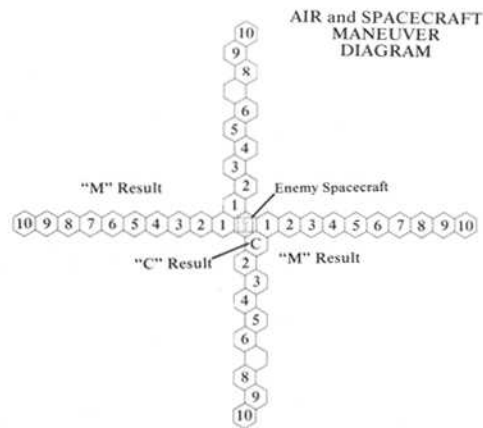
L = Maneuvering pilot ends move 1d10 hexes ahead of enemy craft, but at such an angle that the defender suffers a -30 modifier during the upcoming defensive fire step.

M = Maneuvering pilot ends move 1d10 hexes to the side he chooses of the enemy craft.

H = Maneuvering pilot ends move 1d10 hexes directly behind the enemy craft.

C = Maneuvering pilot ends move 1 hex directly behind the enemy craft at such an angle that the defender cannot fire at the maneuvering craft during the upcoming defensive fire step.

K = Disregard "K" in these results.



When a spacecraft maneuvers, use the results key above to find its final location relative to its target and simply place its counter in the proper hex.

Escape. A pilot declaring escape wants out of the battle. To escape, he must declare the escape option at the

beginning of the round, and his side must win initiative for the round. If his side loses initiative, he must take straight flight for the round.

An escaping pilot must roll a general check against his Pilot skill score during his movement step of the round. If he fails, he must take straight flight or that round. If he passes the check, the pilot ends the round 1d10+ his craft's combat speed away from the enemy spacecraft that was closest to him at the beginning of the round (his choice of direction).

If he ends his movement more than 10 hexes away from *all* enemy craft, he escapes the dogfight: remove his craft from the map. If he is within 10 hexes of any enemy craft, he must suffer through the rest of the round. He may try to escape again next round.

If a pilot in a faster craft decides to pursue an escaping craft, simply assume the pursuer catches the would-be escapee a few dozen TS away. After the first dogfight ends, start a new dogfight with the pursuer 20 hexes behind the escapee. Note that the pursuer's combat speed must be greater than the escapee's combat speed to effectively pursue.

Pilots can also escape a dogfight by accelerating to translight speed, using standard procedures. Ships may fire weapons during the 1d10 rounds required for computer calculations, but must maintain straight flight.

Anti-Spacecraft Fire

Any fire against a spacecraft is Anti-Spacecraft Fire. Characters can use anti-spacecraft fire in each of the ranged weapon fire steps in the Dogfighting Sequence of Play. A character may fire one weapon on each fire step, provided he takes no other action that round. Piloting a craft does not count as an action for purposes of this rule.

To determine the results of anti-spacecraft fire, the firing player rolls a specific check against his character's Piloting skill score. If the character's Piloting score is lower than the VCR of the spacecraft, the character uses the VCR instead the Pilot skill score.

NPC craft usually use the craft's VCR as the Piloting skill score.

The defending pilot rolls 1d10 to determine his defense column on the Action Table. Interpret the result on the Anti-Spacecraft Fire Results Key below:

ANTI-SPACECRAFT FIRE RESULTS

Failure = Miss

S = Slight Damage: Defender loses 1d10 stress points of damage.

L = Light Damage: Defender loses 2-20 stress points (1d10x2)*.

H = Heavy Damage: Defender loses 6-60 stress points (3d10x2)*.

C = Critical Damage: Defender loses 6-60 stress points (3d10x2)* plus one damage box (attacker's choice).**

K = Shield Knockout: The craft's defensive shields are knocked out of operation for the remainder of combat. The craft begins to take full damage immediately (including this attack).

* If the shields are still operating, do not multiply the results by two.

** If the shields are still operating before this attack, do not mark off a damage box.

When a craft is reduced to 0 stress points, it is destroyed. If a PC pilot or passenger passes his Luck check, the character is adrift in a spacesuit. His only hope of survival is to be rescued within one hour.

Hits To Damage Boxes

When all the damage boxes for a weapon or system have been marked, that weapon or system will not function until at least one damage box is repaired. Specific effects are:

Drive Out. The ship cannot maneuver or change speed.

Control Out. This ship cannot maneuver or turn; it must utilize straight flight. The pilot still controls the ship's speed.

Crew Hits. Each crew box represents 25 crew members. When all crew boxes are checked, there are still enough miscellaneous personnel to pilot the ship and fire its weapons.

Inflicting crew hits reduces opposition to boarding actions.

Missile Attacks

A character may announce missile fire during any ranged weapon fire step when the target is within 10 TS. The character firing the missile uses his Piloting skill (or VCR) to guide the missile to its target. The firing character makes a general check against his Piloting skill score (or VCR). Failure means the character misses the target. A character that passes the check hits the target.

Missile hits cause 150% catastrophic damage to their target. The attacker makes a separate roll for damage, interpreting the results on the Anti-Spacecraft Fire Results key.

Repairing Damage

During the Movement step of the round, characters with Emergency Spacecraft Repair skill (see Chapter VI) can attempt to restore a damage box to any damaged weapon or system. At your discretion, NPC craft may use their VCR as an Emergency Spacraft Repair skill score.

Stress point damage can be repaired only at a base or major installation by a character with an Engineering skill. The cost of such repairs normally runs three chips per point for materials and two chips per point for labor. Damage boxes can be repaired for the same price.

Rescuing PCs

Characters drifting in outer space can be rescued fairly easily. The rescuing pilot simply passes by the unfortunate character and tries to scoop him up in the craft's rescue bay. The rescuer then rolls a specific check against his Piloting skill score (or VCR) on column four of the Action Table. Read the results on the following key:

Failure = The craft strikes the "drifter," who suffers an "H" result on the Armed Combat Results Key. The character begins to drift away.

L = Limited success; the character sustains a "M" result on the Armed Combat Results key as he is recovered.

M = Moderate success; the character sustains a "L" result on the Armed Combat Results Key.

H = High success; the character sustains a "S" result on the Armed Combat Results Key.

C = Complete success; the character is recovered without injury.

Strategic Craft in Battle

Strategic craft have large crews and multiple weapon systems. They can fire all weapons systems in a single ranged weapon fire step, as long as each weapon has a target in its field of fire.

There will often be more than one craft in a weapon's field of fire. The character firing each weapon must declare his target at the beginning of the step (you must declare targets for NPC crews aboard large vessels). Once targets are designated, the attackers must complete their fire as they declared it, regardless of results, even if the target is destroyed before a particular weapon gets a chance to fire.

Strategic craft may use only straight flight in combat.

Spacecraft Boarding

Once all of a craft's drive and control damage boxes are checked off, it is a drifting hulk. Characters may board a craft in this state if the pilot passes a general check against his Piloting skill and docks with it. If he fails the check, the pilot misses the target and must wait 1d10 rounds before trying again.

After a successful docking, the characters must breach the airlock. A maximum of ten characters per round may pass through an airlock. Characters will find it best to pick the airlock's lock. If they simply blast a hole in the craft, they will decompress that compartment (or perhaps even all) of the ship—and all cargo inside is destroyed or lost.

Of course, once inside the craft, characters may still have to battle

living crew members. Remember, there are 25 crew members alive for each unchecked crew box.

Space/Ground Battles

Spacecraft not actively engaged in combat with other spacecraft can attack ground targets. Most installations can also return fire upon attacking spacecraft.

Strategic craft attack ground targets by placing themselves in a synchronous orbit above the target. A strategic craft can maintain continuous fire upon the installation from this orbit.

Tactical craft attack ground targets by buzzing them at relatively low altitudes (about 30,000 feet). Tactical craft may attack a single target only once every 1d10 rounds—reflecting the time required to maneuver for consecutive attacks.

Mixed craft may attack in either manner.

Always consider the range between strategic craft and ground installations to be three TS, even though it may be much less in actuality. This range reflects the effects of the planet's atmosphere, magnetic field, terrain, etc. upon combat.

The range between tactical craft and ground installation is always one TS.

All spacecraft must attack specific targets. Strategic craft must attack targets with a surface area of at least 100 square yards. Tactical craft may attack targets as small as hovertanks.

Ground installations generally have weapons similar to those aboard spacecraft. In addition, characters on the ground may fire PPR bursts at tactical spacecraft.

All combat results between spacecraft and installations are interpreted on the Anti-Spacecraft Fire Results key.

Surface Installations

On surface installations, only weapons have damage boxes. All of an installation's stress points must be eliminated to destroy the effectiveness of the installation.

Use your discretion to determine whether attacks on ground installations cause secondary damage such as gas explosions and fires.

Use the following examples as guidelines when assigning stress points to surface installations:

Wood frame house	30 points
Multi-story steel and concrete building	120 points
Sandbagged foxhole	15 points
Concrete bunker	250 points
Watch/guardtower	20 points
Subway Station	275 points

SPACECRAFT WEAPONS CHART

Weapon	Range Modifiers	ROF/Rnd.	Damage Boxes	Cost
Laser (all types)	-05	3	1	200 C (+100 for each +10)
+50 Plasma gun	-03	1	2	10,000 C
+80 Plasma gun	-01	1/2	4	30,000 C
Missile launcher	NA	1	1	100 C

Notes: All Plasma guns have a -50 modifier, in addition to the range modifier, when firing at tactical or mixed craft. Missile launchers on strategic craft can fire one missile per round.

CHAPTER VI: SKILLS

In addition to Basic Abilities, each character in a STAR ACE™ game has *skills: special abilities that stem from advanced training*. For the most part, skills differ from character to character, just as backgrounds do. There are four categories of skills, just as there are four Free Orders. Each Order specializes in one of the categories of skills, and its members gain certain benefits, explained below, when they use those skills. However, a character can acquire any skill, not just those skills in which his or her Order specializes.

SKILL LEVELS AND SCORES

Not everyone who has a skill performs in the same way: you may use a laser pistol very well, but that doesn't mean you're a match for a Spade Ace (or even for the Gorlon mercenary drinking in the local Stalitsan bar). In the STAR ACE game, these differences in ability are represented by three levels of skill: Rookie, Veteran (Vet), and Ace. Rookie is the lowest level; Ace is the highest. When characters first acquire a skill, they always acquire it at Rookie level.

Skill Scores

Just as with Basic Abilities, characters have a score for each of their skills. Skill scores are based on Basic Ability scores, plus a modifier for the level of the skill. Just follow these simple steps to figure out a character's skill score:

1. Find the skill on the Skills Chart. Listed by the skill is a formula for computing a character's base score in the skill.

2. Follow the formula on the chart to figure out the base score. This always involves adding up a few Ability scores, and dividing the sum by the number of Abilities. Round up any fractions.

3. Add the appropriate modifier for the character's level in the skill to the base score you figured out in step 2 above.

The modifier you add depends upon whether the skill is one in which

your character's Order specializes (for example, a member of the Free Order of Diamonds uses the specialty modifier in all Diamond Specialty skills, the non-specialty modifier in any Spade, Club, or Heart Specialty skills he or she chooses), as shown on the following chart:

SKILL LEVEL MODIFIERS

Level	Non-specialty	Specialty
Rookie	+15	+30
Veteran	+30	+45
Ace	+55	+70

These modifiers are not cumulative. When a character advances to the next skill level, add the modifier to his base score, not his *previous* score.

Example: Harry Adams, a Deuce of Clubs, has just acquired the Sword skill. To obtain his skill score, Harry adds his Strength score, 58, to his Agility score, 64, for a total of 122. Next he divides this total by 2, obtaining 61. 61 is his base score. Because Harry has just acquired this skill, he now adds the Rookie modifier to 61, and finds that his skill score is 76 ($61+15=76$). If Harry acquires Veteran level in this skill, his score will be $61+30=91$; and if he's lucky and good enough to make Ace level, his score will be $61+55=116$. If Harry were a Deuce of Spades, his Rookie level score in the skill would be $61+30=91$, because the Sword is one of the skills in which Spades specialize.

Willpower and Stamina

Several skills use either Willpower or Stamina as part of their base score. Changes in a character's current Stamina and Willpower scores *do not affect skill scores, except Distance Running and Swimming* (see below).

ACQUIRING SKILLS

Each newly created player character automatically has certain skills: Spacecraft Piloting (which allows a Star Team member to pilot or operate any spacecraft), and Noetic Defense Mode

(see Club Specialty Skills, later in this chapter). Each PC also chooses two more skills from the list provided for that character's particular Order, and one additional skill, which doesn't have to be a specialty of the character's Order.

Characters can acquire additional skills, or advance in level in a skill they already have, in two different ways: by paying for them with the money they've made during the game, or by promotion within their Order. How characters are promoted through the order has already been explained in Chapter III. The cost (in chips) to advance in skills or acquire new ones is shown on the following chart:

SKILL COSTS CHART

Activity	Cost
Acquire skill at Rookie level	250 C
Raise Rookie skill to Vet	500 C
Raise Vet skill to Ace level	1000 C

Whether they buy the skills, or receive the skill through promotion, all characters with a rank of Deuce through Five in their Order may acquire only new skills at Rookie level. At the rank of Six in an Order, the character may choose one of the following options:

1. Add another Rookie level skill.
2. Improve a skill he or she already has from Rookie to Veteran level.

The character continues choosing from these options with each promotion or purchase until reaching the rank of Ace. Once the character becomes an Ace, he or she may choose one of the following options:

1. Add another skill at Rookie level.
2. Improve 2 Rookie level skills to Veteran level.
3. Improve a Veteran level skill to Ace level.

NPCs—including all aliens—have skills too. The NPC descriptions in each PACESETTER adventure include a list of skills these characters have acquired. If the CM creates his

or her own adventure, he or she should choose skills for the NPCs to match their roles in the scenario.

SKILL CHECKS

Characters make skill checks to find out how well they use a skill, just as they make Ability checks. Skill checks are general or specific, depending on the skill; the descriptions below tell which kind of check to make. Chapters IV and V have explained the checks for combat skills. The results of most other specific skill checks are found on column 4 of the Action Table.

EXCLUSIVE SKILLS

In Chapter IV we explained that characters can use most weapons without having skills for those weapons; they just use their Dexterity or Unskilled Melee score as the base chance of success. Not all skills work this way; many cannot be used unless characters actually have the skill. For example, how many of you would want someone without Emergency Spacecraft Repair skills doing an urgent fix-up job on your weapons system during combat? Such skills are called *exclusive*. Characters without exclusive skills may *never* attempt actions that require those skills.

SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

The Skills Chart gives important information about each skill, but it doesn't tell the whole story—that's in the descriptions below. Read these descriptions before you attempt to acquire or use a skill.

SPADE SPECIALTY SKILLS

The Free Order of Spades specializes in these skills, most of which are combat related.

Spacecraft Piloting Skill

All PCs, and many NPCs, have this skill. However, this skill is a specialty of the Free Order of Spades, and

Spades are generally better pilots than anyone else.

Spacecraft Piloting: *Exclusive skill. Base=(Pcn+Dex+Agl)÷3. Specific check.*

This skill allows a character to pilot spacecraft. At Rookie level, the character can pilot any type of tactical or cargo craft. At Veteran level, the character can pilot a commercial space-liner or any other craft up to and including destroyer class vessels. At Ace level, a character can pilot any spacecraft. No check is usually needed for this skill, except the specific check when dogfighting or making jumps into hyperspace.

Unarmed Melee Skills

Unarmed melee skills usually let a character make more than one attack in a round. They reflect skill in hand-to-hand fighting styles, including two special kinds: Martial Arts and Advanced Self-defense. Note that Martial Arts is a cross-over skill; it allows characters to make both unarmed and armed attacks.

Boxing: *Exclusive skill. Base=(Str+Dex+Agl)÷3. Specific check.*

Characters using Boxing skill are allowed 1 extra melee attack per round at Rookie level, 2 extra attacks at Veteran level, and 3 extra attacks at Ace level. Thus, an Ace boxer would get four attacks in a melee step when using his or her Boxing skill. In addition, if the Boxer obtains a "K" result, he forces the defender to make an immediate general check against current Stamina. If the defender fails the check, he is knocked out for 1d10 minutes. If the defender passes the check, he's still knocked down, as in to the normal "K" result.

Wrestling: *Exclusive skill. Base=(Str+Agl)÷2. Specific check.*

When characters use Wrestling skill, any "H" on the results key means that the defender is pinned in a "hold." The defender can do nothing while he's pinned, except try to free himself. The hold is broken if: 1) The defender wins initiative and passes a general

Unskilled Melee check, Wrestling check, or Martial Arts check—all with a -20 modifier to his score; or, 2) a third party successfully attacks the Wrestler making the hold, using any combat form.

The Wrestler doesn't have to make a check to maintain a hold; it's automatic each round until someone breaks it. For every round that he's held, the defender receives normal "H" unarmed combat damage.

If a Wrestler obtains a "C" result when using this skill, he has managed to make a stronger hold. The results are the same as "H" results, with two exceptions: the held defender suffers a -40 modifier to his checks (rather than -20), and the damage inflicted each round is normal "C" result unarmed combat damage.

"K" results still apply normally. If a "K" result occurs along with an "H" or "C" result, the defender is knocked down and held. The holding character is also on the ground, maintaining the hold.

Characters using Wrestling skill may declare strangling as a called shot (providing the opponent has a neck and breathes through it somehow). A "C" result is applied as above, in addition to the effects of strangling described in Chapter IV.

Martial Arts: *Exclusive skill. Base=(Str+Dex+Agl+Wpr)÷4. Specific check.*

Characters who have Martial Arts skill can also make more melee attacks per round: Rookies make two, Veterans three, and Aces four. But that's not all; the skill offers other advantages, too:

1. At Rookie level, a skilled character can "call a shot" to inflict up to five wounds—using the armed combat results key. If the attack result is a "C," the defender takes the specified number of wounds.

2. At Veteran level, the skilled character may enter combat armed with nunchakus—lethal weapons that consist of two sticks connected by a chain. Characters can attack with one nunchaku in each hand, if they'd like. All attacks made with nunchakus are considered armed

melee attacks. Characters without Martial Arts skill may not use nunchakus.

3. At Ace level, the character can use shurikens (sometimes called "throwing stars") as thrown weapons up to a range of 30'(1g). The Ace can throw this weapon during any missile fire step. Each shuriken counts as one ranged weapon attack.

In Chapter IV, we explained that characters must choose one combat form each round: ranged weapons and melee don't mix. Well, here's the exception to the rule: Martial Arts Aces can mix melee and missile attacks as they choose. The maximum number of attacks is still four, so the character might throw one shuriken as his first attack, throw another later, then kick twice, or... declare a kick, then turn around and throw three shurikens. It's up to the Ace to decide.

*Advanced Self-Defense:

Exclusive skill. Base=(Str+Dex+Agl+Wpr)÷4. Specific check.

Characters must be an Ace in either Boxing, Wrestling, or Martial Arts before they can acquire this skill. Once they have Advanced Self-defense skill, however, they can use any of the unarmed melee skills at a level equal to their level in Advanced Self-defense. (Of course, if they already have a higher skill level in an unarmed melee skill, they attack at that level, instead.)

In addition, characters with this skill shift one defense column to the right when defending in melee—as long as their opponent doesn't have this skill, too. (Column 10 is the highest column possible.)

Armed Melee Skills

All skills: Usual Base=(Str+Agl)÷2. Specific check.

Armed melee skills are simply skills in using melee weapons. Most do not offer extra attacks per round, but they increase a character's accuracy (chance to hit) with the weapon. The Skills Chart lists all the armed melee options. Many are self-explanatory (for example, Dagger skill means simply that you have skill with a dagger), so

no further description is needed. Those that are unusual in some way, or an exception to a rule, are listed in detail below.

Bayonet: Characters using this skill gain one additional bayonet attack per round for each level of skill: Rookies can make two attacks, Veterans, three; Aces, four.

Blackjack: A blackjack is a nasty weapon that resembles a short, heavy club, usually covered with leather. Characters using this weapon skill can sometimes knock their opponents out, if they make the knockout a called shot. The opponent must have his back turned or be surprised. Then if the attacker makes the shot, the opponent's current Stamina score drops to zero immediately, and he falls unconscious.

Bullwhip: *Exclusive skill. Base=(Str+Dex+Agl)÷3. Specific check.*

The base for this skill differs from most others of its kind, so be sure to use the formula given here. The bullwhip comes in handy in many situations, since an attacker can use it two ways. First, he or she can strike an opponent, although the maximum damage the bullwhip can cause is "M" on the armed combat key. Second, the attacker can use it to tangle up his or her opponent: the attacker strikes, and makes tangling a called shot. Any "C" result causes no damage, but means that the whip wraps around the defender, pulling him immediately to the ground. Entangled defenders are helpless. They can free themselves in two rounds, as long as they take no other action during that time.

***Lance, horseman's:** Characters with this skill can use any type of cavalry lance as a melee weapon while they are riding on horseback. A character must have Veteran level Riding skill before he can acquire this skill (After all, what good would the lance do if you couldn't stay on the horse, or whatever you might ride on a given planet?) This is a special mounted melee skill; characters who

have this skill do not also have to acquire Mounted melee skill with the lance (see below).

Polearms: Characters using this skill can wield polearms and thrusting spears of all types—including pikes, awls, halberds, and other common polearms.

Short-handled weapons:

Characters who have this skills are particularly good at bashing and chopping with any short weapon other than a sword, knife, or dagger. Examples of weapons included in this skill are the shock mace, club, mace, axe, morning star, and flail.

Sword: This skill includes any type of weapon with a blade at least 2 feet long, including the popular monofilament sword. But the most common sword in the Star Team arsenal is the beam saber. When its grip is triggered, a beam saber projects a blade 3 to 4 feet long. It can be used defensively if the character using the beam saber declares this intent during the declaration phase of combat. A "C" result is required for such defense use. At Rookie level, a "C" result means the user parries an attempted strike with another sword, club, or hand held weapon. At Veteran level a character can parry missiles with a successful roll. At Ace level, the character can actually deflect beam and particle weapons with his beam saber. A skilled character can parry up to four times in one round.

Once the character with the beam saber has declared his intent to "defend," damage will not be recorded until after the defending character attempts his defensive roll, regardless of initiative and who attacks first.

***Florentine style:** *Base=(Str+Dex+Agl)÷3. Specific check.*

Fighting Florentine style means fighting with a sword in one hand and a dagger in the other. Florentine fighting is no easy feat; characters must have Sword skill at Veteran level before they can acquire this skill.

They can still make only one attack per round, but opponents must shift their "defense" on the Action Table one column to the right, unless they have this skill themselves. Characters may use beam sabers when fighting Florentine style; in such cases, a character could parry up to four attacks (as Veteran or Ace, depending on his or her Sword skill) and still make one dagger attack.

Special Weapons Skills

Lasso: *Exclusive skill. Base=(Str+Dex)÷2. Specific check.*

The lasso is a rope with a sliding noose at one end. It has no effect unless the attacker gets a "C" result, but that result can be deadly. A "C" result indicates that the attacker has successfully entangled the defender in the lasso. The entangled defender is knocked down, bound, and helpless. The defender can free himself in 1d10 rounds, provided he takes no other action. If a friend of the victim has a knife or similar tool, he can cut through the rope in 1 round, and free the lassoed character.

If players use the optional hit location system in Chapter IV, a character may cut himself free in 1 round if his arms and hands are not entangled.

Characters with lasso skill can throw a lasso no farther than 15 feet at 1g. No range modifiers apply.

Net: *Exclusive skill. Base=(Str+Dex+Agl)÷3. Specific check.*

This weapon has no effect except on a "C" result. A "C" result indicates that the defender is entangled in the net. See the notes on "Lasso" for the defender's chance to free himself (or be freed); the same rules apply.

As long as the defender is tangled in the net, he must make a general Agility check each round to remain standing. If he fails the check, he immediately falls down, and is considered "on the ground" until he stands up—which also requires a general Agility check. The entangled defender may use no melee skill in attacking, and defends in melee on column 1 while entangled.

Mounted Skills

Riding Skill: *Base=(Dex+Agl+Per)÷3. General check or Specific check.*

Any character can ride a horse, or a similar beast, under normal circumstances without a skill. This skill allows the character to stay in the saddle (and in control) under more difficult circumstances: for instance, in melee, in high-speed chases, and during dangerous leaps or stunts.

The rider must make a general check whenever he tries to do something that, in the CM's judgment, could cause him to fall off his mount. A successful check means the character stays in the saddle.

If the characters use this skill to perform stunts—such as clinging to the side of a moving horse to use the animal for cover—they must make a specific check. *Only "C" results indicate success; everything else spells failure.*

It always happens: you get up on a high horse, and someone tries to knock you off. When someone tries to drag a skilled rider from his mount, the rider defends against this melee attack using the defense column beneath his skill score (use the ranges at the top of the Action Table).

***Mounted Melee:** *Skill score with weapon. Specific check.*

Characters with this skill make good use of melee weapons while they're riding. Characters without this skill can attempt to fight mounted, too, but they do so with a -40 modifier, in addition to all others. Characters must have reached Veteran level in Riding skill before they can acquire this skill. Mounted melee attacks are made using the character's skill score with the weapon being used, or his Unskilled Melee score; no modifiers for skill level apply to Mounted Melee itself.

***Mounted Ranged Weapon:** *Skill score with weapon. Specific check.*

Characters with this skill have received training to fire or throw weapons while on horseback. (Some weapons, however, can never be used on

horseback, especially early firearms. Refer to the Ranged Weapons Table in Chapter IV.) Characters without this skill may still fire ranged weapons or throw missiles while mounted, but they do so with a -40 modifier. A character must be a Veteran (or Ace) Rider before acquiring this skill. There's no need to advance in this skill, since the base chance always equals a missile weapon skill score.

Ranged Weapon Skills

Ranged weapon skills reflect training with any weapon that you can fire, sling, or throw. With the exception of traditional firearms and beam weapons, these skills do not offer additional attacks per round, but they increase a character's chance to hit when using a particular ranged weapon.

Some of these skills may be used when vehicles or spacecraft are in combat (see Chapter V). Such skills are marked by an asterisk (*).

Bow Skills: *Base=Varies. Specific check.*

There are three bow skills:

Shortbow: Base=Dex

Crossbow: Base=Dex

Longbow: Base=(Str+Dex)÷2

In addition to increasing accuracy, these skills increase the speed with which the skilled character can reload a bow and be ready to shoot again. Characters cannot shoot any bow more than once per round. Furthermore, they need several rounds to reload, as shown on the following chart:

BOW RELOADING

Rounds Required to Reload

Level	Long	Short	Cross
Unskilled	5	5	12
Rookie	4	4	10
Veteran	3	3	8
Ace	2	2	6

Firearms Skill: *Base=Dex. Specific check.*

All firearms skills allow a character to make one additional ranged attack per skill level, per round—up to the

maximum rate of fire for the weapon. There are three specific firearms skills:

Automatic Rifle - This skill includes the use of submachine guns, all automatic rifles, and the Proton Projection rifle*.

Long-barreled guns - This skill includes the use of the arquebus, musket, dragoon musket, rifle, and shotgun.

Pistol - This skill includes the use of hand guns of all types, including derringers, revolvers, automatic pistols, and flintlock pistols.

Long-barreled gun skill enables a character to reload a musket or dragoon musket more rapidly than an unskilled character. Here's how long it takes to reload:

Skill Level	Rounds to Reload
Unskilled	4
Rookie	3
Veteran	2
Ace	1

Beam Weapon Skills*: $Base = Dex$. *Specific check.*

Characters can acquire three separate skills with beam weapons: Laser pistol, laser rifle, and the deadly but rare Beta-Red-Particle Beam rifle.

Thrown Weapon Skills: $Base = (Str + Dex) \div 2$. *Specific check.*

Many separate skills make up this group: Axe/Tomahawk, Dagger/Knife, Dart, Grenade, Javelin, Sling, Spear, and Sensory Knife. These skills simply increase a character's accuracy when throwing these weapons: they don't allow him to throw more than one weapon per round.

Grenade Launcher: $Base = Dex$. *Specific check.*

Grenade launchers can be fitted with one of four types of grenades; standard fragmentation, light, sonic, and glitter. Light grenades can be used to illuminate the dark, or to flashblind opponents. Sonic grenades cause a shock wave (but not in a vacuum) and deafness. Glitter works as a smoke screen and reflects and disperses beams.

HEART SPECIALTY SKILLS

These skills are specialties of the Free Order of Hearts. Most of these skills pertain to scientific, medical, or technical work of some sort.

Computers: $Base = (Pcn + Luck) \div 2$. *Exclusive skill. Secret specific check.*

All PCs, and most NPCs on planets of Tech Level 6 or higher, can use a computer, provided the computer is set up for their use. Computer skill allows a character to reprogram or get information from a computer which the character is not supposed to be able to use, such as the computer that controls life support and fire control on an Imperial ship.

Before using a computer, the user must find a terminal or other communications link. Computer skill does not help a character do this.

Once access has been gained, this skill becomes useful. Characters must overcome any security program the computer may have before they can get information or start programming. Then, the character must find the information he or she is looking for in the computer's files, and/or do any necessary reprogramming. Characters can reprogram a computer to malfunction in carrying out one of its normal functions. All in all, someone who has Computer skill can learn almost anything from a computer, *as long as that information is already in the machine.* PACESETTER adventures specify what information and functions a computer has, and the CM should decide this for his own scenarios, too, before play begins.

To get information from a computer, or reprogram it, characters must tell the CM exactly what they want to find out or have the machine do. They can't ask for "everything the machine has about this dreadnought"; instead, they have to be specific. For example, they might ask, "Can we find where the center for the defense shields for this dreadnought is located? Where is the closest control device to shut down the shields?" If they ask, characters can also find out whether

someone has reprogrammed the computer.

This skill requires a specific check. Use the following key to interpret the results:

L = Little success: the character needs 1-100 hours (roll percent dice) to pass the security and get information or reprogram.

M = Moderate success: the character can get information or reprogram in 1d10 hours.

H = High success: the character can get information or reprogram in $1d10 \div 2$ (round up) hours.

C = Complete success: the character can get information or do the reprogramming in 1d10 minutes.

Ignore "K" results.

Deep Space Tracking: *Exclusive skill. Base = (Pcn).* *Secret general check.*

Characters who have this skill can figure out the probable destination of an enemy ship that moves into translight speed to avoid pursuit. The CM rolls a secret general check, applying a -10 modifier for every Grand Strategic Sector the pilot of the fleeing craft intends to jump. If the check is unsuccessful, the CM may provide the skilled character with false information as to the destination of his enemy.

Demolitions: *Exclusive skill. Base = (Pcn + Dex) \div 2.* *Secret specific check.*

Characters who have this skill can use explosives of all kinds, if they can get them. The Star Teams do not usually provide explosives, so characters must obtain a Demolitions Kit from "other sources."

When a character uses this skill, he must state exactly what he wishes to happen, including the size of the area to be affected. Treat all explosions as 100% catastrophic damage.

Use of this skill requires a specific check—a secret one rolled by the CM. The CM should use this key to interpret the results:

L = Limited success: The explosion has the desired effect, but the blast

affects an area 50' larger than intended.

M = Moderate success: The explosion has the desired effect, but the blast affects an area 25' larger than intended.

H = High success: The explosion has the desired effect, but the blast affects an area 10' larger than intended.

C = Complete success: The explosion has the desired effect in the intended area.

If the specific check is a failure, the CM should roll percent dice. A roll of 01-50 means the explosives did not go off on schedule. (They may explode later; there's a 10% chance per round until the PCs leave the area.) A roll of 51-00 means the characters used too much explosive, with disastrous results at the CM's discretion.

Electronics: *Exclusive Skill. Base = (Pcn + Dex + Luck) ÷ 3. Secret specific check.*

Successful use of this skill lets a character make field repairs of electronic high tech devices such as radios, televiewers, communicators, calculators, listening devices ("bugs"), and other similar high tech devices powered by electricity. If the character can find the proper equipment and materials in the field, he or she can make these electronic devices, too. Characters must have a tool kit to use this skill, but that shouldn't present a problem; the Star Teams issue such a kit to a character who selects this skill.

Characters make specific checks to find out how well they use this skill. Read the key below to interpret the Action Table results:

L = Limited success: repair or construction takes 1d10 hours, and the device will work for 2d10 hours.

M = Moderate success: repair or construction takes $1d10 \div 2$ (round up) hours, and the device will function for 3d10 hours.

H = High success: repair or construction takes $1d10 \div 2$ (round up) hours, but the device will function for 2d10x2 hours.

C = Complete success: repair or construction takes 3d10x2 minutes;

the device will work normally as long as it has a power source.

Failure of the check means the character wastes 1d10 hours before he knows that he has failed.

The CM should roll these checks secretly, then let characters begin their repair or construction work, not telling them the results until the time indicated by the dice has expired. Characters can give up before the time runs out, but they have no chance for success if they do.

Emergency Spacecraft Repair: *Exclusive Skill. Base = (Pcn + Dex + Wpr) ÷ 3. Secret specific check.*

This skill enables a character to make "jury rig" repairs to a tactical spacecraft, erasing one box of damage, while piloting or being in the craft under combat conditions. The craft may not make any attacks with weapons controlled by the character making the repairs. If the character making the repairs is piloting the craft, it cannot jump to translight while repairs are in progress. Specific check results are:

L = Limited success: The repair takes 10 rounds to complete and will last for only 1d10 rounds.

M = Moderate success: The repair takes 5 rounds and lasts for 2d10 rounds.

H = High success: The repair takes 4 rounds to complete and lasts for 3d10 rounds.

C = Complete success: The repair takes 2 rounds to complete and lasts for 3d10x2 rounds.

Engineering: *Exclusive Skill. Base = (Pcn + Dex + Wpr) ÷ 3. Specific check.*

Successful use of this skill allows a character to make all kinds of major, permanent repairs to any spacecraft. Of course, the character must have the proper tools and parts in order to make the repairs. Repairs can also be expensive, as detailed in Chapter V. Check results for this skill are identical to the specific check results for Electronics skill.

Investigation: *Exclusive Skill.*

Base = (Pcn + Wpr + Per) ÷ 3. Secret specific check.

This skill offers two options:

1. Questioning. A character can use this skill score instead of his Personality score when he questions an NPC about a person or event.

2. General Investigation. A character using this skill can gather information about some person or event from large groups of minor NPCs, if he or she spends several hours canvassing an area or working through a crowd. The skill allows the user to ask questions that bring out hidden information. (Characters can best use this skill when the CM has not prepared clues and witnesses who can be found in specific locations.)

In both cases, the Investigation skill temporarily boosts the character's Perception: when the character gathers information, he or she does so with a +20 bonus to his Perception score.

This skill could help track down a smuggler or a particular NPC in a strange city. It can also be helpful when PCs are in legal trouble.

The CM rolls a secret specific check to determine how well characters perform this skill. When the character uses the skill to question a specific NPC, use the direct action check results in Chapter 5 of the *Wilderness Briefing Manual*. When the character uses this skill to make general surveys, use the following results key to find out how well he does:

L = Limited success: The character uncovers one major lead, fact, or important witness in 1d10 hours.

M = Moderate success: the character uncovers 2 major leads, facts, or witnesses in 1d10 hours.

H = High success: the character uncovers 3 leads, facts or witnesses in $1d10 \div 2$ (round up) hours.

C = Complete success: the character uncovers 4 leads, facts, or witnesses, plus many minor details, in $1d10 \div 2$ (round up) hours.

Failure means the character spends 1d10 hours in investigation, but still learns nothing of value.

Of course, this skill doesn't allow characters to pull information out of

thin air. If no one's around to give him clues, then no successful result offers any useful information. And if no one witnessed a crime, then the Investigator simply cannot gain information from a witness—no witness exists!

Mechanics: *Exclusive skill.* $Base = (Pcn + Dex) \div 2$. *Secret specific check.* Characters can use this skill to build any type of mechanical item or device. As with Electronics skill, characters must find the proper materials in the field before they can use this skill. They must also have the right tools. The CM rolls a secret specific check when characters use this skill. Use the key listed under Electronics to interpret results.

Medical Skill: *Exclusive skill.* $Base = (Pcn + Wpr + Per + Luck) \div 4$. *General check.*

Characters who have this skill are medical doctors. Doctors may use their skill to do the following things:

1. Treat critically wounded characters during combat, providing emergency bindings and pain-killers. Treatment takes 2 consecutive rounds. During that time, neither doctor nor patient may take any other action; if they do (or if one of them is attacked during the treatment) the treatment is void that round.

Characters who receive these "quick fix" treatments don't have to make Willpower checks each round to take action. They can go on fighting, but the treatment does nothing to protect them from further wounds or death. Doctors can treat themselves, too, but must pass a general current Willpower check before they try.

2. Care for wounded characters daily, thereby doubling the rate at which the patients heal wounds.

3. Diagnose poisoning and administer proper antidotes. Antidotes save characters who would otherwise die from the poisoning.

Doctors must pass a general check to use this skill successfully. Their supplies are included in a medical kit provided when they choose the skill.

Outdoor Survival: *Exclusive*

Skill. $Base = (Pcn + Wpr + Luck) \div 3$. *Specific check.*

This skill lets the user find food, water, and shelter in harsh but survivable environments. (Finding shelter can prevent exposure damage; see Chapter IV.) Characters must make a specific check to use this skill; they can try only once per day. Use the key below for results:

L = *Limited success:* the character finds enough food, water, and shelter to serve 1 character for 1 day.

M = *Moderate success:* the character finds enough food, water, and shelter to serve 2 characters for 1 day.

