

STAR WARS

Strike Force: Shantipole

An Adventure for use with *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game*

PLUS
Star Warriors
SCENARIO



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In an embattled asteroid field, Rebel heroes desperately struggle to save Commander Ackbar and keep his secret project from falling into Imperial hands.

STAR WARS®

Strike Force: Shantipole

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Introduction

Welcome to another *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game* adventure. If you want to be a player in this adventure you should stop reading now. This book contains information for the gamemaster (GM) only. Players who read ahead spoil the adventure for themselves and others.

In This Adventure...

... a group of Rebels must rescue a high-ranking Alliance officer and his secret project from an embattled asteroid field. Hidden in the Roche Asteroid Field, home of the alien Verpine, lies a secret Rebel base. Here Commander Ackbar* oversees the construction of a new starfighter — the two-man B-wing. As the adventure opens, the project is near completion and Alliance Command has sent Rebel heroes to retrieve Ackbar and the prototype B-wings. The Empire knows of their activity, though, and has plans of its own for this new starfighter.

Can the Rebels rescue Ackbar, his team, the peaceful Verpine and the prototype starfighters from the attacking Imperial forces, then escort them out of the asteroid field without falling to the terrifying power of an Imperial fleet? These are the challenges of *Strike Force: Shantipole*.

Running a *Star Wars* Adventure

Alien beings wander to and fro, TIE fighters scream overhead, blaster bolts whiz by — this is *Star Wars*, a universe full of action and excitement. To capture this feeling while roleplaying, the gamemaster must be familiar with the adventure material. No one has any fun when undramatic pauses invade a crucial scene.

"Two TIE fighters come screaming in on your port side," explains the gamemaster dramatically. "Umm, just let me read for a couple of minutes to see what they do next. . ."

So much for maintaining the tension of the moment. Being unprepared spoils the fun and ruins the excitement of playing in the *Star Wars* galaxy.

If you've only run a few *Star Wars* adventures, here are some hints on how to handle *Strike Force: Shantipole*. First, read through the adventure completely to familiarize yourself with the characters and the storyline. Next, before you begin play, go over the first two episodes carefully. In a typical evening of *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game* it'll take your players a full session (two to three hours) to go through two episodes (although you can stop whenever you feel they've done enough for one evening). Once your players finish these episodes, stop play.

As a suggestion, stop during some bit of action. This creates a "cliff-hanger" ending that will leave your players eagerly awaiting the next session. Before resuming play, read through the next two episodes. And so on. Being prepared assures that you and your players will get the most out of every session of play.

* This adventure portrays Ackbar prior to his promotion to Admiral. For additional information about Ackbar, see page 76 of *The Star Wars Sourcebook*.

Preparing to Play

If this is your first *Star Wars* adventure then you'll need to spend a few minutes helping your players select and customize their character templates. Several space battles occur in *Strike Force: Shantipole*, so having a couple of characters skilled in piloting or gunnery is highly recommended. Next, give each new character 1,000 credits for purchasing equipment. In addition to purchased equipment, the Alliance provides the player characters (PCs) with a modified light freighter, named *Out Runner*, at the start of the adventure. If the PCs have their own ship, let them use it instead of the Alliance light freighter.

If your players already have characters, feel free to let them use them. Remember though, a group of Rebels without a skilled pilot or gunner will be at a distinct disadvantage.

Adventure Materials

Let's take a moment now to go over the components found in *Strike Force: Shantipole*. In addition to the adventure booklet, you'll find:

- *Star Wars Rules Upgrade*. This four-page folder contains important additions and clarifications for *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game*. We strongly suggest using the rules upgrade when running this adventure.
- *The Pullout Section*. The four-page pullout section includes the script that starts the adventure, the maps of Ackbar's Command Base and Research Station Shantipole's hangar bay, the key to the full-color map, and non-player character (NPC) templates.
- *The Full-Color Map*. This map details the interior of Research Station Shantipole. The text tells you when to display it for your players.
- *Additional Materials*. Other items needed to play this adventure include *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game* hardcover book, pencils, paper and lots of six-sided dice. *The Star Wars Sourcebook*, *The Star Wars Campaign Pack* (which includes a gamemaster screen), *Star Wars Miniatures Sets*, and the *Star Warriors* starfighter combat game are also useful, but not necessary for play.

Difficulty Numbers and Game Balance

As GM, you must modify this adventure to fit your particular group of players using the *Difficulty Number Scale* found in the rules upgrade.

For example, if the text says that PCs need to make an Easy *Dexterity* roll to accomplish a given task, turn to the "Difficulty Number Scale" in the rules upgrade and assign a number between 6 and 10, depending on the level of skill of your PCs.

Attributes are capitalized and italicized, skills are only italicized.

In addition, the number and template types of PCs in your group affects the outcome of each encounter. This

adventure is designed for six beginning player characters with a good mix of skills. If you have fewer PCs, you may need to scale down the encounters accordingly.

Adventure Background

The months after the victory at Yavin were a time of great hope for the Rebellion. Following the Death Star's destruction, volunteers and recruits from across the galaxy poured in to swell the Alliance's ranks. Among those recruits were Rebel pilots, who found lumbering Imperial convoys easy pickings for their speedy starfighters. Manpower and supplies were on the rise, and it seemed that the dark days would soon be over.

But all that changed when the Imperial fleet began to relentlessly hunt for the hidden Rebel base. To make matters worse, the Empire added a new vessel to its supply convoys — the powerful Nebulon-B Frigate.

At 194 million standard credits, the Nebulon-B costs less than one twentieth of the price of an Imperial Star Destroyer. With its 24 laser batteries, two TIE fighter squadrons and heavy shielding, the Nebulon-B is more than a match for the lightly-armed Rebel raiders. Since the vessel's introduction, damage to raiding parties has climbed so dramatically that Alliance High Command has discontinued all attacks on Imperial convoys. Supply problems grow critical as the Rebellion slowly strangles into submission.

The Alliance has one hope to counter the deadly escort frigate. Everything depends on a daring plan proposed by a Mon Calamarian named Ackbar. Ackbar learned of the Nebulon-B while he was Grand Moff Tarkin's personal servant/slave. From what he saw of the vessel's overall design, Ackbar determined that only an equally powerful capital ship (of which the Alliance has precious few) or specially equipped starfighters could hope to stand against the escort frigate in combat. It was the decision of High Command to develop a new starfighter to handle this problem. And so, before the wreckage of the first failed convoy raid cooled, Ackbar traveled to Roche system to seek the aid of a renowned race of shipbuilders — the Verpine.

Using Ackbar's vision and their own design skills, the insectoid Verpine began creating a technical work of art — the B-wing starfighter. This heavy starfighter, capable of closing with an Imperial frigate and disabling its TIE bays and hyperdrives, was to be the latest accomplishment of the Slayn and Korpil hives. Soon, without effective escorts, the cargo transports would once again become easy targets.

Under Ackbar and his team of Alliance engineers, the Verpine have completed prototypes of the two-man B-wing starfighter. The two-man B-wing employs a unique firing compartment which allows the gunner to fire from a stable platform while the ship conducts evasive maneuvers. This results in a starfighter with significantly enhanced fire control. In addition, the new B-wing carries more shielding and more firepower than any other Rebel or Imperial starfighter in production.

Recent Events

The Empire: Unknown to the Alliance, a member of Ackbar's design team is an Imperial spy. Salin Glek, Ackbar's lieutenant, keeps District Commander Bane Nothos apprised of the B-wing's progress. Nothos could have crushed the Rebel project long ago, but instead elected to wait until the starfighter prototypes were completed before capturing them for the Empire. While somewhat risky, the district commander hopes this plan will lead to a promotion upon its successful completion.

Three days ago, Nothos received the signal from Glek indicating that the time to move was almost upon them. Since then, Nothos has pulled escort craft out of his district's convoys to form a strike fleet. He has also deployed long range TIE recon-fighters to patrol the outer perimeter of the asteroid field. He now waits for Glek's final signal. But just in case the spy fails, Nothos has ordered the strike fleet to prepare to blockade the entire Roche system. Even now they are moving into position.

The Alliance: Ackbar and a team of Alliance engineers have been working with the Verpine to upgrade the original B-wing design to fit the Rebellion's current need. Two prototype two-man B-wings have been completed and await shipping to the Rebel fleet. Once there, construction of new B-wings will begin in earnest. Unfortunately, the Verpine's pacifistic nature keeps them from openly joining the Rebellion. As a result, the task of replicating the B-wings will fall on Rebel engineers who, though on hand throughout the design process, are hard pressed to match the Verpine's natural talent for ship construction.

Not surprisingly, Ackbar's second assignment is to convince the Verpine to join the Rebellion. The Verpine empathize strongly with the noble Ackbar, a Calamarian pacifist turned warrior, but remain reluctant to commit to such a warlike course.

Now a group of Rebels are on their way to pick up Ackbar, his team, and the prototypes. They should arrive just prior to the Imperial strike fleet. . .

E

pisode One Into Roche Asteroid Field

Summary

The adventure opens with the Rebel PCs approaching the Roche Asteroid Field in *Out Runner*, a modified light freighter. They have orders to deliver a sealed and coded holo-disk to Commander Ackbar, leader of the Alliance asteroid base. As they near the field, three TIE fighters jump them. The Rebels must dispatch the TIEs before continuing on to Ackbar's base. When they arrive they learn of the new B-wing and meet Ackbar, the Verpine, and the traitorous Salin Glek.

On the holo-disk, Mon Mothma, commander of the Alliance, orders the PCs to escort Ackbar and the prototype B-wings to a Rebel rendezvous point in the Pothor system.

Start the Adventure

Hand your players a copy of the script from the pullout section and assign each player a part. The parts are labeled "1st Rebel," "2nd Rebel," and so forth. If you have six players, each player reads one part. If you have fewer than six, assign additional parts as necessary.

Read the section below out loud, then let your players begin the script.

Read Aloud

A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away. . .

These are dark days for the Alliance. Using the new Nebulon-B escort frigate and its mighty armaments, the Empire has virtually ended all raids on cargo convoys. Without the spoils from Imperial convoys, Rebel supplies have become dangerously low. This could spell the end of the Rebellion.

But all is not lost. On a remote base in the Roche Asteroid Field, Commander Ackbar and his team desperately work to complete a new starfighter capable of neutralizing the Nebulon-B.

Even now a team of brave Rebels approach the asteroid field, under orders to pick up Ackbar, his team, and the starfighter prototypes and return them safely to Alliance High Command. If they fail, the struggle for freedom may indeed be over. . .

Point to the player assigned the part of "1st Rebel." He or she starts reading the script aloud. When the script is finished, pick up the action with "The TIE Patrol" below.

The TIE Patrol

When the players finish the script, read the following passage out loud.

Three TIE fighters bank right, screaming toward you in tight formation. Your sensors indicate a high concentration of energy at the TIEs' weapon ports, just before blaster bolts lance across your ship's bow.

The TIEs, part of Nothos's advance patrol, have orders to stop all craft traveling to and from Roche. PCs making a Moderate *technology* roll identify these as TIE/rc starfighters. They know that these craft are quick and maneuverable but lightly armed. TIE/rcs can operate over longer distances than their combat equivalents, making them perfect for reconnaissance missions.

The TIEs fire warning blasts across the freighter's bow, then broadcast instructions ordering the ship to follow them. The TIEs want *Out Runner* to accompany them to their command frigate on the outer edge of the system.

If the PCs submit to these orders, turn to "Captured!" If the PCs decide to fight, refer to either "RPG Starship Combat" or "*Star Warriors* Combat" depending on whether you're using the roleplaying Starship combat rules or the *Star Warriors* boardgame. As the battle nears its conclusion, turn to "Finishing Off the TIE Patrol."

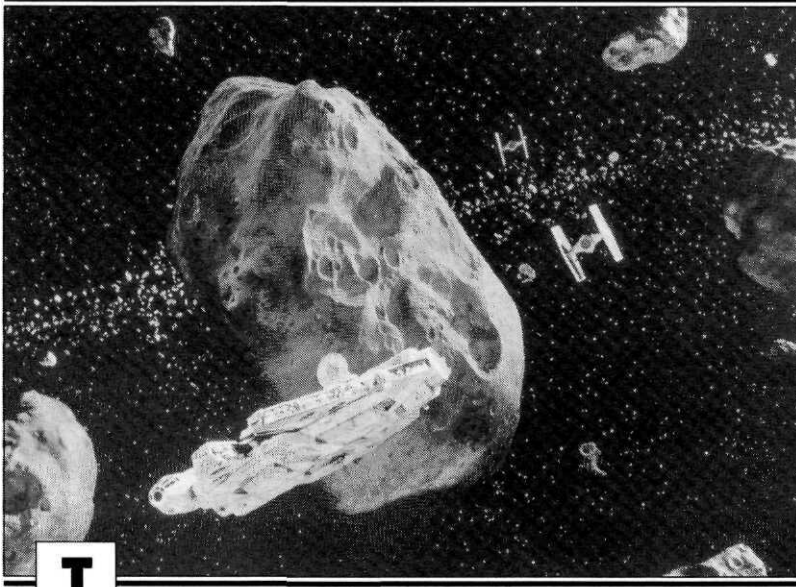
RPG Starship Combat

The Rebel ship begins the battle at medium range with the TIEs and at one greater than long range with the asteroid field. The Rebels can attempt to escape into the asteroids or close with the TIEs. If they opt to ignore the TIEs, the Imperial ships chase them. It takes four rounds to enter the field: one to close to long range, one to reach medium range, one to reach short range, and one to enter. The TIEs continue their pursuit into the asteroid field.

Inside the asteroid field, all ship pilots must make a Moderate *Starship piloting* roll every round (as one of their actions) to avoid slamming into an asteroid. Any ship that fails hits an asteroid and rolls for damage (asteroids do 3D damage).

When attacking, the TIEs try to get as close as possible. They use all available combat options — speed, gunnery, combined fire, and evasion.

Once two of the three TIEs are destroyed, the remaining TIE attempts to retreat back to its command frigate. Two successful rolls to avoid asteroids, in two successive rounds,



T

he battle rages through a deadly asteroid field

are required to escape the asteroid field. If the PCs follow the TIE, they must make the rolls as well. Once in clear space, the TIE attempts to increase its range to one greater than long range. If it succeeds, it reaches the escort frigate. The PCs can continue to close, but will see the large vessel in the distance. If they move closer, they are caught in the ship's tractor beams. Go to "Captured!"

Rebel Modified Light Freighter*: Hyperdrive multiplier x2. Sublight speed 2D; maneuverability 0D; hull 4D. Weapons: Two laser cannons (fire independently); fire control 2D; damage 4D. Shields: 1D.

TIE/rc Starfighter: Hyperdrive multiplier: zero. Sublight speed 5D; maneuverability 2D+2; hull 2D. Weapons: One laser cannon; fire control 2D; damage 2D+2. Shields: none.

Starship piloting 4D+2; Starship gunnery 4D+2.

Star Warriors Combat

To fight this battle using the *Star Warriors* system, apply glue or rubber cement to the unprinted side of the provided counter strip, then fold the strip in half. You now have two-sided counters. Cut along all solid lines to separate each counter. For this battle you'll need three TIE/rcs and the *Out Runner* counter.

All three TIE pilots have 4D+2 piloting and 4D+2 gunnery.

* These statistics are for *Out Runner*, the freighter supplied by the Alliance. If the PCs fly their own ship, use its stats instead.

Required Rules: Use the Standard Game, Pivot Gun (14.4), and Asteroid (24) rules with the following modifications.

- Use only 12 regular asteroid counters and 18 irregulars.
- Asteroids move the following number of hexes, according to the die roll. Roll of 1 or 2, asteroids move one hex; roll of 3 or 4, asteroids move two hexes; roll of 5 or 6, asteroids move three hexes.

Set-Up: Place TIE/rc *1 in hex 1023 facing hex 1123, TIE/rc *2 in hex 1024 facing hex 1124, and TIE/rc *3 in hex 1025 facing hex 1125. Place *Out Runner* in hex 2640 facing any direction the players want. Place the asteroids on the top half of the board, between hex rows xx01 and xx21.

Game End: The game is over when either the PCs surrender or are destroyed, all three TIEs are destroyed, or one TIE escapes off the far end of the map. If the PCs surrender or follow the TIE, turn to "Captured!"

Special Rules: The following special rules are used when playing this scenario. It is played with a static map.

- Asteroids dumped off the map by the move are reset anywhere between hex rows xx01 and xx21, as per normal asteroid set-up rules, but not within three hexes of any ships.
- The freighter's two pivot guns have a limited field of fire. One can fire only into the Forward Left and Rear Left arcs, the other can fire only into the Forward Right and Rear Right arcs.

TIE/rc STAR WARRIORS STATISTICS

Ship Type:	TIE/rc Starfighter	Slip:	3
Pilot's Guns:	SLF	Roll:	3
Gunners		Jink:	3
Wpns:	—	Bank:	2
Body:	3/2	Overturn:	7
Speed Max:	7	Overspeed:	4
Turn No's:		Accelerate:	2
1	1/1	Over Accel.:	6
2	2/1	Decelerate:	3
3	3/2	Over Decel.:	9
4	3/2	Damage Ctrl:	8
5	4/3	Pinpoint Fire:	6
6	5/4	Snap Fire:	4
7	5/5	Targeting:	4
8	(6)/(5)	Angle Shields:	—
9	(6)/(6)	No. of Shields:	—
Stabilizer No.:	4	No. of Aux. Fbw:	3
1/2-Loop:	4	R2 Unit?	No

OUT RUNNER STAR WARRIORS STATISTICS

Ship Type:	<i>Out Runner</i>	Jink:	6
Pilot's Guns:	DMF	Bank:	5
Gunner's Wpns:	DLPx2	Overturn:	1
Body:	16/13	Overspeed:	6
SpeedMax:	4	Accelerate:	3
Turn No's:		Over Accel.:	1
1	1/1	Decelerate:	3
2	2/2	Over Decel.:	9
3	3/2	Damage Ctrl:	6
4	4/3	Pinpoint Fire:	5
5	(5)/(4)	Snap Fire:	5
6	(6)/(5)	Targeting:	6
Stabilizer No.:	4	Angle Shields:	4
1/2-Loop:	6	No. of Shields:	6
Slip:	4	No. of Aux. Row:	3
Roll:	6	R2 Unit?	No

Captured!

If the PCs surrender or are disabled by the TIEs, improvise the following scenes.

The TIEs lead the Rebels back to their waiting command frigate on the edge of the system. Once close enough, the frigate engages its tractor beams and reels the PCs' freighter in. Inside the docking bay, stormtroopers swarm aboard the freighter in search of contraband. If the PCs haven't hidden the holo-disk, the stormtroopers find it. If someone did hide it, that person makes an opposed *hide/sneak* roll against a stormtrooper's *search* (skill of 2D). If the PC rolls higher, the stormtroopers don't find the disk.

As the stormtroopers search the ship, an Imperial officer questions the Rebels. He demands to know their business in this sector. If the PCs surrendered without a fight, let any reasonable story they make up satisfy the officer. If they put up a fight, they need to come up with a very good cover story and make a Difficult *con* roll. Once they convince the officer of their innocence, he gives them a warning and lets them go about their business. Continue with the adventure.

A weak cover story, a failed *con* roll, belligerent PCs, or discovery of the holo-disk puts the Rebels in jeopardy. While the Imperials attempt to break the disk's coding, the PCs are placed in the ship's detention block. You will have to improvise an escape attempt, or simply inform the players that they failed this mission. Let them create new characters and try again.

Finishing Off the TIE Patrol

As the PCs prepare to take out the last TIE/rc, read the following passage aloud:

The final TIE darts away from your ship, trying to use its speed to full advantage. Your gunner has it in his sights, but it's quickly moving out of range.

The targeting arrows line up, a gentle squeeze of the trigger, and the TIE fighter disappears in a colorful fireball. Sparkling fragments fly by, fading into the silence of space.

Once the TIEs are defeated, the PCs can continue into the asteroid field and on to the Rebel base. Their ship is equipped with a receiver that will lead them to a homing device broadcasting from the base.

Even if the PCs were able to stop the TIEs before contact was made with their command ship, it won't be long before the Imperials arrive in full force. Already, Nothos's fleet is moving in and soon the asteroid field will be surrounded.

Roche Asteroid Field

The Roche Asteroid Field is a cluster of rocks, varying in size from tiny meteorites to large planetoids, circling a small yellow sun.

This extremely old field, located in the Roche system, appears rather orderly for a whirling storm of space debris. Its asteroids travel almost predictable elliptical paths around the system's star.

Of course, within an asteroid field, "almost predictable" still means trouble for visiting ships. Pilots must constantly be on guard against impacting asteroids that suddenly bounce into the path of their vessel, hull-piercing micrometeorites, and dense areas with no room to maneuver. And in an asteroid field, engine failure results in certain death.

A patient pilot can pick his way through the Roche field to the Rebel base by making four *Easy starship piloting* rolls. Pilots hurrying through the field, or those trying to navigate while engaged in combat, must make five *Moderate starship piloting* rolls to reach the base. Each failed roll results in a collision with an asteroid. Asteroids do 3D damage.

Mynocks and space slugs inhabit the Roche field. The field is also home to the Verpine, a race of insectoid bipeds with a natural talent for ship building and other technological pursuits. These aliens, allies of the Alliance, live within the honeycombed interiors of the larger asteroids.

Two Verpine asteroids have been modified to handle the Rebel project. The Rebel Command Base houses Ackbar and his staff of Alliance engineers. They oversee the project from here. But the actual testing and construction take place at Research Station Shantipole, a large asteroid deep in the heart of the field.

Ackbar's Command Base

Ackbar's Rebel Command Base is a strange cross between a high-tech community and a cave. Control panels and other machinery, built into stone walls, jut out from the most unexpected places. Corridors and ceilings have no uniform width or height, and subdued track lighting illuminates the entire base complex.

About 50 Verpine and a half-dozen Rebels live and work on the Command Base, coordinating the activity of the other asteroid colonies involved in the two-man B-wing project. All design and construction takes place on the larger asteroid, Research Station Shantipole, but other asteroids are needed for supplies and communications.

Once the PCs have navigated *Out Runner* through the asteroid belt by making the required number of *starship piloting* rolls, they come upon an hourglass-shaped asteroid. The signal beacon they follow originates here,

from deep within the Rebel Command Base.

Read out loud:

You have followed the signal beacon to an hourglass-shaped asteroid. Points of light penetrate the asteroid's outer crust, highlighting air vents and repulsor-beam projectors. As your ship circles the spinning chunk of rock, you notice an opening in the asteroid's side. It appears to be a hangar bay, and several figures can be seen moving about within its lighted interior. As you approach, your com unit crackles to life. "Freighter, identify yourself immediately and state your business."

If the Rebels give the codeword mentioned in the script and then identify themselves honestly, they receive clearance to land. If they don't supply the codeword but identify themselves as Rebels, they receive clearance but are met by an armed party when they land.

Verpine

Strike Force: Shantipole introduces Verpine, a new alien race, to *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game*. A brief outline of their culture follows. Have each player make an *alien races* roll to see exactly how much his player character knows about the Verpine. A PC knows the information available at the level rolled, as well as all information available at lower levels. For example, a PC who rolls a 16 to 20 knows Difficult information, as well as Moderate and Easy information.

Don't feel obligated to give your players all of the information listed below. Let them find out some things by themselves as they interact with the Verpine.

Easy Information (roll of 6-10): Ver-whats? Can you spell that?

Moderate Information (roll of 11-15): The Verpine are a bizarre race of highly-advanced insectoids who live inside asteroids in the Roche system. Obviously the Verpine didn't evolve on the near-airless asteroids, but their exact origin is unknown. Some believe they came from another galaxy; others that the Verpine world slowly disintegrated around them over the course of thousands of years, leaving only the asteroid field as evidence that a planet once orbited Roche. A third theory is that the Verpine destroyed their own world in a catastrophic civil war and that they now live on its remains. It is further speculated that the memory of this war forms the basis for their present-day commitment to pacifism.

Difficult Information (roll of 16-20): Verpine are highly-advanced technologically, displaying an almost child-like sense of wonder when dealing with new machinery. Each of their larger asteroids is a self-sufficient colony capable of producing energy, food, and atmosphere. Most colony asteroids contain 20 to 100 inhabitants, but rumors persist that colonies near the heart of the field house up to 1,000 individuals.

Verpine colonies use focused repulsor beams to avoid collisions with other asteroids. When two asteroids do come in contact, each encounters the other's repulsor-field shell and ricochets harmlessly away.

The Verpine are brilliant ship designers, and while not active participants in the Rebellion, the Verpine openly sympathize with the Alliance's cause and have produced some ships for them, including the original B-wing starfighter. The single-seater B-wing was designed jointly by the Verpine engineers from the Slayn and Korpil colonies.

Very Difficult Information (roll of 21 to 30): There are two major forms of Verpine — the hermaphroditic dominant form and the sterile worker clone. The clone form is of no importance, since it is barely sentient and totally subservient to the dominant form. The dominant form is known to most galactics and is extremely social by nature.

All Verpine belong to one hive and share a form of limited communal consciousness. This allows the Verpine to arrive at basic policy decisions simultaneously. The Verpine have no government, but because of their telepathic natures any individual can speak for the hive with complete authority.

If the civil war theory is correct, then another hive must have existed at one time and may still exist somewhere. Verpine, while normally happy to discuss any matter, are peculiarly close-mouthed on this subject.

These statistics describe an average Verpine in Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game. To create a player-character Verpine, add a total of 6D to the given statistics.

DEXTERITY: 1D+1	PERCEPTION: 1D+1
KNOWLEDGE: 2D+1	STRENGTH: 1D+1
MECHANICAL: 2D+2	TECHNICAL: 3D

Because of the hangar's small size and the rapid rotation of the asteroid, landing is tricky. The pilot must make a Moderate *starship piloting* roll to dock smoothly. If the roll isn't made, explain how the freighter slams into the side of the hangar on its way in. While only minor damage occurs, such as scraped paint and small dents, this blunder should prove quite embarrassing for the Rebel heroes as the adventure progresses. Have Ackbar, his engineers, and the Verpine comment about the accident throughout the adventure, especially whenever the need arises for piloting skills.

A successful roll means the freighter lands smoothly. A voice over the com unit announces, "Nice flying, freighter pilot. Park her anywhere. Feel free to stretch your legs. An escort will arrive momentarily."

Once the Rebels debark, read the following:

The small hangar bay appears functional and efficient. A control tower juts out over the hangar deck. Apparently carved and hollowed out of the natural rock, the bay barely holds your ship. While the ceiling rises high overhead, the walls remain uncomfortably close. A mixture of instrument panels, cooling veins, and patches of natural reddish-brown stone cover the bay walls. A wide stone passage leads out of the chamber. As you emerge from your craft, you are greeted by an excited squeak. Three tall insectoids which you figure must be Verpine scurry out of the passage toward you.

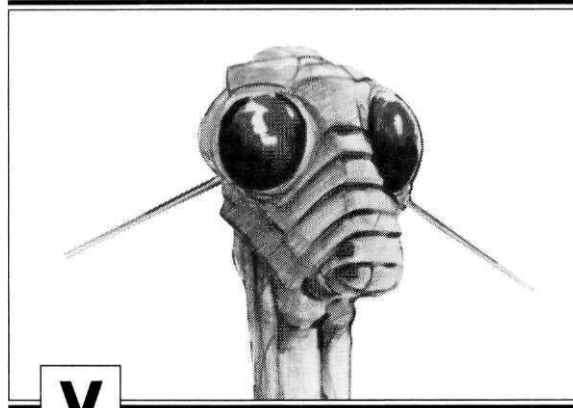
While light freighters are common in most parts of the galaxy, these Verpine have never seen one. The lead Verpine, Suskafoo, has read extensively concerning alien culture and behavior. However, Ackbar's team was the first non-Verpines he had ever met. His use of Galactic Basic is almost unaccented, though in excited states he lapses into the garbled sentence patterns common among Verpine speakers. For more information on Suskafoo, refer to his character template in the pullout section.

The other two Verpine are junior engineers, both assigned to the Shantipole project. All three barrage the PCs with questions concerning the design theory behind their ship's engines and configuration.

Use this period to introduce your players to Verpine ways. Essentially, the Verpine are a very likable race of beings who are fascinated by technology. Suskafoo, a student of galactic culture, tries to restrain himself somewhat, but the younger Verpine have no such inclinations and rattle on and on. PCs who let them out of their sight later find the young engineers poised over an open hatch, chattering excitedly as they streamline *Out Runner's* power system by throwing out all the useless wires. If stopped, it will be up to the PCs to repair the damage (a Moderate *starship repair* roll). If left to finish what they started, the young Verpine actually improve the ship. Increase its sublight speed by 1D.

Suskafoo freely tells the PCs about the two-man B-wing project and discusses its problems with them. Verpine, being of one hive and sharing a communal consciousness, cannot even conceive of lying. Suskafoo readily discusses Project Shantipole with members of the "friendly Rebel hive."

Suskafoo answers any reasonable questions concerning the lifestyle and culture of the Verpine. He is very interested in the Force and questions Rebels with Force skills at length.



Verpine like Suskafoo help the "friendly Rebel hive" anyway they can.

Keep up this interaction for a few minutes until the PCs become familiar with the Verpine, then move on to their meeting with the traitorous Salin Glek.

Meeting Salin Glek

After a few minutes with Suskafoo and his assistants, the Rebels meet Ackbar's chief aid, the Quarren named Salin Glek. If the PCs failed to give the codeword when they were asked to identify themselves on the approach to the base, Glek will have two armed human engineers at his side. Otherwise, he is alone. Read:

Another figure, dressed in a simple brown tunic and matching cape, emerges from the corridor. The figure's head resembles a four-tentacled squid. He focuses his attention on Suskafoo and utters three sharp sounds. Suskafoo chirps an angry reply, waves his antennae at you, and quickly exits the chamber. His two companions mimic the farewell and follow behind him.

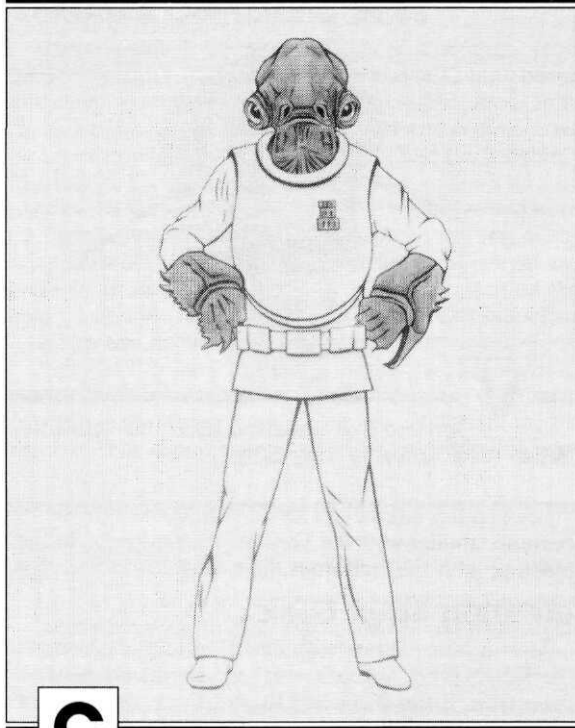
The alien watches the Verpine disappear down the corridor, then turns to you. "Greetings, I am Lieutenant Salin Glek, aide to Commander Ackbar," he says in halting Basic. "I trust you have a prime reason for jeopardizing the security of this base?"