H = *High success:* the character finds enough food, water, and shelter to serve 4 characters for 1 day.

C = *Complete success:* the character finds enough food, water, and shelter to serve all desired characters for 1 day.

Failure means that the character finds nothing useful.

DIAMOND SPECIALTY SKILLS

The Free Order of Diamonds specializes in these skills. Most of them involve interacting with NPCs.

Bargaining: *Base* = $(Per + Wpr) \div 2$. *Specific check.*

Successful use of this skill allows the PC to bargain down the price of goods purchased, or to increase the price he or she receives for goods. (See Chapter 6 in the Wilderness Briefing Manual.) Use of the skill requires a specific check; results are read from the following key:

L = *Limited success:* PCs are paid no more than 0.5 times the market value of their goods, or are charged full price for purchases.

M = *Moderate success:* PCs are paid 0.75 times the market value of their goods, or are charged the full price for purchases.

H = *High success:* PCs are paid 1.25 times the market value of their goods or are charged only .75 times the normal price of goods.

C = *Complete success:* PCs are paid 1.5 times market value of their goods,

and charged only 0.5 times the normal prices for their purchases.

Disguise: *Exclusive Skill.* $Base = (Per + Dex) \div 2$. *General secret check.* Characters using this skill can use clothing and make-up to change their appearance. They can also disguise other people—if those people are willing.

This skill is like Impersonation skill. Skilled characters can change basic appearance and facial features; unskilled characters cannot do this. However, Disguise skill cannot change a character's apparent height by more than six inches, nor his or her weight by more or less than 20 pounds. Nor does this skill enable a character to pass for a specific individual; that requires Impersonation skill.

Disguise skill requires only a general check. The CM should roll this check secretly, letting the results become known during play. Success indicates that disguised characters are taken at face value for at least 12 hours, unless they do something which obviously does not fit within the role they are playing. (Roll a new check every 12 hours, until the character removes the disguise.) If characters fail their Disguise check, the first NPC who encounters them and passes a secret general Perception check (rolled by the CM) realizes that they are imposters. If the NPC already knows the disguised PCs' faces, he or she will recognize them.

Forgery: *Exclusive skill.* $Base = (Pcn + Dex) \div 2$. *Secret specific check.*

Ever heard the saying, "Put your John Hancock here"? Everyday folk would just sign their names in response. Characters who have Forgery skill, however, produce a signature just like John Hancock's—good enough to fool the owner himself. Characters who have Forgery skill can produce handwritten documents that look like someone else's work. To forge the document, the character must have a sample of the handwriting he or she wants to copy—a letter, diary entry, manuscript...anything at least 100 words long. Then he or she must pass

a specific check, rolled secretly by the CM. The key below describes the results:

L = Limited success: Characters who know the original handwriting well can make a general Perception check to see if they notice the forgery.

M = Moderate success: Same as "L" result, but characters make the Perception check with a -20 modifier.

H = High success: Same as "L" result, but characters make the Perception check with -40 modifier.

C = Complete success: Characters without Forgery skill cannot detect the forgery, even if they know the original handwriting well.

The CM should reveal the results during normal course of play—as the characters themselves would make the discovery. Failing the check means the forgery is obvious; anyone who knows the genuine handwriting will detect the forgery on sight, no check required.

Characters with Forgery skill can detect forgeries as well as make them. To detect a forgery, they must have a copy of the genuine handwriting to which the forgery can be compared. Detection still requires a specific check. Characters succeed if they get a result equal to or higher than the result earned by the forger (L, M, H, C; L is low, C is high). If the forger is unknown, or didn't make a check, then the adventure must specify the level of quality.

Gambling: *Exclusive skill.* $Base = (Pcn + Luck) \div 2$. *Specific check.*

Even if they lose money, agents may still find Gambling skill invaluable; In many societies, such as the Trakan, gambling is considered an acceptable, if not a required social activity. Characters who have this skill know games of chance extremely well, so they can cheat to fix the odds. Games of chance include poker, craps, or any other card or dice game.

In any game, characters play the games out "hand by hand." All participants must first agree on the stakes: the amount or item to be wagered. Each participant then rolls percent dice (the CM rolls for NPCs).

High roll wins the stakes multiplied by the number of players.

Characters who cheat can increase the amount of their die roll. Only one rule bars the Gambler: skilled PCs may never cheat other PCs; their victims must always be NPCs. In order to cheat, the character must declare his intent before anyone rolls the dice. The player rolls a specific check against his character's skill score. The result lies on the defense column below the Perception score of the "duped" character—the victim of the cheat. If more than one NPC is involved in the game, use the highest Perception score.

Use the key below to interpret the results of the check:

S or L = Limited success: the character adds 10 to his or her percent roll.

M = Moderate success: same as "L" but add 15 to the roll.

H = High success: add 20 to the roll.

C = Complete success: add 40 to the roll.

Failure = The character gets caught—with an Ace down his sock, or extra dice in his pocket.

Impersonation: *Exclusive skill.* $Base = (Pcn + Wpr + Per + Dex) \div 4$. *Secret specific check.*

Use of this skill allows a character to impersonate a well-known figure. That comes in handy when a Star Team needs to infiltrate restricted areas, especially inside of the Empire.

Before they leave on their mission, Impersonators are briefed on the subject's habits, likes, dislikes, and so on. Star Team Techs create high tech body suits that resemble the intended character in all respects while allowing the skin to breathe, and an authentic wardrobe (at the cost of the costume). Once the Impersonator arrives at the mission site, he or she may decide if and when to begin the impersonation.

Impersonation requires one specific check for every 4 hour period the agent spends with people who know the "real" person well. The CM

should roll this check secretly. Use this key to interpret the results:

L = Limited success: each NPC who has at least daily contact with the impersonated character is allowed a general Perception check with a -20 modifier to detect impersonation.

M = Moderate success: Same as "L" result, but the Perception check modifier is -30.

H = High success: same as the "L" result but the Perception check modifier is -40.

C = Complete success: the impersonation is not detected.

Failing a check means the impersonation is detected by at least one NPC within 1d10 minutes.

Characters who have this skill must avoid meeting family or close friends of the subject. No matter how good the Impersonation, it won't fool close acquaintances unless the meeting is extremely brief and impersonal.

Mirage Missiles: *Exclusive skill.* $Base = (Pcn + Dex) \div 2$. *Secret specific check.*

Characters who have this skill may use mirage missiles: those devices that create a hologram that appears, both to the naked eye and to a spacecraft's scanners, to be a 1-seat starfighter emerging from translight travel. The user can control the hologram, making it appear to maneuver and fire.

At Rookie level, a character may control 1 mirage missile, 2 at Vet level, and 4 at Ace level. To do so is simple: the user announces to the CM his attempt to fire the missile; the CM rolls a secret specific check to determine whether the opponent believes the holographic illusion. If the check fails, the opponent doesn't fall for the illusion. Read the results of successful checks on the following key:

L = Limited success: Opponent believes mirage missile is a starfighter for 1-2 rounds (roll 1d10: 1-5 = 1 round, 6-10 = 2 rounds).

M = Moderate success: Opponent believes missile is a starfighter for 1-5 (1d10 ÷ 2, round up) rounds.

H = High success: Opponent believes missile is a starfighter for 1d10 rounds.

C = Complete success: Opponent believes missile is a starfighter for 2d10 rounds.

The holographic illusion of a mirage missile lasts for 20 rounds.

Security Devices: *Exclusive skill. Base=(Pcn+Dex+Luck)÷3. Specific check.*

Use of this skill enables a character to find and defeat security devices, including locks, traps, alarms, and electrical or electronic gadgets. Each use of the skill requires a specific check, with results from the following key:

L = Limited success: the character defeats any normal lock or combination lock, but fails to find and defeat electrical or electronic alarm systems, which go off!

M = Moderate success: the character finds and defeats any lock and electrical alarm system, but fails to detect and defeat any electronic system (such as "electric eyes," pressure plates, etc.); the latter, unfortunately, go off.

H = High success: same as "M," but the character finds any electronic systems and realizes he can't defeat them before they go off.

C = Complete success: the character finds and defeats all locks and alarms systems.

Failure means the character is unable to deal with a given lock or system until he or she has gained one level in this skill.

Stunt Driving: *Exclusive Skill. Base=(Pcn+Agl)÷2. General check.*

Characters with this skill can perform dangerous stunts while operating any surface vehicle, such as hover craft, wheeled vehicles and the like. The instructors teach Star Team members how to make bootleg turns with a vehicle: forcing it to turn 180 degrees at high speed in just one round. They also teach agents how to ram other vehicles, forcing the other driver to make a driving check to stay in control. These are just two of many possible stunts.

Characters can also use this skill to throw another character off a vehicle, when he's clinging on. The character

being thrown must pass a general Agility check (-40 modifier) in order to stay on the vehicle.

This skill requires a general check each round. Modify the skill score by -01 for every m.p.h. of speed over 50 m.p.h. Drivers failing the check have an accident (see Chapter IV).

Theft: *Exclusive skill. Base=(Pcn+Dex+Wpr)÷3. Secret specific check.*

Theft allows a character to pick pockets, filch items in plain view while standing in a crowd, and so on. (Any character can attempt to steal things when no one's around or looking, however.) Each time the character uses the skill, the CM makes a secret specific check. The defense column matches the highest Perception score of the victim or onlookers (as long as they aren't distracted). Read results from the following key:

S or L = Limited success: The character gets the item desired, but someone immediately notices it is missing.

M = Moderate success: For 1d10 minutes no one discovers the theft.

H = High success: For 1d10 hours, no one discovers the theft.

C = Complete success: No one discovers the theft for 24 hours, and no suspicion is directed toward the character who took it.

Failure, or course, means that the character is caught red-handed while trying to take the item.

CLUB SPECIALTY SKILLS

The following skills are specialties of the Free Order of Clubs. They are all noetic, or mental power, skills. These skills require the user to spend Willpower; the amount of Willpower to be spent, and the column on which to roll check results, are indicated in the skill descriptions. The abbreviation "Will" in these descriptions means the column on the Action Table used to find the result is the column corresponding to the *current* Willpower score of the victim of the skill use.

Noetic Defense Mode Skill

All PCs, and a few NPCs, have this skill. However, this skill is a specialty

of the Free Order of Clubs, and Clubs generally are better at this skill than anyone else.

Noetic Defense Mode: *Exclusive Skill. Base=(Pcn+Wpr)÷2. Secret general check. Column 4. Cost=10 Wpr/minute.*

Successful use of this skill protects a character completely from the effects of the skill Thought Probe. A character may use this skill on himself, or on any other willing character.

Ignore Pain: *Exclusive Skill. Base=(Per+Wpr)÷2. Secret specific check. Column 4. Cost=30 Wpr/use.*

This skill allows the user to cause one character (himself, if desired) to ignore all pain for a set period of time. Characters who receive the benefits of this skill do not have to make a general Willpower check to continue fighting when critically wounded. Results of the check are:

L = Limited success: Character can ignore pain for 1d10 rounds.

M = Moderate success: Character can ignore pain for 12 rounds.

H = High success: Character can ignore pain for one hour.

C = Complete success: Character can ignore pain for 12 hours.

Levitation: *Exclusive Skill. Base=(Str+Wpr)÷2. Specific check. Column 4. Cost=10 Wpr/round.*

This skill allows the user to levitate one to four objects or characters (including the user) up to 20' above the ground. The objects levitated can be of any weight, but cannot be anchored or attached to the ground. The levitated objects must be in sight of the levitating character; objects that leave the character's sight fall to the ground. This skill can be used only on planets, space stations, or in other settings where there is gravity. Results of the specific check are read on the following key:

L = Limited success: Character can levitate 1 object or character.

M = Moderate success: Character can levitate 2 objects or characters.

H = High success: Character can levitate 3 objects or characters.

C = Complete success: Character

can levitate 4 objects or characters.

Noetic Detection: *Exclusive Skill. Base=(Pcn+Per)÷2. Secret specific check. Column=Will. Cost=5 Wpr/use*

This skill enables a character to detect whether or not another character has noetic skills, and the type of skills that character has. The character being probed must be within sight or sensor range of the user. Read results on the following key:

S = *Slight success:* The user learns only whether the probed character has noetic skills.

L = *Limited success:* Same as the "S" result, but in addition the prober learns 1 specific noetic skill of the probed character.

M = *Moderate success:* Same as "S," but the user learns 2 specific noetic skills of the probed character.

H = *High success:* Same as "S", but the user learns 3 specific noetic skills of the probed character.

C = *Complete success:* User learns all noetic skills of the character being probed, plus that character's current Willpower score.

Shield Ship: *Exclusive Skill. Base=(Str+Wpr)÷2. Secret specific check. Column 4. Cost=30 Wpr/use.*

Successful use of this skill allows the character to provide shields of mental energy for one ship, for a period of time determined by the specific check result. The shielded ship may be of any size, but must remain within sight or sensor range of the shielding character. Once this skill is used, the shielding character may perform other actions normally in succeeding rounds; the effects of the shield last automatically without further concentration on his or her part. However, if the shielding character is killed, the shields drop immediately. These noetic shields cannot be knocked down by a "K" combat result. Results of the checks are read on the following key:

L = *Limited success:* Shield lasts 1-2 rounds. Roll 1d10; 1-5 means the shield lasts one round, 6-10 means two rounds.

M = *Moderate success:* Shield lasts

1-5 rounds (1d10 ÷2, round up.)

H = *High success:* Shield lasts 1d10 rounds.

C = *Complete success:* Shield lasts 2d10 rounds.

Shock: *Exclusive Skill. Base=(Str+Pcn+Wpr)÷3. Specific check. Column=Will. Cost=30 Wpr/use.*

Successful use of this skill allows the user to inflict normal armed combat damage on any one other character within sight. Treat check results as armed combat results.

Telekinesis: *Exclusive skill. Base=(Agl+Wpr)÷2. Specific check. Column=4 (or Will if used against an unwilling character). Cost=5 Wpr/round.*

This skill enables the user to mentally cause any object or character to move in a direction of the user's choice. The object can have any weight, but cannot be tied to the ground or to any other object. The speed of movement is 10 mph cumulative per round the telekinesis is maintained. The object (or character) to be telekinesed must be in the user's sight at the instant the skill is used, but need not stay in the user's sight after that. The user must declare the maximum amount of Willpower he or she is willing to spend before the skill check is rolled. The number of rounds the object is telekinesed is never greater than the amount allowed by the amount of Willpower spent, regardless of the check result. Results are interpreted on the following key:

S = *Slight success:* Object or character telekinesed for 1 round.

L = *Limited success:* Object or character telekinesed for 2 rounds.

M = *Moderate success:* Object or character telekinesed for 3 rounds.

H = *High success:* Object or character telekinesed for 4 rounds.

C = *Complete success:* Object or character telekinesed for 1d10+4 rounds.

Thought Probe: *Exclusive Skill. Base=(Per+Pcn+Wpr)÷3. Specific check. Column=Will. Cost=20 Wpr/use.*

This skill lets the user probe the mind and understand the actual thoughts

and feelings of one other character. The number of things learned by means of the probe are determined by the result of the specific check. In any case, the probing character can learn only the thoughts and feelings of the probed character during the round the skill is in use. Use of the skill in multiple, successive rounds requires a new check each round. The target of a thought probe must be within sight or sensor range of the probing character. Results of the skill check are read on the following key:

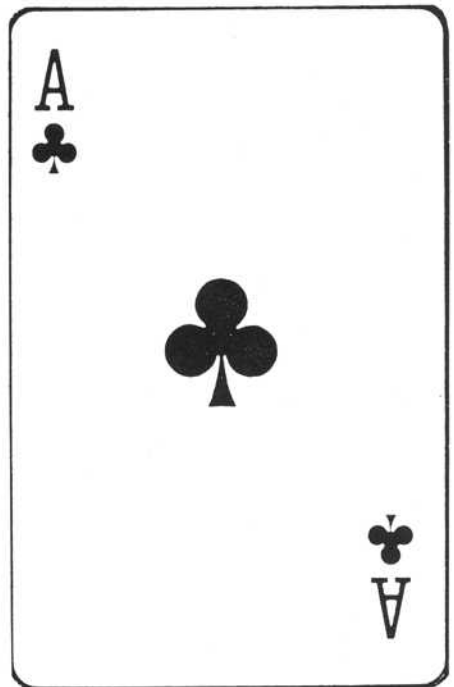
S = *Slight success:* User learns the general emotional state of the probed character—nothing more.

L = *Limited success:* User learns the emotional state and 1 current thought of the probed character.

M = *Moderate success:* User learns the emotional state and 2 thoughts of the probed character.

H = *High success:* User learns the emotional state and 3 thoughts of the probed character.

C = *Complete success:* User learns the emotional state of the probed character and everything that character is currently thinking, including tactical plans, combat intentions, and so on.



SKILL CHART

Skill Name	Base	Check	Wpr Col/Cost
SPADE SPECIALTY SKILLS			
Spacecraft Piloting	(Pcn+Dex+Agl)÷3	S	NA
UNARMED MELEE SKILLS			
● Boxing	(Str+Dex+Agl)÷2	S	NA
● Wrestling	(Str+Agl)÷2	S	NA
● Martial Arts	(Str+Dex+Agl+Wpr)÷4	S	NA
● Advanced Self-Defense	(Str+Dex+Agl+Wpr)÷4	S	NA
ARMED MELEE SKILLS			
Bayonet	(Str-Agl)÷2	S	NA
Blackjack	(Str+Agl)÷2	S	NA
● Bullwhip	(Str+Dex+Agl)÷3	S	NA
*Lance, horseman's	(Str+Agl)÷2	S	NA
Polearms	(Str+Agl)÷2	S	NA
Short handled weapons	(Str+Agl)÷2	S	NA
Sword	(Str+Agl)÷2	S	NA
*Florentine style	(Str+Dex+Agl)÷3	S	NA
SPECIAL WEAPONS SKILLS			
● Lasso	(Str+Dex)÷2	S	NA
● Net	(Str+Dex+Agl)÷3	S	NA
MOUNTED COMBAT SKILLS			
Riding	(Dex+Agl+Per)÷3	G,S	NA
*Mounted Melee	Weapon skill score	S	NA
*Mounted Missile	Weapon skill score	S	NA
MISSILE WEAPON SKILLS			
Sling	Dex	S	NA
Bow Skills			
Crossbow	Dex	S	NA
Longbow	(Str+Dex)÷2	S	NA
Shortbow	Dex	S	NA
Firearms Skills			
Automatic Rifle	Dex	S	NA
Long barreled gun	Dex	S	NA
Pistol	Dex	S	NA
Beam Weapons Skills			
Laser Pistol	Dex	S	NA
Laser Rifle	Dex	S	NA
Beta-Red particle Beam	Dex	S	NA
Grenade Launcher	Dex	S	NA

Skill Name	Base	Check	Wpr Col/Cost
Thrown Weapons Skills			
Axe/Tomahawk	(Str+Dex)÷2	S	NA
Dagger/Knife	(Str+Dex)÷2	S	NA
Dart	(Str+Dex)÷2	S	NA
Javelin	(Str+Dex)÷2	S	NA
Sensory Knife	(Str+Dex)÷2	S	NA
Spear	(Str+Dex)÷2	S	NA
Grenade	(Str+Dex)÷2	S	NA
HEART SPECIALTY SKILLS			
●Computers	(Pcn+Luck)÷2	S★	NA
●Deep Space Tracking	(Pcn)	G★	NA
●Demolitions	(Pcn+Dex)÷2	G★	NA
●Electronics	(Pcn+Dex+Luck)÷3	S★	NA
●Emergency Spacecraft Repair	(Pcn+Dex+Wpr)÷3	S★	NA
●Engineering	(Pcn+Dex+Wpr)÷3	S★	NA
●Investigation	(Pcn+Dex+Per)÷3	S★	NA
●Mechanics	(Pcn+Dex)÷2	S★	NA
●Medicine	(Pcn+Per+Wpr+Luck)÷4	S★	NA
●Outdoor Survival	(Pcn+Wpr+Luck)÷3	S	NA
DIAMOND SPECIALTY SKILLS			
Bargaining	(Per+Wpr)÷2	S	NA
●Disguise	(Per+Dex)÷2	S★	NA
●Forgery	(Per+Dex)÷2	S★	NA
●Gambling	(Pcn+Dex)÷2	S★	NA
●Impersonation	(Pcn+Wpr+Per+Dex)÷4	S★	NA
●Mirage Missiles	(Pcn+Dex)÷2	S★	NA
●Security Devices	(Pcn+Dex+Luck)÷3	S	NA
●Stunt Driving	(Pcn+Agl)÷2	G	NA
●Theft	(Pcn+Dex+Wpr)÷3	S★	NA
CLUB SPECIALTY SKILLS			
●Noetic Defense Mode	(Pcn+Wpr)÷2	G★	4; 10/min.
●Ignore Pain	(Str+Wpr)÷2	S★	4; 3/use
●Levitation	(Str+Wpr)÷2	S	4; 10/round
●Noetic Detection	(Pcn+Per)÷2	S★	Will; 5/use
●Shield Ship	(Str+Wpr)÷2	S★	4; 30/use
●Shock	(Str+Pcn+Wpr)÷3	S	Will; 30/use
●Telekinesis	(Agl+Wpr)÷2	S	4 or Will; 5/round
●Thought Probe	(Per+Pcn+Wpr)÷3	S	Will; 20/use

Notes:

● indicates an exclusive skill.

*indicates a skill that can't be acquired without a prerequisite skill.

Check G indicates general, S indicates specific, ★ indicates a secret check, rolled by the CM.

CHAPTER VII: EQUIPMENT

As the player character Star Team members adventure in space, they add new skills and increase the level of skills they already have. But those aren't the only advantages of adventuring: a PC can also build up quite a stockpile of equipment, weapons, and gadgets. Some of these items are related to the character's chosen Free Order, or the character's choice of skills within that Order. Still other gadgets and devices are the spoils of plunder or a find on the black market.

Beginning characters can buy some of the less expensive items listed in this chapter. As time goes on, they'll gain more money and come back for more equipment. CMs may want to center an entire adventure around searching for and acquiring one of the more costly items listed below.

The description of each item in the equipment list contains entries for its Standard Market Value (SMV) and Availability.

Standard Market Value: The SMV

of an item is the standard cost at which it may be purchased or sold, whether on the open market or through the black market that is alive and well in the Wilderness Region. Of course, these prices vary depending upon the Bargaining skill of the characters who are making the deal.

Availability: This simply tells whether the item is available legally, on the open market, or whether (because of its dangerous or classified nature, or because it has been stolen from the Imperial military) it is available only through the black market.

STAR ACE EQUIPMENT LIST

ARMOR

In addition to entries for SMV and Availability, each armor description includes an entry for Armor Type and Rating. See the section on Armor in Chapter IV for a full explanation.

Field Armor

SMV: 50 chips
Availability: Open Market
Armor Type/Rating: B or C/45

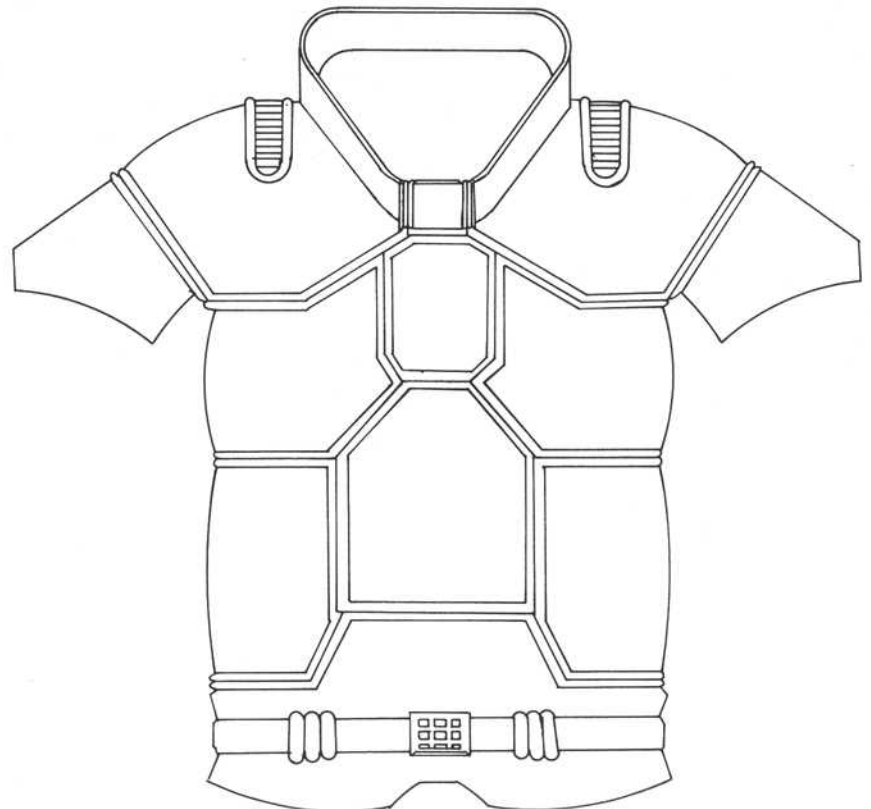
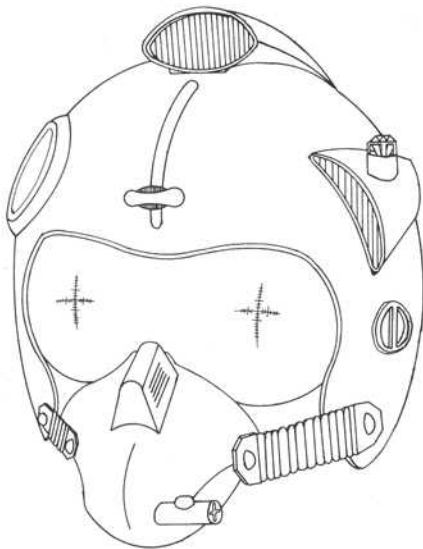
Although not as common as the flak vest (see below), field armor is the favorite of Star Team members because of its overall protection and the fact that it doesn't get in the way.

Field armor is so named because it uses Xantium crystals to set up two force fields around the user—one in front and one behind. The fields are activated by a button on a small box-like device worn on the belt. The force fields go up instantly and remain up until the same button is pushed. The fields cannot be seen by anybody except Crystal Clones or Crystalfolk.

Flak Vest

SMV: 10 chips
Availability: Black market
Armor Type/Rating: C/15

Easily the most popular form of armor in the Star Teams, the "flak



vest" received its name because it resembles the old 20th century World War II flak vest used by U.S. flyers. However, the Star Team flak vest is quite an improvement on its 20th century counterpart.

Through fabric and pressure, the vest provides protection from projectile and melee attacks (armed and unarmed). It offers no protection against beam weapons. The vest is also a flotation device, allowing the user to remain floating in water for an indefinite time. On the inside of the vest are pockets that allow the user to keep tools (one kit's worth), a pistol, a rope, or similar sized object.

When fastened in the front, a flak jacket covers both the front and back of the user from the waist to the base of the skull.

LSS Body Suit

SMV: 25 chips
Availability: Open market
Armor Type/Rating: C/30

A Life Support System Body Suit affords some armor protection to the user, although it is by no means the best protection. However, virtually every Star Team member owns a suit, because it maintains pressure, and provides all necessary life support systems to keep the wearer alive in outer space without ship or other support system for half an hour.

LSS Helmet

SMV: 15 chips
Availability: Open market
Armor Type/Rating: A/15

This helmet differs from the reflector plate helmet (see below) in that it is not polished and therefore does not reflect beams. However, the visor on the LSS helmet does reflect beams so that the face never receives direct beam weapon damage. The visor also has a magnification switch that doubles the user's sight range.

The LSS helmet contains breathing apparatus and a Xantium based communicator that allows the wearer to communicate on Star Team beams.

Reflector Plates

SMV: 20 chips
Availability: Black market
Armor Type/Rating: B/45

Reflector plates resemble highly polished plate mail pieces. The entire outfit consists of a body plate (one piece, covers chest and back), a girle (one piece, covers lower body, front and back), helmet (covers entire head, neck, and face), arm and leg plates (two parts for each limb), gloves, and boots. The armor leaves only the underside of the forearm and the backs of the legs exposed.

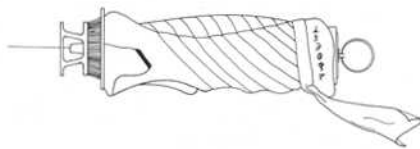
Because they are highly polished, reflector plates reflect and disperse beam attacks. They also serve as "normal armor", affording the user protection from other forms of ranged attack. The only melee attack to which reflector plates are immune is that of the beam saber.

The helmet contains a built-in communicator, visor sight, and the standard LSS unit for breathing.

WEAPONS

Beam Saber

SMV: 20 chips
Availability: Open market



A beam saber is considered the most elegant weapon in the Star Team arsenal. A small trigger device on the saber's 12 inch grip causes the beam blade to spring forth. The blade measures 3 to 4 feet, depending upon the desire of the user. The saber can be used as a two-handed sword, a long sword, or in conjunction with a dagger if the user possesses Florentine skill. The beam saber also can parry almost any type of weapon, depending on the skill level of the user.

Specific information on the uses of the beam saber is contained in Chapter VI under Sword skill.

Beta-Red Particle Beam Rifle

SMV: 100 chips
Availability: Black market



The Beta-Red Particle Beam Rifle is named for the smallest particle known to man, which forms the various parts (Protons, electrons, etc.) of an atom. The particle is fired in a beam and causes fusion. In short, any target hit by this weapon becomes a small hydrogen bomb.

The weapon is obviously very powerful, but it is also very dangerous: hydrogen is the most common element in the universe, and the user of this weapon must be certain that there is no appreciable amount of hydrogen between the end of the weapon and his intended target. The beam itself must be maintained on the target for two rounds before the fusion begins to take place.

A target must contain hydrogen in order for the weapon to function properly. Obviously, the user must be extremely cautious when using the Beta-Red Particle Beam Rifle.

The effect of the weapon is devastating: the target is killed instantly, as are any life forms within 100 yards of the point of impact, for the beam causes a high intensity fireball (100 yd. radius). The beam also causes 200% catastrophic damage within 1/2 mile of "ground zero," and its electromagnetic pulse blacks out all electronics in this area for 1d10 rounds.

In order to avoid certain catastrophe, the weapon has an intricate sighting system that allows the user to identify a target that contains hydrogen, and locate any hydrogen that might exist between the weapon and the target.

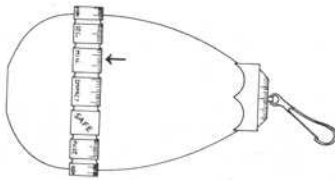
This particular weapon is extremely rare and is not used except in the most extreme cases, because of the general instability and obvious dangers surrounding its use. The CM

is the final judge as to whether to allow this weapon in his or her campaign.

The particle beam will not penetrate spacecraft shields.

Grenade

SMV: 5 chips/box
Availability: Black market



A grenade is a ranged weapon designed to be thrown, or shot from a grenade launcher. Each grenade has a device that allows the user to set a specific amount of time (up to ten minutes) before the grenade explodes, or allows the grenade to explode upon impact. Specific combat information is presented in Chapter IV.

Grenades are usually bought and sold in boxes of six, all of the same type: either fragmentation, light, sonic, or glitter.

Grenade Launcher

SMV: 20 chips
Availability: Black market

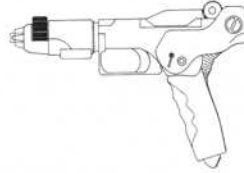


A grenade launcher fires any standard grenade to a range of 500 yards. Each grenade launcher holds a clip of seven grenades.

Star Team members prefer grenade launchers over throwing grenades because of the increase in range and accuracy.

Laser Pistol

SMV: 10 chips
Availability: Black market



The laser pistol is a beam weapon. It is not as accurate a long-range weapon as the laser rifle (see below), but can be wielded and concealed much more easily.

As is the case with all laser weapons, firing the weapon causes a high pitched noise as the bright light beam shoots from the pistol. However, the laser pistol can be fitted either with a silencer, which makes the weapon virtually silent, or an opaquer, which conceals its beam: both of these devices are explained later in this chapter (see "Gadgets and Useful Items").

The laser weapon can fire as many times as the user desires in a 24 hour period. However, the weapon must be recharged on a laser recharger for 15 minutes every day, or it loses power after the 24 hours have passed. The laser recharger is also explained later in this chapter (see "Gadgets and Useful Items").

Laser Rifle

SMV: 20 chips
Availability: Black market

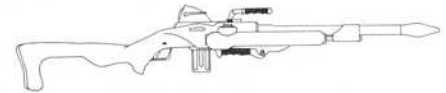


The laser rifle operates on the same premise as does the laser pistol. Because of its physical shape and size, the laser rifle is more accurate over longer ranges, and requires less frequent recharges than the laser pistol.

A laser rifle cannot be fitted with a silencer or an opaquer as can a pistol. However, the rifle operates 72 hours before requiring its 15 minute recharge. As is the case with the laser pistol, the number of shots one can fire from the laser rifle between recharges is limitless.

Proton Projector Rifle (PPR)

SMV: 50 chips
Availability: Open market

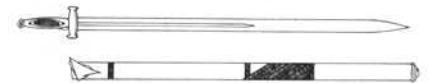


The PPR is a standard issue weapon for the Star Team members. The weapon is a projectile weapon that fires highly charged energy in a magnetic bottle, propelled by an explosive device in the rifle.

The PPR carries a loaded magazine of 60 shots. Reloading is simply slapping in a new magazine. The range of the weapon is 30,000 feet. It can be fired as either a single shot weapon or in bursts as an automatic weapon.

Monofilament Sword

SMV: 25 chips
Availability: Black market

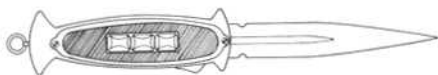


The monofilament sword is a favorite weapon among Star Team members, as well as underworld black marketers and the like. The cutting edge on the sword blade is exactly one molecule thick (kept sharp by the scabbard in which the weapon is kept), and the blade metal is extremely strong.

A monofilament sword can sever the end of a rifle, or split a laser pistol in half with one clean cut. Such an action, however, requires a called shot. Armor serves no protection against a monofilament sword: the sword cuts through the intended protection as if it weren't there.

Sensory Knife

SMV: 25 chips
Availability: Black market



This weapon is a favorite of criminals, mobsters, smugglers, and thieves. The knife resembles a switchblade, but closer inspection reveals a much more complex weapon.

The grip of the knife contains a trigger for the blade and an "on" switch. If the switch is turned on, it activates a homing device inside the grip, which allows the knife to seek its target by sensing the body heat when thrown, like a smart missile finds the heat of an engine's exhaust. In short, the weapon is a "smart knife."

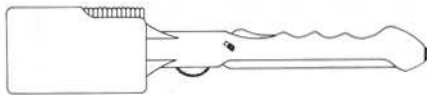
When the knife is thrown, it homes in on the back of the target's neck. A "C" result severs the spinal column and kills the target, providing the knife has penetrated the armor (if any) that protects this vulnerable spot.

The sensory knife has a longer range than most throwing knives (twice as far) because of its homing device. However, unless a "C" result is achieved, the damage is the same as that of a normally thrown dagger.

Shock Mace

SMV: 20 chips

Availability: Black Market



This item is used as a normal medieval mace. The weapon does normal armed combat damage, but on a "C" result, the resonance caused by the electrical device in the mace shatters the following types of armor: all helmets, reflector plates, and body suits. The user must specify which location he or she is striking, because the mace shatters only that part of the armor.

The shock mace looks like the old 20th century German "potato masher"

grenade; it has an on/off switch that turns on the electrical power for the "shock" device.

VEHICLES

For purposes of vehicle combat, assume that each vehicle has one damage box per weapon it carries.

Hover Car

SMV: 30 chips

Availability: Open market

The term "hover car" refers to a number of vehicles that fall under this general category: passenger vehicles, cargo vehicles, and even some smaller troop transports. The vehicles are common throughout most planetary systems.

A hover car carries from four to twelve human sized passengers (depending, of course, on the size and function of the vehicle), and is used in much the same way that the 20th century automobile was used: for driving to work, going on the family vacation, or just generally getting from one place to another.

Forced air allows the car to hover some two to three feet above a surface when operating. This means that the car is able to travel smoothly "off road" in most cases—as easily over water as over land. Sometimes, however, the terrain is so rough and choppy that the craft runs the risk of scraping a sudden protrusion from the ground. It is up to the CM's judgment as to whether an off road area is choppy enough to make it impassable. When in doubt, roll a general check against the driver's Stunt Driving skill (if he or she has one) or the driver's luck.

Because of the use of hover cars and similar forms of transportation, roads aren't what they used to be. Instead of paved highways, most planets have only marked paths, lined with occasional direction signs (and even a few advertising billboards).

Hover cars can attain speeds of up to six 100 yard hexes per round, and usually cruise at about 400 yards per round. These vehicles must be charged

once every 24 hours in order to operate.

Hover cars can be fitted with mounted PPRs or laser rifles for combat purposes. This is done at the cost of the mounted weapon, and by a character who has Mechanics skill. A hover car has five stress points per passenger seat. Hover cars can also be fitted with a vehicle combat shield mounted by any character who has Mechanics skill.

Hover Scooter

SMV: 20 chips

Availability: Open market

Hover scooters are common in almost all planetary systems. The vehicle is almost the same as a hover car, except that it carries only one or two passengers, and hovers anywhere from 2-12' above the surface, depending on the wish of the driver. A hover scooter must be recharged every 24 hours: recharging requires only 15 minutes before the scooter is ready for use again.