If the armed engineers are with Glek, they level their blasters at the PCs. If not, Glek simply stares accusingly at them, daring them to respond.

It's not exactly the kind of greeting the Rebels hoped for after jumping halfway across the galaxy, fighting off TIE fighters, and flying through an asteroid belt, right? Fine, that's what you want. Not only should this greeting make them nervous, it should also make them dislike Salin Glek. For more information on Glek, refer to his character template in the pullout section.

Glek does his best to get rid of the PCs. First, he inquires as to the purpose of their visit. He suggests that they allow him to take any messages they have to Ackbar personally, as the commander is extremely busy at this time. If the Rebels mention the holo-disk, Glek's tentacles wiggle excitedly and he demands that they turn it over immediately. He orders them to comply, suggesting they complete their mission quickly and be on their way in case their ship was tracked.

If the Rebels hand over the disk, see "Giving Glek the Disk."



Commander Ackbar, leader of the Shantipole Project.

If the Rebels refuse, Glek becomes angry, hissing and screaming at them in a strange combination of Basic and Quarren. Glek raves at PCs as he tries to intimidate them, but he ceases when a scar-faced human appears in the corridor opening. The human, named Pollard, looks like a pirate, but he's actually another one of Ackbar's lieutenants (see his template in the pullout section). Pollard demands to know what's going on. Once he finds out, he calls Ackbar, notifies him of the PCs' arrival, and escorts the Rebels to the command center.

In the Command Center

If the PCs agree to accompany Pollard to meet Commander Ackbar, the lieutenant escorts them and Glek through winding tunnels without answering any questions. He says that Ackbar will explain everything. When the Rebels reach the command center, read the following:

Pollard leads you into a large circular chamber. Glek follows along, quiet and sullen. The walls of the room are covered with monitors and control panels. A holo-projector tank fills the floor space on the far side of the chamber.

Across the room, hunched intently over a display terminal, are Suskafoo, the two young Verpine, and a Mon Calamari. Pollard leads you toward them, then stops and announces, "Commander Ackbar. These are the messengers."

The Mon Calamari turns and says, "Welcome to our base. I understand that you've traveled a great distance to see me. I trust your journey was an uneventful one?"

If the Rebels tell Ackbar about the TIE recon fighters, he expresses considerable concern about their presence so near the base. Glek adds a biting comment about how the PCs' ship was probably tracked here. Pollard remains silent.

Next, it's up to the PCs to give Ackbar the holo-disk. When they do, read the following:

Ackbar leads you over to a holo-projector presently displaying the Roche Asteroid Field. "Let's see what you've brought, my friends," says the Mon Calamari. He inserts the disk into the machine. The field disappears, replaced by a woman in a flowing white gown. She is Mon Mothma, Supreme Commander of the Alliance. The holo-image speaks.

"Greetings, old friend," says Mon Mothma warmly. "As you predicted, the Nebulon-B escort frigate has put an end to our supply raids. Your report that the Shantipole Project nears completion could not have come at a better time.

"The rest of this message is for your eyes only, Commander Ackbar, and for the agents who delivered it to you. Please pause the holo-disk until all other personnel have left the area."

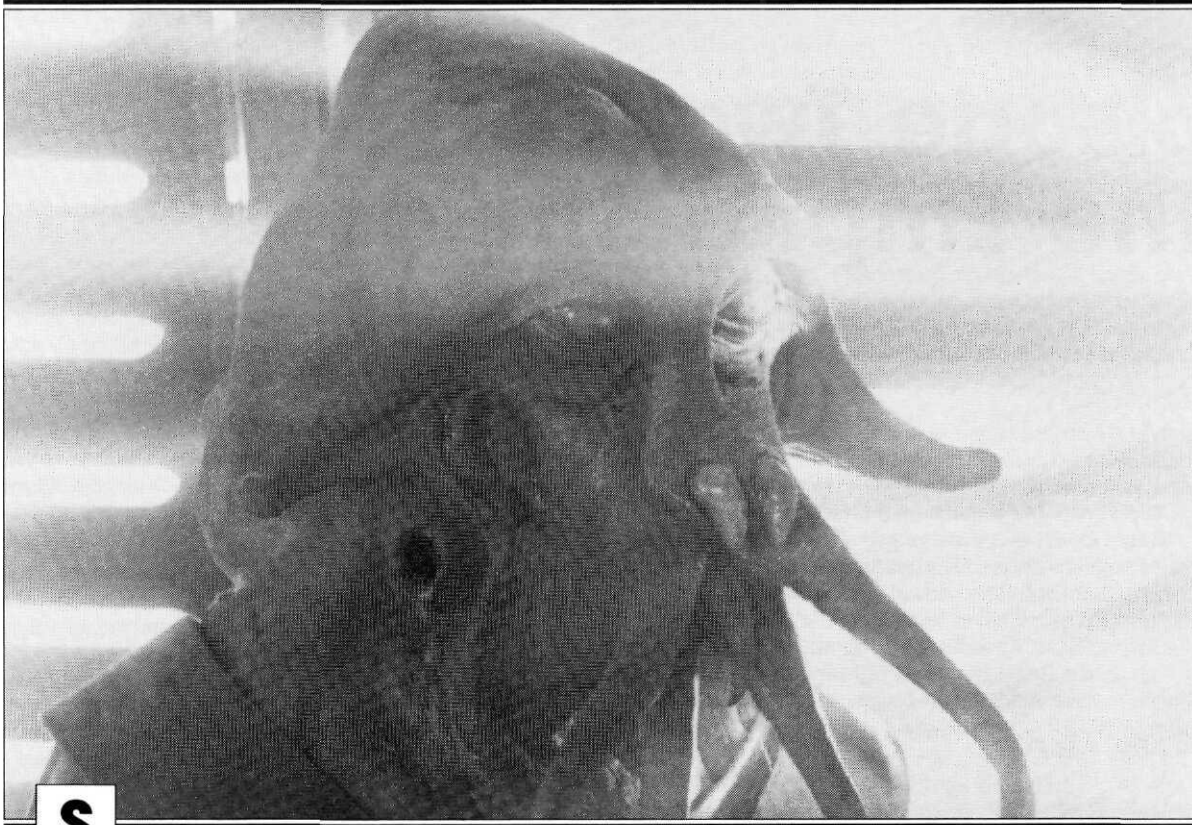
Ackbar reaches out, tapping controls on the projector tank and Mon Mothma's holo-form freezes. Pollard and the Verpine take their leave immediately, but Glek waits until prompted by the PCs or Ackbar. When everyone has gone, the commander again taps the proper control and the message continues. Read:

"The Alliance fleet is assembling in the Pothor system. Proceed there immediately with your design team and your two prototype B-wings. Upon arrival you will assume the rank of Admiral. Your first duty is to organize a mass production system for the new B-wing."

Mon Mothma continues, "To the agents who delivered the disk: Thank you for your service; the Alliance owes you a great debt. I must now ask you to perform another service for us. You must safeguard Commander Ackbar, escorting him and his project to the rendezvous point; the location codes are embedded at the end of this holo-disk. Do not take this duty lightly: our agents suspect that there is an Imperial informer on the commander's staff.

"To Commander Ackbar: Allow these agents to bring you, your team, and the prototypes to the rendezvous point. Trust them as I do. I apologize for the heavy-handed precautions, but we could not risk interception of this message. The new starfighter is too crucial to the survival of the Alliance. Proceed to the rendezvous point with all speed, and may the Force be with you."

Hyperspace jump coordinates replace Mon Mothma's image, then the holo-disk shuts off.



S

alin Glek, Ackbar's Quarren assistant, holds a terrible secret that could destroy Project Shantipole.

Let the Rebels question Ackbar about the assignment. The commander answers all queries to the best of his ability. Use this conversation to fill your players in on the basic storyline. Tell them about the problems with the Nebulon-B and the role the new B-wing will play in future raiding parties.

When the PCs run out of questions, Ackbar signals for the command center personnel to return. All of them do, except Salin Glek. If the PC's inquire about Glek, Pollard says he saw Glek walking toward the hangar bay. A look at the hangar deck monitor shows an empty bay. There's no sign of Glek or *Out Runner*.

Giving Glek the Disk

If the Rebels give Glek the holo-disk, they have made a terrible mistake. First, they've disobeyed their orders to deliver the disk to Ackbar personally. Second, they've

handed a top-secret communique to an Imperial spy. If they believe their mission is accomplished and decide to leave, proceed with the storyline as follows.

The PCs head back out into space aboard *Out Runner*. Just as they prepare to jump to lightspeed, they receive an automated distress signal from Ackbar's base. The message, calling for assistance, repeats itself over and over. The PCs cannot raise anyone over their com unit. If they return to the base, they arrive after the Imperials have attacked. Go to Episode Two.

There will be two unresolved problems for the PCs to deal with if the holo-disk remains in Glek's possession. Problem number one: the PCs no longer have the rendezvous coordinates for meeting the Alliance fleet. Problem number two: the Empire does have the coordinates and will be waiting for the Rebels unless the PCs can somehow warn Alliance High Command.

E

pisode Two

The Empire Strikes

Summary

When Nothos lost contact with the TIE/rc patrol (from episode one) his instincts told him the time to strike was now. As usual, Nothos has guessed correctly, arriving just as Glek gives the prearranged attack signal.

Nothos launches a two-pronged attack. The main assault force targets Research Station Shantipole where the prototypes are kept. The second assault force, made up of 70 stormtroopers in an assault shuttle, attacks Ackbar's Command Base. Amid fires, explosions, and deadly stormtroopers, the Rebel PCs must fight a desperate delaying battle to save Ackbar and escape via life boat.

Base Alert

As the PCs and Ackbar attempt to find Glek, an alarm sounds. Read out loud:

Warning sirens scream throughout the asteroid complex. Then a voice booms from the command center com unit. "Hangar bay to Commander Ackbar! Sir, an unidentified craft is approaching this asteroid. It's closing fast, and it doesn't respond to our signals. Wait. . . it's an Imperial assault shuttle! Repeat, an Imperial. . ."

Two explosions rock the base, showering dust and small rocks upon you. The screens monitoring the asteroid's interior flash white and flick off. Ackbar turns to Pollard and says, "There's no way we can hold out against an attack. We just don't have enough soldiers. Give the evacuation signal."

Pollard complies, shouting into his com unit, "Emergency evacuation! All personnel immediately report to the life boat bay. This is no drill!" The base shudders as the assault shuttle continues its bombardment. With each explosion, the lights flicker ominously.

Ackbar then turns to you. "If I don't retrieve the two-man B-wing configuration files from this computer, then everything we've worked for will be lost. I need some time!"

Allow the PCs to volunteer to buy time. If they don't, Ackbar orders them to "delay those stormtroopers." Suskafoo and Pollard both volunteer to help the PCs. Pollard explains that he hasn't used a blaster in some time, but he knows all the access codes for the base's blast doors.

He calls up a holo display of the base. Show the players the map of Ackbar's base in the pullout, then read aloud:

Pollard says, "Each blast doors is 18 inches thick, constructed of enhanced titanium. It'll take those stormtroopers quite a while to cut through one of them."

Then, as suddenly as it began, the bombardment stops. Ackbar surmises that the base has been invaded and stormtroopers must even now be approaching the command center.

The defense of the base is the PCs' responsibility. The stormtroopers' attack plan is described in "The Assault" below. Ackbar needs 15 combat rounds to finish retrieving his files. The PCs' must give him that time, then find a way to get him safely off the asteroid.

Base Room Descriptions

The following is a brief description of Ackbar's Command Base as shown on the map in the pullout section. This is by no means an exhaustive list of every item on the asteroid, but there should be enough for you to get a general idea of the type of equipment that may reasonably be found.

The base is a converted Verpine colony asteroid. Most of the rooms consist of rock walls and floors, with cables and wires running along their length. Irregularly-shaped corridors connect the various rooms together.

Blast doors are located throughout as indicated on the map. These can be closed or opened via control panels positioned on either side of the doors, provided a person knows the access codes. Without the codes, it takes 10 rounds to cut through a locked blast door. Otherwise, a Difficult *security* roll is needed to break the codes. Pollard, of course, can open or close blast doors without any trouble, as he knows the codes.

Regular doors can be locked from inside using a simple bolt lock. These doors are Easy to hit and have a *Strength* of 2D. They can be smashed open if the damage roll is twice the *Strength* roll of the door. A normal door's lock mechanism can be bypassed by making an Easy *security* roll.

1. Atmosphere Generators. The atmosphere generators sit in this hollowed-out room, atop meter-thick bases of reinforced permacite. Dozens of pipes lead out of the

machine, disappearing into the rocky walls. If the Rebels decide to disrupt the base's air supply, this has at best a negative effect on the battle, as the Imperial stormtroopers carry their own artificial environments and few of the base personnel have time to don space suits. Three airlocks lead to the surface of the asteroid for routine maintenance work, and 10 space suits are stored in a wall locker.

2. Command Center. To one side of this room stands a holo-projector tank. Numerous computer displays line the walls. Screens monitor the Roche Asteroid Field, the asteroids involved in the project, and the surrounding system. From the main console, any PC can open and close blast doors throughout the base, provided they know the access codes or can circumvent them by making a Difficult *security* roll.

3. Communications Center. Control consoles with chairs line each of the walls. A large, clear plastic board stands near the center of the room. Numerous lines have been traced across the board showing the trajectory of Roche's larger asteroids.

4. Living Quarters. Most of this area is open barracks, set up for communal living as the Verpine prefer. Several smaller rooms have been set up against the back wall for Ackbar and his team.

5. Hangar Bay. The hangar bay has tall ceilings but narrow walls. This large, near-empty room has a control tower mounted to one wall, and two smashed asteroid hoppers parked to one side (Glek damaged them as he left). Two exits lead out of the immediate area. The blast doors between the hangar and the rec area are warped by the Imperial's initial bombardment and they cannot be closed.

6. Rec Area. This common room contains tables and chairs, a food dispenser, and a holo-chess game.

7. Main Power Generators. Humming quietly, the main generators fill this tall, rocky chamber. The five-meter tall generators have catwalks running around their upper halves. Two ladders lead up to the catwalks. Four meter-thick pipes lead out of the generators into the stone walls. A control and monitoring panel rests against the far wall. An Extremely Difficult *Technical* roll is required to sabotage these units. If the PCs are successful, the generators explode 20 combat rounds later, shattering the asteroid.

8. Auxiliary Power. Two large machines, the auxiliary power unit and the auxiliary power coolant system, fill this room. A pressure valve leads directly from the coolant system to the outside. PCs making a Difficult *Technical* roll can set the units to overload. The resulting explosion five combat rounds later causes 6D damage to anyone in the room.

9. Storage. A medium-sized room with lots of boxes, this storage room contains both Verpine and Rebel supplies. Just about anything reasonable, except weapons, can be found here, including space suits. This is also a good place to hide, and PCs stumble across a group of Verpine doing just that when they start searching this area.