Hover scooters can be mounted with only one PPR or laser rifle, using the same costs and guidelines discussed in the description of the hover car. A shield can also be mounted on a hover scooter for combat purposes.

A hover scooter has 20 stress points, and reaches a maximum speed of 10 100-yard hexes per round. The average cruising speed of a hover scooter is 700 yards per round.

Hover Tank

SMV: 1500 chips

Availability: Black market

The standard tank of the Alliance military, a hover tank is operated by a crew of four: the pilot/front gunner, the turret operator, and two side gunners. The forward firing laser always fires straight ahead in the direction the tank is heading. The turret has one +20 laser that can fire in any direction, regardless of the direction the tank is headed. The side gunners operate mounted PPRs, which have a 180 degree field of fire. All weapons

maintain the ranges described in Chapter IV, Basic Action.

The vehicle has 100 stress points, and shields which operate exactly the same as those on the tactical fighters in Chapter V, Spacecraft and Combat. It takes full damage from spacecraft weapons and PPRs (1/2 damage while shields are up). Fragmentation grenades do half damage (1/4 damage while shields are up). Hand-held small arms, such as laser pistols and rifles, do no damage. Particle beam weapons do no damage while shields are up.

The hover tank hovers in basically the same manner as the hover car and scooter, at a height of about 10', and has a maximum speed of 7 100-yard hexes per round. It can also go underwater, where its speed is reduced to 3 100-yard hexes per round.

The tank must be recharged once every 72 hours for 15 minutes in order to continue operating.

I Walker

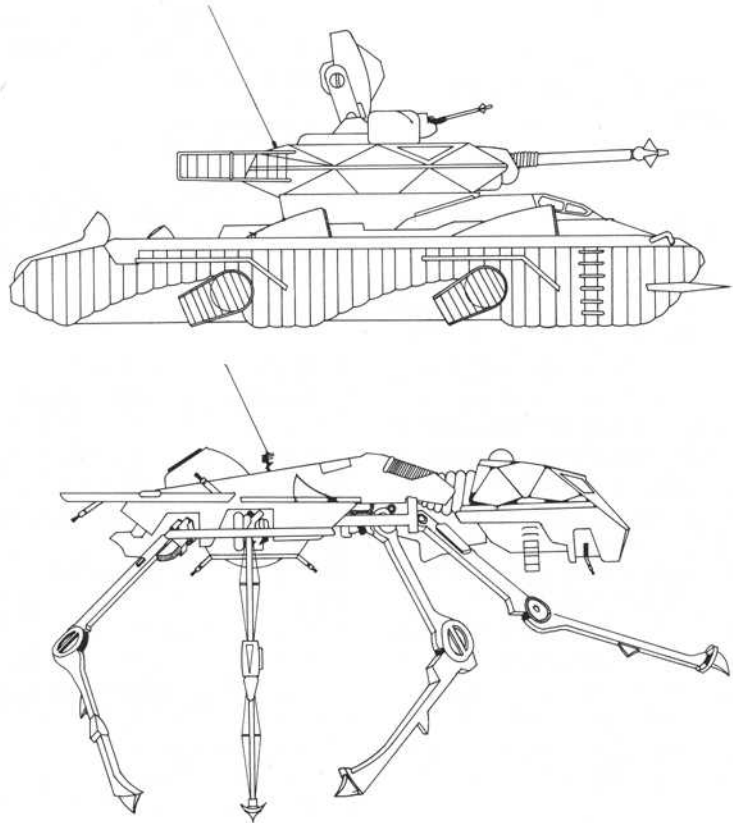
SMV: 2000 chips

Availability: Black market

The Imperial Walker (or "I Walker") is used by the Empire much in the same fashion Star Teams use hover scooters: for small patrols and surface sorties. The main difference is that, while the Star Teams prefer quickness and stealth, the Empire prefers heavy armor and power. Walkers receive their name from the legs they use to walk across a surface. A walker can wade through water up to 8' deep and still maintain surface combat. It can travel underwater to a depth of 300'.

The maximum speed of a walker is 3 100-yard hexes per round. The vehicle has 80 stress points, and shields which operate exactly the same as those on the tactical fighters in Chapter V, Spacecraft and Combat.

The Imperial Walker is manned by a crew of two, and armed with two +20 lasers, one front firing and the second rear firing. The Imperial Walker must be recharged for 15 minutes in order to operate for 24 hours.



As is the case with virtually all Imperial weapons, this item is not for sale on the open market, and is rarely found on the black market. It can be bought in the black market, but at a price far more than the actual worth of the item.

IM Tank

SMV: 1000 chips

Availability: Black market

The Imperial Medium Tank (or "IM Tank") is not quite a tactical match for the Alliance Hover Tank, but it is still a weapon to be respected. The IM Tank has a maximum speed of 6 100-yard hexes per round. The vehicle has 90 stress points, and shields which operate exactly the same as those on the tactical fighters in Chapter V, Spacecraft and Combat. It takes full damage from spacecraft weapons and PPRs (1/2 damage while shields are up). Fragmentation grenades do half damage (1/4 damage while shields are up). Hand-held small arms, such as laser pistols and rifles,

do no damage. Particle beam weapons do no damage while shields are up.

The IM tank is also a hover tank, and it hovers 8' above the land or water.

The IM tank carries one +20 laser mounted on a 360 degree turning turret, one forward firing laser, and one rear firing laser. It must be recharged for 15 minutes every 48 hours in order to continue operating.

IH Tank

SMV: 2500 chips

Availability: Black market

The Imperial Heavy Tank (or "IH Tank") is a heavily armed and dangerous weapon. The vehicle has 120 stress points, and shields which operate exactly the same as those on the tactical fighters in Chapter V, Spacecraft and Combat. It takes full damage from spacecraft weapons and PPRs (1/2 damage while shields are up). Fragmentation grenades do half damage (1/4 damage while shields

are up). Hand-held small arms, such as laser pistols and rifles, do no damage. Particle beam weapons do no damage while shields are up.

The IH Tank carries a 360 degree turning +30 laser, and regular lasers in the front, rear, and on each side. The vehicle carries a five man crew.

The Imperial Heavy Tank hovers about 8' over either land or water, and has a maximum speed of 4 100-yard hexes per round. It be recharged for 15 minutes once every 72 hours.

This weapon cannot be purchased on the open market, and is nearly impossible to find on the black market.

Troop Transporter

SMV: 500 chips
Availability: Black market

A troop transporter is a hover truck designed to carry personnel or cargo. These craft come as military or civilian transports, depending upon the wish of the buyer. The transporter holds up to 30 human-sized bodies in the cargo hold or truck bed.

Transporters hover at 6' above either land or water. Their maximum speed is 8 100-yard hexes per round. The vehicle has 40 stress points.

The transporter can operate 24 hours before it must be recharged.

SKILL KITS

Those skill kits available on the open market can be purchased or requisitioned by the Star Team's quartermaster when a member of the Free Order of Hearts obtains the skill that fits the kit.

Commando Kit

SMV: 80 chips
Availability: Black market

This kit comes with the throwing rope described below, as well as two sensory knives, grease paint, and an opaquer.

Demolitions Kit

SMV: 100 chips
Availability: Black market

This is a standard kit, containing all the materials necessary to use the Demolitions skill listed in Chapter VI. The kit contains 10 grams of advanced plastic explosives, and a variety of detonators: chemical, electrical, radio control, and time delay detonators are included.

One gram of advanced plastic explosive does 30 points of stress point



damage to any structure. The radius and effect of the blast depends upon the skill of the user.

Additional explosives may be purchased on the black market at a cost of 10 chips per gram.

Electronics Kit

SMV: 1 chip
Availability: Open market

This is a standard tool set, containing all of the tools needed to make quick

electrical repairs. This kit contains all the tools necessary to use the Electronics skill listed in Chapter VI.

Mechanical Kit

SMV: 1 chip
Availability: Open market

The mechanical kit is a standard tool set, containing all of the necessary tools to make quick mechanical repairs under combat conditions. This kit contains all the tools necessary to use the Mechanics skill listed in Chapter VI.

Medical Kit

SMV: 5 chips
Availability: Open market

The medical kit contains all items and tools necessary to treat all carbon-based PC and NPC races (this includes all races except the Crystalfolk). The kit allows for quick treatment of wounded characters, and provides everything necessary to use the Medical skill described in Chapter VI.

Technical Kit

SMV: 10 chips
Availability: Black market

The technical kit combines all of the tools in the medical, electronic, and mechanical kits described above, while avoiding duplication of tools. This keeps a tech from getting too bogged down with kits as he or she gains skills in the Free Order of Hearts. Star Teams do not requisition this kit. It must be purchased from a black market source.

GADGETS AND USEFUL ITEMS

Aerial Recon Projector

SMV: 100 chips
Availability: Black market

This item comes in two parts. The first part looks much like a miniature tele-

vision. The second part looks like a grenade and works in conjunction with a grenade launcher, or a flare pistol. The device is loaded to the pistol or launcher and fired into the air. As the device gains altitude, it unsheaths, and the inside contents are exposed and begin to function.

Inside the Aerial Recon Projector are a camera that records the view below, a transmitter that sends instant video images back to the small televisionlike projector kept by the user, and a small parachute that allows the device to fall slowly back to the surface while the pictures are transmitted. The device is able to photograph an area covered by a 3 mile radius, allowing the users to survey "behind enemy lines" without exposing themselves to undue danger.

A character rolls a specific check on column 4 using his or her Grenade Launcher or any ranged weapon skill (Dexterity if the character has none of these skills). The camera falls back to the surface in 1d10 rounds. The results of the specific check are as follows:

L = Limited Success: The camera captures only a quick glimpse of the target area. Describe only one feature of the target area.

M = Moderate success: The camera stays on the target area for a few seconds. Describe two features of the target area.

H = High success: The camera stays on the target area for a fairly long time. Describe the terrain to the character.

C = Complete success: The camera affords the watching character a bird's eye view of the target area. Describe the target area in detail to the watching character.

A failed check means the device has malfunctioned and no picture is transmitted.

The Aerial Recon Projector camera can be shot down by the enemy (or the characters if used against them) while it is functioning in flight.

Communicator (Translight)

SMV: 500 chips

Availability: Open or Black market

Communicators come in three types: Star Team, Alliance, and Imperial. Star Team communicators are readily available to any Star Team member; Alliance or Imperial communicators can be acquired only through the black market. All of the communicators work on Xantium crystals, which is the only means by which any sector can communicate with vessels traveling faster than the speed of light.

Communicators only communicate with one another if they operate on the same beam. Each government operates on a separate set of broadcast beams: an Imperial communicator communicates only with other Imperial communicators, and so on through the various types. Aside from this restriction, communication is instant and effective throughout the Wilderness Region, thanks to CRPs and Xantium.

Content Analyzer

SMV: 25 chips

Availability: Open market

A content analyzer is about the size of a shoebox. If a gas, liquid, or solid sample is placed inside the device, it registers one or more of the following results based on the analysis of the sample:

Toxic: The sample is poisonous, either by ingestion or by contact.

Caustic: The sample will cause burns if exposed to the skin, or even possibly to the spacesuit.

Radioactive: The sample is dangerously radioactive and should not be handled.

Nutrient: Sample may be safely eaten.

Organic: Sample contains carbon element, meaning there is reason to suspect life as known on Earth in the area from which it was taken.

Xantium: Sample indicates the presence of the highly prized mineral; crystals may well be nearby.

Alive/Dead: The sample is alive, or the sample is dead, if either result is applicable.

Safe: The sample presents no danger to player characters.

Stable/Unstable: The sample is made up of a stable compound, or is unstable and subject to reaction.

Chemical Compound (Common name): If the compound has a simple name, such as sand, water, or quartz, the common name is given.

Temperature: The temperature of the sample, if different from air temperature.

Unknown: Nothing is known about the sample. It is completely foreign to anything currently known to the Star Teams.

Empty Head

SMV: 10 chips

Availability: Black market

This item is not standard issue for the Star Teams. In fact, the Star Team Command frowns on its use. Still, an occasional character decides he or she needs one, and chases it down on the black market.

An Empty Head is a helmet that appears in all manners to be a standard issue LSS Helmet; however, their contents differ in important ways. Although both contain communication devices and basic life support systems, an Empty head keeps the wearer alive for only five minutes in outer space, instead of the hour of protection provided by the normal LSS Helmet. Nor does the Empty Head provide armor protection: only the visor in the front protects the wearer's face from beam weapons. The only advantage to the Empty Head is its four empty compartments that allow the wearer to smuggle Xantium undetected.

Flare Pistol

SMV: 5 chips

Availability: Open market

A flare pistol actually serves three purposes. The first, and most common, is to send off a visible signal. This does not require any sort of check; the flare is fired and that's that.

The second use of a flare pistol is to cast light over an area. This requires a

general check against a character's ranged weapon skill (or Dexterity if the character does not possess a ranged weapon skill). If the character makes his or her roll, the designated area is lit, along with everything within a 1/2 mile radius. If not, then some other area is lit.

The third use of a flare pistol is as some sort of a decoy. Some creatures may be frightened by light. A bright flash may send guards running. In short, there are hundreds of ways to use the flares.

Lantern

SMV: 5 chips
Availability: Open market

A lantern works by emitting a chemically self-contained beam. This prevents accidental ignition or combustion from a lit fire or electricity coming into contact with explosive gases in an alien atmosphere.

A lantern illuminates 360 degrees, to a distance of 600 yards.

Laser Recharger

SMV: 10 chips
Availability: Open market

This device usually is attached to the bottom of the stock of a laser rifle or pistol. It will recharge either weapon (one weapon at a time) in fifteen minutes.

This device recharges only lasers. It will not recharge tanks, or other vehicles that require recharging.

Opaquer

SMV: 25 chips
Availability: Black market

While Star Team Command frowns upon certain nonstandard, black market items, the opaquer is one of the most highly prized gadgets in the Star Teams.

An opaquer is fixed to the end of a laser pistol in the same manner as a laser silencer, and it serves the same function of silencing the weapon; in addition, however, the opaquer

"opaques" the beam and keeps it from being seen. All in all, the opaquer makes the laser pistol, and its wielder a formidable force to be reckoned with.

Because these items are available only on the black market, the price of an opaquer is extremely high.

Silencer

SMV: 2 chips
Availability: Black market

A silencer can be attached to any pistol, muffling the sound of the pistol when it discharges.

A silencer blocks out the sound of a laser pistol, but it does not "opaque" the beam of the weapon.

Sleeper

SMV: 10 chips
Availability: Open market

This device is extremely useful to the Star Team members. By pulling an activating cord, the user can inflate a complete Life Support System. An air filled mattress allows one character to sleep comfortably, while maintaining proper pressure, temperature, and oxygen amounts inside the unit. The air-filled unit floats easily, and can even be used to keep a character alive in outer space until, of course, food and water run out (the sleeper is not equipped with food and water supply).

The outside of the device reflects lasers; however, it reflects light and can be seen from literally miles away.

While the mirror-like finish reflects and prevents beam attacks, the unit does not protect against projectiles. One shot into the sleeper causes the unit to deflate in 3d10 rounds. Once the unit is punctured, it becomes useless and cannot be repaired. The owner must buy a new one or do without.

Throwing Rope

SMV: 2 chips
Availability: Open market

This item is particularly useful for covert missions or commando raids. It appears to be a normal rope, except that a set of controls is attached to one end. These controls operate a small wire that runs through the length of the rope. If the wire is activated, the rope stands erect, until it reaches its full length of 100'. At some point before the rope rises to full height, the controls are worked so that the rope ties (or unties) itself around the closest object. To use the rope successfully, a character must make a successful Dexterity check.

Once the throwing rope is tied, it holds any two player characters (only one if the PC is a Kleibor) at a time. Climbing the rope demands a general Agility check every 40 feet. If the character fails the check, compute falling damage from half the distance of the climb.

Since the controls of the rope remain at its bottom, and "freeze" the device so that it cannot be pulled up from the top, smart characters will follow this procedure:

One character climbs the rope. When he reaches the top, another character, remaining below, switches off the controls. Now the character atop the obstacle can catch the rope (general Dexterity check) before it falls and retie the rope without the use of controls. The device then serves as a normal rope for everyone who follows.

Vehicle Recharger

SMV: 100 chips
Availability: Black market

These rechargers will fit any vehicle or tank and recharge the vehicle to its maximum charge in fifteen minutes. A recharger has 100 charges. Once the 100 charges are used, a new recharger must be purchased. The device is the size of a large suitcase and can be stored away easily in a tank or vehicle.

Vehicle Shield

SMV: 500 chips
Availability: Black market

These shields function exactly as the shields on spacecraft, except that these shields are designed to be installed on any type of vehicles, from scooters and walkers to heavy tanks. While its shields are up, a vehicle takes half damage from spacecraft weapons and PPRs, 1/4 damage from

fragmentation grenades, and no damage from hand-held small arms (such as laser pistols and rifles) or particle beam weapons. The shields are knocked down on any "K" result as with spacecraft shields. Damage boxes cannot be marked as long as a shield is up and functioning.

Shields must be purchased and installed on vehicles, since they are not considered standard equipment unless otherwise specified in the vehicle's description. More than one shield on a vehicle serves no purpose, because a "K" result destroys all shields.



INDEX

- Abilities, Basic, 7
- Accidents, vehicle, 33
- Action Table, 4
- Adventures, 4
- Aerial Recon Projector, 61
- Agility, 8
- Armor,
 - field, 56
 - flak vest, 56
 - in combat, 32
 - LSS body suit, 57
 - LSS helmet, 57
 - rating, 32
 - reflector plates, type, 32
- Beam saber, 57
 - use in Sword skill, 46
- Beta-Red Particle Beam 57
- Bow skills, 47
- Bow reloading times, 47
- Boxing skill, 45

- Called shot, 22
- Catastrophic damage, 31
- Characters, 3
- Character creation, 5
- Character sheet, 5, 6
- Charges,
 - mounted, 34
 - on foot, see Movement
- Checks,
 - Ability, 9
 - general, 3
 - skill, 45
 - specific, 4
 - surprise, 20
- Clubs, Free Order of, 18
 - promotion in, 19
 - specialty skills of, 52-53
 - suggested min. scores, 18
- Combat forms, 21
- Combat Procedure, 21
- Commando kit, 61
- Communicator (Translight), 62
- Content Analyzer, 62
- Counters, 2
- Crystal Clones, 11
 - as PCs, 12
 - racial talent of, 12
- Damage, combat, 30
- Damage boxes, 39
- Death, character, 30
- Declaration, 22
- Defense column chart, 22
- Demolitions kit, 61
- Dexterity, 8
- Diamonds, Free Order of, 19
 - promotion in, 19
 - specialty skills of, 50-52
 - suggested min. scores, 19
- Dogfighting, 40
- Driving, 33

- Electronics kit, 61
- "Empty Head," 62
- Equipment, 56-64
 - starting, 5
- Exposure damage, 32

- Falling damage, 31
- Field of vision, 20
- Fire damage, 31
- Flare pistol, 62
- Florentine-style fighting, 46

- Grand Strategic Sector, 4, 35
- Gravity and movement, 27
- Grenades, 26, 58
 - types and damage, 26
- Grenade launcher, 58

- Hand-to-hand fighting, 28
- Healing wounds, 31
- Hearts, Free Order of, 18
 - promotion in, 18
 - specialty skills of, 48-50
 - suggested min. scores, 18
- Helpless defenders, 22
- Hover car, 59
- Hover scooter, 59
- Hover tank, 59
- Humans, 12
 - as PCs, 12

- Imperial Heavy Tank, 60
- Imperial Medium Tank, 60
- Imperial Walker, 60
- Initiative, 22

- Kills, 4, 17
- Kill values, 17
- Kleibor, 12
 - as PCs, 13
 - racial talents of, 13

- Lantern, 63
- Laser pistol, 58
- Laser recharger, 63
- Laser rifle, 58
- Leaping, 28
- LSS body suit, 57
- LSS helmet, 57
- Luck,
 - Ability, 8
 - NPC scores and, 8
 - missile attacks, 8, 21

- Maps, 4, 35
- Mechanical kit, 61
- Medical kit, 61
- Melee combat,
 - skilled, 28
 - unskilled, 28
- Missile combat, 23
- Modifiers,
 - melee, 29
 - missile, 24
 - non-specialty skill level, 44
 - specialty skill level, 44
- Monofilament sword, 58
- Movement, 27
 - basic combat, 27

- Noetic Defense Mode, 5, 52
- Noetic skills, 52-53
 - in combat, 23
 - in Free Order of Clubs, 18

- Opaquer, 63

- Penetration bonus, 32
- Perception, 8
- Personality, 8
- Poisons, 32
- Proton Projector Rifle, 58

- Racial talents,
 - Crystal Clone, 12
 - Kleibor, 13
 - Traka, 14
- Ranges,
 - missile weapons, 25
 - spacecraft fire, 42
- Rank, 16
 - benefits of, 16

- Sensory knife, 58
- Sequence of Play,
 - basic combat, 21
 - spacecraft combat, 40
- Shields,
 - spacecraft, 41
 - vehicle, 64
- Shock mace, 59
- Shotguns, 26
- Silencer, 63
- Sleeper, 63
- Skill(s),
 - chart, 54-55
 - exclusive, 45
 - levels, 44
 - non-specialty, 44
 - specialty, 44
- Spacecraft,
 - combat, 36
 - descriptions, 40
 - damage, 42
- Spades, Free Order of, 17
 - promotion in, 18
 - specialty skills, 45-48
 - suggested min. scores, 18
- Strangling, 29
- Strength, 7
- Stress damage, 36
- Stress points, 36
- Strike number, 21
- Surprise, 20

- Tactical sector, 4
- Tanks,
 - hover, 59
 - Imperial heavy (IH), 60
 - Imperial medium (IM), 60
- Technical kit, 61
- Throwing rope, 63
- Traka, 13
 - as PCs, 14
 - racial talents, 14
- Translight damage, 35
- Translight travel, 35
- Troop transporter, 61

- Vehicles, 33, 59
 - in combat, 33
- Vehicle recharger, 63
- Vehicle shield, 63

- Walker, Imperial, 60
- Watching behind, 20
- Weapons,
 - skills, 45-48
 - spacecraft, 36
- Willpower,
 - Ability, 8
 - and noetic skills, 23, 52
 - current, 8
 - loss, 23
 - recovery, 23
- Wounds,
 - critical, 31
 - healing, 31
 - recording, 30

STAR ACE™

Action Table

Defense Column

Attack Margin	1-15	Ability Checks 16-30	31-45	Skill Checks 46-60	61-75	76-90	91-105	106-120	121-135	136+
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	LK	L	L	L	L	S	S	S	S	S
1-4	M	M	L	LK	L	LK	L	S	S	S
5-9	H	MK	M	L	L	L	L	L	LK	S
10-29	C	H	MK	M	M	M	LK	L	L	L
30-49	C	C	H	M	MK	M	M	MK	L	LK
50-69	CK	CK	C	H	H	H	M	M	M	M
70-89	CK	CK	CK	CK	H	H	H	H	M	M
90-94	CK	CK	CK	CK	CK	HK	H	H	H	H
95-99	CK	CK	CK	CK	CK	CK	HK	HK	H	H
100+	CK	CK	CK	CK	CK	CK	CK	HK	HK	H

ARMED COMBAT RESULTS

Code	Result (Defender loses points from current Stamina.)
S	Scratch Wound: Lose 1 or 2 points (see above), and mark 1 wound box.
L	Light Wound: Lose 2-20 points (1d10x2), and mark two wound boxes.
M	Medium Wound: Lose 4-40 points (2d10x2), and mark three wound boxes.
H	Heavy Wound: Lose 6-60 points (3d10x2), and mark four wound boxes.
C	Crippling Wound: Lose 6-60 points (3d10x2), and mark five wound boxes. (Or called shot, if specified otherwise.)
K	Knockdown: Defender knocked down and back 5 feet; must make DEX check to hold onto any handheld item; any uncompleted actions this round are cancelled.

UNARMED COMBAT RESULTS

Code	Result (Defender loses points from current Stamina.)
S	Scant Damage: Lose 1-2 points (roll 1d10; 1-5=1, 6-10=2).
L	Light Damage: Lose 2-20 points (1d10x2).
M	Medium Damage: Lose 4-40 points (2d10x2).
H	Harsh Damage: Lose 6-60 points (3d10x2), and mark one wound box.
C	Crushing Damage: Lose 6-60 points (3d10x2), and mark two wound boxes. (Or called shot, if specified otherwise.)
K	Knockdown: Defender knocked down and back 5 feet; unfinished actions cancelled this round.

SEQUENCE OF PLAY FOR ONE ROUND

1. CM declaration
2. Player character declaration
3. Initiative determination
4. Side A uses noetic skills
5. Side A fires or throws missiles
6. Side A moves
7. Side B defensive missile fire
8. Side A melees
9. Side B uses noetic skills
10. Side B fires or throws missiles
11. Side B moves
12. Side A defensive missile fire
13. Side B melees
14. Stamina loss and recovery

Side
A's
Attack

Side
B's
Attack

STARACE

STAR TEAM WILDERNESS BRIEFING MANUAL



**Pacesetter**

PROLOGUE

I sight the Tamillan freighter as soon as we pop out of translight. Against the giant gas planet's turbulent surface, she looks like a silver beetle crawling through space. She's right on schedule for our little rendezvous, and so are we. This little girl has enough andilinium concentrate aboard to mint money for an entire system, and to keep my entire crew in Stalitsan heaven for the rest of our lives. The boys know what to do: two quick missiles to her fat belly, a few bursts at her rear laser, a quick scuffle with her crew when we board, and she's ours.

As I bring us to missile range, the sensor alarms break into a scream. I glance down at the ultra-wave radar and see a blip coming around the far side of the gas giant. I slap the alarms off and turn back to the freighter. The rear gunners will handle the blip; it's just an IMP fighter or two escorting the freighter. Nothing for a Spade Ace like me to worry himself about.

The freighter swells up in our viewing screen like a great big whale just waiting for a harpoon. "Tag" and I launch our missiles at the same second, and I swing the ship around to our prey's hindquarters.

The ship intercom crackles, and Leo, the rear gunner, yells, "Step on it, Ace—you've got a frigate on. . ." Suddenly, the whole craft shudders and lurches. Damage alarms ring like church bells. Leo doesn't finish his sentence.

Tag flips the viewing screen to rear and we see an ICE frigate five sectors away, her heavy lasers blazing away. Her next hit takes out our translight drive. "I've got big neg-vibes about this," Tag growls, his cat-like ears lying flat.

Maybe "Duck" Tasha was right, after all. The scoop on this freighter had come too easy; it must have been an ICE plant. As usual, I should have listened to the Trakan. But my poor manners won't matter in another five seconds.

The scanners show four IMP fighters dropping out of the frigate. Looks like we're all dressed up with no place to go. There's only one thing to do: dive for the gas giant and hope for the best. If I can put the planet between us and the frigate, we might take out a few of the interceptors before we become cosmic dust pollution.

As we whip into orbit around the planet-sized ball of gas, my scanners pick up a huge explosion from the frigate's direction. Curiosity gets the better of me—it's a chronic weakness. I pull out of the planet's gravity well and swing around to establish visual contact.

There's the Imperial cruiser Baron Gruy, drifting through the ICE frigate's wreckage, her big plasma guns still glowing. Pretty odd: even Baron Gruy doesn't play games with ICE, and certainly not to help a guy like me.

"Wheeeaaa!" The voice comes from inside my head. It has a Kleibor accent. "Where you going, good buddy? The freighter's over there! We'll take care of those mosquitoes for you." I could kiss that big dumb-sounding noetic bear, whoever he is. How he got his paws on an Imperial cruiser is beyond me, but I'm not complaining. Tasha probably had something to do with it. All I know for sure is that when we get back to Marauder's Landing, I'm going to buy that Kleibor the weekend of his life!

As new recruits, you've still got a lot to learn before you hijack an Imperial cruiser. You're holding the STARACE™ Wilderness Region Briefing Manual. Learn well what is inside; the knowledge could save your life.

Star Team Wilderness Briefing Manual

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: THE EMPIRE	
History of the Empire	2
Founding and Expansion	2
Empire and Alliance	2
The Xenophobic War	3
The Empire Today	3
Conditions on Occupied Worlds	4
Major Imperial NPCs	4
Emperor Frederick Constantine	4
Grand Duke Otto	5
Duke Yanayir Morleth	5
Count Gril Sillith	5
Duke Aurelius Metellus	5
CHAPTER 2: THE ALLIANCE	
Political Organization	5
Military Forces	5
Current Military/Economic Posture	5
Covert Actions	5
Advantage and Vulnerability	5
Attitudes of Member Planets	6
Major Alliance NPCs	6
Executive Joseph Randall	6
Admiral Diana Freze	6
CHAPTER 3: THE WILDERNESS REGION	
Communications in the region	8
Planetary Scanners	9
Wilderness: The Planet	9
Weather and Terrain	9
Plants and Animals	9
Tubernets	9
Airbags	9
Grubbers	10
Wilderhogs	10
Wilderness Syndrome	10
The Star Team Bases	10
Location and Physical Layout	10
Life at Marauders' Landing	11
Political Background	12
Imperial Forces in the Region	12
Imperial Rulers in the Wilderness	12
CHAPTER 4: NPC ALIEN RACES	
The Crassites	15
Physical Characteristics	15
Background	15
Creating Crassite NPCs	16
Crassites in Play	16
The Tarsans	16
Physical Characteristics	16
Background	16
Creating Tarsan NPCs	17
The Gorlons	17
Physical Characteristics	17
Regenerative Powers	17
Background	17
Creating Gorlon NPCs	18
Gorlons in Play	18
The Zoe	18
Physical Characteristics	18
Background	18
Creating Zoe NPCs	19
The Crystal Folk	19
Physical Characteristics	19
Background	19
Creating Crystal Folk NPCs	20
Crystal Folk in Play	20
Xenophobes	20
CHAPTER 5: NPC REACTIONS	
NPC Statistics	21
NPC Reactions	22
Direct Action Chart	23
Legal Problems	24
CHAPTER 6: PLUNDER AND PROFIT	
Currency	25
Plunder	25
Smuggling	27
Miscellaneous Income	27
The High Cost of Living	28
CHAPTER 7: RUNNING STAR ACE	
What the Game is All About	29
The CM's Role	29
Creating and Running Encounters	29
Creating Adventures	30
Campaign Play	30
Combining Games	32
The Two Most Important Rules	32
Suggested Reading and Viewing	32

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The logo for Pacesetter, featuring the word "Pacesetter" in a bold, sans-serif font. Above the text is a stylized graphic of a curved line, resembling a running track or a path, that arches over the letters.

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Chapter 1: THE EMPIRE

Permit me to introduce myself. I am Yasik the Traka. They called me Yasik the Wondrous when I was the High Storyteller to the Imperial Court at Cairn. Times change, and each person's story is a long one; now I'm a Star Ace, Free Order of Diamonds, and assigned to brief you about the Empire, the Alliance, and some folks in between. This time, I'll keep my story short but true.

As far as we know, the Galactic Empire is the largest military, political, and economic force in the galaxy. It covers over 8000 inhabited worlds in almost as many star systems, including the worlds of all PCs and NPCs (except, of course, the Xenophobes). The Emperor holds complete power, and rules through a group of hereditary "high-born" nobles who control all positions of influence. Until recently, the Empire offered its provinces military security, but the Imperial thugs took an arm and a leg in return—the provinces supplied nearly all their resources to the Imperial military machine, and most of their young folks served in the front lines of the Imperial Army as nothing more than laser fodder. The Empire still bleeds its provinces, but the military security it once promised is now threatened—by the mysterious Xenophobes from the galactic core and by those of us in the Star Teams (not to mention those in the Alliance and resistance movements on occupied planets, who help us on the sly).

HISTORY OF THE EMPIRE

Strange as it may seem, the seeds of the Empire were sown on the planet Earth—that same Earth that fought the Empire for nearly 500 years and which is still a hotbed of rebellion against Imperial authority. But Earth is the home planet of the human race, and the Empire is a human institution. No non-human has worn the Imperial crown, nor can the few non-human nobles expect to rise to the throne.

One thing I'll have to grant humans: they're a race of survivors.

Those on Earth recovered rapidly from the nuclear holocaust of 2054, aided by the ancient Kleibor and Tarsan civilizations who contacted them in 2145. In the six centuries from 2200 to 2800, the aggressive human race spread throughout the inhabitable worlds of almost a tenth of the galaxy. Though they weren't the oldest (nor by any means the wisest) race in this section of the Milky Way, humans became the dominant race.

Founding and Expansion

Human cultures varied greatly from world to world, and in some cases—maybe because of isolation, war, or economic collapse (who really knows why?)—humans turned back to an almost primitive barbarism, which I suspect is their natural state. That's what happened on the planet Cairn, where in 2899 a young barbarian named Leo used sword and flame to seize planetwide royal power.

Leo's bloodthirstiness was unusual, even for a human. Soon he caught the attention of some neighboring Crassites. Always after the quick money, the Crassites backed Leo with hard cash and high tech, using him as a strongarm man to "convince" nearby worlds that dealing with the Crassites on Crassite terms was in everyone's best interest. The arrangement was right up Leo's alley: he took over six worlds in six years. Then in 2905, he turned on his Crassite bosses, wiped them out and sacked their two home planets, then proclaimed himself Leo I, Emperor of the Galaxy.

Well, the worlds nearby didn't take Leo and his eight-world empire all that seriously; most never heard of it, and those who did were right to think that it would take all the brains a hoodlum like Leo could muster simply to keep his worlds in order. But they overlooked Leo's son.

Educated by the finest means Crassite wealth could buy, but still a gangster at heart, Young Leo did away with his father in 2910, blaming the murder on a Crassite separatist plot and assuming the "Imperial throne." In a rare show of humor,

Young Leo renamed himself Innocent I, and in 2911, began the greatest career of conquest in recorded galactic history.

He must have inherited his genius from his mother, but at any rate, Innocent knew what he was doing. He applied high technology equipment and advanced administrative theories to the needs of his barbaric but numerous forces, and increased his empire from eight planets to nearly 7600 star systems in the 64 years of his reign. After his first few military conquests, the rest of these planets simply surrendered.

Innocent's empire was feudal: he granted control of star systems and planets to his relatives, followers and non-human allies, all of whom received titles of nobility. Each overlord ran his provinces much as he wished: all the Empire demanded was loyalty, money, resources, and manpower to continue its conquests.

Empire and Alliance

When Innocent I died in 2974 (peacefully, and of natural causes), a welcome quiet settled over the galaxy. A number of short-lived successors struggled for 85 years to tighten Imperial power in the vast number of conquered systems. Meanwhile, the systems still free from the Empire began a series of long negotiations, more out of terror than anything else. In 3059 some of these systems formed the Federal Alliance, for the sole purpose of preventing further Imperial aggression. Ironically, the Alliance's strongest supporter and its first and foremost military headquarters was—once again—Earth.

The Four Hundred Years War

Forming this Alliance merely stirred things up again. Under Emperor Leo II (a brilliant general in his own right), the Empire declared war on the Alliance in 3081. You know most of the story of the next four centuries: wars and rumors of wars, the early Imperial victories, all the truces broken by the Empire, and the formation of the Alliance Star Teams.

Let's just say that the tactics of the Star Teams gave the Empire fits until the final Battle of Sol (3480), in which the Alliance main fleet was destroyed by the massed might of the Imperial Navy. Imperial losses, however, were so severe that the Empire couldn't follow up its victory. In fact, it welcomed the Alliance's request for an armistice, demanding only control of Earth. Both sides agreed not to interfere in the area of the galaxy called the Wilderness Region, although as usual, the Empire's word was as worthless as a deed to Tamillan farmland.

The Xenophobic War

Negotiations following the armistice failed to produce a peace treaty. Not only did the Empire gain the Sol system, including Earth, but it soon broke the non-interference agreement and occupied several systems in the Wilderness Region: Sepa Green, Emniyet, and Shamba. Things looked bad for the Alliance; the Empire, with all its resources, could rebuild much faster than the Alliance and would probably attack as soon as it was able.

The Alliance was saved by the appearance of the Xenophobes in 3503. We'd never heard of them before, and we still don't know much about them: they're not human, and they're from somewhere near the galactic core. At any rate, they know how to make a strong first impression: they announced their arrival in this section of the galaxy by blowing two entire planets to cosmic dust and attempting to grab three more. Naturally, this caught the attention of the Empire, and with many of their forces dispatched against the Xenophobes, they no longer could carry on a full-scale war against the Alliance. As for the Xenophobes, they're still a major Imperial headache, but they haven't bothered the Alliance...yet. At any rate, theirs is not what you'd call a mission of mercy.

THE EMPIRE TODAY

Enough of history. I spent some time on Cairn not so long ago. They asked me to leave, for reasons I won't go into

at the moment. I've been kicked out of better places before, so good ride! Here's the lowdown on the way they work things on Cairn, and throughout the Empire.

First of all, the current Emperor, Frederick Constantine II, is a complete incompetent—can't handle the Star Teams, much less the Alliance or the Xenophobes. The court is one big shark tank, with each advisor out for himself. Life near the Emperor is dangerous; those who displease him have been known to end up pushing rocks on Tamilla or floating face-down in a swamp on Sepa Green.

Beneath the Emperor himself are three roughly equal ruling classes: the heads of the Imperial bureaucracy, the Council of 100, and the Emperor's direct vassals. It is possible for one person to be a member of all three groups at once.