10. Repulsor Beam Generators. Three tall, silver cylinders, interconnected by a maze of pencil-thin filaments, fill this chamber. These are the repulsor beam generators, and each produces the energy that shields the asteroid from collisions with other floating rocks. If this

device is damaged, asteroids will begin smashing into the base at a rate of one every three combat rounds. Fissures appear in the walls and atmosphere can be heard leaking through the cracks. Fifteen combat rounds later the base is pulverized in a collision with another large asteroid. Anyone still in the base dies.

11. Medical Center. The base's medical center consists of eight beds and one bacta-tank. A surgical area is curtained off in one corner.

12. Life Boat Bay. Three medium-sized life boats are recessed into the asteroid's outer wall, ready for immediate escape. Each life boat holds 15 passengers. This bay also handles small craft and most of the asteroid hopper traffic.

13. Auxiliary Command Center. Computer panels and communications equipment fill this area, which is used only in emergencies.

The Stormtroopers' Assault

Below is the timetable and attack plan for the stormtroopers. Refer to it as necessary. The stormtroopers have a very precise schedule and are thoroughly familiar with the layout of the base, courtesy of Salin Glek.

Note: If the PCs are returning to the base after falling for Glek's ploy, they arrive at the beginning of combat round 6.

Combat Rounds 1-5, Docking: During the first five rounds of the battle, the Imperial assault shuttle pulls up along side the hangar bay and lays a boarding tube into the bay. Rebels who begin moving from the command center to the hangar bay when the first explosion sounds reach the bay on round 3. If they wait for Ackbar's instructions and take time to check the command center monitors, they arrive at the hangar no earlier than round 6.

Rounds 6-15, Disembarking: At the beginning of round 6, stormtroopers begin pouring out of the boarding tube at a rate of five per round, up to a total of 50. The stormtroopers spread out and leave the hangar bay as rapidly as possible, trying to overwhelm the opposition by sheer numbers.

The first 20 stormtroopers are assigned to take the command center via the communications center. The next 20 are assigned to capture the living quarters (one squad of 10 goes through the rec room corridor, the other squad goes through the far hangar tunnel). The final 10 stormtroopers remain in the hangar in reserve.

The stormtroopers' orders are to capture as many prisoners as possible. (Nothos wants the Rebel commanders alive for interrogation.) The stormtroopers push forward rapidly, combining their fire (in fire teams of five) on those Rebels who give them the most trouble.

Rounds 16-25: The Imperial assault shuttle disengages from the hangar and swings around to the life boat bay. Once there (on round 20), it again connects its boarding tube and disgorges 10 more stormtroopers. Four have orders to take the medical center, four to capture auxiliary command, and two to remain in the bay as guards.

Rounds 26+: The shuttle disengages and moves back to the hangar bay. Inside the asteroid, the stormtroopers battle the Rebels, and move captured Verpine toward the hangar to load them onto the assault shuttle. Ten stormtroopers remain on board the shuttle in reserve and as

guards for the prisoners. If the Rebels try to storm the assault shuttle, it disconnects from the asteroid and hovers out in space.

Stormtroopers*: DEX 1D, blaster 3D, brawling parry 3D, dodge 3D; STR 2D (3D for damage purposes), brawling 3D. All other attributes and skills 2D. Blaster damage 4D.

* These codes reflect armor adjustments.

Creating the Mood

When running this battle, keep the action moving. Don't give your players a lot of time to analyze their actions. Show them what's going on by putting their characters in your descriptions.

For example:

Blaster bolts explode near you, showering you with blisteringly-hot sparks. Frightened Verpine scurry by, jostling you and hampering your aim in their hurry to escape. Then, through the parting clouds of smoke, you see the gleaming white armor of Imperial Stormtroopers. Without hesitation the troopers charge your position, and soon you can see nothing but the sparkling haze of blaster fire.

Also, keep up the suspense. Don't tell your players how many Stormtroopers have invaded the base. That information is strictly for you. Instead, reveal the numbers to them as they encounter each group or wave of troopers. Let them guess the total number or sweat it out thinking they're facing the entire Imperial fleet! And don't let on that Ackbar needs only 15 combat rounds to extract his computer files. If the PCs ask him when he'll be done, Ackbar tells them "just a few seconds more" as another explosion rocks the base. These techniques build suspense, give the game a movie-like feel, and create the *Star Wars* mood.

Running the Battle

Keep track of the number of combat rounds that pass, and run the Stormtroopers according to the instructions above. Other than that, just move the Stormtroopers through the base and keep track of what the PCs are doing. Any time the Stormtroopers encounter PC resistance, they wade right in. If the PCs manage to cut down five or more of them, the Stormtroopers dig in, using any available cover or falling prone, then combine fire against one PC at a time.

The obvious course for the PCs to take is to seal as many blast doors as possible, attempt to contain the stormtroopers until Ackbar finishes his retrieval program, then

fight their way to the life boat bay (as Glek has run off with their ship). Of course, players rarely do the obvious, so be ready for anything. Let reasonable actions and heroics succeed, while foolhardy actions fail.

Ending the Episode

This episode ends with the PCs and Ackbar escaping the asteroid (most likely in a life boat) or being captured by the Imperials. Escaping to proceed with the adventure is the ideal ending. With so many Stormtroopers, however, there's always a chance your heroes will find themselves trapped somewhere in the base. Here are a few ways to get them out of tight situations.

Escape Through the Airlocks. Three airlocks lead from the atmosphere generator chamber to the surface of the asteroid. If the PCs don space suits, they can escape through the airlocks and make their way, unobserved, across the asteroid to the life boat bay. Once there, all they need do is overcome the guards.

Verpine to the Rescue. Verpine colony asteroids consist of dozens of tiny rooms connected by extremely narrow corridors. This asteroid, in addition to all the large chambers presented on the map, contains a number of narrow corridors and sub-passages hidden behind ventilation shafts and service ducts. Rebels trapped in an isolated area (such as the storage room) can be rescued by the two young Verpine techs who were with Suskafoo in the hangar earlier. They emerge from behind a vent or duct and lead the PCs to an adjoining room.

Pollard's Dramatic Death. Pollard is a hero in the truest sense of the word. His life has been long and hard, and death holds little mystery to him. If the situation merits, Pollard won't hesitate to give up his own life to distract the Stormtroopers and allow Ackbar to escape. Let Pollard charge forward, grenade in one hand, blaster in the other. His action buys the Rebels a few precious combat rounds to make good an escape. If you use this scene, keep in mind that later in the adventure the PCs will discover that Pollard is still alive. Wounded during his heroic action, he was captured and placed in Research Station Shantipole's detention area for safekeeping. See episode four for more details.

The Escape

By the time the PCs reach the life boat bay, one of the three life boats is gone, taken by escaping Verpine.

The Verpine life boats have no steering or navigation controls. Instead, they rely upon pre-programmed computer guidance systems to fly them to predetermined pick up points.

As soon as everyone climbs inside a life boat, Ackbar closes the door and presses the eject button. A small explosion sounds outside the craft and a jarring leap plunges the ship into space.

E

pisode Three

The Trip to Shantipole

Summary

A Verpine transport, searching for survivors of the Imperial raid, picks up the Rebels' life boat. Once inside the transport, a Verpine leads the PCs to the ship's bridge. The PCs learn that both Ackbar's Command Base and Research Station Shantipole have fallen to the Empire. Furthermore, the entire sector is under naval blockade. TIE fighters constantly sweep the asteroid belt in search of Ackbar and his team. It's only a matter of time before the Empire finds them.

Ackbar assesses the situation quickly and formulates a plan. Soon the Rebels find themselves flying to Research Station Shantipole on a desperate mission to recover a combat vessel and destroy the remains of Ackbar's project. During the flight to the captured asteroid, the PCs must battle probe Droids, navigate through asteroid storms, and elude TIE patrols. The episode ends just as the PCs see Shantipole in the distance.

Rescued!

Read:

Time passes slowly within the drifting life boat. Without communication equipment, sensors, or flight controls, you remain helpless, at the mercy of the vessel's automated controls. Occasionally the life boat makes a leisurely course adjustment. Not enough, you think, to avoid the hundreds of asteroids out there, yet no collisions occur. Only Suskafoo seems unconcerned with the prospect of flying blind through an asteroid belt.

As you contemplate the unpleasant situation, the life boat shudders and becomes caught fast, as though caught in the jaws of some great power vise. Ominous sounds echo through the craft. Then the sounds stop.

The PCs should be ready for anything. They probably think they've been picked up by an Imperial ship. They're wrong, but let them sweat it a little. Build the tension, allowing the players' imaginations to run wild. Open the life boat's hatch slowly, revealing an enormous docking bay. Let them notice the two other life boats sitting upon the open deck. Show them the dozens of Verpine skittering about at a hurried pace. Then let them see the distinctive architecture that marks this bay as part of a Verpine ship. The Rebels have been rescued by a Verpine transport, one of many scouring the field for survivors of the Imperial raids.

The Verpine in the bay seem oblivious to the PCs. They are worker clones and little more than automatons. They cannot speak and are completely incapable of indepen-

dent thought. As such, they ignore the PCs and go about their duties. Verpine have no trouble telling a worker clone from a dominant form, although other races can see no physical difference.

After a few moments, a dominant Verpine approaches. Read:

From across the bay a Verpine strides over to meet your group. "Please follow me," he says in halting Basic. He leads your group through several crowded corridors to the bridge. The command chair spins around and another, older, Verpine considers you and your companions. Ackbar steps forward and says, "It is good to see you again, Speaker Jurfel." The Verpine nods, "Mine is the pleasure Commander Ackbar. But danger threatens the hive and we must act quickly."

With the help of Speaker Jurfel, a Verpine elder who speaks for the entire hive, the Rebels get brought up to date on the Imperial raid.

A

Quick Note on Verpine Ships

As traveling through an asteroid field involves lots of gut-wrenching maneuvers, it's small wonder that one of the Verpine's earliest technological developments was a ship stabilization system. This system, sort of a gravity gyro, allows the crew and passengers to travel more comfortably by keeping the main compartment stable while the rest of the ship rotates to compensate for any maneuver. The Verpine life boat uses this system, as does the B-wing starfighter and most other Verpine ships.

Unknown to the PCs, the "leisurely course adjustments" they experienced while inside the life boat were actually violent maneuvers over, under and around asteroids. If asked, Suskafoo describes the system to the PCs.

Ackbar and Jurfel Tell All

The following information can be presented to the players as simply a series of facts, but we suggest revealing it as part of a conversation involving the PCs, Suskafoo, Jurfel, and Ackbar. While the PCs and Suskafoo are present in order to be brought up to date on the situation, they are encouraged to ask questions and make suggestions. But most of the conversation is dominated by the two leaders. With the help of a holo-projector, here's what Jurfel and Ackbar reveal:

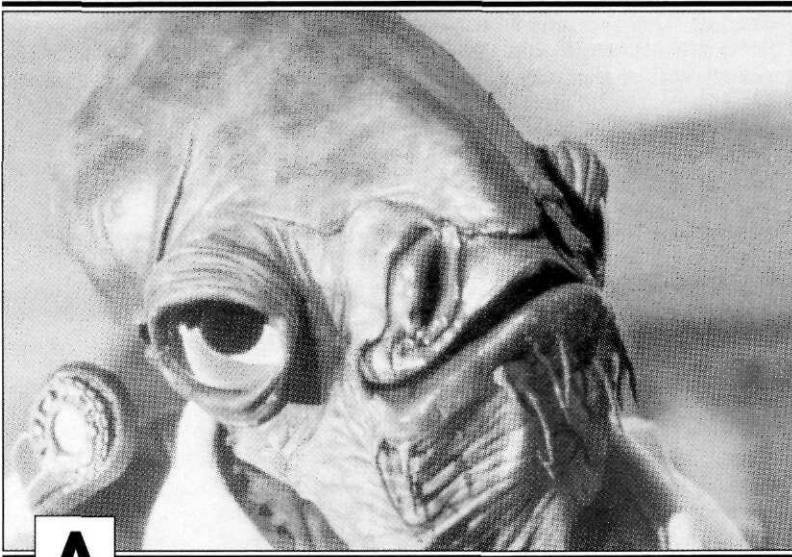
Jurfel Reveals: "One hour ago, the Empire broadcast a sub-space message on all frequencies, ordering the Verpine to submit or die. The hive has rejected the Empire's ultimatum and has decided to actively join the Alliance. The situation is grim, however. Imperial stormtroopers have captured Research Station Shantipole and, with it, the two prototype two-man B-wings. Our remote sensors reveal that a large number of capital ships have moved into position around our asteroid field. TIE fighters are sweeping the area in regular patterns. We are massing our own fleet in an attempt to gather the hive for escape."

Ackbar Reveals: "Those capital ships have formed a blockade, effectively cutting off our avenue of escape. The TIEs are engaged in a systematic search that will not end until they find what they are looking for — namely, the computer files I have stored within this data pad and all members of the Alliance engineering team."

"The Verpine fleet consists of unarmed ships which stand no chance against the powerful Imperial vessels. But my analysis shows a flaw in the blockade. Here, at this point, is the weak link. A single escort frigate is the only obstacle in sector G147, where the asteroid trajectories form a natural corridor through the field. An armed vessel could provide cover fire and a distraction that would allow us to move the fleet out of the field and into open space before the rest of the blockade could respond."

"With your ship missing, the only combat-ready craft in the immediate vicinity is my transport. Unfortunately, it is docked in the Shantipole's hangar bay. A small strike team could sneak into the research station, recover the ship, and eliminate any remaining evidence of our secret project."

If the PCs don't volunteer for this important yet dangerous mission, Ackbar orders them to undertake it. After all, they are the only real warriors Ackbar has (except for Pollard, if he's still with the group). They are Ackbar's only hope.



A

Ackbar presents his plan to the Rebels.

Wounded Rebels

Nobody likes to be left behind, especially during an exciting part of an adventure. Here's how you can keep your party together if some of them were wounded in the stormtrooper assault. Instead of discovery by the Empire being imminent, have Ackbar announce:

"After analyzing the Imperial search pattern, I calculate that we have a little less than nine days to make our breakout attempt. After that we're certain to be discovered by the TIE patrols."

Those nine days give the Rebels plenty of time to heal any wounded or incapacitated characters in Verpine rejuvenation tanks. Mortally wounded characters can be saved by the Verpine tanks, as per normal *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game* rules, but not in time to go on the raid.

Ackbar's Plan

While Ackbar cautions the Rebels to be ready to think for themselves and modify the plan as they proceed, he nevertheless outlines the mission as he sees it. Show your players the full-color map of Research Station Shantipole while Ackbar speaks.

Ackbar calls up a holo-image of the asteroid field. The Verpine transport and the research station are highlighted to show their relative positions. The image changes, zooming in to show the research station. He says, "You must fly through the asteroid field to Research Station Shantipole, get inside undetected, and set the main generator to explode. I'll provide you with the detonite and timers myself. A 30-minute fuse should give you a reasonable safety margin. When the generator explodes it should destroy the entire station, and the prototype starfighters along with it. That explosion will be our signal to move the fleet into corridor G147. If you have not secured a combat vessel and begun your distraction maneuvers on the frigate, we shall try to escape anyway, but we'll be easy targets for the Imperial ship. Good luck, and may the Force be with you."

Ackbar hasn't been informed that the B-wings are in working order. The engineer that reported to Glek didn't know the Quarren was a traitor, so Glek was the only one in the command base to receive this news.

Suskafoo volunteers to accompany the Rebels. He can retrieve additional data files from the base computer that will save months of work when B-wing construction starts.

Of course, if the PCs gave the holo-disk to Glek in episode one, they have another problem to overcome. They must recover the disk and broadcast the hyperspace jump coordinates to the Verpine fleet before they clear the asteroid field's gravity well. Otherwise, Ackbar will have to guess at a safe jump destination and the much-needed B-wing prototypes will not reach Alliance High Command until new coordinates can be provided.

S

Strike Force: Shantipole Adventure Script

Use the following script to start your adventure. Your gamemaster will tell you what part (or parts) to read. When your turn comes read your lines out loud, speaking the way you think your character would. Be sure to listen to what the other characters are saying as the script contains important background information to start the adventure.

Start the Script

1st Rebel: What's that red light mean?

2nd Rebel: It's an Alliance signal receiver. When the light starts blinking, it means we're close to a broadcasting base-homing device.

3rd Rebel: We just follow the signal to its origin. We should be docking in less than an hour.

4th Rebel: Good. The sooner we turn this holo-disk over to Commander Ackbar, the better. Playing mail carrier to outer rim systems isn't my idea of a glamorous assignment.

5th Rebel: I believe this disk is much more important than you realize. Alliance ships are too scarce to be used on frivolous missions.

6th Rebel: And we were specifically ordered to hand deliver the disk directly to Commander Ackbar.

2nd Rebel: Don't forget, I saw Mon Mothma back at the base . . .

6th Rebel: . . . talking to our commander before the briefing. We know. You told us.

2nd Rebel: No really, I did. Just before they gave us the code word.

1st Rebel: What do we need a code word for, anyway?

3rd Rebel: To identify us when we reach Commander Ackbar's base. You don't want them mistaking us for Imperials, do you?

4th Rebel: Um, what was that code word again?

5th Rebel: I believe the commander pronounced it, "Bantha pudu." According to our computer lexicon, the phrase originates with the Huttese culture and means . . .

2nd Rebel: Not now! Plotting a course into an asteroid field isn't easy, you know.

1st Rebel: I never heard of an Alliance base located in an asteroid field before.

6th Rebel: If everyone heard about it, it wouldn't be a secret.

3rd Rebel: It also happens to be the home of the engineers working with Ackbar on his secret project.

4th Rebel: Secrets, everybody's got secrets! Any idea who these engineers are?

5th Rebel: They call themselves the Verpine. I understand the entire race lives within the asteroid field. Roche, I believe the name is.

6th Rebel: They developed that weird-looking starfighter, didn't they?

3rd Rebel: Weird-looking? The B-wing assault ship is one of the most heavily-armed starfighters in the galaxy.

1st Rebel: Hey, what's *that* red light mean?

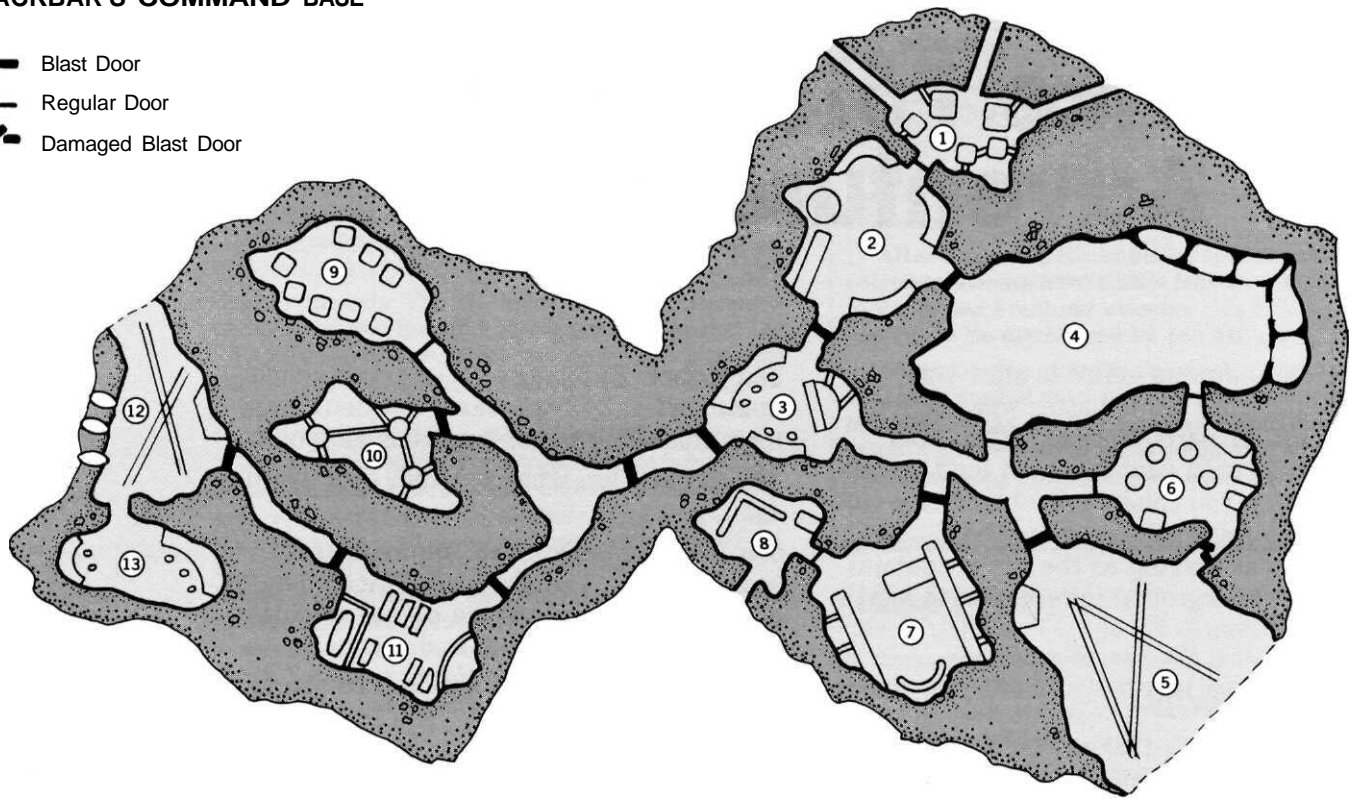
2nd Rebel: I told you, that's the signal receiver.

4th Rebel: No, that's the full-spectrum transceiver. Three TIE fighters are approaching on our port side.

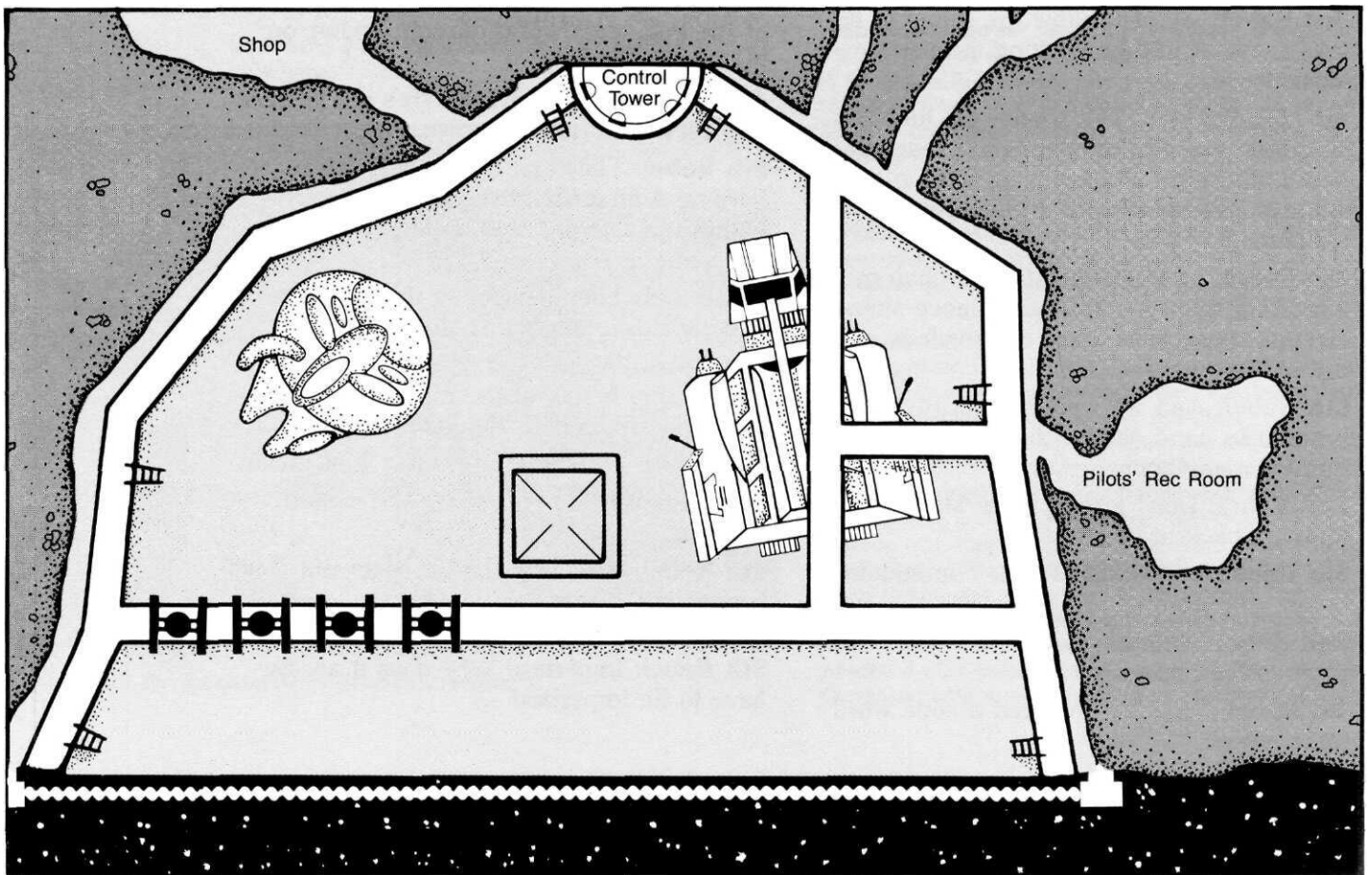
5th Rebel: Imperials! Why does it always have to be Imperials?

ACKBAR'S COMMAND BASE

- Blast Door
- Regular Door
- ⊘ Damaged Blast Door

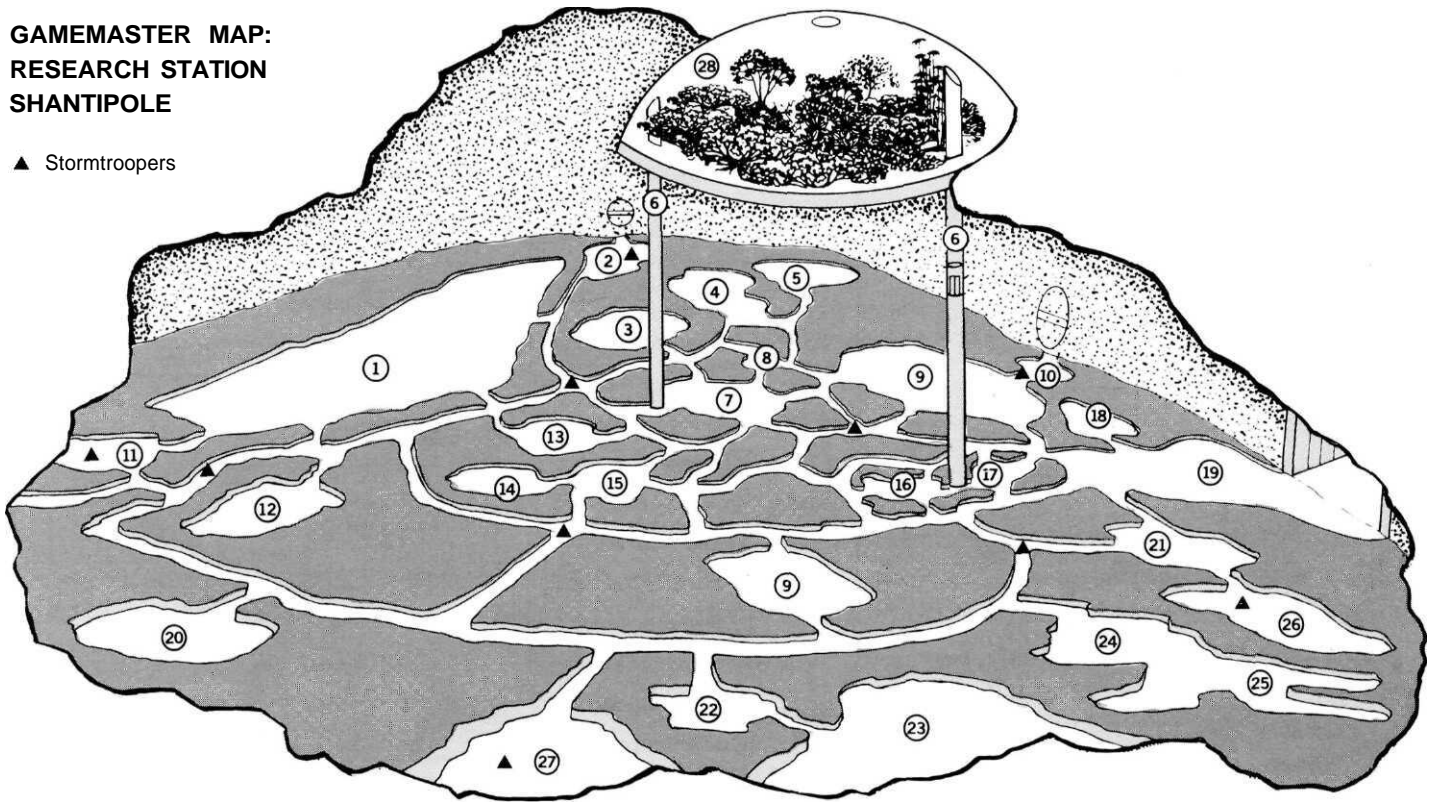


RESEARCH STATION SHANTIPOLE HANGAR BAY #1



**GAMEMASTER MAP:
RESEARCH STATION
SHANTIPOLE**

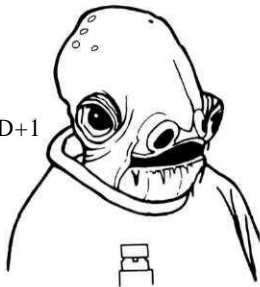
▲ Stormtroopers



Commander Ackbar

Template Type: Mon Calamari
Ht.: 1.8m **Sex:** Male

DEX 3d+1	PER 2D+1
Blaster 4D+1	Command 6D+1
KNO 3D+1	STR 3D
Alien Races 5D+1	
Bureaucracy 6D+1	
MEC 2D+1	TEC 3D+2
Astrogation 4D+1	
Starship Piloting 4D+1	



Physical Description: Ackbar is a bipedal, salmon-colored amphiboid from Mon Calamari. He wears a white jump suit and speaks with a watery gurgle.

Equipment: Comlink, data pad, mini-computer.

Background: Enslaved by the Empire, Ackbar was taken from his world and given to Grand Moff Tarkin as a gift by an ambitious fleet officer. Ackbar served with quiet dignity, all the while learning whatever he could about the Empire. Eventually rescued by a Rebel strike force, Ackbar now serves as a valuable officer in the Alliance. He knows both the powers and the weaknesses of the Empire, and he works to exploit that knowledge to one day restore the Old Republic.