1. The Imperial bureaucracy has five branches; one individual, appointed by the Emperor, heads each branch:

Administration (headed by Duke Metellus) has offices and agents on

IMPERIAL TITLES	
Title	Notes
Crown Prince	Son of an Emperor; first in line to succeed to the throne.
Grand Duke	Brother of an Emperor
Duke	Member of the Imperial family by blood or marriage; usually has several systems as personal fiefs.
Count	Noble with at least one star system as a fief.
Viscount	Any holder of a planet or system from a count.
Baron	Lowest rank of nobility, holds as fief one planet or portion of a planet

almost every Imperial planet. It handles the daily operation of the Empire and carries out Imperial policy.

Revenue (headed by Duke Metellus) is the Imperial tax collecting agency, responsible for raising and guarding Imperial funds.

Legal (headed by Count Sillith) is the Imperial court system. All trials are conducted by its appointed judges. These officials can command testimony, inflict torture to obtain information, waive any or all the rights of the accused, and impose penalties, including death. They seem to enjoy all these duties. The legal branch keeps voluminous records and has facilities for almost any type of research related to Imperial law or law enforcement.

Imperial Military Forces (headed by Grand Duke Otto IV) includes all regular military forces of the Empire. The head of this branch, the High Admiral/General, reports directly to the Emperor who is Commander-in-chief of the Imperial forces.

Only the highest and most trusted officials know the exact size of the Imperial Navy and Army (and since *this* Emperor trusts no one, even those officials aren't sure), but these forces are certainly enormous. All occupied planets have a garrison, usually numbering several thousand at least, and the navy's vessels patrol all major space routes. In addition to patrol and occupation forces, there are the main battle fleets of the navy and the assault units of the army.

Imperial Command Enforcement (headed by Duke Yanayir) is composed of fanatically loyal elite troops who also function as the Imperial secret police. ICE has priority and authority over other branches when in the field, and answers only to the Emperor.

2. The Council of 100 is an advisory body with no legal authority. However, its members have the right of access to the Emperor; he must agree to see them personally about any grievance or problem they have. The Council advises on Imperial law and policy. Its members include all nobles with the rank of Grand Duke or

Duke, and anyone the Emperor feels like appointing: when a member dies or retires, the Emperor simply appoints another to fill out the 100. Duke Metellus is the present President of the Council.

3. Vassals of the Emperor are all who govern planets or star systems. Direct vassals hold their territories by direct grant from the Emperor himself; other vassals hold territories by grant of these direct vassals. For example, Baron Silva is a vassal of Countess Livia, who is a direct vassal of the Emperor. Only direct vassals are of equal rank with Council Members and heads of the bureaucracy, but all vassals have certain privileges: the right to legal authority in all non-Imperial affairs in their possessions, the right to tax their planets or systems, and the right to raise personal military forces.

Conditions on Occupied Worlds

Of course, occupied planets differ widely, but the Empire leaves its calling card on all its possessions. The populations are viewed as a resource for the use of both the Empire and the local noble who governs the planet. Seizure of property, military drafts, and citizen relocation are common practices on occupied planets.

Attitudes toward the Empire vary from system to system, planet to planet, depending on the policies of garrisons and officials. However, most people (and non-humans) in most of the occupied worlds take part willingly in the scramble for fame and fortune, believing the Empire's lie that "anyone can better himself under our guiding hand."

Planetary economies always benefit the Empire and the nobility, but sometimes enough profits trickle down to allow for a fairly well-to-do middle class. On more advanced worlds, the merchant class does especially well for itself. These people play the Empire's game—make their money under its "guiding hand"—so they aren't likely to support the Alliance, much less the Star Teams. Those on the poorer planets live with

IMPERIAL MILITARY ORGANIZATION

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

The smallest Imperial Army unit is the fireteam; larger units are built from fireteams. The unit commander's rank is listed in parenthesis.

1 Fireteam=5 troopers, 1 w/grenade launcher (Cpl.)

4 Fireteams=1 Squad (Sgt.)

5 Squads=1 Platoon (Cpt.)

3 Platoons + 1 special Fireteam w/ PPRs=1 Company (Col.)

3 Companies + 1 platoon of 3 IM Tanks=1 Battalion (Brig. Gen.)

3 Battalions + troop transports troops=1 Brigade (Lt. General)

2 or more Brigades, + 3 extra platoons of IM Tanks=1 Division (Maj. Gen.)

very few comforts: the struggle to keep those comforts and not to sink to day-by-day survival keeps people busy, so there is little thought of rebellion.

Attitudes towards the Alliance and the Star Teams vary, but as a rule the Alliance is seen as an enemy; after all, many folks in the Empire lost several generations of family members in the Four Hundred Years War. We're considered pirates, terrorists, or (at best) desperados. Face it, there's some bad publicity out there.

Every major city and installation on every occupied planet swarms with the Imperial military in their shiny white armor. In addition, troops of the local overlord patrol everywhere, dressed in anything from the fanciest uniforms to old animal pelts. These two military groups serve as the primary means of law enforcement and control. Of course, everyone lives in great dread of the ICE secret police and "special duty" squadrons: their techniques have made them famous.

Despite the iron grip of the Imperial hand, resistance movements

are quite...lively on several occupied planets. The organization, strength and success of these groups vary from planet to planet. The resistance may spread anti-Imperial propaganda, spy for the Alliance, furnish information, shelter, or even bases to Star Team members, or maybe even tinker with a few Imperial gadgets, if you catch my meaning. ICE fights the resistance by taking it out on the locals, or by trying to infiltrate the resistance groups. As to what they'll do when they catch a resistance fighter or a Star Team member...well, you've seen the wanted posters, and I don't think you'd care to hear the details.

MAJOR IMPERIAL NPCS

Now for the inside story on a few of the most important Imperial officials. You may never meet up with any of them: if you do, your CM should make sure it happens rarely. But rest assured that whatever plot or scheme is in the air, one of these fellows may well be behind it.

His Imperial Majesty FREDERICK CONSTANTINE II, Emperor of the Galaxy



RACE: Human

STR	48	DEX	46	AGL	54
WPR	74	PER	42	PCN	62
STA	52	UMS	51	WNDS	13

SKILLS: Gambling, Rookie, 71; History, Rookie, 83; Investigation, Rookie, 75.

At the age of 23, Frederick is vain, spoiled, cruel, and decadent. I don't think he'll grow out of it. He loves to be flattered (that's why he got tired of having me around) and he loves to use power on a whim (that's why he threw me off of Cairn). Frederick doesn't give a Crassite's snout for the real responsibilities of rulership.

A lot of the older nobles remember Frederick's father, Frederick I, rather fondly, and they think the youngster has, as they say, a few holds empty in the cargo ship. Frederick would rather be alive than popular, so he uses ICE and its current head, Duke Yanayir, to help him to keep the nobility divided. The Emperor rarely leaves the pleasures of his court on Cairn, and seems to think that the Empire will handle the Xenophobe threat without any personal effort on his part.

**The Grand Duke OTTO IV
High Admiral/General of the
Empire**

RACE: Human

STR 62 **DEX** 56 **AGL** 54
WPR 70 **PER** 58 **PCN** 78
STA 64 **UMS** 58 **WNDS** 14

SKILLS: All contemporary ranged weapons, Rookie, 71; Sword, Vet, 88; Martial Arts, Ace, 116; Advanced Self Defense, Ace, 116; History, Vet, 104; Investigation, Vet, 99; Military Leadership, Ace, 119.

The 63-year-old Grand Duke Otto disapproves of his nephew the Emperor. Otto is loyal to the Empire, and the Xenophobe threat worries him. He is a tough, realistic soldier, not afraid to use brutality when he needs to. He stays in power despite his nephew because of his extreme competence, the influence and respect he receives from the military, and the wealth he's stockpiled from the 100 star systems he governs. All in all, he's a crashing bore, but a tough enemy.

**Duke YANAYIR MORLETH
Overlord, Imperial Command
Enforcement**



RACE: Crassite

STR 36 **DEX** 34 **AGL** 62
WPR 70 **PER** 76 **PCN** 78
STA 32 **UMS** 49 **WNDS** 11

SKILLS: All beam weapons, Vet, 64; Computers, Vet, 94; Investigation, Ace, 130; Forgery, Vet, 86.

After the Emperor himself, Yanayir is the most dreaded Imperial official. His ICE troops and secret police seem to be everywhere at once; the duke sees himself as the real power behind the throne, and he's probably right. This old Crassite is completely corrupt, and all the humans in the high nobility hate him. Rumor has it he's trying to get the Wilderness area by marrying off his daughter Nisha to Count Sillith's only son, then arranging an "accident" to dispose of the rather hefty bride's husband and father-in-law, both at once.

**Count GRIL SILLITH
Grand High Vizier of the Empire**

RACE: Gorlon

STR 78 **DEX** 56 **AGL** 64
WPR 62 **PER** 44 **PCN** 70
STA 76 **UMS** 71 **WNDS** 15

SKILLS: All beam weapons, Vet, 86; Investigation, Ace, 114; Computers, Vet, 90; Bargaining, Vet, 83.



Count Sillith recently acquired the planets of the Wilderness area as a reward from Duke Metellus; it seems that all those Gorlon mercenaries under Sillith's personal command come in handy. His influence with the Emperor is based on his proven ability to deliver "convicted traitors" for public execution at the Emperor's court. He is aware that Duke Yanayir covets his Wilderness territory.

**Duke AURELIUS METELLUS
Administrator of the Empire,
Master of Imperial Revenues, Pres-
ident of the Council of 100**

RACE: Human

STR 42 **DEX** 50 **AGL** 40
WPR 64 **PER** 68 **PCN** 74
STA 52 **UMS** 41 **WNDS** 13

SKILLS: All beam weapons, Vet, 80; Computer, Vet, 92; Bargaining, Vet, 96; Investigation, Ace, 124; Forgery, Vet, 92; Gambling, Vet, 92; Sword, Ace, 96.

At 55 Duke Metellus has decided to rest on his past achievements and play up to the young Emperor. Despite his laziness and dishonesty, Metellus is a first-rate plotter (you'd have to be to hold so many Imperial offices!). His current goal is to stop Duke Yanayir's rise to power by promoting the fortunes of Count Sillith.

Chapter 2: THE ALLIANCE

Now for the “good guys.” They support your Star Teams, and they’re against that bunch of Imperial thugs, but I’ll tell you one thing: the little welcome their Admiral Freze gave me when I came home to Stalitsa after my stay on Cairn wasn’t what I’d call warm: 12 hours of interrogation is more than even a Trakan wants to talk. At any rate, here are the facts.

The Federal Alliance is the second largest known power in the galaxy (remember, we still aren’t sure about those Xenophobes). At present, 2000 planets in only slightly fewer star systems are members. The Alliance isn’t a nation or an empire, but a loose confederation of worlds which share one common interest: avoiding Imperial conquest.

Political Organization

Membership in the Alliance is voluntary: your planet can withdraw from the Alliance at any time without penalty. They always welcome new members, and require only that the planet’s government (or whatever controls the planet) be “committed to mutual defense against any act of Imperial aggression”—that’s straight from the Alliance Charter.

The policies of the Alliance are set by a Senate. Each member planet is represented by one Senior Senator; if a planet pitches in a good deal of money, materials, or manpower to the Alliance, it can also have up to three Junior Senators. Things get bulky and quarrelsome in an assembly this large, but at least it’s democratic. Carrying out Senate policies is the job of an Executive, chosen by the full Senate, and a special Committee of 50, chosen by the Senior Senators.

The main concern of the Alliance is military and economic defense of its member planets. Each member planet runs its own internal affairs, trade agreements, and relations with other planets. You can deal with the many neutral planets, or even with the Empire (though the Alliance gets pretty ruffled if you deal arms or high tech to an Imperial planet!). The Senate passes no “laws” except those concerning defense or espionage.

Military Forces

The military forces of the Alliance consist of the Alliance Space Navy and Space Marines. Member worlds contribute troopers, weapons, and spacecraft to these forces. The Alliance itself builds some ships and recruits some military personnel, using funds from members who do not have the capability to build ships or train forces themselves.

All forces operate under a unified Alliance Command. The Executive appoints the top officers of Alliance Command from a list of volunteers from the member planets. Navy commanders in each system near the Wilderness Region are responsible for keeping contact with the Star Teams operating in the area. Further contact with Star Teams takes place when necessary.

Current Military/Economic Posture

The Four Hundred Years’ War was a complete disaster for the Alliance, although the Battle of Sol did stop Imperial aggression for the time being. However, the cost of the war drained the Alliance economy, and the destruction of its fleet meant it had to rebuild its navy from scratch.

From the time of the Battle of Sol to present-day 3512, the Alliance has taken on the slow task of rebuilding, concentrating first on economic recovery for member planets. This takes most of their money and time; as a result, the military buildup is mostly limited to the quick and cheap construction of starfighters, an extra cruiser or dreadnought when money and time are handy. In short, they don’t stand too much of a chance against a full-scale Imperial invasion.

The Marines are also rebuilding; manpower is short, and only the Alliance capital and those systems nearest to the Empire’s borders have Alliance garrisons. If there’s an all-out Imperial attack, the first worlds attacked will have to rely on their own defenses while the Alliance scraps together what reserves it can.

The Alliance obviously can’t afford another war with the Empire;

luckily, the Xenophobes are on the top of the Empire’s dancecard right now. However the cause of the Alliance—resistance to the Empire—must continue on the worlds lost during the war. Further, the Alliance must take what steps it can to disrupt the powerful economy of the Empire. So, Star Team members, just think of yourselves as . . . economic advisors.

Covert Actions

The Alliance is counting quite a bit upon the Star Teams which were so successful during the war. Secretly, while denying any such activity, the Alliance is smuggling funds to the Star Teams, giving them free rein to hit Imperial shipping and damage the Empire’s economic and military power whenever and however they can.

In addition, the Star Teams have both espionage and counter-espionage duties. The Alliance especially wants any information on Imperial military positions, and on the power struggles within the Court on Cairn (believe me: they kept asking until they learned everything I knew). Star Team raids often influence the political struggles within the Imperial inner circle.

Finally, the Star Teams are used by the Alliance to maintain contact with resistance groups throughout the Empire. Star Team members can become rich by smuggling, but often their actions help the Alliance and the resistance, too.

Advantage and Vulnerability

The Alliance has one great advantage (in addition to the Star Teams) in its ongoing struggle with the Empire: the planet Ruoka, home of the Crystal Folk, is a member of the Alliance. This planet is the single best source of Xantium crystals in all explored star systems.

Xantium crystals are necessary to maintain interstellar communications and hyperspace astrogation (see Chapter VII: Equipment, in the STAR ACE™ Training Manual). The Empire has only limited natural supplies of these crystals, and synthetic pro-

duction is very costly and time consuming.

So you can be sure: the Empire is very interested in Ruoka. For now, they're adopting a political and economic strategy designed to lure Ruoka out of the Alliance. If war breaks out, Ruoka will be a primary Imperial objective.

Both the Empire and the Alliance are handling Ruoka with kid gloves. All kinds of schemes center on this planet and its valuable crystals and many plots are actually hatched, since the planet lies in the non-interference zone agreed to by both sides in the Armistice.

Attitudes of Member Planets

Most member planets of the Alliance have their own forms of political and economic organization. These are wildly varied: some planets have a representative, democratic form of government, others are popular monarchies, and some are theocracies ruled by the leaders of some particular religion.

Since the Alliance worlds are so very different, it's natural that everyone is tolerant in matters of race, religion, trade, and politics. This doesn't mean that a local system will allow itself to be undermined, or even that visitors never find themselves in a barroom brawl because of a difference of opinion. It does mean that characters of any race can think, and perhaps say, about anything they want to as long as it isn't subversive, dangerous, or very insulting to the local majority. Remember, this tolerance stuff has to work both ways.

The Star Teams are popular folk heroes on almost all Alliance worlds. The adventures of Star Teams and their blows against the Empire are the subjects of countless barroom songs, holodramas, and popular novels and histories. Human children grow up playing "Star Team" just as their ancestors on Earth grew up playing "cops and robbers."

Star Team members visiting an Alliance world can expect to be treated as popular heroes, according to the customs of that world.

MAJOR ALLIANCE NPCS

Now for a couple of the major Alliance officials. Although you may never meet them in your adventures, the CM must be aware of their backgrounds and keep their goals in mind when running a STAR ACE campaign game.

JOSEPH RANDALL Executive of the Federal Alliance



RACE: Human

STR	58	DEX	56	AGL	48
WPR	72	PER	68	PCN	78
STA	66	UMS	53	WNDS	14

SKILLS: Boxing, Ace, 109; Sword, Vet, 83; All firearms, Vet, 86; All beam weapons, Vet, 86; Thrown Weapons (Sensory Knife), Vet, 87; Spacecraft Piloting, Ace, 116; Computers, Vet, 94; Investigation, Vet, 103.

At 62, Randall is in fine shape—doesn't look a day over 35, same as they said he did when he was an Earth Space Marine Colonel. He's a good Executive of the Alliance, although he's a bit gruff and impatient of failure. I guess even that impatience has its reasons: failure is something the Alliance can't afford in its weakened condition. Randall likes to chart a plan of action and carry it out, letting others worry about the political consequences.

DIANA FREZE Admiral, Alliance Space Navy



RACE: Crystal Clone

STR	44	DEX	76	AGL	52
WPR	64	PER	54	PCN	66
STA	42	UMS	48	WNDS	12

SKILLS: Spacecraft Piloting, Ace, 120; All beam weapons, Vet, 106; Computers, Vet, 88; Deep Space Navigation, Ace, 121; Investigation, Vet, 92; Emergency Spacecraft Repair, Vet, 99.

Admiral Freze commands the small forces available to the Alliance Navy near the Wilderness sector. This command, its headquarters on Stalitsa, is the most sensitive in the Alliance Navy: defending Ruoka against Imperial attack depends heavily upon a delaying action by Freze and her forces.

Freze, at 52, is already somewhat old for her race, but still has a strong fighting spirit. Randall is annoyed by Freze's neglect of day-by-day government, but the Crystal Clone is an aggressive commander. She believes that Star Team raids into Imperial territory are the best defense the Alliance could have, and takes pains to make sure the Star Team base on Wilderness is supplied with everything it needs.

Chapter 3: THE WILDERNESS REGION

Now your good friend Yasik's going to give you the inside story on the place where the action happens. Take a look at the color map in your STAR ACE™ game. What you see is an area that we in the Star Teams (and the folks in the Alliance) call the "Wilderness Region." The Empire calls it "the Non-Interference Zone," or some other kind of military doubletalk which really means they want to take it over. But more about that later.

As you can see, the region includes not only the Wilderness system, but other systems nearby: Asfalia, Tamilla, Emniyet, Sepa Green, Shamba, Earth, Stalitsa, and Ruoka.

To help out your navigators, the map divides the Wilderness Region into a number of smaller areas called *Grand Strategic Sectors*. These Grand Strategic Sectors are the hexagons (or "hexes") on the map.

Each Grand Strategic Sector on the map contains a million *systems*. Now what's a system? Simply one star and the planets, asteroids and other astronomical bodies which orbit that star. (There are a few binary or trinary systems, in which two or three stars orbit each other, with a few planets thrown in for good measure.) Most of the systems in the Wilderness Region are not shown on the map; only those systems we know to be inhabited are shown. Inhabited systems are named, for convenience, for the major inhabited planet in the system. So, for example, Earth's solar system is called the "Earth system," even though it also contains planets such as Venus, Mars, and Bacchus (the 10th planet, discovered in 2011).

The Wilderness Region will most likely be the setting for your first few STAR ACE™ adventures. In fact, there's enough happening in the Wilderness Region alone for it to serve as a complete campaign setting. You may want to adventure in the Wilderness region, or use this information as a model for your own campaign settings.

After the defeat of the Alliance at the Battle of Sol, the Star Teams chose the planet Wilderness as a location for several top secret bases. They picked it for three reasons:

1. The Wilderness sector contains a million tightly clustered systems, many of which are unexplored. If that's not enough, the whole sector is filled with gas clouds and galactic storms. The Wilderness system itself is the old needle in a haystack in this sector. Even if the Empire suspected that our bases were located in the sector, they'd search for centuries before they found us.

2. The Wilderness system itself contains asteroid belts, strangely orbiting small planets and moons, and other hazards to sublight navigation: getting near the planet Wilderness is no treat for even a top pilot.

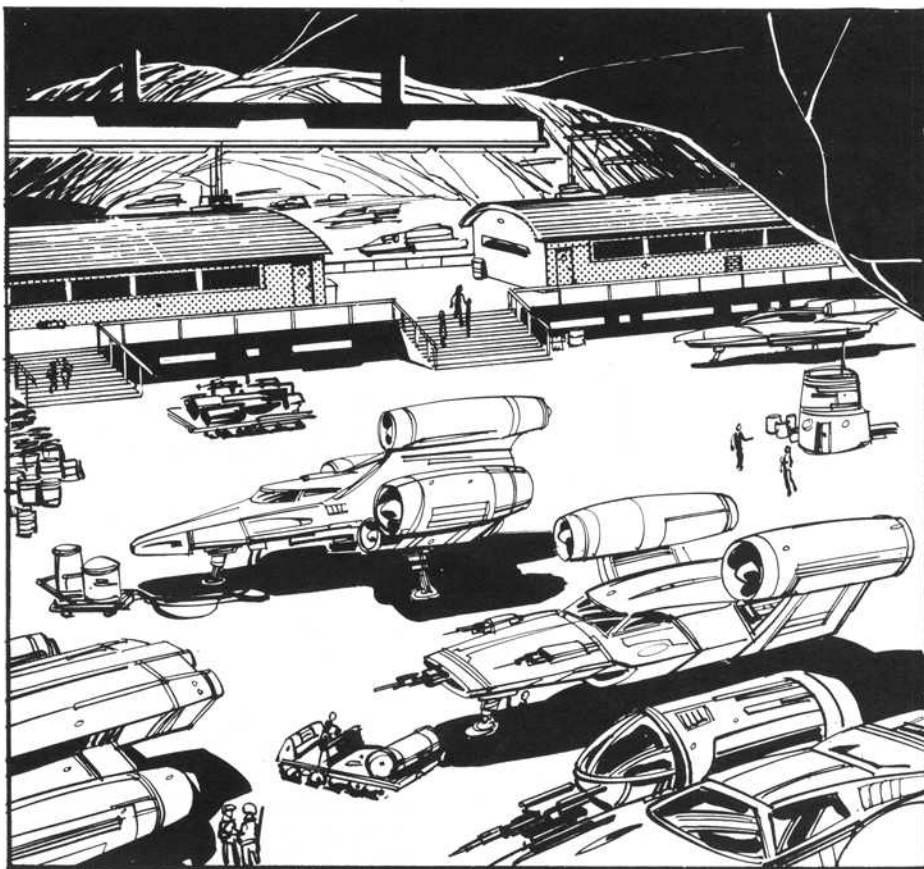
3. Most Imperial authorities think the Wilderness sector worlds are uninhabitable.

All in all, it's a good setup, and a great cover. There are drawbacks—but more about those later.

Communications in the Region

How do we know what's going on in a region filled with so many stars and planets, not to mention vast, empty stretches of space? Thanks to Xantium crystal technology, it's possible to relay communications at translight speeds. Translight communications travel on tight beams broadcast between Communications Relay Points (CRPs for short). Your Wilderness Region map shows the location of these CRPs. There are also CRPs on every inhabited planet in the region. The maximum distance over which a message can be relayed from one CRP to another is three Grand Strategic Sectors.

These CRPs make it possible to have almost instant communication between any point in the region; it is even possible for a ship in hyperspace



to communicate with other ships and planet bases.

The CRPs indicated on the map as "shared CRPs" are used by both the Empire and the Alliance for standard commerial communications. Both Alliance and Imperial military ships use these CRPs for communications, but have a scrambled beam to avoid enemy decoding. In addition, the Star Teams have placed secret Star Team CRPs in the region; these are used only by Star Team ships on a beam unknown to both the Empire and the Alliance.

The "shared CRPs" are actually space stations, manned by Imperial troops, usually guarded by Imperial fighters, and patrolled by task forces from the Imperial fleet at Asfalia. Imperial pilots may get their ships repaired at shared CRPs; we have to go to our secret CRPs to get our ships repaired. Of course, knocking out any CRP makes communications relays through it impossible.

Planetary Scanners

Each garrisoned planet in the region has a series of planetary scanners—an early warning system to prevent raids or invasions. These devices have an 80% chance to detect any craft that approaches within interceptor range of the planet. The scanners all tie into a central control at the chief planetary spaceport.

Imperial planets always ask for a code phrase—a password—to allow landing without interference. Any craft that tries to land without giving the code phrase is subject to interceptor pursuit, fighter pursuit, or both. The Empire changes the code from time to time, but it's available to everyone except the Star Teams. We can, however, bribe other pilots to find it out.

WILDERNESS: THE PLANET

To the average PC or NPC, Wilderness is a nightmare planet. The atmosphere is usually breathable, and the gravity a comfortable 1 g, but there the resemblance to Earth, Stalitsa, or

any of the other PC races' homeworlds ends.

Weather and Terrain

The first thing you notice about Wilderness is the howling winds that whip across the planet's surface. They reach speeds of up to 150 miles per hour, so they're kind of hard to overlook. Most of the surface of the planet is affected by these storms for 1 to 5 hours each day. (There is a constant 20% chance per hour of such a windstorm beginning any time characters adventure outside on Wilderness.) No PC race can withstand these winds; several Star Team members, dumb enough to be outside when a storm suddenly arrived, have been injured or killed by the windstorms. (Treat as 175% catastrophic damage.)

The temperature on Wilderness ranges from 180 degrees Fahrenheit during the day to -90 degrees Fahrenheit at night. These extreme temperatures, coupled with the gravitational pull of the two barren moons that orbit the planet, probably cause the storms. All in all, there's plenty of reasons to stay inside.

Most types of familiar terrain can be found on Wilderness, along with some things that probably aren't so familiar. Most striking are the Alliance Mountains, which run over two continents and soar to heights of over 60,000 feet. The planet also has its share of dust-bowl like plains, hills, rocky deserts, meadows of tubernet plants, bumbershoot forests, and arctic wastes.

Plants and Animals

I really can't begin to list all the various types of plant and animal life on Wilderness; in fact, nobody's really studied the wildlife on the planet. I suppose that's because nobody cares all that much. Still, it might be good to talk about a very few of the more common lifeforms found on the planet.

Tubernet

There are quite a few types of tubernet plants; all of them, however, are green,

and all have an unusual root system. The roots extend over 3' into the ground, and they're connected by tough, fibrous tendrils to the roots of other neighboring tubernets. In fact, a meadow of these plants could be considered a single, enormous plant. Tubernets grow only a few inches above the surface of the ground, spreading their tough, broad, waxy leaves to gather what little light falls from the dusty sky. Like the roots below ground, these leaves grow together, joined by tough, vinelike fibers.

Tubernets have countless sharp thorns along the edge of their leaves to defend against small predators who live in their shelter. These thorns are poison to all PC races, not to mention Crassites, Gorlons, Tarsans, and Zoe.

Watch out if you walk through an area covered by tubernets; you're likely to become entangled in the plants. A character must make a general Agility check each round he moves through tubernets at any speed faster than a walk. Failure means he trips and falls on the thorny plants, automatically being stuck by some of the poisonous thorns.

Airbags

STR	30	DEX	NA	AGL	60
PCN	40	STA	46	UMS	45
WNDS	12	Move:		Wind speed	

"Airbags" is a general term we use for the numerous species of air-dwelling creatures that float in the windy atmosphere of Wilderness. Some of them look like jellyfish without tentacles, others like toadstools or mushrooms. Airbags ride the winds of Wilderness, feeding on wind-carried plant spores and smaller airbags. They're transparent and nearly invisible, which makes them particularly dangerous. All characters suffer a -40% modifier to their Perception when trying to spot airbags. When an airbag accidentally floats or flies into you, it panics and attacks fiercely, once per round, fighting for life. Unfortunately, a person who's bitten by one of these things has a 50% chance of getting "Wilderness syndrome," a really nasty disease I'll explain shortly.

Grubbers

STR 20 DEX 26 AGL 60
PCN 60 STA 30 UMS 40
WNDS 11 Move: 75'/round

Grubbers are four-legged mammals that live in burrows beneath the planet surface. Grubbers are omnivorous: they burrow under tubernet plants to feed on the roots, and they also eat various other small animals. They look quite a bit like gophers do on Earth, but they have keener eyesight, spending several hours each day on the surface seeking small prey. Adult grubbers average two to three feet in length.

On the surface, grubbers usually run in packs of up to 100. They seem to find marvelous strength and courage in numbers; a pack of grubbers can take down large prey. That makes for a dangerous situation during the Wilderness day (by night they're almost always underground): a pack of grubbers will just as soon attack one or two Star Team members as burrow for tubernet roots. Unlike Earth pack hunters, grubbers aren't afraid of fire; come to think of it, they aren't afraid of much of anything (part of that comes from being not very bright in the first place). When they begin an attack, they keep at you and at you, regardless of the losses they suffer. An attacking grubber bites each round for full armed combat damage.

Wilderhogs

STR 110 DEX 26 AGL 60
PCN 60 STA 110 UMS 85*
WNDS 18 Move: 175'/round

**To be used only for defense column; a wilderhog will not fight in any situation; if cornered, it tries to burrow into the ground to escape its enemies.*

The wilderhog is a larger, more gentle cousin to the grubber. It stands over 4' high at the shoulder, looks like a large gopher or groundhog, and has huge hooked claws, once used for burrowing,

but now used to grab and dig into the planet surface during the fierce Wilderness windstorms.

The wilderhogs can be used for transportation, ridden much like a horse. Their ability to anchor themselves in the midst of a windstorm, plus their strange immunity to the poison of tubernets, make them a very convenient and useful mount.

The only drawback to using a wilderhog as a mount is its slight tendency to freeze in the middle of a stressful situation (5% chance per situation), such as combat. The paralyzed state lasts for 2d10 minutes, during which time the wilderhog can do nothing but stand still and shiver.

WILDERNESS SYNDROME

Wilderness syndrome is a peculiar disease which nearly wiped out the original Star Team settlers on Wilderness, and which still threatens anyone who lives there. First the good news: we do have a vaccine against Wilderness syndrome, which all Star Team members in the region receive upon recruitment. Now the bad news: the vaccine is only partially effective. Each player character runs a 01% chance each game year of catching Wilderness syndrome.

The symptoms of Wilderness syndrome are:

1. You gradually lose all body hair over a period of 1d10 weeks. For all PC races, this results in a permanent modification of -10 to the Personality score;

2. You might suffer uncontrollable convulsions. There's a 02% chance of convulsions occurring in any stressful situation, such as combat. These convulsions last 1d10 minutes;

3. You might suffer a sort of berserk battle lust. There is a 05% chance that this condition will arise in any combat situation (that is, if you haven't gone into convulsions first). Once triggered, the battle lust drives you to attack as relentlessly as a grubber, regardless of your own safety or any battle plan you might have had.

This description of the symptoms of Wilderness syndrome assumes that

the disease is being treated at least monthly by a character with Medical skill. Untreated Wilderness syndrome quickly leads to death, as per the normal disease rules.

THE STAR TEAM BASES

There are five major Star Team bases on Wilderness. Each of them is more or less the same as the others, and each is loyal to a principal leader or base commander. In addition, there are a number of smaller bases, begun by smaller groups who have chosen their own commander. To give you an idea as to what these places are like, I'll detail Marauders' Landing, one of the five major bases.

Location and Physical Layout

Marauders' Landing lies in the northern hemisphere of Wilderness, near a large tubernet plain, right at the foot of the Alliance mountains. The base itself has been tunnelled out of the mountainside, and has an interior surface area of over one square mile.

There are two entrances to Marauders' Landing. The one most often used is the fighter landing entrance. Huge, 30' high sliding double doors open here onto the landing strip for starfighters. Pilots making this approach must come in extremely low over the tubernet plain, ready to set down as soon as their craft has passed the doors. The second entrance is a small, narrow tunnel located a half mile north of the landing entrance.

Inside, to the south of the landing entrance, are the huge hangar areas where Star Team craft are stored, refueled, rearmed, repaired, and modified. There's enough hangar space to store and work on slightly over 1,000 single-seat starfighters, or fewer, larger craft.

North of the landing entrance are the commander's office, the computer control center (always staffed by two Crystal Clones), the base medical bay, and the living and recreational facilities. The power supply for the base lies further underground, beneath the landing entrance.

Base Defenses

Because of its hidden, secret location, Marauders' Landing doesn't need some sophisticated, high tech base defense. The base does have a shield generator, but shields are down unless the base comes under actual Imperial attack; they'd be a dead giveaway to any randomly passing Imperial ship that something big was happening on the planet. Sentinels are posted on sensory monitoring equipment which monitors activity in the Wilderness system, and all base personnel are trained in a scramble drill designed to put a swarm of spacecraft into space as quickly as possible, just in case the base is attacked. Of course, all incoming craft must identify themselves to Computer Central before entering the base. Beyond that, the base's best defenses are the skills and talents of the Star Teams.

Life At Marauders' Landing

Marauders' Landing currently serves as the main base of operations for 300 Star Team members under the leadership of base commander Malako, a Trakan Diamond Ace. As you might imagine, Malako runs a loose ship, which, if you ask me, is the only way to command; any Star Team member can use the base facilities for a small donation: 05% of any income from plunder, ransoms, smuggling, or whatever. This donation goes to meet the base's expenses. Those who fail to make the donation don't stay around Marauders' Landing very long, and they don't come back a second time. In addition, each Star Team member at the base is required to put in three days out of every 30 in various random duties: helping in the mess, running the computers, serving on the emerg-

ency security squad, or at whatever else needs fixing or mixing.

Each Star Team member who makes Marauders' Landing his personal base of operations is entitled to personal living quarters, food service from the base mess (which is currently run by an excellent Kleibor chef), hangar space, storage space for captured plunder, and use of the recreation facilities.

Aside from performing their duties, Star Team members are free to come and go as they like. On occasion, Malako may assign some group to a special mission for the base (usually something the Alliance wants done) or ask for volunteers for a particularly dangerous assignment. Beyond that, each individual shifts for himself, although the Star Team members are a tight-knit group and usually go out of their way to help a fellow member.



WILDERNESS REGION POLITICAL BACKGROUND

Under the terms of the armistice which ended the Four Hundred Years War, the Earth system was surrendered to the Empire. Asfalia and Tamilla had been under Imperial control before the war, and remained so. Emniet, Sepa Green, and Shamba were to become "border planets," accessible to both Imperial and Alliance ships, while Ruoka and Stalitsa remained Alliance planets.

Of course, the Empire moved at once to take advantage of the Alliance's weakened condition and snatched control on Emniet, Sepa Green and Shamba. These planets now have Imperial overlords, and all the trappings and hoopla that goes with Imperial control. However, all three planets are still open to merchant ships and small craft from the Alliance. The Empire started allowing this when the Xenophobes turned up in this part of the galaxy. The Xenophobes are a handful, and the last thing the Empire would want is another all-out war with the Alliance thrown into the new problems. Non-Imperial citizens travelling to the occupied worlds are closely watched by the local government and by ICE. Of course, Star Team members discovered here are immediately arrested as privateers.

Stalitsa, of course, the "party planet" of the region, is open to traffic from all comers. Although Stalitsa remains loyal to the Alliance, and is the site of the only Alliance Navy base in the Wilderness region, its economy would probably collapse without the tourist money pumped in by Imperial Army, Navy and ICE personnel who spend their leave time in its bright lights and...countless attractions.

The "open" status of Emniet, Sepa Green, Shamba and Stalitsa make the spaceports and cities of these planets hotspots for smugglers, spies, black marketeers, and dealers in information.

Ruoka's another matter: at the request of the Crystal Folk, the Alliance has declared it totally off-limits to the Empire. However, if I were a betting

Trakan (and there's no such thing as a "non-betting Trakan"), I'd lay good money that the place is crawling with Imperial spies and saboteurs who've worked their way onto the planet in the guise of workers in the Alliance controlled Xantium mines.

Earth is strongly occupied by Imperial forces, but that certainly doesn't mean the resistance has rolled over and died. Open guerrilla warfare against the Empire is being waged from secret bases in the Rocky Mountains, the Carpathians, and the Urals, as well as in the jungles of Southeast Asia and South America.

Imperial Forces In The Region

The main Imperial force in the region is the fleet based at Asfalia. It's a big one:

Three dreadnoughts, the *Conquest*, *Leo I*, and *Cairn*, each with a complement of 12 starfighters.

12 cruisers, each with a complement of 4 starfighters.

36 destroyers, each with a complement of 2 starfighters.

3 troop transports.

All Imperial occupied planets in the region are equipped with planetary shields, to be activated in the case of an Alliance attack. In addition, each Imperial planet has based on it:

1. 12 squadrons of interceptors, with three craft per squadron (a total of 36 interceptors).

2. Four squadrons of Imperial starfighters with three craft per squadron (a total of 12 starfighters).

3. One destroyer, with its complement of 2 starfighters, which randomly patrols the planet's system.

Finally, the Imperial Command Enforcement regional center on Asfalia maintains a fleet of 12 ICE frigates, which are often on secret ICE missions in the region.

In addition to Imperial forces, the feudal overlords of the occupied planets keep their own little private space forces.

The planet's feudal overlord and his personal troops usually handle the on-planet defense, although there's at least one company of Imperial soldiers in every city of over 250,000

on each of the occupied worlds. Personal troops of the overlord tend to hang around the cities as well: there's usually one division in each city of 250,000 or more.