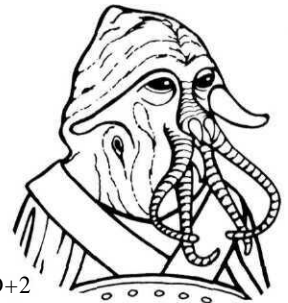
Personality: Ackbar is a peaceful man who has been forced to learn of war by the Empire. Still, everything he does is tempered by justice, honor, and concern. He will never ask anyone to do something he will not do. He is quiet, firm, and a true leader. He never stops working for peace, but he understands the necessity of war.

Quote: "We dream of a day when the galaxy will again be bound together by peace and justice."

Salin Glek

Template Type: Quarren
Ht.: 1.8m **Sex:** Male

DEX 3D	PER 3D+1
Blaster 5D	Con 5D+1
Dodge 5D	
KNO 2D+2	STR 3D+1
MEC 3D	TEC 2D+2
Starship Piloting 4D	Security 3D+2



Physical Description: Like all Quarren, Glek's head resembles a four-tentacled squid. He wears a simple brown tunic and cape.

Equipment: Blaster pistol (damage 4D), comlink.

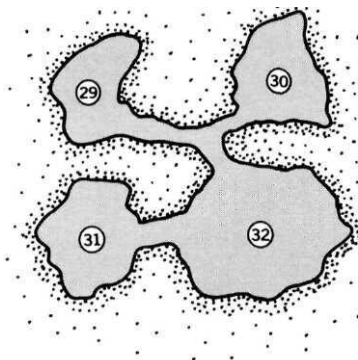
Background: Glek grew up in the bowels of a Mon Calamarian floating city, learning to despise his Mon Cal neighbors. But he never showed any discontent. Instead, he joined the Alliance and worked up to a position of power. From there, with the help of the Empire, he will make the Mon Cals pay for what he feels are their crimes against his people.

Personality: Glek is a bitter, hateful individual, but he hides it well. He despises Ackbar and his Mon Cal dreams. He betrays the Alliance not for money or power, but for spite.

Quote: "Pah, dreams are only useless illusions."

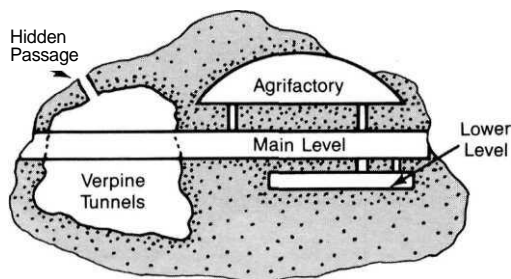
RESEARCH STATION SHANTIPOLE

Lower Level



RESEARCH STATION SHANTIPOLE

Side View



RESEARCH STATION SHANTIPOLE MAP KEY

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| ① Verpine Tunnels | ⑰ Atmosphere Generator |
| ② Airlock #1 | ⑱ Pilots' Rec Room |
| ③ Communications Center | ⑲ Hangar Bay #1 |
| ④ Rec Area | ⑳ Storage |
| ⑤ Mess | ㉑ Maintenance Shop |
| ⑥ Elevators | ㉒ Damaged Maintenance Shop |
| ⑦ Command Center | ㉓ Damaged Hangar Bay #2 |
| ⑧ Computer Room | ㉔ Shield Generator |
| ⑨ Living Quarters | ㉕ Power Cells |
| ⑩ Airlock #2 | ㉖ Storage |
| ⑪ Life Boat Bay | ㉗ Airlock #3 |
| ⑫ Medical Center | ㉘ Agrifactory |
| ⑬ Repulsor Beam Controls | ㉙ Storage |
| ⑭ Main Generator | ⑳ Research Lab |
| ⑮ Power Converters | ㉑ Auxiliary Power |
| ⑯ Life Support | ㉒ Hangar Bay Sub-Level |

Lieutenant Pollard

Template Type: Outlaw
Ht.: 1.9m Sex: Male

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| DEX 4D | PER 2D |
| Blaster 5D | Command 3D |
| Dodge 5D | Hide/Sneak 2D |
| KNO 3D | STR 3D+1 |
| Streetwise 4D | Brawling 4D+1 |
| MEC 2D+2 | TEC 3D |
| Starship Piloting 3D+2 | Starship Repair 4D+1 |
| Starship Gunnery 4D+2 | |



Physical Description: Dark and heavily lined, Pollard's face is scarred and ageless. People first meeting him often find him sinister, but his loyalty to good causes soon wins them over.

Equipment: Heavy blaster pistol (damage 5D), comlink.

Background: Pollard speaks little of his past. Instead, he exists in the present — watching the Empire's movements, countering their plans, and keeping Ackbar safe. Pollard was one of the Alliance agents that participated in Ackbar's rescue, and he has worked with the Mon Calamarian ever since. He doesn't like or trust Salin Glek, but he can't put his finger on anything solid enough to go to Ackbar with.

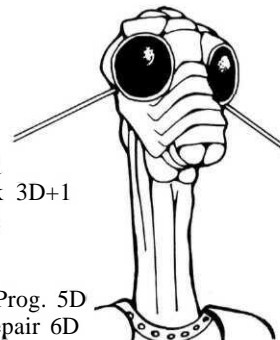
Personality: A born leader, Pollard would do well with a command of his own. But he is not an ambitious man. He prefers to fill what he considers important secondary roles. He is tough, wary, and dangerous-looking.

Quote: "I wouldn't do that, if I were you."

Suskafoo

Template Type: Verpine
Ht.: 1.9m Sex: Male

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| DEX 2D+1 | PER 2D+1 |
| Dodge 3D+1 | Hide/Sneak 3D+1 |
| KNO 3D+1 | STR 2D+1 |
| Languages 5D+1 | |
| MEC 3D+2 | TEC 4D |
| | Computer Prog. 5D |
| | Starship Repair 6D |



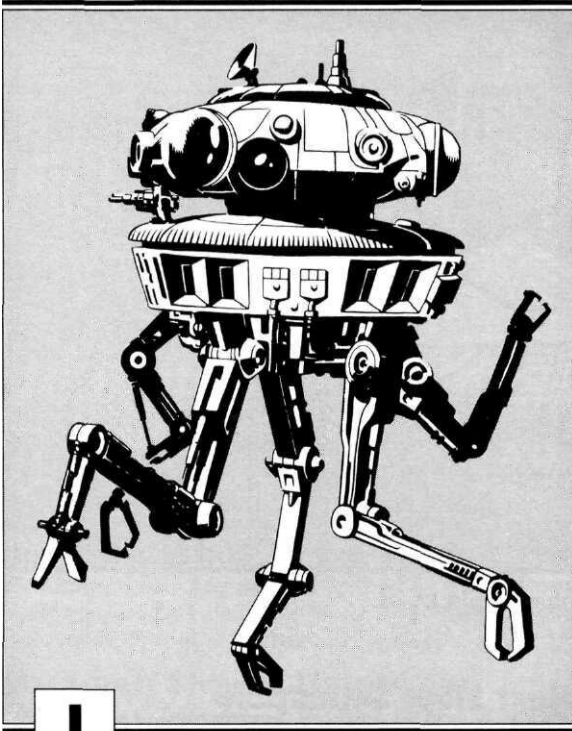
Physical Description: Suskafoo's tall, thin body is an evenly colored pale green. His joints, like all Verpines, are somewhat awkwardly articulated causing Foo to appear ungainly in his movements. Suskafoo's most striking aspect is his dark, featureless eyes. When speaking Suskafoo twitches and chirps excitedly, his antennae moving in time.

Equipment: None.

Background: Suskafoo ("Foo" to his friends) lived his early life on an asteroid on the edge of the field. The Verpine had dealt with galactic traders for many years, but Foo's asteroid was the first contacted by the Alliance. Foo used his programming experience to quickly master Galactic Basic. Since then, Foo has worked as a mediator between his hive and the "Rebel Hive."

Personality: Foo has grown to see that the Empire and the Alliance as something other than two opposing hives. There is a fundamental difference between them. Foo is only beginning to understand the concepts of good and evil. Suskafoo, like all Verpine, is incredibly curious about technology of any sort. He loves working on theoretical problems, but he doesn't always realize the consequences of some of his suggestions.

Quote: "Now that you mention it, I suppose that would cause a thermoblast. Forget I ever suggested it."



Imperial probe Droids hunt for Ackbar's team.

Asteroid Hoppers

Jurfel leads the strike force to a small docking bay in another part of the transport. Waiting for the PCs are six cubes of detonite, three timers, space suits for every member of the party, and four asteroid hoppers. Any additional requests for supplies can be granted, within reason, as long as you remember that the Verpine have no weapons.

The Verpine Speaker explains that each asteroid hopper carries up to four people. These short-range repulsorlift craft are ideal for traveling through asteroid fields, but cannot operate in deep space. They have been covered with a sensor-reflective material that should confuse Imperial scanning equipment. The trip to the station lasts about three hours, provided nothing goes wrong.

Asteroid Hopper: Crew 1; Passengers 3; Speed Code 2D; Maneuverability 3D; Body Strength 3D. Weapons: none. Shields: none.

The Journey Begins

Once the PCs are aboard the hoppers, have the pilots make Easy *repulsorlift operation* rolls to start them up and lift out of the transport's hangar. Read:

The asteroid hoppers glide away from the Verpine transport. Several dozen small- to medium-sized craft float nearby, all of them Verpine. A life boat similar

to the one you arrived in is engulfed by one of the larger vessels. You kick in the repulsorlift engines and your hopper leaps away, leaving the gathering Verpine fleet far behind.

Before the Rebels begin the raid on Research Station Shantipole, they have to get there. That's not as easy as it sounds. Below are two encounters which occur along the way. The first involves an Imperial probe Droid headed toward the Verpine fleet; the second involves either navigating through an asteroid storm or dodging an Imperial patrol.

Have the pilots make Easy *repulsorlift operation* rolls to simulate the journey. After the first hour, the encounter with the probe Droid takes place. An hour later, the second encounter occurs.

Encounter One: The Probe Droid

Imperial probe Droids scour the field, searching for the missing Rebels. Nothos has ordered their use because the TIE patrols are ineffective within the more dense portions of the asteroid field. The PCs intercept a transmitted report from a probot that is on an intercept course with the Verpine fleet! A PC making an Easy *security* roll determines that the transmission is of Imperial origin. A Moderate roll pinpoints and identifies the approaching probot, while a Difficult *security* roll breaks the code and reveals that the Droid has not yet discovered the Verpine fleet. But it will if it continues on its present course. The PCs should decide that the probot must be destroyed.

Destroying the probe Droid won't be easy. The hopper carries no weapons, so the PCs have to either ram the Droid or open the hatch to use their blasters. Ramming does 6D damage to the probot and 3D to the ship.

If the probot ever receives enough damage to incapacitate it, it automatically self-destructs to avoid being captured.

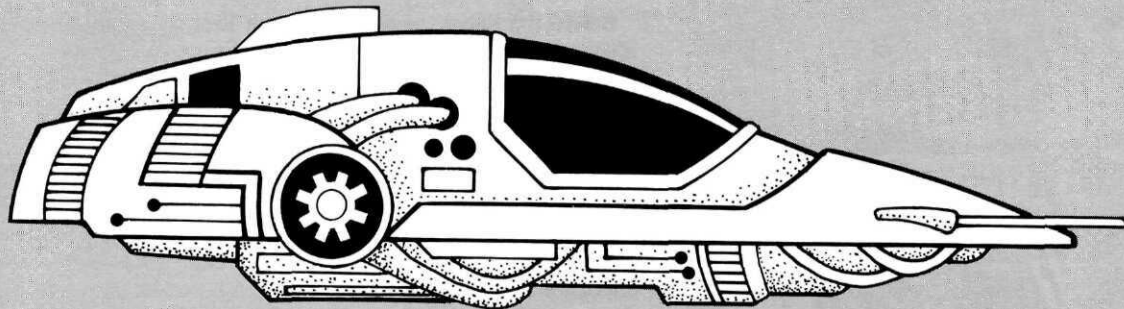
Alternately, the PCs can try to lead the probe off-course. Imperial probe Droids are programmed to investigate anything out of the ordinary. Allow any reasonable diversion to draw the probe Droid away.

Probe Droid: STR 4D, blaster 4D, search 4D. Weapons: blaster cannon, damage 4D+2.

Encounter Two: The Asteroid Storm

The Rebels are near the end of their journey when they pick up two things on their sensors. An unusually heavy concentration of asteroids has appeared up ahead, and a TIE fighter patrol skims the edge of the field near where the hoppers travel. Suskafoo explains, "Asteroid storms are rather common. We usually just fly around them. However, with those TIE fighters patrolling the edge of the storm, I expect we would be spotted and quickly blown out of space."

The PCs have two choices. They can fly through the asteroid storm and risk being smashed to bits, or go around the storm and risk encountering the TIE patrol.



V

erpine hoppers provide the best means of transportation through asteroid fields.

Flying through the storm requires three Difficult *repulsorlift operation* rolls. The players can add the hoppers' maneuverability dice to their skill roll. Failing a roll means an asteroid has struck the ship, doing 3D of damage to the hull. A hopper that cannot move because of damage continues to be pounded by asteroids until destroyed. Rebels within an unmoving hopper take damage from asteroids along with their craft.

If the PCs maneuver around the storm, they must move toward the outer edge of the asteroid field (going further into the field means traveling through even heavier concentrations of asteroid fragments). They immediately spot the two TIE fighters. If they stop to discern their patrol pattern (and make a Moderate *Perception* roll), they realize the TIEs are repeating the same criss-crossing flight pattern as they scan for Verpine ships. PCs can fly around the asteroid storm and between the TIEs by making a Moderate *repulsorlift operation* roll. The players can add the hoppers' speed code dice to their skill rolls. If the PCs didn't discern the patrol pattern, they must make a Very Difficult roll to avoid being detected. PCs who don't make the roll are spotted. The TIEs swoop in, blasters blazing. If the Rebels dive back into the asteroid storm they can escape the Imperial ships. But now they must deal with the crashing asteroids. See the previous paragraph for details.

Next Stop: Shantipole

Once past the asteroid storm, the rest of the journey is uneventful. Then Suskafoo suggests a final look at the research station layout. He projects the image onto each hopper's heads-up display. Show the players the full-color map again and read:

The asteroid station appears on your heads-up display, slowly rotating to show you its battered surface. Then the surface cuts away, revealing the interior. "I'm afraid," explains Suskafoo, "that this image is being produced from our computer library tapes. It does not show any damage sustained by the recent attack. We won't be able to determine the extent of damage until we're within visual range."

Shortly thereafter, the hoppers reach Research Station Shantipole. From their angle of approach, the PCs can see the flames and smoke rising out of what used to be hangar two. There is other evidence of a violent attack, but nothing else quite as prominent as the destroyed hangar bay. The Rebels must decide how they will enter the station before they move closer and alert the patrolling TIE fighters to their presence.

E

pisode Four To Retake Shantipole

Summary

After their harrowing journey through the asteroid field the Rebels arrive at Research Station Shantipole. They must figure out a way to get inside the station undetected, reach the main generator and set their detonite timers, then find the hangar where the combat craft are stored. Shantipole belongs to the Empire now, guarded by a horde of stormtroopers. Any mistake by the PCs will alert the stormtroopers and almost certainly make their mission even more difficult — perhaps impossible!

Research Station Shantipole

Before the Empire arrived, Research Station Shantipole was the Alliance's largest base in the Roche system. Here, Verpine engineers worked for nearly five months designing and constructing the new two-man B-wing. Now Shantipole is under Imperial control.

Commander Nothos has ordered his stormtroopers to dismantle the entire operation. The stormtroopers have the same statistics as those in episode two. They travel in squads (eight troopers and an officer) or details (three to five troopers). Verpine who didn't escape during the assault are being rounded up for shipment to Imperial detention centers, and the prototype B-wings are being moved to Nothos's flagship. (Note that stormtrooper officers have skills and attributes 1D higher than normal troopers.)

The asteroid, originally a Verpine colony, is considerably larger than the one that housed Ackbar's Command Base. Before the assault about 200 Verpine, as well as the rest

of Ackbar's engineering staff, lived and worked here. The facility has three levels, as depicted on the full-color map and the map in the pullout section.

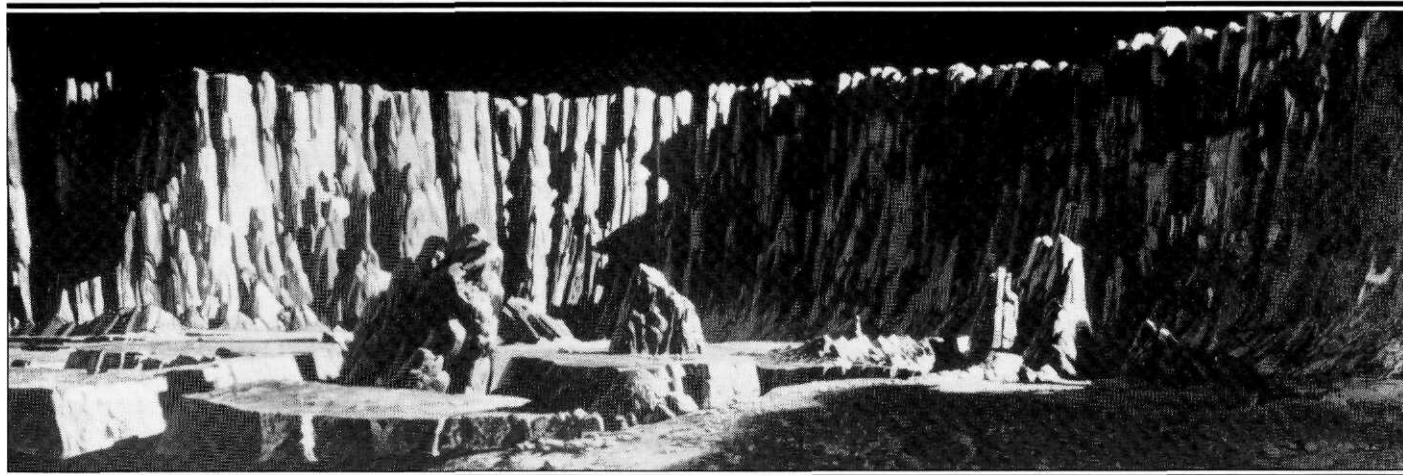
Observing the Asteroid

As the PCs draw near the asteroid, Suskafoo suggests landing on a tiny moonlet that orbits nearby, as that would be a convenient vantage point for observing the station.

Once the Rebels land, read the following:

The research station rotates slowly before you. Several airlocks and repulsor-beam units are visible, haphazardly spaced across the asteroid in typical Verpine fashion. As the asteroid turns, two hangars come into view. The first, obviously a target of the Empire's attack, is in shambles. Frayed wires and other debris float freely within the shattered confines, drifting lazily into space through the now-dead force field. A blackened ship lies twisted against one wall. Five Imperial techs in full vacuum suits move about the hangar's semi-darkness, apparently surveying the damage.

The second hangar is well-lit and undamaged. Dozens of stormtroopers stand guard while unarmed technicians load boxes on a large Imperial shuttle. A second ship, a Mon Calamari freighter, sits unattended in the corner.



Each PC who makes an Easy *Perception* roll notices one of the following:

- Glistening ice-crystal deposits can be seen in spots all over the asteroid. If the same PC makes an Easy *survival* roll, he or she realizes that the ice indicates atmospheric discharges such as when an airlock opens. Investigating any of these ice deposits reveals a standard airlock hatch (areas 2, 10, and 27 on the map) or a small opening that leads into the Verpine tunnel system (area 1 on the map).
- A large dome rises out of the top of the asteroid. Suskafoo explains that this dome covers the colony agrifactory.
- Four TIE fighters hang suspended from the undamaged hangar's ceiling on a temporary TIE docking platform, and one mobile laser cannon has been set up near the hangar's entrance.

Give the players some time to plan their raid on the base. Occasionally they see an asteroid deflected away by the base repulsor beams, but otherwise further observation reveals very little. The techs in the damaged hangar work throughout the day.

If the PCs decide to wait for an extended period of time, have Suskafoo remind them that the Verpine fleet is in danger of discovery and time is crucial. Rebels who delay for more than 12 hours receive an emergency message from Ackbar stating that the Verpine fleet is under attack. From that moment, the PCs have just 30 minutes to recover a battle-ready ship and come to Ackbar's rescue.

Getting Inside

After spending some time observing Shantipole, the Rebels must begin making their way to the captured asteroid. A Moderate *hide/sneak* roll is required for each hopper pilot to reach the asteroid unseen. A failed roll means a stormtrooper or tech sees something suspicious and reports it. Increase the station's alertness level by one (see "Shantipole Defenses" below).

There are two good routes into the asteroid: through the hidden passage into the Verpine tunnels, and through the damaged hangar. Both routes hold promise for entering the base unobserved, but both also hold danger. In the damaged hangar the PCs must avoid or deal with five Imperial technicians. The tunnels contain a much more dangerous obstacle. Unknown to the Verpine or the Imperials, a space slug has taken up residence within the hidden passage. The space slug has been preying on the mynocks which infest the icy passage, but it won't hesitate to supplement its diet with a Rebel or two.

Other less suitable but still plausible routes open to the Rebels include one of the three airlocks or through the functioning hangar bay. Both are well-lit and guarded, offering little chance for entering unnoticed.

Entry Via the Hidden Passage

By exploring ice-crystal deposits on the surface of the asteroid, the PCs discover a hidden passage. Suskafoo explains that the presence of ice indicates that an airlock or ventilation system still operates somewhere within the passage. That's the key to entering the research station from this area.

From the moment the Rebels enter the hidden passage, the ice crystal formations become considerably larger. As they travel deeper into the asteroid, footing becomes more

and more treacherous (-1D to all *Dexterity-based* skills). By following the trail of ice (and making three Easy *search* rolls), the PCs eventually come across the still-operational vent. A panel recessed in the stone wall controls magnetic seals that can be activated to provide an atmosphere-safe corridor into the Verpine tunnel system. A Moderate *security* roll is needed to operate these controls.

Passages without ice deposits lead nowhere. The PCs can explore one or two if they want, but all they'll find is a maze of similar corridors. Every time they fail a *search* roll they find themselves in an ice-free maze.

Following the ice path is the least of the Rebel's problems — a space slug lives in these caverns. Space slugs instinctively attack any moving body they encounter.

As the PCs follow the ice trail, create suspense by letting them see something move in the shadows. Next, give them a scare by having them stumble across a nest of mynocks, which quickly scatter and fly away when disturbed. Then let the PCs make Moderate *Perception* checks. Those who are successful shout a warning as the space slug attacks. If no one made the roll, the space slug's attack comes as a total surprise, which means the PCs can do nothing during the first round of battle.

The Space Slug's Tactics: This rather small space slug (four meters long) attacks the last person in the Rebel party when it first appears. Thereafter, the slug attacks the nearest person each combat round. It continues to attack until wounded. Because of the narrow confines of the tunnels, PCs lose a die from all dodges against the space slug (this is in addition to the die lost due to icy conditions).

Space Slug: DEX 2D; PER 1D; STR 4D. Speed code 3D; Size 4 meters; Combat: teeth (5D damage).

Entry Via the Damaged Hangar

Hangar Bay #2 was completely destroyed by the Imperial bombardment. An emergency airlock has been rigged to permit travel between the pressurized regions of the research station and the hangar area.

Five-man crews of Imperial technicians work around the clock surveying the damage and studying the mix of Verpine and Alliance equipment. The hangar has no power, so the techs rely upon glow rods to provide light.

The technicians carry low-power blaster pistols, but are not combat troops in any sense. They have com units built into their space suits and will call for help at the first sign of hostile activity. They run before they fight, and will only fight if given no other alternative. Any military-type PCs will recognize the techs' non-combative nature and will know that killing these men is not a heroic act. The PCs should instead try to slip past them without resorting to violence. Here are a few ways they can accomplish this.

- Make Difficult *hide/sneak* rolls to slip around the techs under the cover of darkness. If the PCs stage a diversion, lower the difficulty number appropriately.
- Arrange an "accident" for one of the techs that requires his fellow workers to rush him to the medical center.
- Bluff their way past the techs. This requires a good story and a Difficult *con* or *command* roll. You may lower the difficulty number depending on the quality of the PCs' roleplaying.

- Stunning or rendering the techs unconscious. The PCs have two combat rounds to incapacitate all five techs; otherwise somebody sounds the alarm. The base goes up one defstat level and a stormtrooper squad is dispatched to investigate the hangar. The squad arrives in five combat rounds.

If the PCs slip past the techs, a Moderate *security* roll is required to figure out the code for the airlock. A failed roll means the airlock opens but the base goes up one defstat level and stormtroopers are sent to investigate. Success means the Rebels have entered the base unnoticed.

Imperial Technicians: DEX 2D+1; KNO 2D+2, technology 4D+2; PER 2D+2. All other attributes and skills: 2D. Blaster damage: 3D+1.

Entry Via Airlock

Each airlock is a two-meter by two-meter room with two four-inch thick durasteel doors. One door opens directly into space; the other maintains the base's atmospheric integrity. A small viewport located in each door provides a limited line of sight to the other side. Three stormtroopers are stationed inside the base to keep any free Verpine from escaping. Every few minutes one of the guards peers into the airlock as a standard precaution. Control panels for the airlock are located outside each door and inside the airlock itself. A pressure lock keeps both doors from opening at the same time.

PCs making a Difficult *security* roll can override the pressure lock from the outer control panel. If both doors open at the same time, the stormtroopers must make an Easy *Dexterity* roll to keep from being blown out into space. This sudden loss of pressure also causes a base-wide alert, with the life support computer automatically sealing the blast door nearest the airlock.

Stormtroopers and repair personnel arrive in 10 minutes to investigate. During these 10 minutes the PCs must close the airlock, then override the security lock on the blast door by making a Difficult *computer programming* roll. Finally, the Rebels must find a place to hide to avoid the investigating stormtroopers.

Any other plan to gain entry through an airlock should involve effective disguises, superb marksmanship, or use of the Force to have any chance of succeeding.

Entry Via Hangar Bay #1

Suskafoo warns the PCs against entering Shantipole through the undamaged hangar bay, pointing out that at least 25 stormtroopers and a heavy weapon were visible during their observation period. If the Rebels ignore Suskafoo, then nothing but tremendous luck or extravagant use of the Force will keep them alive and the base below defstat three. (Turn to episode five for further details on hangar defenses. Ignore all references to Salin Glek and the B-wings if the PCs go there at this time.)

Shantipole Defenses

The gamemaster's map of Research Station Shantipole (located in the pullout) shows where each stormtrooper detail in the base is stationed, and also contains a map key for quick reference. Unlike the large color map, this map should not be shown to the players.

For the Imperials, guarding Research Station Shantipole is a tactical nightmare. The corridors twist and wind, there



One of the Rebels assigned to Strike Force: Shantipole.

are no clear lines of fire, and the Verpine tunnels are three levels deep and contain over one hundred small chambers.

At present, dozens of stormtroopers are busy pacifying the base. About 90 of these are searching the tunnel complex for hidden Verpine; the rest are working in the hangar, performing routine patrols, or standing guard duty.

When this episode begins the Imperials have no idea that the Rebels are planning a raid. The capture of the the base was bloodless and the Verpine, when cornered, offered no resistance. The ease of the operation has lulled the Imperials into a false sense of security. They are confident that the few Rebels who escaped are busy staying hidden. Even so, Nothos expects to capture every straggler on the base within hours.

Shantipole has been set to operate on a four-level defense status (defstat) system. When the PCs reach Shantipole, the research station is at the lowest defstat level — defstat zero. Whenever the PCs do something to make the Imperials suspicious, the defstat level rises by one.

Defstat Zero: No stormtrooper patrols. Normal guard stations (as marked on map).

Defstat One: Normal guard stations. Stormtrooper squads patrol the station for possible intruders. A roll of 1 on a six-sided die determines that the PCs have run into a patrol. (Roll every time they exit a chamber.) An Easy *hide/sneak* roll must be made by each Rebel to avoid being seen whenever they encounter a patrol or guard post.

Defstat Two: Guard post personnel double. Squads patrol the station for possible intruders. A roll of 1 or 2 on a six-sided die determines that the PCs have run into a patrol. (Roll every time they exit a chamber). A Moderate *hide/sneak* roll must be made by each Rebel to avoid being seen whenever they encounter a patrol or guard post.

Defstat Three: Blast doors seal around the area where the Rebels were last encountered. Codes for blast doors change, requiring a Difficult *security* check to open them. Two heavily-armed squads sweep into the area with orders to capture all intruders.

If the PCs encounter a stormtrooper patrol while the station is at defstat one or two alert, they will be asked to surrender before the troopers attack. During defstat three, stormtrooper patrols blast everything that moves. A battle with a patrol instantly increases the defstat level by one.



Once Inside ...

Stealth should be the Rebels' main concern as they move through the base; they can't just land and start blasting. Death or capture awaits Rebels who try to assault an entire base commandeered by stormtroopers.

If the PCs find they must use force, however, a well-coordinated surgical attack offers the best chance for success. Stormtroopers who survive more than two combat rounds report the Rebel intruders. This raises the base one defstat level.

Eliminating guards has consequences, too. Nothos isn't stupid. He sends a patrol to any guard post which misses its regular com check (troopers must report every 15 minutes). If the guards are missing, the patrol instantly raises the base one defstat level.

The more damage the PCs cause, the tougher it's going to get. If they make a lot of mistakes early they will probably have to contend with a base on full alert. At that point, you'll probably have to give them a little help. For example, a Verpine could sneak them out of a tight spot through a secret tunnel. Alternately, some of the Rebels might get captured and taken to the storage room that now serves as a detention cell (area 26). If this occurs, it's up to you (and the players!) to devise a breakout scenario.

Shantipole Room Descriptions

The following descriptions detail the rooms on the asteroid as they appear when the Rebels arrive. As with Ackbar's Base, the information provided is not an exhaustive list of everything found in the station. It is, instead, a general description of each room's more prominent features.

1. Verpine Tunnel System. The Verpine tunnel system is a sprawling multi-level facility. Three levels tall, the complex contains over one hundred small chambers and twisting passages. Repulsorlift tubes connect the various levels. A hidden passage leads from the surface of the asteroid to a vent on the top level of the tunnel system.

When the PCs first arrive on the base, 90 stormtroopers search for Verpine in the tunnel network. As the station's defstat level goes up, stormtroopers are called away to search other sections of Shantipole. Once the PCs pass

through the vent, roll a six-sided die every so often as they explore the winding passages. On the roll of a 1, the Rebels encounter a stormtrooper squad. On a roll of 6, the PCs find a fleeing Verpine.