IMPERIAL RULERS IN THE WILDERNESS

All Imperial planets in the Wilderness region (Asfalia, Tamilla, Earth, Emniet, Sepa Green, and Shamba) are under the overlordship of the Gorlon Count Gril Sillith, Grand High Vizier of the Empire. He holds these worlds, in turn, from Duke Metellus. Thus, if you mess with these worlds, you mess with Sillith and Metellus. Count Sillith has divided up his Wilderness region holdings into several subfiefs, which have been distributed to the following bunch of degenerates.

Viscount THASSAS

RACE: Gorlon



STR	60	DEX	52	AGL	64
WPR	58	PER	40	PCN	58
STA	76	UMS	62	WNDS	15

SKILLS: Spacecraft Piloting, Vet, 80; Sword, Ace, 117; All beam weapons skills, Ace, 107; Investigation, Rookie, 67.

HOLDINGS: Asfalia

FORCES: 10 divisions Gorlon mercenaries; cruiser *Thassilith*, four destroyers with 2 starfighters each, 24 planet-based starfighters (8 squadrons).

Viscount Thassas, at age 43, is an extremely ambitious Gorlon noble. His biggest headache is the current Zoe uprisings against the Empire. What he'd really like to do is discredit Baron Rissil and receive the additional subfiefs of Sepa Green and Shamba. He's got a good shot at doing this, if he can just get solid evidence of Rissil's illegal black market activities. It wouldn't take much to start sparks flying between the forces of Thassas and Rissil. Count Sillith would almost certainly award the winner of such a test of power the subfief of the loser.

Baron RISSIL

RACE: Gorlon

STR 68 **DEX** 42 **AGL** 50
WPR 72 **PER** 32 **PCN** 78
STA 68 **UMS** 59 **WNDS** 14

SKILLS: All beam weapons, Vet, 72; Bargaining, Ace, 107; Forgery, Ace, 115; Gambling, Vet, 94; Sword, Vet, 89.

HOLDINGS: Sepa Green, Shamba
FORCES: At Sepa Green, 8 divisions Gorlon mercenaries, cruiser *Rissilith*, two destroyers with 2 starfighters each, 9 planet based starfighters (3 squadrons); at Shamba, 17 divisions Gorlon mercenaries, cruiser *Arillith*, three destroyers with 2 starfighters each, 12 planet based starfighters (4 squadrons).



Baron Rissil, age 32, is one of the up and coming young Gorlon nobles. Although he's not as strong as the average Gorlon, he makes up for it with smarts. He not only tolerates the illegal black market on his worlds; he encourages it and protects those who give him a piece of the action. He knows about Thassas' plots against him, and secretly plans to crush Thassas if he can lure Thassas' fleet out of the Asfalia system. In addition, Rissil is trying to win Regional ICE Commandant Jub'el's favor for a coup on Earth against Viscount Amin, who hires his Gorlon mercenaries through Rissil. Paying court to Jub'el is risky business for Rissil: Sillith and Metellus are rivals of ICE Overlord Yanayir. With all his politicking, Rissil is unaware that the Tarsans of Shamba have built a secret Star Team emergency base right under his nose.

Baron GRUY

RACE: Human

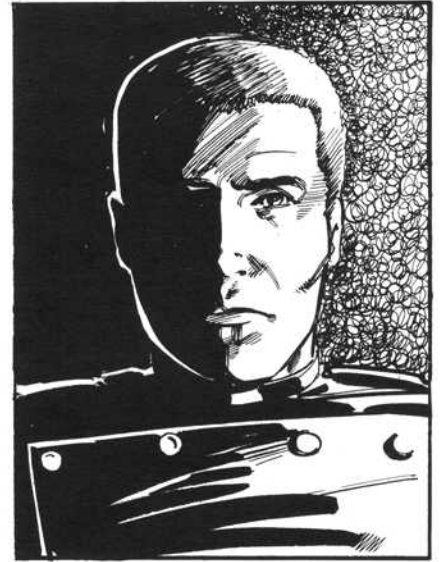
STR 50 **DEX** 74 **AGL** 54
WPR 52 **PER** 56 **PCN** 60
STA 66 **UMS** 52 **WNDS** 13

SKILLS: Sword, Ace, 107; Spacecraft Piloting, Ace, 118; All beam weapons, Vet, 104; Emergency Spacecraft Repair, Vet, 92; Bargaining, Rookie, 69; Mechanics, Rookie, 82.

HOLDINGS: Tamilla

FORCES: 2 divisions of elite Human mercenaries, 2 destroyers with 2 starfighters each. Secret forces that include cruiser *Baron Gruy*, 3 destroyers with 2 starfighters each, and 12 additional starfighters (4 squadrons) hidden in underground base.

Baron Gruy is 32 years old, and just about as militaristic, ruthless, and ambitious as they come. Overlordship of Tamilla has given him the chance he wants to make a bid for real power in the Empire. Tamilla is a prime source for the minerals madinium and altinium, both of which are vital to all types of starship construction. While the mining operations on this planet alone are making him rich, Gruy is carrying on a con game as well. In secret underground factories



and bases, he is skimming off the highest grade ores from the mines and using them to construct his own personal, secret fleet. The lower grade ores he sells to the highest bidder in the Empire—and sometimes to Star Team members. Of course, Sillith, Metellus and the Empire get a percent of the profits, but not from the ore Gruy is stealing. Gruy is often willing to trade with Star Team members in exchange for damaging information about Viscount Ligl of Emniyet. Gruy actually enjoys the harsh environment of Tamilla, and feels that Emniyet should be his next acquisition.

Viscount AMIN

RACE: Human

STR 44 **DEX** 42 **AGL** 48
WPR 58 **PER** 78 **PCN** 70
STA 50 **UMS** 46 **WNDS** 12

SKILLS: All beam weapons, Rookie, 57; Spacecraft Piloting, Rookie, 69; Sword, Rookie, 61; Sensory Knife, Vet, 73; Bargaining, Vet, 98.

HOLDINGS: Earth

FORCES: 12 divisions Gorlon mercenaries, 2 cruisers, the *Imperial* and the *Frederick Constantine II* (both on personal loan from the Emperor himself), each with 4 starfighters, and 15 starfighters (5 squadrons).

Viscount Amin is a silver-tongued weakling who owes his current fief



from Count Sillith to the fact that Sillith wished to please the Emperor; Amin is an Imperial favorite, and spends every possible hour at court on Cairn, away from what he calls "the dreadful guerrilla war" on Earth. Amin knows his position at court could change with the whim of Frederick Constantine II, and he's trying to enlist other noble allies in the Wilderness region, most especially Baron Rissil. He doesn't know that Rissil is stringing him along, planning to use the Gorlon troops he has hired out to Amin to be the means of Amin's own downfall. Only Amin's current standing with the Emperor, and the neutrality of Jub'el, prevents his immediate overthrow.

Viscount LIGL

RACE: Gorlon

STR 44 DEX 62 AGL 50
WPR 62 PER 32 PCN 60
STA 70 UMS 47 WNDS 15

SKILLS: All beam weapons, Vet, 92; Sword, Vet, 77; Spacecraft Piloting, Vet, 88; Outdoor Survival, Vet, 88; Investigation, Vet, 82.

HOLDINGS: Emniyet

FORCES: 12 divisions Human mercenaries, 6 destroyers, each with 2 starfighters, 15 planet based starfighters (5 squadrons).

Viscount Ligl is an older Gorlon who controls Emniyet as a reward for his loyal service to Count Sillith through the years. Now, at the age of 120, he is considered a fossil by the younger Gorlons. Ligl has little time to worry about the schemes of Baron Gruy against him; the Kleibors of Emniyet are making his life a nightmare. Ligl is famous for his love of creature comforts: if there's anything he hates more than Kleibors, it's the climate on Emniyet. Perhaps his constant discomfort goes a long way toward explaining why he's so brutal toward the occupied population.



Count VON HELMUTH
Admiral, Commander Imperial
Fleet, at Asfalia

RACE: Human

STR 56 DEX 54 AGL 50
WPR 78 PER 60 PCN 72
STA 52 UMS 53 WNDS 13

SKILLS: Spacecraft Piloting, Ace, 114; Emergency Spacecraft Repair, Ace, 123; Deep Space Navigation, Ace, 127; All beam weapons, Vet, 84; Sword, Vet, 83; Mirage Missiles, Vet, 93.

HOLDINGS: None in Wilderness Region

Admiral von Helmuth commands the Imperial fleet at Asfalia. His principal duties are protecting ore shipments from Tamilla, suppressing the

Star Teams, and defending the Imperial occupied worlds of the region. He hates Jub'el, the regional overlord of ICE, and is involved in countless plots against this Crassite. Otherwise, the admiral, in his mid-50's, spends his time on administrative duties and drowning his sorrows in Asfalian wines.

Count JUB'EL Regional Overlord, ICE

RACE: Crassite

STR 60 DEX 44 AGL 48
WPR 62 PER 48 PCN 72
STA 38 UMS 54 WNDS 12

SKILLS: Investigation, Ace, 116; Computers, Vet, 91; All beam weapons, Vet, 74; Sword, Vet, 84; Disguise, Vet, 76; Impersonation, Vet, 87.

HOLDINGS: None in Wilderness Region

This fat old Crassite is a wily operator, dedicated solely to his own financial and political advancement. He is involved in schemes with almost every noble in the region to increase his cut from black market activities. He knows about Baron Rissil's designs against Viscount Amin, but keeps carefully neutral on the subject. He hopes to polish his reputation by stunning victories over the Star Teams.



Chapter 4: NPC ALIEN RACES

Yasik the Traka, ladies and gentlemen—back again and at your service, this time to acquaint you with some of the folks you're likely to meet on your Star Team adventures.

There are several hundred known intelligent species within the boundaries of the Empire and the Alliance (some of these—believe me—more intelligent than others!). Of these, five, aside from the PC races covered in the *Training Manual*, play important roles in Imperial and Alliance affairs in the Wilderness region. I'm going to give you a little background on these five major alien races, and also what little we've figured out about the Xenophobes, that mysterious race of murderers who are invading the Empire from somewhere in the galactic core.

THE CRASSITES

Crassites are short, fat humanoids with tapirlike snouts. Their knack for business and trade has made the phrase "bargain like a Crassite" a part of the Universal language.

Physical Characteristics

Crassites measure height to the shoulder, rather than to the top of the head, because a Crassite always stoops forward from the shoulders. The average Crassite measures about 4'10" to the shoulder, although some are as tall as 5'3".

Crassites are extremely fat by human standards—I mean, we're talking sideshow fat! Carnival fat! At any rate, this layer of fatty tissue just below their grainy, stubby, gray skin protects them against the cold on their home world, Fal'el. Of course, their size has its disadvantages, too: they become uncomfortable in most temperate settings. Temperatures over 60 degrees Fahrenheit cause a Crassite to sweat like a Kleibor in a sauna, and they can't stand temperatures higher than 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

Crassites have small hands and short, stubby fingers. Their bodies are hairless except for a few greasy black locks at the top of the head,

which disappear when the Crassite gets to be about 70 years old.

Despite their ugliness, the physical makeup of Crassites isn't that different from that of Humans. Crassites are omnivores, although they tend to eat meat sparingly; they share the same senses as Humans, and Crassite females bear live young. The average life expectancy of a Crassite is about 100 Earth Years.

Social and Cultural Background

There's no doubt that the ancestors of the Crassites were grazing herd animals. Crassite society and culture still have a herdlike structure.

Crassites organize themselves socially into large clans (called *muir'im*), which consist of at most a few dozen adult males, and 3-10 female Crassites for each male: the wealthier the *muir'im*, the greater the number of females. Sounds like a bad deal for the females, doesn't it? Well, both male and female of the species are so wretchedly ugly that everyone's a loser in my book.

Still, being male is an advantage among Crassites: all males carry both a personal name and the name of the *muir'im* into which they were born; females have only personal names until they are sold or bartered to a *muir'im* in which they will breed. Males are the valued members of the *muir'im*; females are seen as bargaining chips or breeding stock.

For most Crassites, the good of the *muir'im* is more important than the individual. Because the "good" of the *muir'im* is seen purely in terms of money, a "good" Crassite may sell his own son or daughter into slavery if the price is right. Almost all property and goods owned by members of a *muir'im* are considered the property of the *muir'im*; when you deal with a Crassite, you're actually dealing with the "family business." Quarrels within a *muir'im* are often settled suddenly and violently.

During the annual breeding season, the males of the Crassite *muir'im* compete fiercely for the attention of the clan's females; this is probably the reason Crassites love to show off



their riches. Most of the time, Crassite males wear their wealth: heavy, jewel-encrusted gold nose rings, diamond lensed monocles, all kinds of rings and earrings, extremely expensive black robes of silk or crushed velvet, silver or gold brocade, and ornamental weapons, worn more for show than for use.

Crassite males are as cold in business as they are with their females and families: it doesn't bother them a bit to ruin someone financially, have someone roughed up, or even hire an assassin to get their way. However, aside from the lower class Crassites, whose love of plunder makes them fierce (but unruly) mercenary soldiers, most are cowardly in the face of violence; they much prefer to hire others to do their dirty work for them, and agree to almost anything when threatened (not that they keep promises when the danger has been removed). Crassites are noted for their long memories and ability to nurse grudges for decades.

Creating Crassite NPCs

To create a Crassite NPC, use the method for creating Human PCs, but make sure Ability scores follow these restrictions (see Chapter 5 for more information on creating NPCs):

1. The maximum Stamina for a Crassite is 60;
2. The minimum Perception for a Crassite is 60.

The following statistics are those of a standard Crassite NPC:

STR	64	DEX	46	AGL	46
WPR	60	PER	40	PCN	72
STA	38	UMS	55	WNDS	12

Crassites In Play

Crassites receive a +30 modifier to their Personality and/or Willpower scores, as appropriate, when engaging in any type of business or trade negotiations. See "Chapter 5: Dealing With NPCs," for more details.

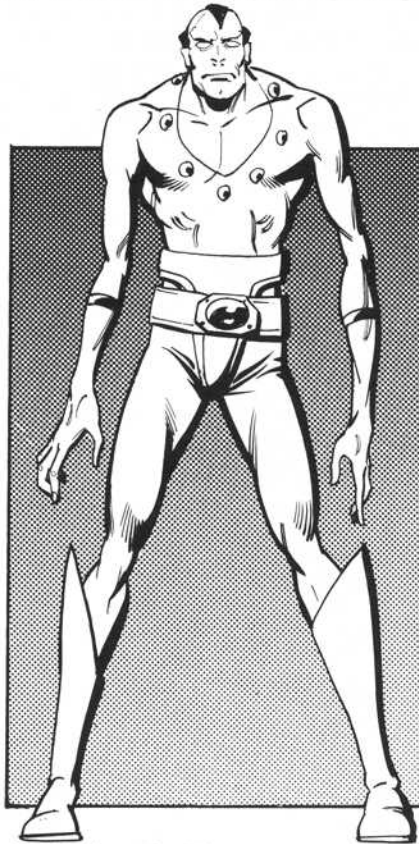
THE TARSANS

Tarsans are extremely tall, thin, intelligent humanoids. They're one of the oldest known races in the galaxy,

and spend much of their time in meditation and thought—a lifestyle now threatened by the Imperial occupation of their homeworld, Shamba.

Physical Characteristics

Tarsans look a lot like tall, spindly Human giants, usually between 8' and 9' tall. Their heads are long and egg shaped; the face has large, child-like eyes, a flat nose, and a small mouth. The two arms are long, extending almost to the knees, and ending in extremely large, surprisingly



nimble hands. The average life expectancy of a Tarsan is about 70 Earth Years.

Social and Cultural Background

Tarsans are similar to Humans in so many ways, and their way of life embodies so many Human ideals, that Humans sometimes call them the "giants of Eden." We Trakans are more inclined to label them "big dopes," for reasons that should become obvious.

Tarsan history was similar to the Human until some 150,000 years ago. At that time, the race developed the technology that transformed its homeworld, Shamba, from a struggling, dog-eat-dog society to a virtual garden paradise. Now that they no longer had to struggle for daily survival, the Tarsans unified their planet and went on to develop the high tech needed for space travel.

The Tarsan "Space Period" lasted some 100,000 years, while the race explored almost a quarter of the galaxy, including most the territory now covered by the Empire and the Alliance. As luck would have it, the Tarsans came across some kind of plague that even their advanced medical knowledge couldn't handle. Spread by their trade ships, the disease destroyed the Tarsans on planet after planet, and came close to wiping out the entire race. The few survivors returned to Shamba.

Now, 50,000 years later, the Tarsans themselves know almost nothing about their Space Period. They lost interest in exploration after the plague, and most of the records of the great Tarsan galactic civilization were destroyed. Now they have a quiet, stable society, limited to Shamba, where they rear their children strictly and study theology and philosophy. And that's it.

Sure, the Tarsans did undertake a few more space voyages from time to time, but they were friendly voyages, to contact intelligent species in what is now known as the Wilderness region.

Well, Imperial occupation has made for trouble in the Shamban paradise. Now Tarsan children are being taught "good Imperial citizenship" by state schools under the authority of Baron Rilh. The occupying Gorlon troops stage gladiatorial games in which Gorlons and Tarsans fight to the death; the apparent purpose of this is to bring out the Tarsans' fighting spirit, making them fit material for the Imperial military.

The Tarsans haven't taken well to the new regime on Shamba. Most of them are more thinkers than fighters, and philosophy doesn't defend you

all that well against a beam saber. So the Tarsans have developed a philosophy of passive resistance, which basically gets them beat up all the worse. A few Tarsans, however, have realized that lemonade and flowers don't work with the Gorlons, so they've taken up the high tech weapons their occupied economy can still produce. Gorlon troops are engaged in an active campaign to stamp out these Tarsan guerrillas, who have been quite a bit tougher than the Empire cares to admit. Still, Tarsan violence is an unusual thing, strictly limited to dealings with the Empire; a Tarsan seldom, if ever, attacks a being not affiliated with the Empire.

Creating Tarsan NPCs

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

1. The minimum Tarsan Strength, Dexterity and Stamina score is 70;
2. The maximum Tarsan Willpower score is 50.

The following scores may be used for standard Tarsan NPCs:

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

THE GORLONS

The Gorlons are a warm-blooded, intelligent reptilian race. They're basically smart bullies, and that made them first valuable allies and now valued servants of the Empire. Still, not all Gorlons are Imperial goons: a few live in and are loyal to the Alliance.

Physical Characteristics

Gorlons appear so obviously reptilian that they've received the very proper nicknames "lizard men" and "slime crawlers." There are two distinct type of Gorlons: brown and green.

Brown Gorlons are descendants from the lower class, desert dwelling Gorlons of the race's homeland,



Srith. The typical brown Gorlon has a thick brown hide, a flat head, and large eyes set well back in the side of the head. Its sharp teeth are those of a carnivore. The creature has a large, thick tail, once used for balancing itself, but now evolved into almost a prehensile limb, capable of grasping and clutching. Brown Gorlons stand between 6' and 7' tall.

Green Gorlons are descendants from upper class dwellers in the tropical forests of Srith. They are very similar in appearance to their brown cousins, but are about 8' tall and no longer have tails.

Gorlons have senses similar to Humans. They are egg layers, and although the brown and green types could breed together, it is against Gorlon custom and law. The average Gorlon life expectancy is about 150 Earth Years.

Regenerative Powers

Both brown and green Gorlons have a limited ability to regenerate lost limbs, and tend to heal extremely

rapidly. A successful armed combat called shot to any limb of a Gorlon severs that limb from the creature's body. The limb regenerates completely in 2d10 days. Gorlons can heal wounds at double the normal rate for PCs.

Social and Cultural Background

Gorlons have only a limited family structure. Young are reared by females especially chosen for the duty. These duties consist mainly of education, for a newborn Gorlon is fully capable of caring for its basic needs on its own. Brown Gorlons may learn only the "socially acceptable" subjects of reading, writing, basic economics, basic science, and warfare. Green Gorlons may have an advanced education including most of the topics normally covered in Human universities.

The social wall between brown and green is found everywhere in modern Gorlon life. Brown Gorlons are the underclass, and serve the greens as slaves and soldiers. The society is

strict in keeping a policy of “separation of the races,” and for some strange reason, the brown Gorlons seem to buy this garbage! Well...not all of them. A few have made their way to Alliance worlds and established new, racially equal Gorlon societies. These Alliance-based brown Gorlons are particularly friendly toward Crystal Clones.

Racial problems aside, Gorlon architecture is probably the weirdest thing about their culture. Their extremely tall buildings, similar to skyscrapers on 20th Century Earth, are made of lightweight metals. These structures usually have glass walls and sides, and are open to the light—Gorlons love to bask. The buildings are framed in light metal latticework, an ideal structure for Gorlons to climb, a form of exercise they prize. A typical Gorlon dwelling in such a building contains a public area with doorways about 9' tall, and private areas with doorways only 3' tall; the Gorlons go through the smaller doors by crawling on all four limbs, a form of movement used only in the presence of other Gorlons.

Most Gorlons under Imperial dominion believe that power is the greatest good and the highest goal in life. Green Gorlons, especially, believe that the powerless life is not worth living. They believe you get power by force, and show power through continuing to push other folks around. That's why Gorlons make excellent planetary occupation troops. Green Gorlons tend to be involved in many plots and schemes for power within the Empire.

Creating Gorlon NPCs

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

1. The minimum score for Gorlon Stamina and Agility is 40.
2. The maximum score for Gorlon Personality is 60.

The following statistics may be used for a standard Gorlon NPC:

STR	58	DEX	50	AGL	76
WPR	50	PER	32	PCN	48
STA	76	UMS	67	WNDS	15

Gorlons In Play

Gorlons have the regenerative powers described above. They are also natural climbers, and can climb walls, cliffs, trees, and other obstacles at a rate of 20' per round.



THE ZOE

You couldn't tell by looking at them, but the Zoe just may be the most ferocious race in the galaxy. They haven't done anything culturally important or new for thousands of years; in fact, they just want to be left alone—a policy the Empire isn't all that good at following. Asfalia, the Zoean home planet, has been occupied since the Armistice, and the Zoe are giving the Imperial garrisons a pretty rough time of it.

Physical Characteristics

Zoe are much shorter than most intelligent races: both sexes average

3'4" in height, although the Zoe tell stories about 5' tall “giants.” An average Zoean weighs only 45 pounds in normal (1g) gravity.

Zoeans are quite thin and frail, with unusually large heads. They are completely hairless, and their eyes are huge and black. The mouth and nose are similar to Humans', but the Zoe have no outer ear; instead, they have small entry canals to an inner ear on each side of the large head. Zoeans all have very pale skin; their veins and arteries show clearly through the skin. The Zoe appear to have no upper skull: the top of the head looks like a large, skin-covered brain, throbbing in rhythm with the Zoean's pulse.

The average life expectancy of a Zoean is about 120 Earth Years.

To the casual observer, there is no apparent difference between the Zoe sexes. Only another Zoean, or a trained medical observer who has conducted a thorough examination, can tell them apart.

Individual Zoe dress in simple, seamless robes. They tend to be rather blunt and honest. They show no emotions, even in battle.

Social and Cultural Background

The Zoe population is controlled by the nature of their extended family, or *mazi*, system. A *mazi* consists of up to 100 related Zoeans. Zoeans born into the *mazi* stay there until the age of 30, at which time they are expected to take a spouse from another friendly *mazi*. The couple joins the smaller *mazi* of the two who arranged the marriage. Should both *mazis* be “full,” that is, have 100 members, the couple is granted permission to start a new *mazi*. Seem like a blueprint for overpopulation? The Zoe have solved that problem by their rather curious Wars of Vigilance.

Every 50 years (Asfalia's year is 370 days—very close to that of Earth) each *mazi* engages in a ritual war against another. The war lasts for 100 days, after which each *mazi* arranges its opponent for the next war. It is considered an honor to die in the Wars of Vigilance, for the greater

good of the mazi and the "larger mazi that is Asfalia." The next War of Vigilance begins in 3514.

It may be surprising when you consider their bloodthirstiness, but the Zoe are vegetarians. Only a low technology level is needed to keep the controlled population well fed. There is (or was until Imperial occupation) very little work required of the average Zoean.

Perhaps as a result of this life of ease, the chief pursuit of the Zoe became entertainment (if you can call it that). Zoe theatre and drama were highly popular on Asfalia, but the plays always teach support and submission to "the will of the mazi." All in all, boring stuff—no match for a Kleibor dort game or a Trakan comedy.

The sudden arrival of the Empire on Asfalia changed much about Zoean life. Totally used to submitting to "a larger power," the Zoeans surrendered immediately, and soon found themselves slaves to an Imperial overlord.

When they saw that the Empire was disrupting the ancient traditions of the mazi, a few Zoeans began resistance activities, aided heavily by Star Team smugglers who managed (and still manage) to get weapons to them under the nose of the Imperial Navy base on Asfalia. Even veteran Star Team members marvel at the ruthlessness, the complete disregard of their own safety, with which the Zoe resistance wages war against the Empire. Although physically weak, the Zoe are almost foolishly brave: they fight to the death, neither asking nor giving mercy.

Creating Zoe NPCs

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

1. The maximum Zoe score for Strength and Stamina is 40;
2. The minimum Zoe score for Perception is 70.

The following scores may be used for a standard Zoe NPC:

STR	20	DEX	46	AGL	58
WPR	54	PER	40	PCN	76
STA	20	UMS	39	WNDS	10

THE CRYSTAL FOLK

The Crystal Folk of Ruoka are unique among the intelligent races of the Wilderness region, in that they are not a carbon based life form. The Crystal Folk keep much about themselves secret; however, here's what we know for sure.

Physical Characteristics

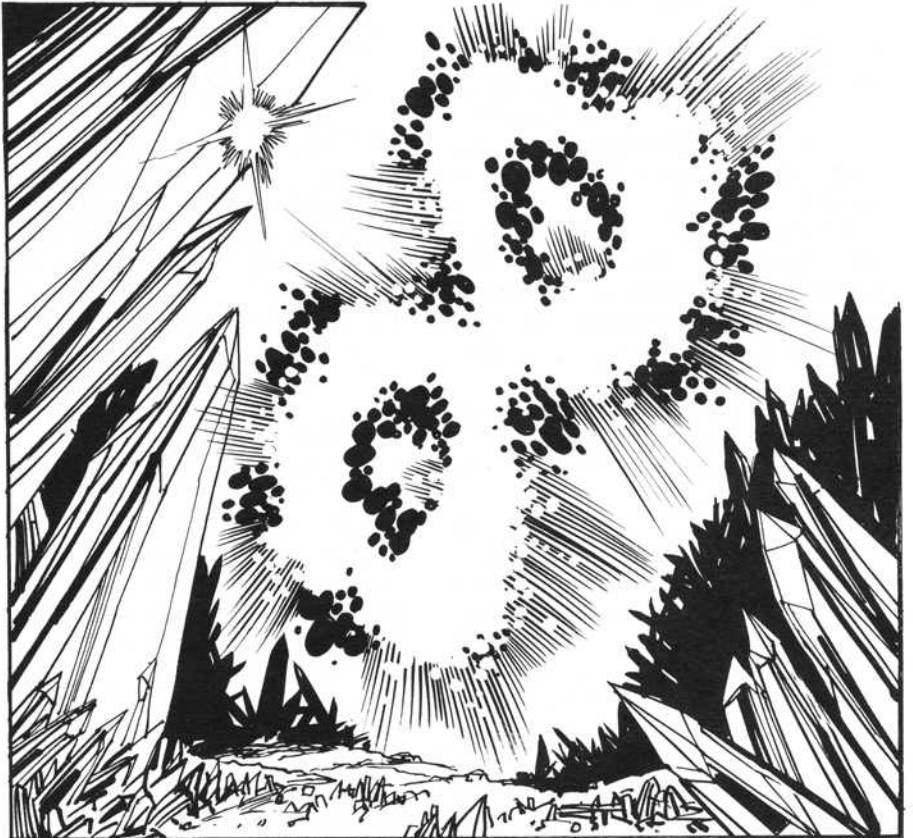
The Crystal Folk are living, intelligent fields of energy, combined somehow with a small amount of matter. Crystal Folk are very hard for other races to detect by sight, sound, or any other normal sense except touch. Barely visible to the naked eye, they appear as a shimmering, transparent, hourglass or figure-eight shape, floating a few inches above the ground. New-born Crystal Folk are spheres; they gradually take their adult hourglass shape.

Crystal Folk are native to the planet Ruoka, and apparently are the only life form to have evolved there. Crystal Folk arise (or are born) when certain forms of radiation from the Ruokan sun pass through a Xantium crystal, releasing a stream of highly charged light energy and ions into the peculiar Ruokan atmosphere. The resulting reaction produces a Crystal Folk sphere. This sphere, drawing further energy from the passage of Ruokan sunlight through Xantium, rapidly evolves, within a few weeks, into an adult Crystal Folk.

Crystal Folk communicate using varying electromagnetic frequencies beyond the perception of most races. They can manipulate physical objects by generating and controlling electromagnetic force fields within about 2' of their own "body."

Social and Cultural Background

The age of the Crystal Folk, and their history as a race, is unknown to all except themselves. We have learned a bit, however, about their social organization and values.



“Food” is the single most important element in the life of the Crystal Folk. The same energy that creates them feeds them—Ruokan sunlight passed through Xantium crystal—and they guard this energy source jealously.

Crystal Folk construct their dwellings out of Xantium crystals. These appear to be nothing more than a pile of huge crystal shards with an opening leading to a space underneath the pile. While the Crystal Folk remain in these dwellings, they contantly absorb energy during the daylight hours.

If you were to look closely, however, you’d notice that these dwellings, or “crystal mounds” as Humans call them, are always near a hill or other area that provides shade. You see, the Crystal Folk arrange things so that the dwelling is exposed to the direct light of the Ruokan sun for no more than 8 out of the 14 Earth hours of daylight on Ruoka; creating a spheroid infant requires a longer period of sunlight than this, so by design, the Crystal Folk prevent accidental increases in population.

New Crystal Folk arise only from the designated breeding fields, where Xantium crystals are placed in predetermined numbers in the open. Population growth is regulated; no Crystal Folk is allowed to be created unless there is some purpose to be served by the birth.

The young Crystal Folk are taught their “purpose” very early in life. These various purposes remain a mystery to us, but that’s not unusual: we don’t know anything about their technology or economics, either. The Crystal Folk guard these secrets in natural underground caverns on Ruoka, where, apparently, they work in rotating, short shifts.

Aside from food, most important thing to the Crystal Folk is symmetry, or order. Of course, Crystal Folk don’t seem to understand the symmetry or order of carbon based lifeforms any more than one of us can understand the electromagnetic order in a Crystal Folk dwelling. As a result the Crystal Folk seem to think that, at best, all the other known races (yours and mine included) are ugly things better left

alone. Kind of hard to believe, isn’t it? That anyone could find Trakans ugly!

Nevertheless, Crystal Folk must have some notion of kindness or concern; after all, they did attempt to help the first Humans on Ruoka by creating the first Crystal Clones to aid the Humans as technicians (see Chapter III of *Basic Training Manual*). Of course, once the Crystal Folk learned that the Humans were after Xantium, their attitude changed. They now see their “sale” of Xantium mining rights to the Alliance in return for military protection from the Empire as the lesser of two evils.

We don’t know much about the combat abilities of the Crystal Folk. It is certain—I’ve seen it myself—that each individual can generate a directed energy beam, just like the one from a laser pistol, which can really do a number on carbon based life forms. Occasionally, two or more Crystal Folk band together to create powerful fields, capable of lifting a carbon based form (such as a Human, Trakan, or Kleibor) high in the air. We believe that using this ability requires one Crystal Folk for every 100 pounds (at 1g gravity) they plan on moving, and drains 10 points of Willpower from each one involved.

Communication between the Crystal Folk and other races is possible through Crystal Clone translators, or by use of a special computer translation program, which requires the Folk to speak into a computer input.

Creating Crystal Folk NPCs

Adult Crystal Folk all have identical Basic Ability scores. Treat all scores except Personality and Stamina as 60. Crystal Folk have no Stamina score. Crystal Folk have a Personality score of 60 when they are attempting to persuade, negotiate, or otherwise deal with other NPCs; treat them as if their Personality is 80 when PCs are attempting to persuade or otherwise deal with them.

Crystal Folk In Play

Crystal Folk don’t suffer wound damage or Stamina loss like other

characters. Instead, any Crystal Folk who has a metal weapon thrust into its body becomes inactive until the weapon is removed and for 1d10 rounds thereafter; a Crystal Folk subjected to the influence of an electromagnetic field generator is destroyed. Other types of weapons have no effect on them.

THE XENOPHOBES

We don’t know what they call themselves, but we call them the Xenophobes because of their total hatred and fear of all intelligent races except their own. They’re an extremely noetically gifted race, and a few years back, they invaded the Empire from somewhere near the core of the galaxy. The few who have lived to tell of these aliens report that they appear to be ratlike humanoids with extensive noetic talents.

So far, Xenophobes have refused any peaceful contact with other races; instead, they attack on sight. They do keep some of the population of their conquered worlds alive as slaves.

We know almost nothing about Xenophobe technology, but their vehicles seem to be inferior in design to those we have in the Star Teams. We’re glad of that; we’re also glad that Xenophobes haven’t shown up yet in the Wilderness region.

Creating Xenophobe NPCs

Xenophobe NPCs are created just like Human NPCs with one exception: a Xenophobe’s Willpower score is always 1d10+70. In addition to all other talents, each Xenophobe has a minimum of three noetic talents at Rookie level, two at Veteran level, and one at Ace level. The following may be used as statistics for a standard Xenophobe NPC:

STR	40	DEX	60	AGL	60
WPR	75	PER	30	PCN	50
STA	40	UMS	50	WNDS	12

Chapter 5: NPC REACTIONS

It should be clear that, in a galaxy of 100 billion stars, all the folks who play parts in a STAR ACE™ adventure aren't going to be player characters! Nonplayer characters (NPCs) are all the characters in the game who aren't PCs. Some of them play major roles in an adventure; others have only a minor part. But, of course, all of the NPCs are important to the flavor and fun of the game—to the CM's creating a rich and believable world as the background for the adventure.

The CM plays all the NPCs in an adventure. It is his or her job to make these characters "come to life" for the other players in the game. A lot of the time, this means figuring out how the NPCs in the adventure are going to react to what PCs are doing. What's that Gorlon trooper going to do when a PC starts a fist fight with his drinking buddy? What's the Crassite trader going to do when he realizes his gambling opponent has been using loaded Trakan dice? Will that Imperial official at the space port customs office take a quick bribe? This chapter tells the CM how to deter-

mine the reaction of an NPC to almost any situation, quickly and easily.

NPC STATISTICS

NPCs are created just like PCs, using the same basic character generation system. Remember when creating Kleibor, Crystal Clone, or Trakan NPCs that each of these races has a restricted Basic Ability score, and that several of their other Basic Abilities are, as a result, usually a bit higher than the average Human's. In addition, some NPC races have minimum or maximum scores in specific Basic Abilities. In such cases, simply assign and adjust the Basic Ability scores rolled to meet these minimums or maximums. For example, the minimum Perception score for a Crassite is 60. Let's say that, while creating a Crassite NPC, a CM rolls no Basic Ability scores higher than 56. In this case, all he or she needs to do is assign the 56 to Perception, assign the other scores rolled to the other attributes, then

STANDARD NPCS CHART

RACE: Human
All ability scores: 50
WNDS: 13

RACE: Traka
STR 50 DEX 57 AGL 50
WPR 50 PER 57 PCN 50
STA 40 UMS 50 WNDS 12
Max. STA: 60

RACE: Crystal Clone
STR 50 DEX 57 AGL 50
WPR 50 PER 40 PCN 57
STA 50 UMS 50 WNDS 13
Max. PER: 60

RACE: Kleibor
STR 50 DEX 40 AGL 50
WPR 57 PER 57 PCN 57
STA 50 UMS 50 WNDS 13
Max. DEX: 60

RACE: Crassite
STR 64 DEX 46 AGL 46
WPR 60 PER 40 PCN 72
STA 38 UMS 55 WNDS 12
Min. PCN: 60 Max. STA: 60

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

Min. STR, DEX & STA: 70
Max. WPR: 50

RACE: Gorlon
STR 58 DEX 50 AGL 76
WPR 50 PER 32 PCN 48
STA 76 UMS 67 WNDS 15
Min. STA & AGL: 40
Max. PER: 60

RACE: Zoe
STR 20 DEX 46 AGL 58
WPR 54 PER 40 PCN 76
STA 20 UMS 39 WNDS 10
Min. PCN: 70
Max. STA & STR: 40

RACE: Crystal Folk*
All ability scores: 60
STA & WNDS: NA
All Crystal Folk have identical stats.
Crystal Folk have a PER of 80 when the reacting character in an interaction.

RACE: Xenophobe
STR 40 DEX 60 AGL 60
WPR 75 PER 30 PCN 50
STA 40 UMS 50 WNDS 12
Min. WPR: 1d10+70
Automatically have 3 Rookie, 2 Veteran and 1 Ace noetic skills.

NOETIC SKILLS CHART

Race	Chance	Rook	Vet	Ace
Human	05%	2	2	1
Traka	03%	2	1	1
Crystal Clone	01%	1	1	0
Kleibor	10%	3	3	2
Crassite	04%	1	1	0
Tarsan	01%	1	0	0
Gorlon	02%	2	1	1
Zoe	08%	3	2	1
Crystal Folk	0	0	0	0
Xenophobe*	100%	6	4	3

Chance = The chance that an NPC of the given race has noetic skills

Rook = The maximum number of noetic skills the NPC may have at rookie level

Vet = The maximum number of noetic skills the NPC may have at Veteran level

Ace = The maximum number of noetic skills the NPC may have at Ace level

* = All Xenophobes have 3 noetic skills at Rookie level, 2 at Veteran level, and 1 at Ace level. More powerful Xenophobes may have additional noetic skills up to the maximums shown.

raise the Perception score automatically to 60, the minimum for a Crassite.

Often, the CM has to create an NPC during play, and has to do so quickly so that the players don't get bored waiting for the action to start up again. For example, the PCs may unexpectedly decide to drop in at a local space port bar. Who's the bartender (maybe more importantly, who's the bouncer?) and what are their Basic Ability scores? In such cases, it is often convenient to use a standard NPC. A standard NPC is simply an NPC whose scores are typical for his or her race. For the CM's convenience, the scores for a standard NPC of each race are given on the Standard NPCs Chart.

NPCs And Luck

NPCs do not have Luck as a Basic Ability; only player characters have a Luck score. However, sometimes an NPC may have a skill which uses Luck as part of the formula for computing the skill score. In such cases,



all NPCs, regardless of race, may be assumed to have a Luck score of 50 for purposes of computing the skill score.

NPC Skills

Generally, NPCs may have whatever skills are appropriate to their function in an adventure. For example, Gorlon soldiers would certainly have at least some skill in using their weapons, NPC technicians would have at least Rookie level skills with computers, and so on. The CM should use common sense and the particular needs of the adventure when he or she assigns skills to NPCs.

Noetic skills are another matter. Aside from Xenophobes, only a very few NPCs have noetic skills. The chance that an NPC has noetic capabilities, and the maximum number and level of the NPC's noetic skills, is given on the NPC Noetic Skills Chart. The actual noetic skills an NPC may have are left to the choice and judgment of the CM.

Status Ratings

NPCs who hold military, political or economic power on a planet, in a system, or in even a larger area have a Status Rating that indicates the power they have. Status Ratings range from 1 (the least powerful) to 5 (the most powerful). An NPC's status rating is directly related to his or her Imperial title or Alliance office. Of course, the vast majority of NPCs have no Status Rating. The following chart provides Status Ratings for Imperial and Alliance NPCs.

STATUS RATINGS CHART

Position	Rating
Emperor, Alliance Executive	5
Grand Duke, Duke, Senior Senator	4
Count, Junior Senator	3
Viscount, Alliance planet ruler	2
Baron, Alliance planet major official, family member of any of the above	1

NPC REACTIONS

There are three guidelines for determining how NPCs react in any given situation. These guidelines are given in order of importance: when determining NPC reactions, the CM should use the second guideline only if the first does not apply, and the third only if the first two do not apply.

Guideline One: The story in the adventure scenario. In many cases, the adventure scenario you are playing plainly states how an NPC will react in a given situation. Often, these reactions are a built-in part of the plot of the adventure. They are also usually consistent with the character of the NPC. For example, the commanding officer of an Imperial destroyer is certainly going to respond aggressively to an attack on his vessel; such a response is a natural and basic part of the plot of almost any adventure in which an Imperial destroyer would be introduced.

Guideline Two: The personality of the

SITUATION CHECK RESULTS

Die Roll	Result	DAC Modifier
1	Hostile: Angry that he or she is being disturbed; doesn't want to deal with PCs.	-20
2	Angry: Angry about something which does not involve the PCs; in a bad mood.	-15
3	Scornful: Feels he or she is too important to waste time with the PCs.	-10
4	Hurried: Will grant the PCs very little time; has more important matters to deal with.	-05
5	Bored: Uninterest in what the PCs have to say, unless it sounds novel or amusing.	0
6	Open: Willing to deal with the PCs in a business-like manner.	0
7	Curious: Courteous, but very inquisitive.	0
8	Friendly: Initially friendly to the PCs, willing to provide reasonable service or information.	+05
9	Flirtatious: Attempts to flirt with PC of appropriate race and sex. If no such PC is present, treat as result 8 above.	+10
10	Eager: In a jovial mood, eager to hear what PCs have to say and to be of reasonable assistance.	+15

NPC. The CM should “know” the most important NPCs in an adventure before play begins. He or she should have formed a clear idea about NPC personalities, goals, desires, likes, dislikes, and the probable way they would react to the situations most likely to come up during play. For example, suppose a major NPC in an adventure is a Crassite merchant noted for his smooth talking (and for his cowardice). Obviously, this NPC will try to talk his way out of a dangerous situation, and will appear to give in if he is threatened with violence (only to send a couple of assassins after the PCs later). It is important to keep the reactions of the major NPCs consistent with their personalities; this makes the adventure seem more real to the players, and makes the game more fun for everyone.

Guideline Three: Situation checks and direct action checks. When the CM cannot otherwise decide how an NPC will react to a situation, he or

she can use situation and direct action checks to determine the NPC's reaction.

Situation Checks

Well-played NPCs should have their moods, just like people in the real world do. Those moods can affect the way they react to PCs or other NPCs. The CM can use situation checks to determine quickly and secretly the mood of an NPC just before that NPC is approached by another character.

A situation check is made by rolling 1d10. If the NPC in question has a Status Rating, subtract that rating from the roll of 1d10. Results are obtained on the Situation Check Results Table.

Direct Action Checks

A direct action check is a specific check against a character's Personality score. The results of a direct

action check tell the CM how an NPC reacts to the words or actions of the character who is making the check.

Direct action check results are found in the defense column of the Action Table which corresponds to one of the Basic Abilities of the NPC whose reaction is in question. For example, if several Star Team members are trying to con a Crassite merchant whose Perception Ability score is 72, the CM finds the “61-75” range in the smaller blue numbers at the top of the Action Table; the results will be found in column 5. The following chart shows the possible types of actions by PCs which could result in a direct action check, and the appropriate Basic Ability of the NPC to use when resolving the check on the Action Table.

DIRECT ACTION CHART

PC Action	NPC Ability (Def. Column)
Routine request	Personality
Request for aid, no danger	Personality
Request for aid in dangerous situation	Personality
Lying, conning	Perception
Persuading	Current Willpower
Threatening	Current Willpower

Direct Action Check Modifiers

A PC's Personality score may be modified before the roll of a direct action check by a situation check modifier and a racial modifier.

Situation check modifiers reflect the mood of the NPC at the time the PC begins to interact with him or her. These modifiers are found on the Situation Check Results Chart under the heading “DAC Modifier.”

Racial modifiers reflect the relative like or dislike which exists between the PC and NPC race: Kleibor generally like Humans and Trakans, Humans generally like Kleibor and Trakans, and nobody cares too much for Gorlons in general. These modifier are summarized on the Racial Modifiers chart.

Results

Failure of a direct action check means the NPC reacts negatively. He or she refuses to help, sees through a lie or con, or, if the PC has made a threat, responds with a counterthreat or perhaps even direct violence.

Successful direct action checks yield results which are interpreted on the following key:

DIRECT ACTION CHECK RESULTS KEY

S = Slight positive reaction: The NPC doesn't say "No." Further discussion is in order.

L = Limited positive reaction: The NPC takes some limited action to do what the PC wants. This action must not involve danger or harm, cost the NPC money, or take up much of his or her time.

M = Moderate positive reaction: The NPC is willing to spend time to help the PC as long as that help involves no financial or physical risk.

H = Highly positive reaction: The

NPC is willing to spend some time and money to help the PC, but will not expose himself to physical danger.

C = Charmed: The NPC is quite taken with the PC, and is willing to risk time, money and even moderate danger to aid the PC.

K = Not applicable.

Interaction Among NPCs

Sometimes, a group of PCs may have an NPC along with them, participating in some form of interaction with still another NPC. On these and other occasions, the CM may wish to determine randomly the results of interactions between NPCs. The standard situation and direct action check system is used, treating the acting NPC as if he or she were a PC.

Frequency of Checks

Usually, the CM should limit direct action checks to one per specific encounter. That is, PCs should only have one chance to persuade, con, or

bargain with a given NPC in given situation. The "S" result on a direct action check is the obvious exception: an "S" result demands another direct action check, as the CM determines whether the PC has made inroads in persuading the NPC, or whether he or she has messed up a fairly decent start.

In addition, if the CM feels that the situation calls for it, he or she may allow additional checks as the PCs use different tactics to influence the behavior of the NPC.

LEGAL PROBLEMS

On occasion, PCs may be hauled before an Imperial vizier (the appointed judges in the Empire's legal system) for such violations of Imperial law as piracy, smuggling, firing on Imperial ships, murder (resistance fighting), or simply for being a Star Team member. The penalty for all of these offenses is, of course, death.

All Imperial trials are conducted by a vizier. If the evidence is overwhelming against the PC, the PC will almost certainly be executed at once unless the CM decides to allow a rescue attempt by other Star Team members.

In cases in which the PC might have even a slim chance to avoid being convicted, the CM should allow the PC to make a general Luck check. A successful check indicates the PC is found "Not guilty." Failure indicates the opposite. At the CM's option, the PC's Luck score may be modified by +10 for each piece of major evidence or important witness the PC can obtain on his own behalf. If this system is used, the PC's Luck score should similarly be modified by -10 for each major piece of evidence or important witness brought against him.

Trials on Alliance worlds are generally more fair than Imperial trials, and in some cases the sentences are lighter, but the same game system can be used should PCs commit some great crime on an Alliance world. Both Imperial viziers and Alliance judges can sometimes be bribed; see the bribery rules in "Chapter 6: Economics."

RACIAL MODIFIERS CHART

Race of acting character	Race of Reacting NPC							
	Human	Traka	Clone	Klbr.	Cras.	Tar.	Gor.	Zoe
Human	0	-05	-10	+20	0	+10	-20	0
Traka	+10	0	-05	+15	0	+10	-05	+05
Kleibor	+10	+05	-20	0	0	0	-25	+10
Crystal Clone	-10	+10	0	0	0	0	-10	+10
Crassite	-15	-20	-20	-20	0	-10	+05	-10
Tarsan	+10	-10	0	0	0	0	-20	+10
Gorlon	-20	-20	-05	-25	0	-10	0	-10
Zoe	-10	-05	0	+05	0	-10	-15	0

Abbreviations: Klbr. = Kleibor; Cras. = Crassite; Tar. = Tarsan; Gor. = Gorlon.

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

Chapter 6: PLUNDER AND PROFIT

It costs a lot of money to keep a spacecraft in good repair, and to keep a respectable supply of weapons, equipment, and other knick-knacks on hand. It even costs money to buy new skills or raise scores in the old ones. Chapter 6 explains the economics of the STAR ACE™ game, especially the methods available to PCs (plunder, smuggling, and miscellaneous “contracts”) for getting their hands on money. This chapter also explains how the PCs spend that hard-earned cash.

CURRENCY

When interstellar trade involves some 10,000 inhabited worlds, it is important to have a currency recognized as valuable by all known worlds. This is easier said than done, however. Because governments have been known to change monetary policies overnight, and because one never knows who will rule what planet a month from now, paper money and computer credits have no value in the interstellar marketplace.

What is valued is “hard” currency: money made of a substance with unquestioned value. The Empire and Alliance use three types of hard currency: Bits (small gold coins equal to about \$1 in 1980), Imperials (larger gold coins equal to about \$10 in 1980), and Chips (coins made from the precious metal andilinium, equal to about \$1,000 in 1980).

The relative value of these coins is shown on the following chart:

RELATIVE CURRENCY VALUES

- 1 Bit = \$1 (1980)
- 1 Imperial = 10 Bits = \$10 (1980)
- 1 Chip = 100 Imperials = \$1000 (1980)

MONEY TALK

Money talks, and during the course of an adventure, players will want to “talk money.” Before you or the players discuss any monetary affairs, it is important to understand the economic factors below.

Technology Level

Each inhabited planet is assigned a Technology Level, usually called the Tech Level. The Tech Level is a rating, on a scale of 2 (the lowest) to 9 (the highest), of the technology possessed by the planet’s native inhabitants. The Tech Level reflects the nature and value of goods that planet produces.

The Tech Level of each planet shown on the map of the Wilderness Region is printed next to its description on the game map. Use the guidelines below to assign Tech Levels to planets of your own design.

Tech Level 2. Equivalent to Stone Age on Earth; natives possess stone weapons, use fire for cooking, cultivate crops in a very limited fashion. The most intelligent inhabitants are hunter/gatherers.

Tech Level 3. Equivalent to Earth’s earliest civilizations (such as Mesopotamia and early Greece) through the European Middle Ages. Natives can write, understand basic metallurgy and stone masonry, and are considerably advanced in the fine arts.

Tech Level 4. Equivalent to Earth after the invention of the printing press until the Industrial Revolution. Natives possess gunpowder weapons, steam engines, and are well-versed in the basics of strategic warfare.

Tech Level 5. Equivalent to Earth from the Industrial Revolution to the beginning of the Atomic Age. Natives make extensive use of the internal combustion engine, have developed flight, and are exploring rocketry and space science.

Tech Level 6. Equivalent to Earth during the Atomic Era, from 1945 to the Holocaust of 2054. Natives have begun limited intrasystem space travel and developed early laser weapons.

Tech Level 7. Equivalent to Shamba today (3512). Advanced weaponry, translight space drives, and translight communications systems.

Tech Levels 8 and 9. Not presently known in the Empire or the Alliance. You may develop planets with these Tech Levels in accordance with the guidelines in Chapter 7, Running Star Ace.

Economic Level

A planet’s Economic Level (usually just called “Econ Level”) is a measurement of the planet’s ability to buy goods on the interstellar market. It ranges from 2 (the lowest) to 9 (the highest). The Econ Level usually varies no more than one or two points from the planet’s Tech Level, although an extremely backward planet with a wealth of valuable materials might have an Econ Level much higher than its Tech Level.

Imperial Installation Tech and Econ Levels. All Imperial installations have Tech and Econ Levels of 7. Note, however, that Imperial Nobility use the Tech and Econ Levels of their planets for purposes of dealing in the black market.

The Black Market

The Empire controls the economy tightly on most planets. Citizens often need identification papers and ration cards to buy essentials such as food, clothing, and fuel. Both the Empire and local government heavily tax items that are not rationed. In many cases, the Empire prohibits private citizens from owning some items, such as weapons.

“Black market” refers to the secret sale of items to avoid Imperial or local controls. As one might expect, the black market is virtually a way of life on many Imperial planets. The risks are great, however: the penalties for black marketeering (for non-nobles only, of course) range from life as a mine slave to death.

Imperial efforts to crack down on black marketeers are usually frustrated by the fact that many nobles enjoy the extensive profits reaped in the black market.

PLUNDER

Plunder refers to any goods or equipment characters obtain in large quantities during an adventure. Plunder is always measured in terms of *cargo units*. A cargo unit (abbreviated c.u.) is a 12' x 12' x 12' area. Cargo units are

usually described in terms of the type of goods. For example, a standard cargo ship carries 12 cargo units of goods. Such a cargo might include three c.u. of basic foodstuffs, six c.u. of metal concentrates, and three c.u. of cheap costume jewelry.

Occasionally, plunder will be useful to PCs. For example, PCs might someday be lucky enough to plunder an Imperial cargo ship carrying PPRs! For this reason, the Basic Price List in this chapter contains the number of weapons in a cargo unit. In most cases, however, characters must convert plunder to cash before it is of any value to them.

Selling Plunder

PCs must find a buyer in order to sell their plunder. This buyer must be located on a non-Alliance planet; the Alliance would find it extremely distasteful to explain to the Empire why plundered goods are showing up on their planets.

The availability of a buyer depends on the type of goods offered. For example, a resistance group would be a logical place to sell weapons. Merchants (or even Imperial nobles) who deal in the black market are often purchasers of non-military goods.

PCs have a 100% chance of establishing contact with the local black market in any spaceport on Earth, Emniyet, Sepa Green, or Shamba. They have a 50% chance of establishing such contact on Tamilla, Stalitsa, and Asfalia. Such contact is always made through an NPC. Once established, PCs can maintain contact as long as the NPC stays in the black market business.

Use the Black Market Sales Procedure below to determine whether or not the contact will arrange a purchase of the PCs' goods, and to determine how much he will pay:

Black Market Sales Procedure

1. Determine whether the PCs are selling raw materials or finished goods. A *raw material* is anything that something else can be made from, such as metal ore, hides, oil, lumber, stone,

etc. *Finished goods* are items that have been made from raw materials, such as wire, fur coats, plastics, furniture, and so on.

2. Determine the chance that the contact wants to buy the goods (and has enough money to do so). The chance that the contact wants to buy raw materials is equal to 10 times the planet's Tech Level.

The chance that the contact wants finished products is 10 times the planet's Econ Level.

3. Roll a general check against the chance that the contact wants the PCs' goods. If the check succeeds, the contact is interested. If the check fails, the contact doesn't want the goods.

4. Assuming the contact wants to deal, consult the Base Prices Chart below to determine the base price of the goods. If the goods aren't on the chart, use the Base Prices Chart as a guideline in assigning a base price to them.

5. Multiply the base price by the planet's Tech Level. Multiply the result by the planet's Econ Level.

$$\text{Base Price} \times \text{Tech Level} \times \text{Econ Level} = \text{Market Value}$$

This is the market value of the goods on that planet.

A few items have a fixed market value, regardless of Tech and Econ levels. These include spacecraft, certain metal concentrates, and any items listed on the "Fixed Market Value Chart." PCs and NPCs may still bargain to alter the price they actually pay for items with fixed market values.

FIXED MARKET VALUE CHART

Item	Price
Gold Concentrate	5000 C/c.u.
Andilinium Concentrate	50,000 C/c.u.
Xantium crystal (standard cut)	4,200 C/crystal
Xantium crystals (bulk quantities)	2.5 million C/c.u.
Spacecraft	See craft description

6. Next, the PC conducting the transaction rolls a specific check against

his Bargaining skill (or Personality) score. Use the column corresponding to the contact's Bargaining skill (or Personality) score to obtain a result from the Action Table. (If the contact is acting on behalf of another NPC, use the column corresponding to the Personality or Bargaining skill score of the NPC actually making the decision to spend the money.)

Interpret the results of this check as follows:

Bargaining Results Key

Failure = The contact will pay no more than 0.1 times the market value of the goods.

S = The contact will pay no more than 0.5 times the market value of the goods.

L = The contact will pay no more than 0.75 times the market value of the goods.

M = The contact will pay the market value of the goods.

H = The contact will pay 1.25 times the market value of the goods.

C = The contact will pay 1.5 times the market value of the goods.

7. If the PCs agree to sell for the contact's price, determine the final amount of the transaction by multiplying the market value of the goods by the modifier obtained in Step 6 above, and then multiplying this result by the number of cargo units the PCs are selling.

$$\text{Market Value} \times \text{Modifier (Step 6)} \times \text{Number of Cargo Units} = \text{Transaction Amount}$$

Role-play the actual transfer of goods and money normally. All transactions are, of course, strictly cash.

Use the Black Market Sales Procedure for each type of goods the PCs try to sell, even if the goods come from the same source. The PCs may contact only two contacts concerning one type of goods in one week. For example, a Star Team member trying to sell plundered furniture may make only two contacts on Emniyet in a one week in an attempt to sell the furniture. If both contacts refuse, the PC must wait a

week and try again, or peddle his goods on another planet.

Remember that Crassites have a +30 modifier to their Personality score for purposes of bargaining. (This +30 modifier also applies to the Personality score when computing a Crassite's Bargaining skill.)

BASIC PRICES CHART

Type of Goods Base Price/c.u.
(in Chips)

RAW MATERIALS

Metal Concentrates	10-100
Silver	70
Iron	40
Tin	30
Aluminum	50
Copper	60
Mineral Ores	1-10
Raw plant products	1-8
Foodstuffs (basic)	1
Foodstuffs (common)	2
Foodstuffs (rare)	3
Fabric plants	2
Fabric plants (rare)	5
Wood/Lumber	7
Spices	8
Raw animal products	2-9
Foodstuffs (basic)	2
Foodstuffs (common)	3
Foodstuffs (rare)	4
Hides/Skins/Furs	8
Uncut gemstones	100

FINISHED PRODUCTS

		(# in
		chips c.u.)
Weapons		
Laser pistols	800	(4000)
Laser rifles	800	(2000)
Particle		
Beam weapons	2400	(1200)
PPRs	2800	(2800)
Plasma Guns	1200	(1)
Beam Sabers	4700	(11750)
Monofilament		
swords	1300	(2600)
Sensory Knives	6900	(13800)
Starfighter missiles	45	(112)
Grenades	2000	(20000
		boxes)
Grenade Launchers	230	(575)
Armor(reflector plate)	260	(650
		suits)
Clothing (basic)		1
Clothing (common)		3



Clothing (luxury)	9
Common	Producer's
appliances	Tech Level
Computer systems	50
Industrial equipment	Producer's
	Tech Level
Art works, rare books	250
Jewelry, costume	3
Jewelry, genuine	250
Toys and Games	3
Perfume (cheap)	2
Pets (common)	4
Pets (rare)	9
Holoplays	5
Video novels	3

Designing Plunders

As a CM, you have considerable leeway in designing cargos for the PCs to plunder. As guideline, assume an average cargo vessel carries 12 c.u. of goods from a Tech Level 5 planet, with a base price of 5. On Earth (Econ Level 5), this average plunder would have a market value of 125 C/c.u. (total value = 1500 Chips).

Base Price (5) x Tech Level (5) x Econ Level (5) = 125 C/c.u.

SMUGGLING

Smuggling simply means sneaking goods onto or off a planet illegally. Smuggling is an essential part of the interstellar black market economy.

PCs usually smuggle by contract agreement with some other character involved in the black market. The contractor has usually arranged for the sale of the goods in advance. The PCs must usually pick up the goods, sneak them off-planet, smuggle them to the buyer, pick up the cash, and return the money to the contractor.

Standard payment for smuggling is 10% of the sale price, plus expenses. However, PCs may bargain for a higher fee, especially if the job is more dangerous than normal.

Dangers of Smuggling

Smuggling is a dangerous way to earn a living. Like other black marketeers, smugglers caught by Imperial or local authorities face death or life as a mine slave.

Imperial planets monitor all craft from the moment they enter the system.

Smugglers landing in isolated spots on planets, rather than entering through a spaceport, are almost certain to draw the attention of local authorities. Within 15 minutes, a flight of interceptors will visit their landing spot to investigate.

Spaceports are always guarded by a few customs officers, and occasionally Imperial troops. Most spaceports have some sort of electronic security system, although the system's effectiveness may vary with the Tech Level and importance to the Empire of the planet. Players must find ways for their characters to avoid spaceport security, and you must use your discretion to determine how much and what kind of security PCs will face at each spaceport.

MISCELLANEOUS INCOME

PCs can earn miscellaneous income from many sources. The Alliance often pays a bonus for information about the Imperial fleet or the intrigues of Imperial nobility. Private citizens may have tasks they wish PCs to undertake, such as helping a relative escape from an Imperial detention facility. PCs can sometimes ransom prisoners, especially noble ones, back to the Empire. Creative PCs will think of additional ways to make money. Use the following guidelines to determine how much the PCs should earn from these types of activities.

MISCELLANEOUS INCOME CHART

Activity	Income
Intelligence gathering	1-10 Chips per useful report
Ransoms	100 x Status Rating of the prisoner for nobility; 1 Chip per man for common soldiers
Military actions	Negotiable; usual minimum is 20C for a "sure thing" mission.

Note that Star Team members never charge for military actions undertaken at the request of their base commander. These are usually missions secretly requested by the Alliance, necessary to the security of Alliance planets.

THE HIGH COST OF LIVING

All Star Team members have expenses. They most commonly spend money in the following ways:

Basic Support. Each Star Team member must pay 5% of his income to his base for basic support, as detailed in Chapter 3 of this book.

Ships, Repairs, and Equipment. The costs of spacecraft, spacecraft repairs, and equipment are detailed in Chapters V and VII of the *Star Team Basic Training Manual*.

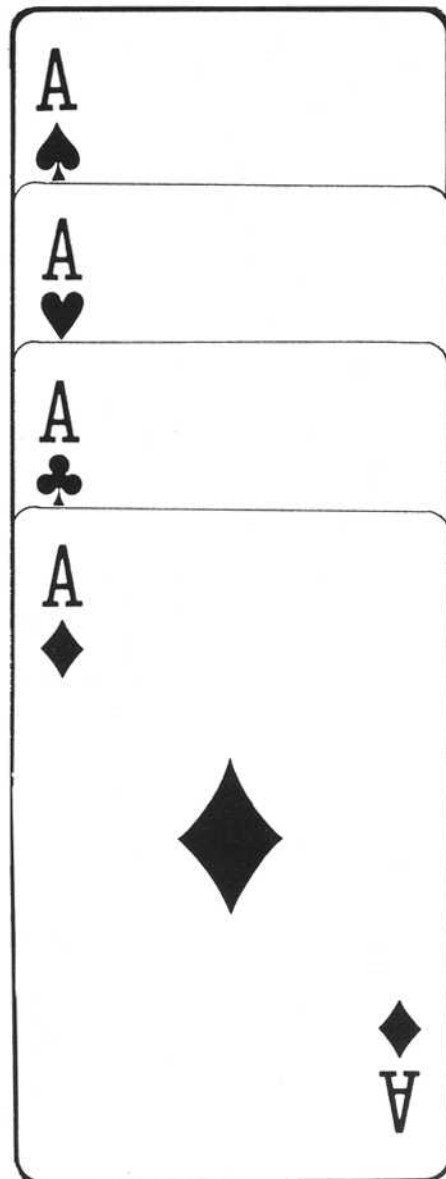
Buying and Improving Skills. These high costs are discussed in Chapter VI of the *Star Team Basic Training Manual*.

Miscellaneous Expenses. These include all the little things a character might desire, such as clothes, jewels, decorations for ship and weapons, a night on the town, etc. Use the following chart for guidelines on such expenses:

MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES CHART

Item or Service	Cost
Hotel Rooms	
Cheap Dive	10 Imperials
Moderate	20 Imperials
Luxury	1 Chip
Entertainment	
Drinks	1-10 Bits
Stalitsan nightclub, cover charge	1-5 Imperials
Emniyet amusement park, admission	1 Imperial
Theatre admissions	1-10 Bits
Private clubs, cover charge	10 Imperials
"Night on the town" on Stalitsa	1-5 Chips
Meals	
Cheap	1 Imperial
Moderate	5 Imperials

Ritzy Private Club	10 Imperials
Clothing	50 Imperials
Plain, casual	10 Imperials
Moderate, casual	30 Imperials
Designer casuals	1 Chip
Cheap, dressy	30 Imperials
Moderate, dressy	80 Imperials
Best, dressy	3-10 Chips
Cut gemstones	100-500 Chips
Jewelry, real	1-100 Chips



Chapter 7: RUNNING STAR ACE

STAR ACE™ is a free-wheeling game of swashbuckling adventure in outer space. The *Star Team Basic Training Manual* and the *Wilderness Region Briefing Manual* provide all the rules and background material you'll need to run the STAR ACE™ game.

The box doesn't include one thing that will be necessary for your endless hours of science-fiction adventuring: a good CM. This chapter is especially for you CMs. It explains how to run an exciting STAR ACE game.

WHAT THE GAME IS ALL ABOUT

First, as CM, you must understand the flavor of the STAR ACE game thoroughly. This is a game of adventure and action—it's not a game of science theory and fact. Hard scientific theory (or even fact) does not play an integral part in the game system. We decided to downplay scientific fact because:

1. Interstellar travel, in any sense meaningful to a game, is not possible according to the laws of physics as we currently understand them. Consequently, scientific explanations for things like translight drives aren't "scientific" anyway. However, such things are necessary to have a wide-open game of space adventure, whether modern science understands them or not.

2. Most game players, and most CMs, aren't specialists in fields like biochemistry and astrophysics. We wanted to create a game people could play without consulting college textbooks in vain attempts to figure out what is possible according to science today, and what isn't.

3. A good adventure must have a good plot and strong characters. The CM must be free to concentrate on the story and the players must have time to concentrate on their characters. These things are hard to do if you must compute the ratio of argon to oxygen in the atmosphere of every planet the characters visit.

So, STAR ACE isn't a game of science. It's a game of fast-paced, swashbuck-

ling action. It's a game of tough, resourceful good guys battling an interstellar empire of bad guys. It's a game of futuristic weapons and mental powers that are just plain fun to play with. In short, STAR ACE is adventure in space; it isn't a lecture in modern physics.

THE CM'S ROLE

The CM has the most important role in a STAR ACE game. He must perform a number of tasks, each equally important to the ultimate goal: everyone having fun.

First of all, the CM creates the adventures in which the player characters find themselves. He or she controls the opportunities and challenges the PCs face: Does that convoy have a valuable cargo for the PCs to plunder, or is it just a decoy, with ICE frigates hiding nearby? Will the Baron negotiate for the ransom of his captured troops? Will the PCs survive this hard-fought space battle? Or will an Imperial cruiser pop out of translight and destroy them? Only you, CM, know for sure—because you create the story.

But you don't just create the story; you must tell it to your player characters. More accurately, you must answer PC questions in such a manner that the PCs gradually uncover the story of which they are a part. You are the "eyes and ears" of the PCs. The PCs know only what you tell them they see, or hear, or sense, or remember, or otherwise know. You must become an actor, learning to use your language and voice to describe the action vividly and in an exciting manner.

Of course, the action in a STAR ACE story isn't one-sided: the PCs have a lot to say about how the story progresses. The options they choose, or even the unexpected things they do, often have as much (or more) influence on the plot of the adventure as your original story. When the PCs go into action, you must act as referee, applying and interpreting the rules of the game according to the situation, and ensuring that everything proceeds in an orderly, fair way. For this reason,

it's important to have a thorough working knowledge of the game's rules. This doesn't mean you have to memorize the rules; it does mean you should know them well enough to find what you need quickly during play. The index in each of the two STAR ACE books will be of great help in this regard.

Finally, every adventure depends on the actions of certain NPCs. Those actions should arise naturally from the NPC's character. The CM is the person who brings those NPCs to life for the other players. Don't be shy about "hamming it up." Play the role of the NPCs rather than just describing what they say or do. Acting and speaking as if you are the NPC(s) makes the game more fun for everyone, and it helps your players become role-players themselves.

CREATING AND RUNNING ENCOUNTERS

An "encounter" is any meeting between an NPC and a PC. It can be something simple, like meeting for a drink in a spaceport bar, or it can be complex and dangerous, like a deep space battle.

When creating and running encounters, you must always consider the crucial factor of *game balance*. In the simplest terms, a well balanced encounter isn't so easy that the PCs waltz right through it with no sense of danger, but it isn't so deadly that the PCs have no chance of winning (or at least escaping).

New CMs will quickly learn that the STAR ACE combat system is fast and deadly. It is designed this way to ensure that encounters are fast-paced and challenging to the players. But keep in mind that the system's lethal nature makes balance that much more important.

Ultimately, all CMs learn to balance encounters by experience. After you have run several starfighter combats, for example, you'll have an intuitive feel for what makes a balanced, fair fight and for what will overwhelm the PCs.

Until you've gained that experience, however, it's better to *err on the side of*

the player characters. Remember, they're just learning the game, too; an even shooting match might not be so "even" at all! In your early adventures, you can always make an encounter more difficult as it progresses if the PCs aren't challenged; a few more interceptors could be ordered into the battle, a few more Imperial troops could wander into the barroom brawl, and so on. It's a lot easier to make an encounter tougher as it progresses than to make it easier after you realize all the PCs are about to die.

This doesn't mean, however, that you should never let a PC die. The threat of death, after all, is the basis for the game's excitement. If no character ever dies, your game won't be very exciting. PCs who blunder badly, turning nicely balanced scenarios into death traps, should die. The players may be temporarily sad, but their next characters will be wiser.

The second important element in a good encounter is *pacing*. This means you should not let the game drag or be delayed. There are always a few players in any group who take half an hour to determine what their characters are going to do during the next five-second round. Don't let them. After you've made the CM's declarations, ask each player what his character is going to do. If the player doesn't answer in a reasonable amount of time, move on to the next one. Assume that player's character is doing *nothing*; like the player, the character is befuddled and trying to figure out what to do next. Keep the action fast and furious; everyone will have more fun.

CREATING ADVENTURES

An adventure is a complete story composed of several encounters. You may purchase ready-made adventures for the STAR ACE™ game from Pacesetter, Ltd., (and we certainly hope you do!) or, if you have the time and energy, you can design your own adventures.

Good adventures have two essential ingredients: the characters and the plot. These two ingredients are very closely related; the plot (or story) must flow naturally from the motiva-

tions and actions of the characters. You can create a good adventure by thinking about either element first, but it is usually easier to start with the characters.

The most important characters in your adventures are the PCs (they're the heros). Of course, the whole idea of playing the STARACE™ game is to have as much adventure and excitement for the PCs as possible. But they are also the most important characters because, as in any story, the plot of the adventure must revolve around them. Everything that happens must involve them in one way or another; if the admiral of the Imperial fleet is plotting to destroy an entire system, this should concern the PCs for some reason (perhaps it's their home). Although NPCs might do something the PCs aren't aware of, the results of the NPCs' actions should impact upon the PCs somehow. Never bore your PCs with an encounter (or even a description of something) that doesn't concern them.

The second most important characters in the adventure are the bad guys: one or more major NPCs who are, in some way, at odds with the PCs. They serve as the catalyst for adventure; just when the PCs think they've got it made and things are going smoothly, the bad guys do something to make life exciting again.

Because the players determine what their characters are like and what they will do, it is usually wisest to start creating an adventure by thinking about a few major NPCs.

You must know your major NPCs thoroughly, the same way an author knows his villains. You must determine what kind of people your NPCs are, how their minds work, what they want to accomplish, and so on. In Chapter 3, we provide background information on a number of major NPCs; use this information as a model when creating your own NPCs. In the brief space available, we've tried to provide details that will help you get to know these NPCs, as well as outlining some of the schemes they've set afoot. These characters and their schemes are excellent starting points for your early adventures.

For example, look at Baron Gruy, with his mining interests and secret fleet construction project on Tamilla. He wants to be Overlord of Emniyet as well. He is a ruthless, cunning, calculating, backstabbing kind of fellow. What will he do in order to get Emniyet? Once you have answered that question, you have the starting point for an adventure.

The second element in an adventure is the plot (or story). A good plot develops naturally out of the actions of the major characters. Let's suppose the Baron happens to know when a valuable cargo of industrial machinery is due in the Emniyet system. The Baron might have some of his underlings leak this information to some Star Team members (our PCs), hoping that they will intercept the incoming convoy. This will make the current overlord of Emniyet look somewhat incompetent. In fact, the Baron might show up himself to rescue the cargo (and capture the PCs), thus demonstrating that busy as he is with the affairs of Tamilla, he is a better defender of Imperial interests on Emniyet than the current overlord.

Thus, a plot is born. Of course, this would be only the beginning of an adventure. The continued growth of the plot would depend upon a number of things: Do the PCs fall for the bait? How does the overlord of Emniyet react? Will he deal with Star Teams to avenge himself? Is there a way resourceful PCs can work this feud to the Alliance's advantage?

The most important thing to remember when plotting your adventures is to keep NPC actions consistent with the NPC's character. Unless something terribly dramatic happens, a cold calculating villain is not going to have a change of heart and help the good guys; nor will a ruthless, cunning enemy act in a half-hearted, squeamish, or stupid manner.

CAMPAIGN PLAY

Just as adventures are composed of several encounters, a campaign is composed of several on-going adventures. A typical campaign game might involve one CM and four to eight PCs.

These adventures are linked together in two ways: they involve the same characters, and the plot of one adventure grows naturally and logically out of the previous adventure.

The STAR ACE™ game favors an especially free-wheeling style of play which lends itself well to a campaign game. The PCs have many options. The Wilderness Region is a relatively large section of interstellar space ready for them to adventure in. There are plots, counterplots, resistance movements, and rich cargo to be plundered. In short, there are a lot of things for the PCs to do. After their first few adventures, the players will probably start picking these options without much urging or "guidance" from the CM. At that point, a real campaign has begun, and your task is to portray how the environment reacts to the PCs' actions.

Bright CMs will quickly find that this eases their burden, rather than increasing it. Once you have the character of the major NPCs firmly in mind, and are comfortable with quickly stating their reactions, the campaign game seems to run itself. Adventures will evolve at the gaming table as NPCs react to PC actions, forcing the PCs to take new actions, and so on.

Of course, in a campaign game setting, player characters will acquire new skills and improve old ones. They will become more powerful as the game progresses. Thus, balance becomes just as important to the campaign as it is to encounters. Here again, balance is the trick of making the game just hard enough to be exciting and challenging, but not so hard that most player characters can't make progress.

As a general rule, player characters in a campaign should play between 12 and 18 hours in order to score enough kills to advance to the next rank in their Free Order. With each increase in rank, you should increase the challenges they face. The plots of nobles should become more devious, the number and quality of enemy craft and pilots should become greater, the jams PCs get themselves into should become stickier, the mysteries

they must solve should become more difficult, the stakes should become more lucrative, and the consequences of failure more desperate. On the other hand, as PCs rise in rank and power, NPCs should exhibit a little more respect, they should be presented with opportunities for more lucrative deals, they should have an easier time gathering resources for their missions, and so forth.

A few characters will eventually reach Ace rank in their Free Order, and a few extremely lucky characters may even reach Ace level in almost all available skills. Eventually, these rare, extraordinary characters should be retired from the game. By the time they have reached such a high rank and such high skill levels, they are wealthy enough to terraform their own asteroid in some nice Alliance system and live the life they've always dreamed of. Of course, such characters may always be brought out of retirement from time to time to help other PCs on some extraordinarily dangerous missions.

Beyond The Wilderness Region

Campaign play is not confined to the Wilderness Region by any means. The Wilderness Region is stressed in the boxed game so players and CMs will have a ready-made setting for their initial adventures. In fact, you could run a perfectly fine campaign without leaving the region. But most gamers like something new from time to time, and CMs may want to try their hand at creating new worlds and alien races. Although there is no need in the STAR ACE game system to place such creations outside the Wilderness Region, you might want to place these creations elsewhere in order to preserve the integrity of your campaign inside the Wilderness Region.

Aside from the Wilderness Region, there are several other areas where the borders of the Empire and the Alliance are very close, where the same sort of uneasy truce is maintained. In addition, there are inhabited worlds affiliated with neither the Empire nor the Alliance. There are

worlds deep in the heart of the Empire where the fires of the resistance movement are beginning to burn, and there are worlds near the galactic core which are part of whatever it is the Xenophobes are creating. Finally, there is the rest of limitless space, unexplored and unknown, both within the galaxy and in the countless galaxies beyond.

You are free to develop these areas as suits your own imagination and campaign. The most important thing to keep in mind when you create new worlds and races is *believability*. The things you create must seem real to your players in order for the game to remain fun. The best way to make new inventions believable is to refrain from violating the known rules of science or logic until you have no other choice. Because the STAR ACE game (and most science fiction) borders on the limits of our knowledge of what is possible and what is not, you may eventually find it necessary to violate the rules of science and logic. When you must do so, violate them consistently. Most players will accept your creations as long as they are consistent with themselves and the rest of the game.

Miscellaneous Tips

Here are a few more miscellaneous tips to help you make your campaign game easier for you and more fun for the PCs:

1. Keep copies of all your players' character sheets, and have them handy during play. This saves a lot of time and trouble when you want to roll a secret skill or Ability check without the player's knowledge. It also helps when designing your own adventures; you won't have to rely on memory to tell how much money the PCs currently have, which skills they have at what level, and so on. Finally, it will be especially handy when a player loses his own copy of the character sheet, which almost always happens.

2. Make sure to take care of any bookkeeping concerning money, new skills, advancement in rank, and so

on at the end of each gaming session. When the next gaming session begins, your players want to sit down and play, not sort out details from the previous session.

3. Keep accurate notes about the actions, possessions and status of NPCs, as well as the progress of the adventure. It is amazingly easy to forget some detail critical to the plot of an adventure.

4. From time to time during play, do a few things to keep the players on their toes. Roll the dice loudly out of the players' sight, and act as if the results are very interesting. Then, when you must roll a secret check, the players won't know whether something is about to happen or not. Occasionally pass a few folded notes to different players which say nothing in particular. That way, when you must tell one player something without the knowledge of the others, you can simply pass a note without arousing undue suspicion.

COMBINING GAMES

CMs who are familiar with Pacesetter's other role-playing games, CHILL and TIMEMASTER, will notice that the basic game systems are compatible. It is entirely possible to take a character from one game into the environment of either of the other games. Players and CMs who have one or both of these other games might occasionally enjoy a "super adventure" in which Time Corps agents from the TIMEMASTER™ game travel back in time to recruit a few S.A.V.E. envoys from the CHILL™ game and join some STARACE™ PCs in a battle against some horror from outer space. There are many different ways such combination scenarios could be constructed.

Should you run such a scenario, give any CHILL characters the number of wounds consistent with their Stamina scores in the STAR ACE system and use the STARACE damage and recovery system. Characters from the CHILL and TIMEMASTER games should keep their own skills, disciplines of the Art, and paranormal talents, using them as they would in

their native game system. Characters from these other games should make skill checks on Column 3 of the Action Table rather than Column 4.

THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT RULES

These two rules are more important than any of the rules in either of the books in the STARACE game. We've saved them for the end.

1. **HAVE FUN.** The purpose of playing any game is to have fun. Role-playing games intimidate some people because they seem to have so many rules. A few people turn into "rules lawyers," attempting to argue about every fine point and every decision the CM makes. Both of these groups are missing the point, which is to have fun without worrying too much about the rules. The rules exist only to help you have fun, not to get in the way. As a CM, apply the rules as best you can and forge ahead! If you are having fun, and your players are having fun, you're doing everything right. If someone isn't having fun, do whatever is necessary to see that they do.

2. **THE CM CONTROLS THE GAME.** The CM has absolute control over what happens in the game. A good CM will listen to the arguments or pleas of his players, but in the end, the CM's decisions are final. There is no court of appeal. The CM has the authority to change any die roll, interpret or even change any rule, or do whatever else is necessary during play to keep the game moving and keep it fun. The best CMs use this power very sparingly, but without hesitation when necessary.

Ultimately, the responsibility for the success of your STARACE game lies in your hands. It is your imagination, your voice, your guidance which brings the world of STARACE to life for your players. And now, somewhere out there, some helpless race is being trampled under the ugly boot of Imperial troopers. A valuable shipment of metal concentrate is leaving Tamilla to enrich the coffers of the Empire, and the resistance on Emniyet needs weapons desperately. Assemble

your players, rattle your dice, and take off to adventure!

SUGGESTED READING AND VIEWING

The following books and T.V. programs will help you get into the mood for great STARACE adventures, and may suggest plots which you can use in your own campaign.

Books

Poul Anderson: *The Space Merchants*

Isaac Asimov: *The Foundation Trilogy*, and most of his other science fiction works.

Arthur C. Clarke: *A Fall of Moon Dust* and *Childhood's End*

Harry Harrison: *The Stainless Steel Rat* series, and *The Deathworld Trilogy*.

Robert Heinlein: *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress* and *Double Star*

Frank Herbert: *The Dune* series

Ursula K. LeGuin: *The Left Hand of Darkness*

E.E. "Doc" Smith: *The Lensman* Series and *The Skylark* Series

T.V. Programs

Buck Rogers (Original serials)
Flash Gordon (Original serials)

INDEX

- Airbags, 9
- Alliance, 6-7
 - covert actions, 6
 - defeat in 400 Yrs. War, 2
 - military forces, 6
 - political organization, 6
- Amin,
(Viscount of Earth), 13
- Asfalia, 12, 18
- Balance, 29
- Bargaining, 26
 - results key, 26
- Basic Prices chart, 27
- Bits, 25
- Black market, 25
 - sales procedure, 26
- Campaign play, 30
- Checks,
 - direct action, 23
 - frequency of, 24
 - situation, 23
- Chips, 25
- Cost of living, 28
- Council of 100, 2
- Crassites, 15
 - appearance, 15
 - background, 15
 - creating NPCs, 16
 - in play, 16
- Creating adventures, 30
- Creating and running encounters, 29
- Crystal Folk, 19
 - appearance, 19
 - background, 20
 - creating NPCs, 20
 - in play, 20
- Currency values, 25
- Direct action checks, 23
 - modifiers, 23
- Earth, 2, 13, 14
- Economic level, 25
 - in determining value of goods, 26
- Emniyet, 14
- Empire, 2-5
 - founding of, 2
 - history of, 2
- Four Hundred Years' War, 2
- Frederick Constantine, Emperor, 4
- Freze, Admiral, 7
- Gorlons, 17
 - appearance, 17
 - background, 17
- creating NPCs, 18
 - in play, 18
 - regenerative powers, 17
- Grand Strategic Sectors, 8
- Grubbers, 10
- Gruy,
(Baron of Tamilla), 13
- ICE, 3
- Imperials (coins), 25
- Imperial Bureaucracy, 3
- Imperial Command Enforcement, 3
- Jub'el, Count,
(Regional Overlord, ICE), 14
- Legal Problems, 24
- Ligl,
(Baron of Emniyet), 14
- Marauders' Landing, 10
- Mazi, 18
- Metellus, Duke Aurelius, 5
- Miscellaneous Expenses Chart, 28
- Miscellaneous Income, 28
- Miscellaneous Income Chart, 28
- Muir'im, 15
- NPCs, 15-25
 - alien, 15-20
 - creating, 21
 - and Luck, 21
 - and noetic skills, 22
 - and skills, 22
 - reactions, 22
- Otto IV, Grand Duke, 5
- Plunder, 25
 - selling, 26
- Racial modifiers, 23
- Racial modifiers chart, 24
- Randall, Joseph,
(Alliance Executive), 7
- Rissil,
(Baron of Sepa Green and Shamba),
13
- Ruoka, 6, 19
- Sepa Green, 13
- Shamba, 13, 16
- Smuggling, 27
 - dangers of, 27
- Stalitsa, 12
- Star Team bases, 10
- Status ratings, 22
 - chart, 22
- Suggested readings, 32
- Tarsans, 16
 - appearance, 16
 - background, 16
 - creating NPCs, 17
 - Technology level, 25
 - in determining value of goods, 26
- Thassas,
(Viscount of Asfalia), 12
- Tubernets, 9
- Von Helmuth, Admiral, 14
- Wars of Vigilance, 18
- Wilderhogs, 10
- Wilderness,
 - planet, 9
 - region, 8
 - system, 8
- Wilderness syndrome, 10
- Xantium crystals, 6
- Xenophobes, 3, 6, 20
- Xenophobic war, 3
- Yanayir, Duke,
(ICE Overlord), 5
- Zoe,
 - appearance, 18
 - background, 18
 - creating NPCs, 19
 - Wars of Vigilance, 18

STAR ACE™

Action Table

Defense Column

Attack Margin	Ability Checks		Skill Checks		61-75	76-90	91-105	106-120	121-135	136+
	1-15	16-30	31-45	46-60						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	LK	L	L	L	L	S	S	S	S	S
1-4	M	M	L	LK	L	LK	L	S	S	S
5-9	H	MK	M	L	L	L	L	L	LK	S
10-29	C	H	MK	M	M	M	LK	L	L	L
30-49	C	C	H	M	MK	M	M	MK	L	LK
50-69	CK	CK	C	H	H	H	M	M	M	M
70-89	CK	CK	CK	CK	H	H	H	H	M	M
90-94	CK	CK	CK	CK	CK	HK	H	H	H	H
95-99	CK	CK	CK	CK	CK	CK	HK	HK	H	H
100+	CK	CK	CK	CK	CK	CK	CK	HK	HK	H

ARMED COMBAT RESULTS

Code	Result (Defender loses points from current Stamina.)
S	Scratch Wound: Lose 1 or 2 points; (see above), and mark 1 wound box.
L	Light Wound: Lose 2-20 points (1d10x2), and mark two wound boxes.
M	Medium Wound: Lose 4-40 points (2d10x2), and mark three wound boxes.
H	Heavy Wound: Lose 6-60 points (3d10x2), and mark four wound boxes.
C	Crippling Wound: Lose 6-60 points (3d10x2), and mark five wound boxes. (Or called shot, if specified otherwise.)
K	Knockdown: Defender knocked down and back 5 feet; must make DEX check to hold onto any hand-held item; any uncompleted actions this round are cancelled.

COMBAT PROCEDURE

1. Declare attack
2. Determine base chance
3. Determine strike number
4. Defender declares Luck use (PCs, missile attacks only)
5. Attacker rolls specific check against strike number
6. Apply results

UNARMED COMBAT RESULTS

Code	Result (Defender loses points from current Stamina.)
S	Scant Damage: Lose 1 - 2 points(roll 1d10; 1-5=1, 6-10=2).
L	Light Damage: Lose 2-20 points (1d10x2).
M	Medium Damage: Lose 4-40 points (2d10x2).
H	Harsh Damage: Lose 6-60 points (3d10x2), and mark one wound box.
C	Crushing Damage: Lose 6-60 points (3d10x2), and mark two wound boxes. (Or called shot, if specified otherwise.)
K	Knockdown: Defender knocked down and back 5 feet; unfinished actions cancelled this round.

SEQUENCE OF PLAY FOR ONE ROUND

1. CM declaration
2. Player character declaration
3. Initiative determination
4. Side A uses noetic skills
5. Side A fires or throws missiles
6. Side A moves
7. Side B defensive missile fire
8. Side A melees
9. Side B uses noetic skills
10. Side B fires or throws missiles
11. Side B moves
12. Side A defensive missile fire
13. Side B melees
14. Stamina loss and recovery

Side
A's
Attack

Side
B's
Attack

DEUCES WILD

Introductory STAR ACE™ Adventure



By Mark Acres

Editing: Michael Williams

Pacesetter

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INTRODUCTION

First, it's a wild search for the "Wildman"; now this. Your missile worked over that little Imperial interceptor, now a cloud of litter and dust behind you. Problem is, two Imp fighters are breathing down your neck, and your scanners tell you everyone else in your group has the same kind of unfriendly escort.

Two bright beams of light, Imperial laser fire, flash past your craft into deep space beyond. Close—but close doesn't count in a dogfight. You know what they say: you never see the one that gets you. You still have a chance, now that they've missed. A couple of quick maneuvers, and they could both wind up like that interceptor back there. That wouldn't be too shabby for your first day as a Star Team Deuce; here's your chance to show Commander Malako what to expect from a bunch of deuces wild!

STOP: If you are going to play in this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of this booklet is intended for the CM only. Players who read this material before playing the adventure will ruin many of the surprises in the adventure and spoil much of the fun for themselves.

HOW TO USE THIS ADVENTURE SCENARIO

This is a specially designed STAR ACE™ adventure scenario. It's designed to introduce new players to the game system while providing CMs all they need to make the first adventure rousing, action filled, and fast paced.

As CM, you should first read through this entire booklet carefully. Get familiar with the outline of the adventure, and note any details which may require special handling during play (such as the ICE prison in Encounter 4).

The adventure itself consists of 11 numbered Encounters. Most encounters contain some indented text between two scribe lines; read this text to the players at the start of the encounter. It tells them what their characters can see or hear, and sets the stage for the action that follows.

The remaining text in each encounter tells you how to run the encounter. It provides details about how the action should proceed, how NPCs will act or react to the PCs, and any additional information the PCs may gather during the encounter.

Each encounter concludes with a listing of each NPC and/or NPC spacecraft in the encounter. These listings are designed so you can keep track of damage to NPCs right in the adventure scenario booklet: that way, there's no need to bother with cumbersome notebooks in the middle of an exciting combat.

The center pages of this booklet contain eight pregenerated player characters. Each character is presented on a character card. Encourage your players to use these characters in their first game: this saves the time of having to create PCs and gets everyone playing right away. Of course, your players may create their own characters (using the directions in Chapter II of the *Basic Training Manual*) if they choose.

To use the character cards, gently remove the four center pages of the booklet, then cut out the character cards along the dark black lines.

When playing encounters for which sketch maps are provided, use the counters and the battle board as needed to keep track of the action. Spare counters can be used as necessary to help the players keep track of where furniture, walls, and doors are located.

CM'S PLOT SUMMARY

The PCs are assumed to be brand new Star Team deuces, fresh from basic training, linked up with the Marauders' Landing Star Team base on Wilderness. Base Commander Malako summons the PCs to his office to assign them a first mission.

Malako tells the PCs "Wildman" Ashvelt, Spade/4, is missing. Ashvelt was sent to Sepa Green to gather intelligence for the Alliance. He hasn't reported back. The PCs are to go to Sepa Green, make contact with the resistance there, and investigate Ashvelt's disappearance. If possible, they are to get Ashvelt back.

What even Commander Malako doesn't know is that the Star Team contact with the Sepa Green resistance, Joseph Black, is a traitor. Black was discovered to be a resistance member some time ago by the ICE. Under threat of death for both himself and his family, Black has since then been betraying Star Team members and resistance leaders to the ICE. Black betrayed Ashvelt while Ashvelt was on Sepa Green, and is also setting up the PCs, now that he knows they are coming.

The PCs' first clue that all is not well is the Imperial reception committee that awaits them outside the Sepa Green system. Assuming they win the space combat which ensues, and make it to Sepa Green, Black sets them up for arrest by the ICE, this time in a sleazy spaceport city bar. If his plot fails, Black leads the PCs on a wild goose chase into the swamps, where they will be intercepted by a Gorlon ICE patrol.

By this time, the PCs should be aware that something is very wrong about Black. If they have discovered (through Investigation skill or by a chance encounter in the ICE prison) that Black's family is being held, he will brave out the situation, offering to provide the PCs with the necessary clues to find Ashvelt, and to help them on their mission, if they'll help him rescue his family.

Ashvelt is en route to an ICE prison on Asfalia. Using the information finally provided by Black, the PCs can probably overtake the Imperial convoy bearing Ashvelt, and, after a final space battle, rescue the Star Team member and gain a cargo ship loaded with plunder as well.

You should keep careful track of game time during this adventure: the rescue of Ashvelt depends upon the PCs completing the adventure within 120 game hours.

1. BRIEFING ON WILDERNESS

"Welcome, deuces!"

Commander Malako rises from his desk, shakes hands with each of you, and indicates comfortable seats.

"Make yourselves comfortable. It's probably the last comfort you're going to see for a while," he says with a sharp Trakan smile.

"As you know, Star Team members here on our base at Marauders' Landing are sent, from time to time, on special assignments. Well, I have one which should be just right for you rookies; give you a little taste of action, maybe a chance for plunder, and a chance to earn a little glory around here."

"We're missing a pilot, a human pilot named Roger "Wildman" Ashvelt, Spade/4. He was a hotshot, but tends to get in tight spots every once in a while. I sent him to Sepa Green last week to make contact with the resistance there and pick up some intelligence information for the Alliance. He hasn't reported back. Find him. Any questions?"

As the PCs ask questions, Commander Malako makes sure they receive the following additional information:

1. Ashvelt was due to report in three days ago. There has been no word since from him on any tightbeam communications channel.

2. The resistance on Sepa Green reports no knowledge of his whereabouts, but they are investigating.

3. The main starport on Sepa Green is open to Star Team craft, although Imperial patrols have a habit of trying to jump Star Teams just outside the Sepa Green system.

4. Security on Sepa Green is tight; anyone coming on planet in a Star Team craft most certainly will be tailed by ICE undercover agents.

Whether the PCs ask or not, Malako tells them an experienced human resistance fighter, Joseph Black, will meet the PCs at the spaceport after they have cleared customs. He will approach them and offer to

sell them a ring. They should decline to buy it, saying, "Sorry, I don't need a ring now. Perhaps you have a bracelet?" This will establish their identity for Black. Black will then leave; the PCs should follow him, keeping at a distance, until he determines that their ICE tail has been shaken off. Black will then approach the PCs, arrange for them to get weapons, since no weapons are allowed through Imperial customs on the planet, and aid their investigation.

Allow the PCs time to ask any questions they want. At the conclusion of their interview with Malako, the commander stresses that speed is urgent; if Ashvelt has fallen into Imperial hands he will certainly be tortured and/or killed. Malako will not answer questions about the information Ashvelt was gathering; intelligence information is given out only on a "need to know" basis.

At the end of the interview, the PCs should, if all is proceeding normally, hop in their Phoenix starfighters and make the hyperspace jump to the Sepa Green system. The CM should keep careful track of game time from this point on; the PCs' chance to rescue Ashvelt depends upon the speed with which they act and the amount of time eaten up by hyperspace jumps.

2. A WELCOMING PARTY

Before beginning this encounter, the CM should remember to roll for the amount of time the PCs have spent in hyperspace and to require Spacecraft Piloting skill checks to determine stress damage to their craft. Then read the following to the players:

Your starfighters lurch slightly as they pop out of hyperspace back into the everyday universe. Almost as quickly as your eyes readjust to the normal sights of sublight travel, you notice blips on your scanners. Imperial fighters--closing fast with their shields coming up!

The forces of Baron Rissil, Imperial Overlord of Sepa Green, have prepared a little welcoming committee

for the PCs. Tipped off by the resistance traitor, Black, that the Star Team PCs would be arriving shortly, they plan to destroy the PCs before they reach the planet.

The Imperial forces consist of two squadrons of Imps backed by 3 squadrons of interceptors, a total of 6 Imp fighters and 9 interceptors. These forces have been waiting for several hours for the PCs to pop in from hyperspace.

Use the battle board and appropriate counters to run this encounter, using the dogfighting rules in Chapter V of the *Star Team Basic Training Manual*.

If there are fewer than 6 PC craft in this encounter, you should modify the forces shown so that there is one Imp fighter for every PC craft, and one and one-half interceptors for every PC craft.

Both the interceptors and the Imps fight until one-half of their respective forces have been destroyed. Then the remaining craft of each force try to escape the dogfight. Escaping craft make for the spaceport on Sepa Green, the same port for which the PCs are bound. Travel time from the area of the battle to the spaceport is only 8 hours at sublight speed.

NPC Craft Statistics

Six Imperial Fighters

Stress Pts: 60 Combat Speed: 9
VCR: 60 Crew: 1
Damage:
Stress Points Damage Boxes

#1	<input type="checkbox"/> Front laser	<input type="checkbox"/> Rear missile
	<input type="checkbox"/> Drive	<input type="checkbox"/> Control
#2	<input type="checkbox"/> Front laser	<input type="checkbox"/> Rear missile
	<input type="checkbox"/> Drive	<input type="checkbox"/> Control
#3	<input type="checkbox"/> Front laser	<input type="checkbox"/> Rear missile
	<input type="checkbox"/> Drive	<input type="checkbox"/> Control
#4	<input type="checkbox"/> Front laser	<input type="checkbox"/> Rear missile
	<input type="checkbox"/> Drive	<input type="checkbox"/> Control
#5	<input type="checkbox"/> Front laser	<input type="checkbox"/> Rear missile
	<input type="checkbox"/> Drive	<input type="checkbox"/> Control
#6	<input type="checkbox"/> Front laser	<input type="checkbox"/> Rear missile
	<input type="checkbox"/> Drive	<input type="checkbox"/> Control

Nine Interceptors

Stress Pts: 40 Combat Speed: 8
VCR: 50 Crew: 1

Damage:

Stress Points Damage Boxes

- | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------|
| #1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Front laser | <input type="checkbox"/> | Drive |
| #2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Front laser | <input type="checkbox"/> | Drive |
| #3 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Front laser | <input type="checkbox"/> | Drive |
| #4 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Front laser | <input type="checkbox"/> | Drive |
| #5 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Front laser | <input type="checkbox"/> | Drive |
| #6 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Front laser | <input type="checkbox"/> | Drive |
| #7 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Front laser | <input type="checkbox"/> | Drive |
| #8 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Front laser | <input type="checkbox"/> | Drive |
| #9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Front laser | <input type="checkbox"/> | Drive |

3. RISSIL SPACEPORT

The signs say, "Welcome to Rissil Interstellar Spaceport." not that you feel very welcome: the entire place is crawling with armored Imperial troops and Rissil's private mercenaries as well, both groups consisting mostly of Gorlons. The hangar fees are high: 5 chips each to house your ships; 12 chips each if you want the three-day long-term rate. Repair to stress damage is done here at the usual rate of 5 Chips per point repaired. You can have your ships repaired while you adventure on the planet, and pay as you leave. Aside from a standard cargo vessel, your ships are the only craft in the hangar.

The Imperials have been eyeing you openly ever since your craft landed, and you can see two Crassites, pretending to be in deep conversation, watching you out of the corners of their eyes as you walk through Imperial customs.

Show the players the sketch map of the spaceport facility, and point out the location of the customs desks. Unless the PCs actions indicate otherwise, they should pass through customs without any problems.

PCs may attempt to smuggle weapons through customs; allow the standard Gorlon customs agents a general Perception check for each PC. A Gorlon who passes the check notices or finds the smuggled weapon.

The offending PC will be arrested at once as a black market smuggler and taken to the ICE prison in Rissil City (see Encounter 4).

Once they are in the main lobby, the PCs are approached by a human dressed as a merchant/businessman. He has been conspicuously approaching people at random in the lobby, offering to sell them a ring. He approaches the PCs, shows them the ring, and offer to sell it. If the PCs respond in the way Commander Malako told them, the man nods politely and heads out the main doors of the spaceport to a place where rental hover cars are available. This man is of course Joseph Black, the PCs' resistance contact.

PCs who pass a general Perception check notice that the two Crassites seem to be following them. The Crassites are ICE undercover agents, dressed as moderately wealthy merchants. Their job is to follow the PCs and arrest them at the first moment they step out of line.

If the PCs start any combat with Imperial troops or Rissil's mercenaries, more such troops come into the fight from the general area at a rate of 1d10 troopers per round until the PCs are subdued or killed. Any live PCs are taken into custody by the Crassites and thrown into the ICE prison facility in Rissil City. (The prison is described in Encounter 4.) If the encounter takes place smoothly and without combat, go to Encounter 5.

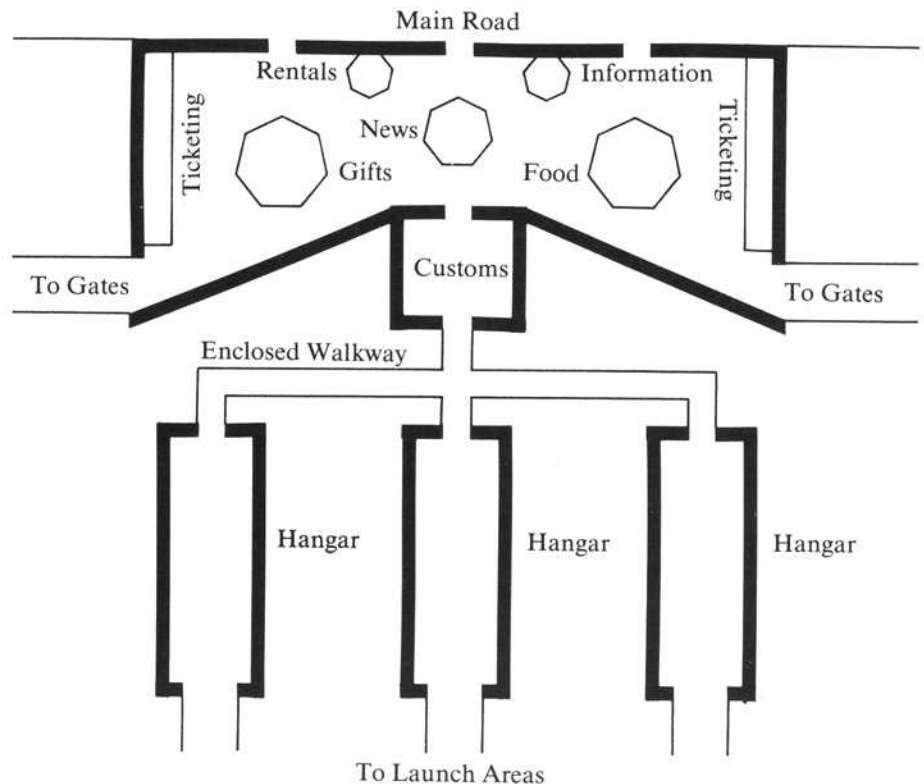
NPC Statistics

Imperial and Mercenary Troops

All these troops are standard Gorlon NPCs:

STR	58	DEX	50	AGL	76
WPR	50	PER	32	PCN	48
STA	76	UMS	67	WNDS	15

Skills: Beam Weapons, Rookie, 65.



RISSIL INTERSTELLAR SPACEPORT

Current STA	Wounds
#1	0000000000000000
#2	0000000000000000
#3	0000000000000000
#4	0000000000000000
#5	0000000000000000
#6	0000000000000000
#7	0000000000000000
#8	0000000000000000
#9	0000000000000000
#10	0000000000000000

Add additional troops as needed.

All are wearing reflector plate armor and helmets. All are armed with laser rifles.

Two Crassite ICE Agents

These men are both standard Crassite NPCs:

STR	64	DEX	46	AGL	46
WPR	60	PER	40	PCN	72
STA	38	UMS	55	WNDS	12

Skills: Beam Weapons, Vet, 76.

Current STA	Wounds
#1	000000000000
#2	000000000000

Both are secretly armed with hidden laser pistols. They carry short range communicators which put them in touch with ICE headquarters in Rissil City. They are unarmored.

4. A NICE, COOL PLACE

This encounter is a description of the ICE prison facility in Rissil City. It should be used only if the PCs are arrested, or if they break in to rescue Black's family; if the PCs are arrested at any time on Sepa Green, they are brought here for questioning, trial, and execution.

The sketch map of the prison shows the layout of the section of the prison where the PCs are being held. The PCs are kept two per windowless cell. As luck would have it, Black's wife and daughter are kept in a cell on the same hall (they will not join in an

escape unless escorted by the PCs: they're just too beaten down and frightened by their long imprisonment: use standard Human NPC stats if these two come into play). The communications center shown on the map monitors the security devices in each cell and hall. From the center, a door leads to the outside, but can be opened only by giving the computer at the communications center the proper access code, or by destroying the computer.

Video monitors with attached weapons which fire like laser pistols (base strike number=85) guard all corridors to the cells. Their fire is computer controlled, and is activated instantly whenever a being enters a corridor without first having clearance from the communications center.

Each cell is locked with a computer controlled lock, which can be deactivated at the communications center.

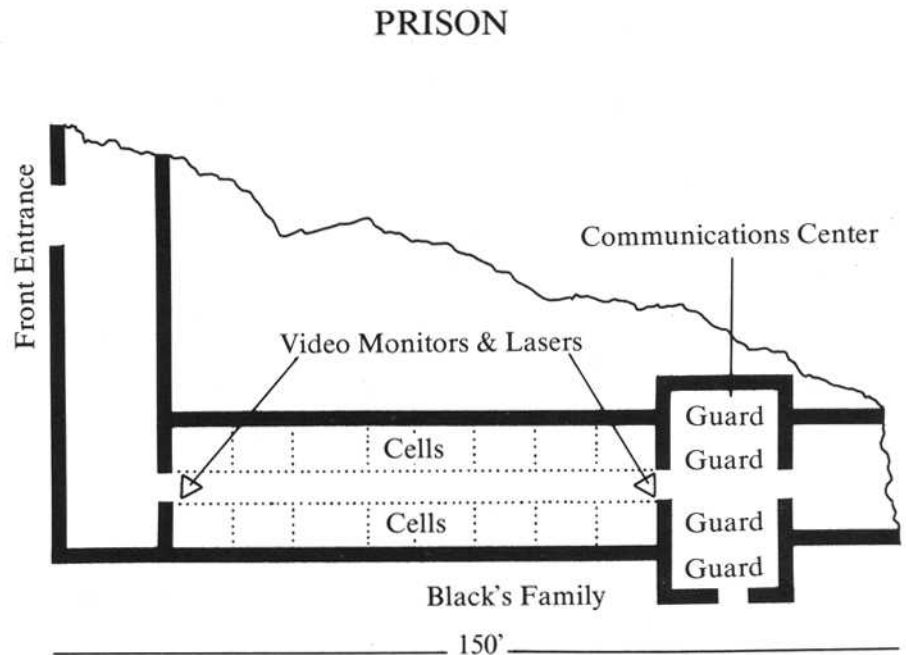
The communications center itself is manned by four Gorlon guards. In

addition, there are eight additional guards for this section in the guard recreation area; they respond to an alarm in 1d10 rounds.

PCs with Security System skill will be able to pick the cell locks, if they can gain access to an electronics kit. PCs with Computer skill can reprogram the computer at the communications center to erase any record of the PCs having ever been arrested. They can also learn from the computer the proper code to activate the door to the outside which leads from the communications center.

The outside of the prison is manned constantly by ICE storm troopers. One team of four watches the front entrances, while a second team patrols the sides and rear. Access to the prison building is limited to ICE officials, guards, and persons with appointments, who must check in with the commander of the front entrance guard team.

The walls of the prison cannot be harmed by normal, hand-held wea-



pons. They can be blown through with explosives by a character with Demolitions skill. If fired upon by spacecraft type weapons, the walls can take 50 stress points of damage before collapsing.

PCs not in the prison can gain information as to which cells PC prisoners are kept in by bribing any one of the front entrance guards after he goes off duty. The minimum bribe such a guard will accept is 20 Chips. He will not provide further aid.

If, at any time, the PCs help Black's wife and daughter to escape, Black will show his true colors: sympathy with the Star Teams. He'll provide all the information he has on Ashvelt's whereabouts, and offer to help the PCs himself. They may be able to steal the cargo ship in the hangar where their fighters are stored; if they can, Black, his wife, and daughter will operate the ship and accompany them (use the Standard Cargo Vessel statistics found in Chapter V of the *Basic Training Manual*).

NPC Statistics

Twelve Gorlon ICE Storm Troopers (Guards)

STR	62	DEX	58	AGL	76
WPR	54	PER	32	PCN	50
STA	76	UMS	69	WNDS	15

Skills: Beam Weapons, Vet, 88.

Current STA	Wounds
#1	0000000000000000
#2	0000000000000000
#3	0000000000000000
#4	0000000000000000
#5	0000000000000000
#6	0000000000000000
#7	0000000000000000
#8	0000000000000000
#9	0000000000000000
#10	0000000000000000
#11	0000000000000000
#12	0000000000000000

These guards are all wearing reflector plate armor. Each carries a laser rifle and a laser pistol sidearm.

Eight Outside Guards

Same statistics as guards above.

Skills: #1 and #5, Beam Weapons, Vet, 88; Grenade Launcher, Vet, 88. All others, Beam Weapons, Vet, 88.

Current STA	Wounds
#1	0000000000000000
#2	0000000000000000
#3	0000000000000000
#4	0000000000000000
#5	0000000000000000
#6	0000000000000000
#7	0000000000000000
#8	0000000000000000

All are wearing reflector plate armor. All are armed with laser rifles and laser pistol sidearms, except numbers 1 and 5, who both carry a grenade launcher with frag grenades instead of a laser rifle.

5. SHAKING THE TAIL

Your contact rented a hover car and took off into the city traffic; you flipped down 2 chips deposit on a multi-seater for yourselves and followed at a discreet distance.

PCs passing a general Perception check will notice that the Crassites who were watching them at the hangar have also rented a multi-seater, and are following them at a careful distance. Ahead of them, Joseph Black suddenly accelerates into a quick turn and begins weaving through the heavy traffic. After several such turns, the PCs notice that their "tail" has apparently been lost. Black parks his hover car outside a rather sleazy looking dive (a sign above the place reads "Belto's Good Time Lounge") and walks inside. Should the PCs do the same, Black approaches them.

Although the PCs do not know it, Black plans to lead them into another trap. The ICE agents tailing the PCs deliberately allowed themselves to be shaken off; they are quite aware that Black is leading the PCs to Belto's.

6. GETTING THE LOWDOWN

Inside, you see that the bar is large, dark, loud, and cheap. Out-of-tune clarinet music plays quietly beneath the murmur of conversation. Your contact has seated himself alone at table in a dark, rear corner of the establishment. At the bar, a few drunken Gorlons mutter peacably enough among themselves. The rest of the clientele is mixed; every race in the region is represented. In all, there are about 60 customers in varying states of animation and intoxication. Several empty tables are still available.

Use the sketch map of the barroom for this encounter. Show the map to the PCs as soon as they enter the establishment.

Black wanders over to the PCs table as soon as they have seated themselves. He cheerfully orders drinks for them, and engages in small talk until they are served. Then quietly, he gets to the business at hand.

Black first spends some time bragging about the ease with which he shook the ICE tail that was placed on the Star Team members. He will deny any knowledge of their encounter in space before arriving at Sepa Green, if the subject arises. Above all, Black pretends to be concerned about the whereabouts and fate of Ashvelt. He says that he has a contact among Rissil's men who may be able to help the Star Team members find their companion, and that he has set up a meeting with this man for tonight, in the swamps outside town. He gives the PCs a small map showing the location of the meeting, with the time (7 p.m. tonight) noted.

Black won't bring up the subject of weapons for the PCs. If the PCs raise the subject once, he reassures them: "Of course I have weapons for you!" Then he changes the subject. If pressed on the point a second time, Black walks up to the bartender, asks for his "package," and returns to the table with a large box. Inside the box are one charged laser pistol, one sensory

BASIC ABILITIES

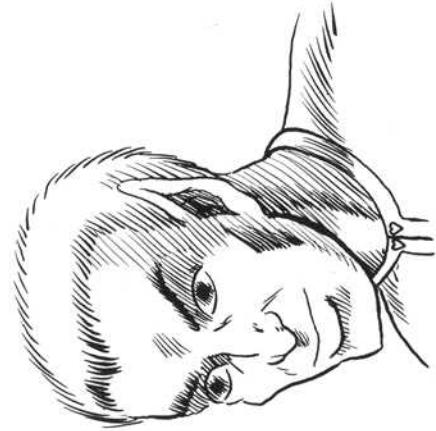
Strength 50 Perception 80
 Dexterity 58 Stamina 52
 Agility 46 Luck 54
 Willpower 50 Wounds 13
 Personality 48 UMS 49

Current Stamina:

Wounds:

SKILLS

Name	Level	Score
Spacecraft Piloting	Rookie	77
Noetic Defense		
Mode	Rookie	80
Computers	Rookie	97
Laser Rifle	Rookie	73
Emergency		
Spacecraft Repair	Rookie	93



LIKEASIA

BASIC ABILITIES

Strength 52 Perception 80
 Dexterity 72 Stamina 54
 Agility 50 Luck 54
 Willpower 52 Wounds 13
 Personality 34 UMS 51

Current Stamina:

Wounds:

SKILLS

Name	Level	Score
Spacecraft Piloting	Rookie	83
Noetic Defense		
Mode	Rookie	81
Demolitions	Rookie	106
Medicine	Rookie	85
Grenade Launcher	Rookie	87



VALO

BASIC ABILITIES

Strength 48 Perception 54
 Dexterity 66 Stamina 40
 Agility 54 Luck 74
 Willpower 46 Wounds 13
 Personality 70 UMS 51

Current Stamina:

Wounds:

SKILLS

Name	Level	Score
Spacecraft Piloting	Rookie	73
Noetic Defense		
Mode	Rookie	65
Bargaining	Rookie	88
Mirage Missiles	Rookie	90
Sword	Rookie	66



KRAST

BASIC ABILITIES

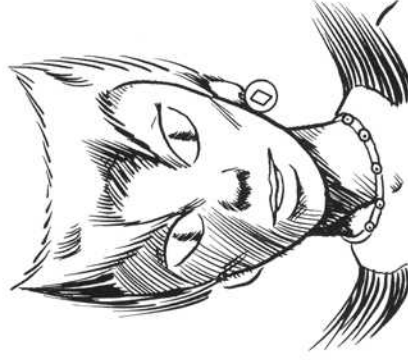
Strength 48 Perception 56
 Dexterity 60 Stamina 46
 Agility 54 Luck 74
 Willpower 48 Wounds 12
 Personality 60 UMS 51

Current Stamina:

Wounds:

SKILLS

Name	Level	Score
Spacecraft Piloting	Rookie	72
Noetic Defense		
Mode	Rookie	67
Forgery	Rookie	88
Security Devices	Rookie	94
Investigation	Rookie	70



SVABODNI

RACE: Crystal Clone **SEX:** Female

PERSONAL DATA:

ORDER/RANK: Heart/Deuce

Age: 23
Height: 5'4"
Weight: 130 pounds

RACIAL ABILITIES

Energy beam from hand

STARTING EQUIPMENT AND FUNDS

Star Team FX-80 Phoenix Starfighter
Proton Projector Rifle
Shock Mace
Laser Pistol

LSS Body Suit
LSS Helmet
23 Chips

Valo is dedicated to the cause of the Star Teams and the defense of Ruoka. However, she freely allows her artistic interests to show. She particularly enjoys space combats, not because of the violence involved, but because of the combination of sights and sounds (over the radio).

Valo is also a dedicated doctor, and has promised herself that she will never willingly leave a comrade behind in a combat situation.

RACE: Crystal Clone **SEX:** Male

PERSONAL DATA:

ORDER/RANK: Heart/Deuce

Age: 21
Height: 5'2"
Weight: 105 pounds

RACIAL ABILITIES

Energy Beam from hands

STARTING EQUIPMENT AND FUNDS

Star Team FX-80 Phoenix Starfighter
Proton Projector Rifle
Laser Pistol
Laser Rifle

LSS Body Suit
LSS Helmet
20 Chips

Like most recently created Crystal Clones, Liikasia's Crystal Purpose is to be a Star Team member. He is totally devoted to the Star Teams and the protection of Ruoka against the Empire.

Because of his extraordinary Perception, Liikasia is often the first to spot trouble. He dislikes, but does not fear violence; he prefers to find a logical, non-violent solution to most problems, but doesn't hesitate to use force when it is the only logical means at hand. Secretly, Liikasia would like to become a light and sound artist.

RACE: Trakan **SEX:** Female

PERSONAL DATA:

ORDER/RANK: Diamond/Deuce

Age: 21
Height: 6'1"
Weight: 135 pounds

RACIAL ABILITIES

Stealth
Night Vision

STARTING EQUIPMENT AND FUNDS

Star Team FX-80 Phoenix Starfighter
Proton Projector Rifle
Laser Pistol
Sensory Knife

LSS Body Suit
LSS Helmet
24 Chips

Svabodni like Krast grew up on the streets of Stalitsa. More than most, she enjoyed the freedom of the Stalitsan way of life. She resents and resists when anyone or anything interferes with her personal freedom and ties her down.

These attitudes led her to begin life as a smuggler, aiding resistance fighters on Shamba. After early successes, funded by an old Crassie, she came to the attention of the Star Teams and was recruited, after being assured that her personal liberty would not be that limited by the way of life at Marauder's Landing.

RACE: Trakan **SEX:** Male

PERSONAL DATA:

ORDER/RANK: Diamond/Deuce

Age: 20
Height: 6'4"
Weight: 150 pounds

RACIAL ABILITIES

Stealth
Night Vision

STARTING EQUIPMENT AND FUNDS

Star Team FX-80 Phoenix Starfighter
Proton Projector Rifle
Beam Saber
Sensory Knife

LSS Body Suit
LSS Helmet
18 Chips

Like most Trakans, Krast grew up on the streets of Stalitsa. Although he had the beginnings of a promising career fleeing tourists, Krast was more serious-minded than the average Trakan; he recognized the constant threat of the Empire as a threat to the Trakan way of life. As a result, he went to Earth and did what he could to aid the resistance there.

The Star Teams first noticed Krast when he approached a Spade/7 in an Earth bar and offered to sell him an Imperial fighter. Krast had bargained the drunken Gorton pilot out of his craft in exchange for a deed to some Tamilian farmland. Impressed, the Spade/7 recruited Krast on the spot.

BASIC ABILITIES

Strength 50 Perception 66
 Dexterity 60 Stamina 66
 Agility 54 Luck 62
 Willpower 64 Wounds 14
 Personality 58 UMS 52

Current Stamina:

Wounds:

SKILLS

Name	Level	Score
Spacecraft Piloting	Rookie	75
Noetic Defense		
Mode	Rookie	95
Ignore Pain	Rookie	91
Shield Ship	Rookie	87
Emergency		
Spacecraft Repair	Rookie	79

**ZAHMET****BASIC ABILITIES**

Strength 68 Perception 58
 Dexterity 40 Stamina 54
 Agility 46 Luck 48
 Willpower 64 Wounds 13
 Personality 50 UMS 57

Current Stamina:

Wounds:

SKILLS

Name	Level	Score
Spacecraft Piloting	Rookie	63
Noetic Defense		
Mode	Rookie	91
Levitation	Rookie	96
Thought Probe	Rookie	88
Wrestling	Rookie	72

**YUMRUK****BASIC ABILITIES**

Strength 58 Perception 60
 Dexterity 64 Stamina 56
 Agility 70 Luck 56
 Willpower 56 Wounds 13
 Personality 48 UMS 64

Current Stamina:

Wounds:

SKILLS

Name	Level	Score
Spacecraft Piloting	Rookie	95
Noetic Defense		
Mode	Rookie	73
Laser Pistol	Rookie	94
Grenade Launcher	Rookie	94
Telekinesis	Rookie	78

**VANESSA LING****BASIC ABILITIES**

Strength 60 Perception 50
 Dexterity 62 Stamina 56
 Agility 56 Luck 48
 Willpower 56 Wounds 13
 Personality 46 UMS 58

Current Stamina:

Wounds:

SKILLS

Name	Level	Score
Spacecraft Piloting	Rookie	86
Noetic Defense		
Mode	Rookie	68
Laser Pistol	Rookie	92
Automatic Rifle	Rookie	92
Emergency		
Spacecraft Repair	Rookie	71

**ALFRED FINNEY, III**

RACE: Human **SEX:** Female

PERSONAL DATA:

ORDER/RANK: Spade/Duce

Age: 22
Height: 5'2"
Weight: 110 pounds

RACIAL ABILITIES

No special abilities

STARTING EQUIPMENT AND FUNDS

Star Team FX-80 Phoenix Starfighter
Proton Projector Rifle
LSS Body Suit
LSS Helmet
Laser Pistol
Grenade Launcher
20 Chips

Vanessa Ling grew up fighting the Empire. Her father was once a prominent member of the Freedom Party in old Earth's California, and a strong supporter of continued resistance as the Four Hundred Years' War wore on. He was finally executed by the Empire when Vanessa was only four.

Vanessa's skills and determination drew the attention of the Star Teams, especially after she engineered a resistance raid on an Imperial arms bunker which netted several thousands of Chips worth of weapons.

RACE: Human **SEX:** Male

PERSONAL DATA:

ORDER/RANK: Spade/Duce

Age: 25
Height: 6'0"
Weight: 175 pounds

RACIAL ABILITIES

No special abilities

STARTING EQUIPMENT AND FUNDS

Star Team FX-80 Phoenix Starfighter
Proton Projector Rifle
LSS Body Suit
LSS Helmet
Laser Pistol
Beam Saber
17 Chips

Alfred Finney, III, is the son of aristocratic "old money" on the European continent on Earth. As a small child, he heard endlessly about the way the Empire had destroyed his family's fortune and way of life. Small wonder, then, that the angry young man should turn to the resistance movement to avenge the injustices done to his family.

Finney came to the attention of the Star Teams after he singlehandedly broke a Star Team member out of an ICE detention center, demolishing the building with a PPR in the process. He is considered a promising member of the Order of Spades.

RACE: Kleibor **SEX:** Female

PERSONAL DATA:

ORDER/RANK: Club/Duce

Age: 30
Height: 11'9"
Weight: 1150 pounds

RACIAL ABILITIES

Telepathy, 1 WPR/word
Learn Language, 1d10 rounds
Transfer Stamina, 1 point/round

STARTING EQUIPMENT AND FUNDS

Star Team FX-80 Phoenix Starfighter
Proton Projector Rifle
LSS Body Suit
Shock Mace
LSS Helmet
Laser Pistol
16 Chips

Zahmet joined the resistance while still a cub, learning about the glories of the Star Teams and the battle against the Empire from her parents. When her parents were taken prisoner and executed by ICE, there was no question that their daughter would end up in the Star Teams.

Zahmet was recruited from the resistance fighters on Emniyet after she piloted a stolen Imp fighter in combat against three Imperial interceptors trying to destroy an incoming Star Team delivery of weapons. Like most Kleibors, Zahmet is fun loving; she enjoys loud parties, barroom brawls with green gortons, and picnics on the ice of her homeworld, Emniyet.

RACE: Kleibor **SEX:** Male

PERSONAL DATA:

ORDER/RANK: Club/Duce

Age: 28
Height: 12'2"
Weight: 1250 pounds

RACIAL ABILITIES

Telepathy, 1 WPR/word
Learn Language, 1d10 rounds
Transfer Stamina, 1 point/round

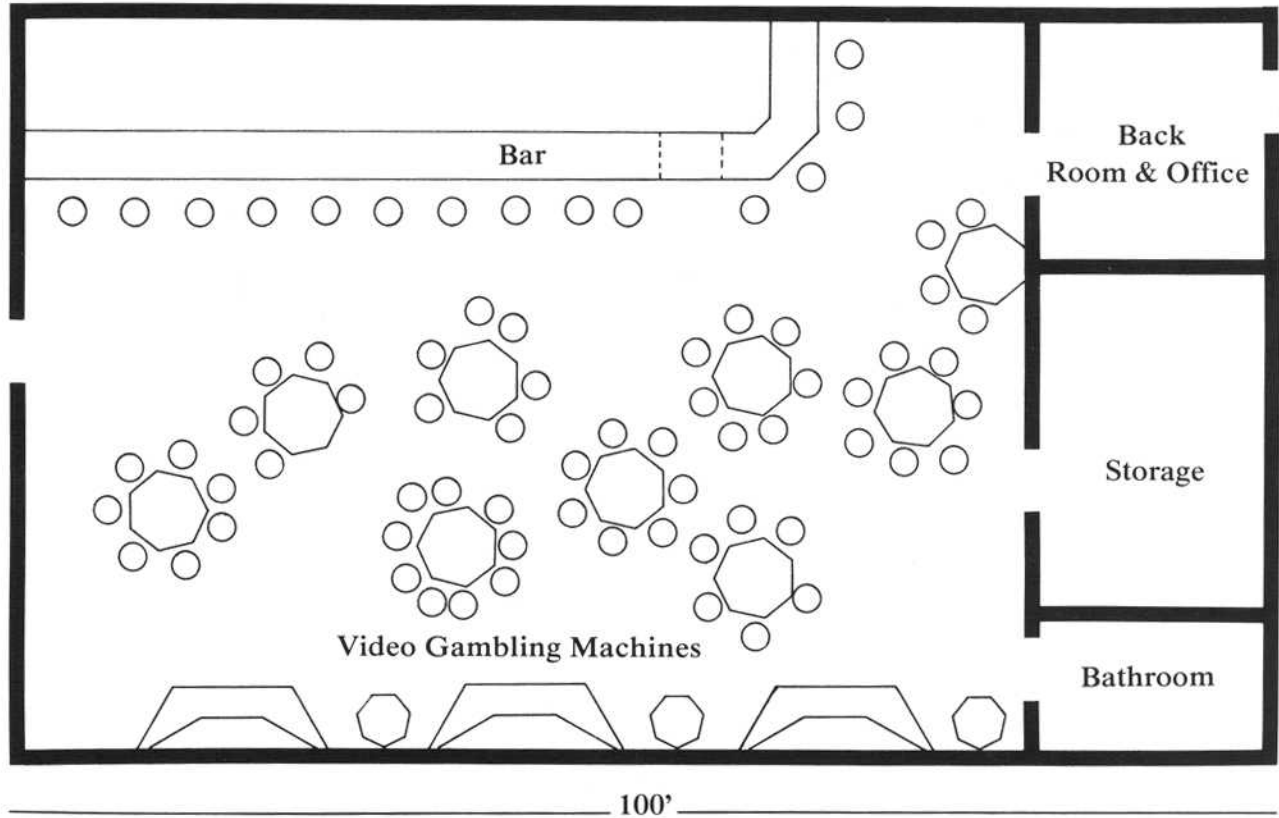
STARTING EQUIPMENT AND FUNDS

Star Team FX-80 Phoenix Starfighter
Proton Projector Rifle
LSS Body Suit
Shock Mace
LSS Helmet
Laser Pistol
15 Chips

Yumruk was an aspiring young black marketer and something of a renegade resistance fighter before the Star Teams spotted his potential. From the Star Teams he has learned the necessary discipline to tone down his natural rowdiness and love of battle against Imperials.

Yumruk is fond of Kleibor sports, and has a reputation as a good basher in the Kleibor game. Dort. He is also fond of practical jokes, and his friends have more than once dragged him, somewhat unwillingly, away from the pleasures of the clubs on Statista.

BAR



knife, an unassembled grenade launcher (can be assembled by anyone in 1d10 rounds), and a clip of seven frag grenades.

Black insists on handing out the contents of the box very slowly, beneath the table, checking constantly to see if anyone is watching. He also informs the PCs that there is a PPR for them in the back room.

Black is stalling about giving the PCs weapons; he gives them to them if pressed so they won't suspect him of being a traitor, but he secretly is waiting for the ICE to show up to arrest the PCs.

Any PC who goes into the back room to get the PPR will meet the 2 Gorlon ICE storm troopers on the way into the main room of the bar from the back door. One of the troopers is carrying the PPR.

7. THE ICEMAN COMETH

As you're conversing with Black, you suddenly notice two familiar-

looking Crassites quietly entering the front door of the bar. Behind them stroll four heavily armored, armed Gorlon ICE storm troopers. Conversation in the room quickly dies; most of the clients quietly stare down at their drinks. From the rear door leading to the back room, two more Gorlons stroll through. One of them, a smirk on his face, carries a PPR.

At this time, the PCs may or may not be armed. If they thought to ask Black about weapons in the previous encounter, and pressed him about them, they are armed by now. If they didn't ask, or didn't press the point, they have only whatever weapons (if any) they smuggled through customs.

The two Crassites approach the PCs table, covered by the Gorlons at both exits. Unless the PCs take any action before the Crassites arrive at their table, the first Crassite says in a low voice, "You are all under arrest by order of the Imperial Command

Enforcement. Please come along quietly."

If the PCs do not resist arrest, they are taken to the ICE prison (see Encounter 4). PCs imprisoned here must either escape on their own, or, if the CM feels generous, Commander Malako just may send in an experienced commando team to get them out after several days. The Crassites take Black away separately, supposedly for "private questioning"; they release him as soon as the storm troopers deposit the PCs at the ICE prison.

If the PCs offer resistance, run the combat normally. The other customers in the bar take no action to help either side in the fight. The bartender does not call any other local forces to put down the disturbance. If the PCs are able to fight their way out of the bar, they can escape in their hover car. They will have no further significant encounters until their meeting in the swamp. (Go to Encounter 8.)

Black does not begin any resistance to the arrest. If the PCs offer resistance,

he will fight on their side, using his fists and sensory knife, and attempt to "escape" along with them. Afterward, Black will be extremely apologetic, explaining that he was certain he had "lost" the Crassites who tailed the PCs.

NPC Statistics

Two Crassite ICE Agents

These are both standard Crassite NPCs:

STR	64	DEX	46	AGL	46
WPR	60	PER	40	PCN	72
STA	38	UMS	55	WNDS	12

Skills: Beam Weapons, Vet, 76.

Current STA	Wounds
#1	000000000000
#2	000000000000

Both are armed with hidden laser pistols. They carry short range communicators which put them in touch with ICE headquarters in Rissil City. They are unarmored.

Six Gorlon ICE Storm Troopers

STR	62	DEX	58	AGL	76
WPR	54	PER	32	PCN	50
STA	76	UMS	69	WNDS	15

Skills: Beam Weapons, Vet, 88.

Current STA	Wounds
#1	00000000000000
#2	00000000000000
#3	00000000000000
#4	00000000000000
#5	00000000000000
#6	00000000000000

These Gorgons are all wearing reflector armor. All are armed with laser rifles and laser pistol sidearms. Number 5 has put down his laser rifle and is carrying the PPR meant for the PCs.

Joseph Black

STR	56	DEX	54	AGL	62
WPR	58	PER	52	PCN	70
STA	50	UMS	59	WNDS	13

Skills: Boxing, Rookie, 73; Noetic Defense Mode, Rookie, 79; Spacecraft Piloting, Rookie, 77; Beam Weapons, Vet, 84; Thrown Weapon, knife, Vet, 85.

Current STA	Wounds
	00000000000000

8. THE SWAMPS OF SEPA GREEN

Your hovercars have held up well in this desolate swamp, somewhat better than you have. There's no denying that the parasitical insects of the swamps of Sepa Green are bigger and hungrier than any you've seen elsewhere.

Despite the insect bites, everything seems to be going smoothly. You are nearing the appointed place for your meeting with Black's contact. Maybe soon you can get to the bottom of this mess and on with the rescue mission. . .

The swamp the PCs are traveling over is extremely wet; the water stands in vast stagnant pools varying in depth from one to six feet. Alien varieties of ferns and a few palmlike trees grow both in the water and on outcroppings of mucky land which appear from time to time. The thick vegetation, combined with the murky twilight, limits visibility to about 30 yards.

Black is with the PCs unless they have dumped him some reason. He guides the party unerringly to the location given on the map he handed them earlier.

When they arrive at the proper location, which doesn't seem to be that much different from the rest the endless swamp, Black says he's "going on ahead a little way to make contact." "Stay right here," he warns. "I'd rather not spend the rest of the night trying to find a lost rookie."

With that, Black takes his own hovercar forward until it is out of sight of the PCs. He is, in fact, getting out of the area, because he has led the PCs into a Gorlon ambush.

If Black is not with the party, the ambush begins as soon as the PCs arrive in the location designated on the map Black gave them.

When the ambush begins, read the following to the PCs:

Suddenly, from somewhere very close by, you hear the sound of another hover vehicle. You quickly spot it; an Imperial hover tank is bearing down on you; already its +20 turret laser is aimed in your direction!

As the tank approaches, it opens fire at 30 yards range: maximum visibility. At the same time, five Gorlon ICE storm troopers suddenly emerge from the water on all sides of the PCs' hovercar, and open fire.

The IM Tank cannot be damaged by the PCs' laser pistols. It is subject to one-half normal damage from frag grenades (treat all damage as one-quarter normal until the tank's shields are knocked down, then as one-half normal) and full damage from the PPR the PCs could have obtained in the bar.

The only goal of the Gorlon NPCs is to kill or capture the PCs. They fight until the tank is disabled, at which time they break off the attack and try to flee. If captured, they can offer no useful information to the PCs; they were simply ordered to the spot and told to ambush a party that would arrive at 7:00 pm.

PCs captured in this encounter are taken directly to the ICE prison; see Encounter 4.

Black makes good his escape during the fighting, and returns to Belto's Good Time Lounge to collect his payment for betraying them. PCs who pass a general Perception check can remember hearing his vehicle heading back in the general direction of Rissil City.

If the PCs vehicle is destroyed, they can use the tank; if both vehicles are destroyed, it takes the PCs about six

hours to make it back to the outskirts of Rissil City.

NPC And Vehicle Statistics

IM Tank

Stress Points: 90 **Combat speed:** 6
VCR: 65 **Crew:** 3
Damage:
Stress Points **Damage Boxes**
 +20 turret laser
 Front laser
 Rear laser

Three Gorlon Tank Crewmen

These are standard Gorlon NPCs:

STR	58	DEX	50	AGL	76
WPR	50	PER	32	PCN	48
STA	76	UMS	67	WNDS	15

Skills: Beam Weapons, Rookie, 65.

Current STA	Wounds
#1	0000000000000000
#2	0000000000000000
#3	0000000000000000

The crewmen are unarmored. They carry laser pistol sidearms.

Five Gorlon ICE Storm Troopers

STR	62	DEX	58	AGL	76
WPR	54	PER	32	PCN	50
STA	76	UMS	69	WNDS	15

Skills: Beam Weapons, Vet, 88.

Current STA	Wounds
#1	0000000000000000
#2	0000000000000000
#3	0000000000000000
#4	0000000000000000
#5	0000000000000000

All five Gorlons are wearing reflector armor. Numbers 1 through 4 are armed with laser rifles. Number 5 is armed with a PPR.

9. JUSTICE FOR A TRAITOR

No matter when the PCs arrive back in Rissil City, they can find Black whenever they look for him in Belto's Good Time Lounge. PCs may waste a great deal of time asking around about Black; NPCs who give them a favorable reaction have a 10% chance of having heard about Black, and knowing that the bar is his usual hangout. However, such time may be well spent: a successful Investigation skill check in conversation with any NPC who knows Black's whereabouts can uncover the fact that his wife and daughter are held in the ICE prison. When the PCs go back to the bar, read the following:

Nothing much has changed in this sleazy dive; the same type of folks and the same corrupt atmosphere pervade the place. Black is again seated at a table near the back corner, talking quietly with two Crasites and a Gorlon. All three are wearing standard ICE uniforms. They are unarmored.

Allow the PCs to take whatever actions they desire. None of the NPCs in the bar interfere with them, although if there is a fight, the bartender, a human, requests "a little something for the damages" after the combat is over.

If the PCs take Black alive, and apply threats, he will tell them everything he knows; if they tell him they know about his family, he'll strike a deal for the information: he'll tell them everything he knows, if they help him release his family. Black knows the following:

1. Ashvelt did make contact with the underground on Sepa Green and received an intelligence report from them for delivery to the Alliance.

2. Ashvelt was captured by the ICE just as he was about to leave Sepa Green. He was turned in by Black.

3. Ashvelt was held in the ICE prison in Rissil City until the same time the PCs left their base for Sepa Green. As the PCs were taking off for Sepa Green, Ashvelt was being herded

aboard one of Rissil's cargo ships for a trip to ICE headquarters on Asfalia. The ship also carries a few units of normal trade cargo.

4. The forces with the cargo ship consisted of nine Imperial fighters.

5. The Imperial convoy did not plan to jump straight to Asfalia. To save wear and tear on their vehicles, they planned to make smaller jumps to the two stations between Sepa Green and Asfalia. If the convoy spent enough time in hyperspace, the PCs might still be able to intercept it on the last leg of its journey, just outside the Asfalia system.

6. ICE is still confident they will capture the PCs; they have the PCs' spacecraft under heavy guard in the hangar at the spaceport.

7. Black was at one time a loyal member of the resistance on Sepa Green. He became an Imperial informer and spy when the ICE captured him and gave him a hard choice: either work for them or lose both his own life and the lives of his family. If the PCs can help him release his family, he'll do everything he can to help them—and this time he's telling the truth!

NPC Statistics

Joseph Black

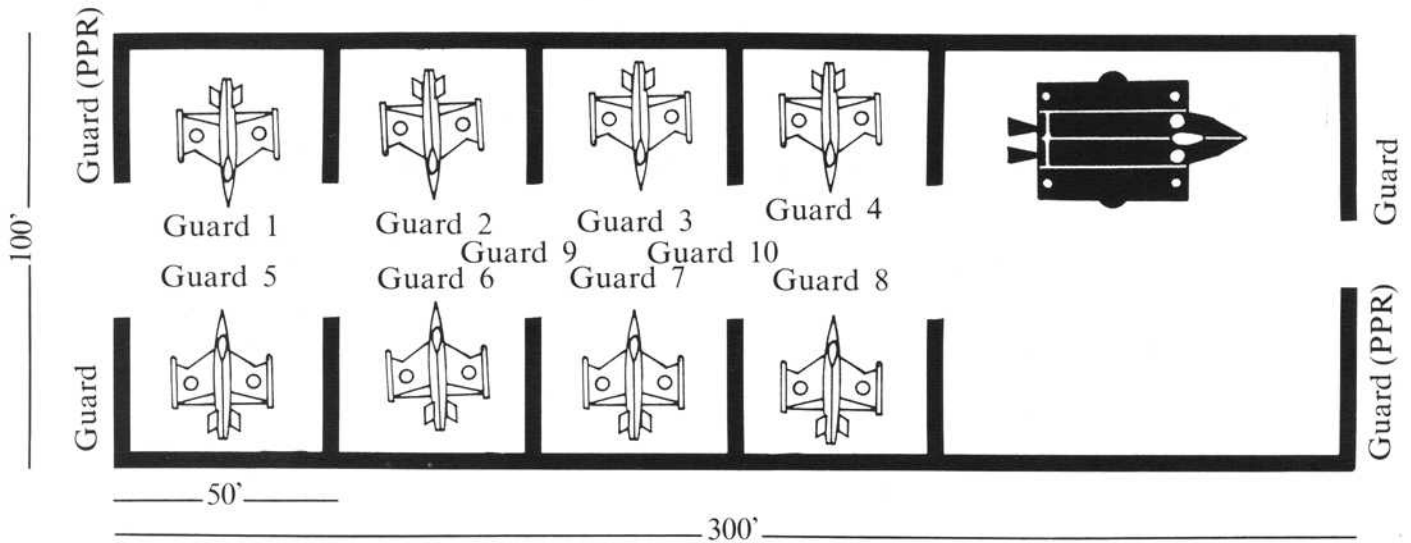
STR	56	DEX	54	AGL	62
WPR	58	PER	52	PCN	70
STA	50	UMS	59	WNDS	13

Skills: Boxing, Rookie, 73; Noetic Defense Mode, Rookie, 79; Spacecraft Piloting, Rookie, 77; Beam Weapons, Vet, 84; Thrown Weapon, knife, Vet, 85.

Current STA	Wounds
	0000000000000000

Black is armed with a sensory knife.

HANGAR



Gorlon ICE Agent

STR 60 DEX 48 AGL 74
 WPR 66 PER 36 PCN 50
 STA 76 UMS 67 WNDS 15

Skills: Beam Weapons, Vet, 78;
 Dagger/Knife, Vet, 97.

Current STA Wounds
 00000000000000

The Gorlon is armed with a concealed laser pistol.

Two Crassite ICE Agents

STR 64 DEX 46 AGL 46
 WPR 60 PER 40 PCN 72
 STA 38 UMS 55 WNDS 12

Skills: Beam Weapons, Vet, 76; Black-jack, Vet, 85.

Current STA Wounds
 1 000000000000
 2 000000000000

The Crassites each carry a concealed laser pistol and a blackjack.

10. THE GETAWAY

Presumably the PCs will want to get some sort of disguise, make their way to hangar where their ships are stored, and make their get-away. When they do this, the spaceport is identical to the way it was before: allow the Imperial troops a general Perception check to see if they notice anything "odd" about any disguised PCs making their way to the hangar area. (If any PC has Disguise skill, use the procedure for detecting that disguise as outlined in Chapter VI of the *Basic Training Manual*.) If the PCs make it to the hangar area, read the following description:

Black told the truth about one thing: the hangar is certainly heavily guarded. Two ICE human guards stand outside each of the two hangar doors. One of each pair has a PPR and the other totes a grenade launcher. The hangar doors are

shut. The control which opens them is a simple button on the wall behind the guard with the PPR.

There are additional guards inside the hangar, in the locations shown on the accompanying sketch map. You may show the map to the players when their characters have made it inside the hangar. Once inside, the PCs will have to fight their way to their ships, throw up their shields (one round), start their engines (another round), and taxi to the nearest runway (12 rounds). From the runway they can take off without hindrance--and without clearance from the spaceport.

The CM should note that any stress damage to the ships has been repaired normally while the ships were in the hangar--this is standard operating procedure at any open spaceport. The PCs will probably be taking off without paying the customary fee for such repairs, however, and their craft will be noted and considered criminal should they land at this port again.

If the PCs have rescued Black's wife and daughter, all three members of the family volunteer to go along, helping the PCs on their mission and flying the cargo vessel docked in the hangar that contains the PCs starfighters. At the moment, all three are unarmed. Use standard Human NPC stats for Black's wife and daughter. Black will fly the craft; his wife and daughter will each man one of the weapons on the craft, leaving a fourth weapon (CM's choice) unmanned.

The PCs will be pursued by nine Imperial fighters, which take off 10 minutes behind them. These craft cannot overtake them, but try to track them through hyperspace unless the PCs take the extreme risk of making their jump from within the system. Use the VCR (60) of the fighters as the base chance that all nine fighters figure out the location to which the PCs are jumping.

NPC Statistics

Four Human ICE Storm Troopers

STR 60 DEX 66 AGL 56
WPR 54 PER 48 PCN 50
STA 56 UMS 58 WNDS 13

Skills: Beam Weapons, Vet, 96; Numbers 1 and 3, Grenade Launcher, Vet, 96; Numbers 2 and 4, Long barreled gun, Vet, 96.

Current STA	Wounds
#1	00000000000000
#2	00000000000000
#3	00000000000000
#4	00000000000000

All four are wearing reflector armor. Numbers 1 and 3 have grenade launchers frag grenades. Numbers 2 and 4 have PPRs. All four have laser pistol sidearms.

Ten Gorlon ICE Storm Troopers (Guards)

STR 62 DEX 58 AGL 76
WPR 54 PER 32 PCN 50
STA 76 UMS 69 WNDS 15

Skills: Beam Weapons, Vet, 88.

Current STA	Wounds
#1	00000000000000
#2	00000000000000
#3	00000000000000
#4	00000000000000
#5	00000000000000
#6	00000000000000
#7	00000000000000
#8	00000000000000
#9	00000000000000
#10	00000000000000

All ten guards wear reflector armor. All are armed with laser rifles and laser pistols.

11. RESCUE ASHVELT

This is the final encounter of the adventure. It takes place only if the PCs arrive just outside the Asfalia system within 120 hours (five full days) of the time they took off from Wilderness. If more than 120 hours have elapsed, Ashvelt has arrived on Asfalia in ICE custody, and there is no easy way the PCs can rescue him--they certainly can't spring him from the major Imperial base in the region without help! If the PCs do make it in time, read the following:

You're in luck! The Imperials must have taken their time at the stations along the way: despite the length of time you've spent on this mission, there they are, popping out of hyperspace, sweet as you please. The Imperial fighters and the cargo ship look a bit worse for wear, too.

Set this encounter up on the battle board, using the appropriate counters. The nine Imperial fighters should be in a loose formation surrounding the cargo ship. They use only straight flight until attacked by the PCs, and do not initiate hostilities themselves; the job of those Imp pilots is to get the cargo ship safely to Asfalia, not go on a dogfighting spree with any Star Team craft they happen to see.

The nine fighters are already damaged from their last hyperspace jump: notice that in the statistics given below they have only 52 stress points

each instead of the normal 60. Similarly, the cargo ship is down to 192 stress points.

To succeed, the PCs must board the cargo ship and overcome its crew and guards while warding off the Imp fighters. They can either capture the cargo ship and take it with them (Ashvelt can pilot any of the PC craft or the transport) or carry Ashvelt home in the emergency rescue bay of one of their fighters.

It is possible the nine Imperial fighters which pursued the PCs from Sepa Green might be present for or show up to join the combat. The CM should use the normal procedure for determining whether or not this group succeeded in determining the PCs destination, then roll separately for stress point damage for each craft, and finally make one roll for time in hyperspace for the group.

Once combat is joined, all the Imp fighters fight to the death. They also radio the Imperial Navy base on Asfalia for aid, although it will take such aid more than 14 hours to arrive at sublight speed. There is a flat 10% chance that an Imperial destroyer from the Navy base is on routine patrol near enough the combat location to arrive in 3d10 rounds. If this ship does arrive, the PCs should be told their scanners have picked up a large combat craft approaching two rounds before the destroyer enters the battle board. The destroyer may enter on any edge of the battle board at the choice of the CM.

NPC Craft And Statistics Nine Imperial Fighters (Escorting Cargo Ship)

Stress Points: 52 **Combat speed:** 9
VCR: 60 **Crew:** 1

Damage:
Stress Points **Damage Boxes**

#1	<input type="checkbox"/> Front laser	<input type="checkbox"/> Rear missile
	<input type="checkbox"/> Drive	<input type="checkbox"/> Control
#2	<input type="checkbox"/> Front laser	<input type="checkbox"/> Rear missile
	<input type="checkbox"/> Drive	<input type="checkbox"/> Control
#3	<input type="checkbox"/> Front laser	<input type="checkbox"/> Rear missile
	<input type="checkbox"/> Drive	<input type="checkbox"/> Control
#4	<input type="checkbox"/> Front laser	<input type="checkbox"/> Rear missile
	<input type="checkbox"/> Drive	<input type="checkbox"/> Control

- #5 Front laser Rear missile
 Drive Control
- #6 Front laser Rear missile
 Drive Control
- #7 Front laser Rear missile
 Drive Control
- #8 Front laser Rear missile
 Drive Control
- #9 Front laser Rear missile
 Drive Control

Cargo Ship

Stress Pts: 192 Combat Speed: 4
VCR: 40 Crew: 4

Damage:
Stress Points Damage Boxes
 Front laser Rear laser
 Drive
 Control

Cargo: 1 c.u. laser pistols, 4 c.u. food-stuffs 2, 1 c.u. fabric plants. All cargo originated on Sepa Green, Tech Level 5.

Cargo Ship Crew
(Four Human Standard NPCs)

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

Skills: Laser Pistol, Vet, 80

Current STA	Wounds
#1	00000000000000
#2	00000000000000
#3	00000000000000
#4	00000000000000

All four wear standard civilian garb and carry laser pistol sidearms.

Four Gorlon ICE Storm Troopers
(Guarding Ashvelt)

STR 62 DEX 58 AGL 76
WPR 54 PER 32 PCN 50
STA 76 UMS 69 WNDS 15

Skills: Beam Weapons, Vet, 88.

Current STA	Wounds
#1	00000000000000
#2	00000000000000
#3	00000000000000
#4	00000000000000

All four wear reflector armor and are armed with laser rifles.

Roger "Wildman" Ashvelt
(Spade/4)

STR 58 DEX 62 AGL 68
WPR 64 PER 70 PCN 52
STA 60 UMS 63 WNDS 14

Skills: Spacecraft Piloting, Rookie, 91; All Firearms Skills, Rookie, 92; All Beam Weapons Skills, Rookie, 92; Sword, Rookie, 93; Deep Space Navigation, Rookie, 67; Bargaining, Rookie, 82.

Current Stamina:
Wounds: 00000000000000

Ashvelt is held in standard handcuffs. He has no life support suit.

Nine Imperial Fighters
(Pursuing from Sepa Green)

Stress Pts: 60 Combat speed: 9
VCR: 60 Crew: 1
Damage:
Stress Points Damage Boxes

- #1 Front laser Rear missile
 Drive Control
- #2 Front laser Rear missile
 Drive Control
- #3 Front laser Rear missile
 Drive Control
- #4 Front laser Rear missile
 Drive Control
- #5 Front laser Rear missile
 Drive Control
- #6 Front laser Rear missile
 Drive Control
- #7 Front laser Rear missile
 Drive Control
- #8 Front laser Rear missile
 Drive Control
- #9 Front laser Rear missile
 Drive Control

Imperial Destroyer
(10% Chance of Appearance)

Stress Pts: 500 Combat Speed: 6
VCR: 70 Crew: 150
Damage:
Stress Points:

Damage Boxes:

Front: +20 laser +20 laser
Front/side: +30 laser
Rear/side: +30 laser
Right side: laser laser
 +10 laser +10 laser

missile launcher
 missile launcher
Left side: laser laser
 +10 laser +10 laser
 missile launcher
 missile launcher

Rear: +20 laser +20 laser

Drive:
Control:
Crew:

Two Imperial Fighters
(Carried on Destroyer)

Stress Pts: 60 Combat speed: 9
VCR: 60 Crew: 1

Damage:
Stress Points
Damage Boxes:

- #1 Front laser Rear missile
 Drive Control
- #2 Front laser Rear missile
 Drive Control

12. WRAPPING UP

After the final encounter, the PCs will doubtless head for home, perhaps with Ashvelt, possibly even with the cargo ship as well. Black and his family will want to return to Marauders' Landing: after all, it would be death for them to return to Sepa Green. The CM should remember to roll for stress point damage for the PC (and NPC) ships making the jump to Wilderness.

Once the PCs are safely back at Marauders' Landing, it is time to add up their kills. The CM should go over his record of kills achieved during the entire mission, taking the point values from Chapter III of the *Star Team Basic Training Manual*. All points for kills should be evenly divided among the surviving PCs.

In addition to all other rewards for this mission, Commander Malako shows his gratitude for a job well done by granting each PC up to 20 chips worth of equipment of the PC's choice from Malako's own private stores.