2. Airlock #1. For a complete description of the airlocks, see "Entry Via Airlock."

3. Communications Center. Four Imperial technicians work here, busily prepping the Verpine com stations for removal. Three disconnected computers stand in the center of the room. Wires dangle loosely where the computers were once connected with the wall. The techs don't notice the PCs unless the Rebels take some action. The officer in charge has a comlink, but it is lying several feet away on one of the disconnected computers. Suskafoo can access the main computer from this room and retrieve the remaining B-wing data, provided he has six uninterrupted combat rounds to accomplish his work.

4. Rec Area. This recreation chamber contains two tables, six chairs, a food dispenser, and a holo-chess board.

5. Mess. Six long tables, benches, and several half-eaten meals are the only things to be found here.

6. Elevators. These old-style lifts connect the main level to the agrifactory, and the life support center to the auxiliary power chamber on the lower level.

7. Command Center. Assorted techs and officers are seated at computer stations around three of the walls and around a central console island. Data cables run across the floor and dangle from walls. Consoles appear to have been dismantled or moved, and discarded equipment has been dumped in one corner.

The Imperials are busy stripping the memory banks of the station's computers. There are 12 techs here, each oblivious to the world around him. Rebels making an Easy *con* roll can actually walk through the command center unchallenged.

From inside this room, the Rebels can control every blast door on the asteroid. Any attack on the command center instantly raises the base to defstat three. Suskafoo can access the main computer from this room and retrieve the remaining B-wing data, provided he has six uninterrupted combat rounds to accomplish his work.

8. Computer Room. A simple one-man computer station is recessed into the back wall. Seated here, a lone technician works quietly trying to access the B-wing data from the main computer (which is actually located in a sealed chamber on the lower level).

From this terminal the Rebels can program every system on the base. Any fighting in this room, however, is sure to attract the attention of the 12 technicians in the command center and raise the base defstat three.

Suskafoo can retrieve the remaining B-wing data from this room, provided he has six uninterrupted combat rounds to accomplish his work.

9. Living Quarters. Overturned bunks, clothes hastily tossed aside — it's obvious the research station residents were totally surprised by the Imperial attack. This large open chamber has beds laid out in rows, barrack style.

10. Airlock #2. For a complete description of the airlocks, see "Entry Via Airlock." (Note, while the PCs are wandering the station, Salin Glek docks the stolen *Out Runner* here and proceeds to hangar bay #1.)

11. Life Boat Bay. The life boat bay is empty, except for the stormtrooper guards. Launch ports for six life boats are built into the wall. All six are vacant, used by the base personnel to escape the Imperial assault.

12. Medical Center. Eight overturned beds lie on the floor, their sheets torn and scorched. Two bacta-tanks with smashed face plates stand in the room's center. Around them, bacta healing fluid pools on the floor. Rebels who bother to search the room find three medpacs. A computer station sits against one wall, from which Suskafoo can retrieve the remaining B-wing data.

13. Repulsor Beam Control. Two repulsor beam generators sit in the center of the room. Verpine use repulsor beams to protect their asteroid colonies from smashing into other bits of space debris. A four-man computer station, occupied by four Imperial technicians, sits against one wall. The techs are preparing to dismantle the beam computers.

14. Main Generator. This base, like most Verpine colonies, uses a boron power generator. The generator sits unattended in one corner atop a meter-thick slab of permacite, with two duplicate computer stations facing it. A pressure pipe leads directly from the generator, across the ceiling, and to the power converter in the room beyond.

PCs can set four cubes of detonite to destroy the generator. A Moderate *demolition* roll is needed to set the timer for 30 minutes. If the roll fails, the detonite will explode sooner than the Rebels expect. Lower the set time by one minute for every number less than the difficulty number, to a minimum of 15 minutes. If the roll is missed by more than 15, the detonite explodes as the PC works with it, causing 8D damage to everyone in the room. In this case, the generator does not explode because the detonite wasn't set properly.

15. Power Converter. Excess energy transfers from the main generator into the converter unit for use by secondary systems such as lighting and gravity synthesizers.

16. Life Support. Atmospheric pressure, composition, and circulation all originate here, along with water recycling systems. A large computer sits unattended in the room's center. Shutting down air-flow to selected portions of the

base requires a Difficult *Technology* roll (but this will not affect stormtroopers since they wear self-contained environment armor). Shutting down the entire system is as simple as one well-placed blaster bolt. In either case, disrupting life support results in an alarm sounding at the command center, raising the defstat level by one.

17. Atmosphere Generator. The atmosphere generator responds directly to commands from the life support computer and works mainly to produce argon. Argon, only a trace element in most atmospheres, is critical to Verpine health.

Pipes from the generator lead directly into life support. There, the life support computer distributes the argon throughout the base via a series of ducts and fans.

Destruction of the atmosphere generator will set off an alarm which raises the base defstat by one level. The Verpine won't begin to feel the effects of argon deprivation for several days.

18. Pilots' Rec Room. Six Imperial pilots are resting here. See episode five for further details.

19. Hangar Bay #1. This hangar is undamaged. The climax of this adventure occurs here. When the PCs come within sight of hangar bay #1, turn to episode five and refer to the map in the pullout.

20. Storage. Broken boxes and crates lie strewn about this room. All weapons and heavy equipment have already been removed, but smaller items still remain. Use your discretion as to what the PCs can find, gauging your generosity by the success they have had up to this point.

21. Maintenance Shop. A variety of tools, diagnostic computers, and vehicle parts can be found here.

22. Damaged Maintenance Shop. Nothing remains in this totally wrecked chamber. A temporary airlock has been established within the passage that leads from the shop to the inner corridor.

23. Hangar Bay #2. The initial bombardment by the assaulting forces all but obliterated this hangar bay and the adjacent shop area. Five Imperial techs in full vacsuits examine the damage. For more information of this hangar bay, turn to "Entry Via the Damaged Hangar."

24. Shield Generator. This unit controls the magnetic fields that maintain the atmospheric integrity between the hangar bays and space. To shut down the shield generator the Rebels must cut the power lines to all three power cells and then divert or destroy the generator's main power cable. Locating the main power cable requires a Moderate *Technology* roll.

When the magnetic field drops, an alarm sounds throughout the base and blast doors adjacent to the hangar automatically close. Stormtroopers must make an Easy *Dexterity* roll to activate their mag-boots and keep from being blown into the void. The techs have no such option.

25. Power Cells. In case of an energy failure, these cells can provide up to 72 hours of backup power for the shield generator. There are three power cell units, each tied to the shield generator by its own network of wires.

26. Detention Area. Before the Imperial attack, this storage room held spare parts for the shop. The Imperials are now using this chamber as a detention area. Two guards stand near the door, armed with blaster rifles (damage 5D).

Seven Verpine sit quietly against the far wall. These Verpine are the configuration team which developed the original design for the two-man B-wing. The Imperials have yet to discover the prisoners' importance. These are also the same Verpine which appear in episode five. At the first opportunity, they explain to the PCs that the B-wings are in working order. If the Rebels rescue the prisoners before going to the hangar, then there will be no Verpine in the bay in episode five.

Also, if Pollard "died heroically" in episode two, he will be found here when the Rebels arrive. He is wounded, but will do all he can to aid the PCs.

27. Airlock #3. For a complete description of the airlocks, see "Entry Via Airlock."

28. Agrifactory. The agrifactory is topped by a giant dome. Life support maintains a sweltering tropical temperature in the agrifactory.

Rows and rows of six-foot tall dividers, called grow walls, line the room. Each grow wall is covered in *magenge*, a type of fungus. Magenge is light green in color and sweet to the taste. It peels easily from the grow walls and is best if eaten while still moist. The Verpine live exclusively on magenge.

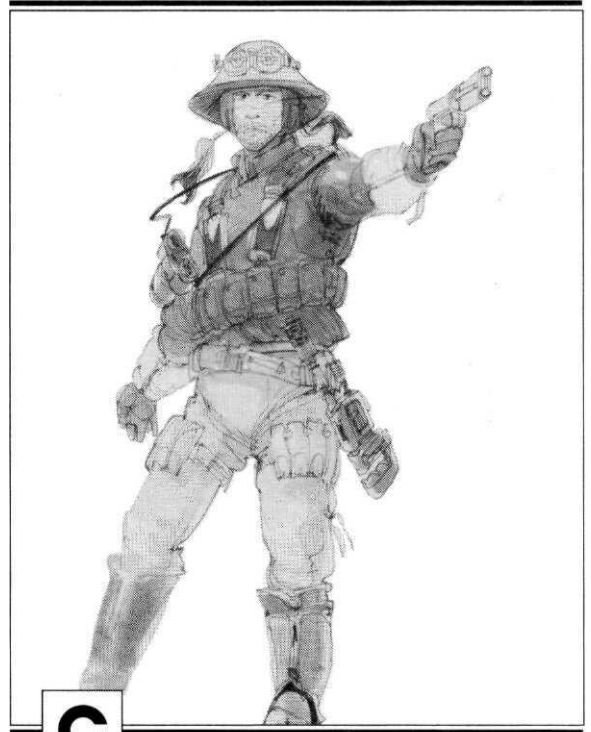
Hiding in the agrifactory isn't difficult. There are hundreds of grow walls, a giant water distribution complex in one corner, and piles of solar collector panels to hide behind.

Two elevators lead to the agrifactory. A detail of stormtroopers are stationed here to catch escaping Verpine.

29. Storage. Broken boxes and crates lie strewn about this room. All weapons and heavy equipment have already been removed, but smaller items still remain. Use your discretion as to what the PCs can find, gauging your generosity by the success they have had up to this point.

30. Research Lab. This room was where the most of the configuration work on the updated B-wings took place. It is also the first room disassembled by Nothos's agents. Nothing remains here. Every computer station, every storage disk, every chair has been removed and loaded on the Imperial shuttle in hangar bay #1.

31. Auxiliary Power. The auxiliary power chamber can be reached either by elevator or through the lower level maintenance room. Auxiliary power, created by converting excess energy from the agrifactory solar cells, can supply the station with enough power to remain operational for limited periods.



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Can the Rebel heroes survive the dangers of the fallen research station?

32. Hangar Bay Maintenance Center. A vehicle lift leads to hangar bay #1 above. Against one wall is an asteroid hopper flipped over and mounted on two braces. A variety of engine parts lie scattered across the floor about the hopper. Several computer terminals dot the outer edges of the room, and two tables piled with tools and machine parts rest in the corner. If the PCs arrive here before reaching hangar bay #1, they interrupt Glek and the techs as they load the second B-wing onto the lift. (The first B-wing is already aboard the shuttle.)

Ending the Episode

This episode ends with the PCs reaching hangar bay #1 and preparing to recover a combat ship. Turn to episode five.

E

pisode Five Battle In Hangar Bay #1

Summary

The Rebels assault the heavily guarded hangar bay #1 to procure a combat vehicle. Visible craft include an oversized Imperial shuttle, four TIE fighters, and a Mon Cal freighter. Unseen, the two prototype B-wings are stored in the shuttle's hold for transport to an Imperial facility.

Even though their original mission was to retake Ackbar's freighter, the PCs can take any ship they want. Before they reach the ships, though, the PCs must defeat the stormtroopers stationed here.

The episode ends with the PCs flying out of the hangar in one or more captured vehicles, preferably just seconds before the main generator explodes (if they successfully set the detonite).

Hangar Bay #1

The Rebels reach the hangar through either one of two tunnels, or by taking the vehicle elevator from the lower level.

When they reach the hangar, the PCs find that the situation has taken a dramatic twist. The traitor Salin Glek directs four technicians loading boxes onto an Imperial shuttle. The boxes all bear markings that identify them as part of the Shantipole project. See the map in the pullout section for an illustration of the chamber.

The following read aloud assumes that the Imperials have not gone to an alert status higher than defstat one. If they are at higher alert status, or if the Rebels have made it known that they are headed toward the hangar, the stormtroopers prepare a special welcome for them (see "The Stormtroopers on Alert").

The hangar bay is immense and bustling with activity. The tunnel you are standing in enters the room from the side. A metal catwalk forms an awning some 10 meters above the floor. Three other tunnels exit from the bay. To your right, the hangar control tower juts out from the stone wall. Two officers stand inside, directing the activity below. Across the bay, on the catwalk, three stormtroopers stand by a tripod-mounted repeating blaster. Near them, four TIE fighters hang suspended from a temporary TIE docking rack. Twenty stormtroopers move about the hangar's floor. Three of these guard a group of Verpine off to one side. A familiar squid-faced Quarren directs four technicians as they load boxes onto an oversized Imperial shuttle. A Mon Cal freighter is parked on the far side of the bay.

It's important to realize that this is a two-level hangar. The catwalk, control tower, and TIE fighters are all on the upper level. The hangar floor, entry tunnels, Mon Cal freighter, Imperial shuttle and maintenance lift are all on ground level. Six ladders, indicated on the map, connect the catwalk with the hangar floor.

Below are brief descriptions of the more important locations in the hangar and the various characters found here.

Mon Cal Freighter. This ship sits unattended, its loading ramp down. The landing gear keeps the ship suspended about one meter above ground, so characters can crawl underneath if they want. The craft is in working order. Use the stats for *Out Runner* from episode one, or if you have a copy of the *Tatooine Manhunt* adventure you can use the stats for *Alabak's Gold*.



S

stormtroopers stand ready while an Imperial officer supervises the loading of the prototypes.

Imperial Shuttle. This oversized shuttle has been modified to serve as a cargo transport. This craft requires both a pilot and a co-pilot to operate. The rear hatch is open, and resting in the huge hold are the two prototype B-wings. The RPG stats follow.

Oversized Imperial Shuttle: Hyperdrive multiplier: x1. Sublight speed 2D; maneuverability zero; hull 3D. Weapons: Four laser cannons (fire linked); fire control 1D; combined damage 4D. Shields: 2D.

Catwalk. This standard metal-grill catwalk has safety rails running along its outer edge. Ladders connecting the catwalk to the hangar floor are spaced at even intervals.

Maintenance Lift. This elevator moves small ships and equipment between the maintenance area and the hangar. It takes three combat rounds to switch levels.

Control Tower. Two doors connect the control tower with the catwalk, one on each side. The tower's window is made of pure transparisteel and is impervious to blaster fire. The doors have a strength of 3D. They can be destroyed by an incapacitated damage result or better. Two Imperial naval officers are stationed here. They have the same stats as stormtrooper officers, but without the armor bonuses.

Equipment. Two piles of captured Rebel equipment, not indicated on the map, are in the hangar. The first pile is stacked near the shuttle's rear loading ramp. The second sits beside the maintenance lift. These piles provide medium cover during combat.

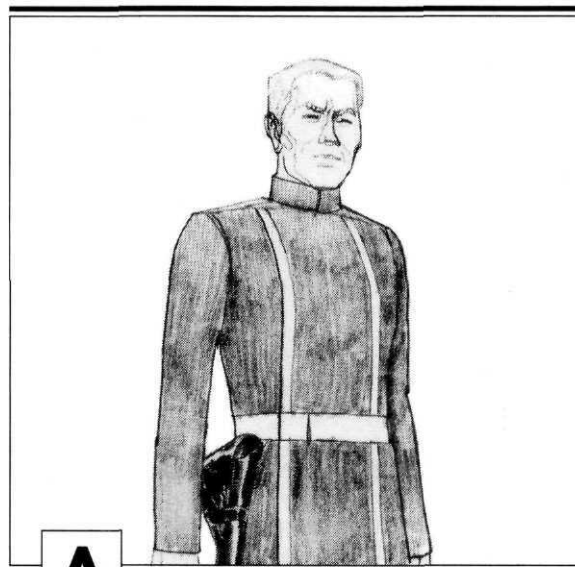
B-wing Prototypes. When the PCs arrive, both prototype ships have already been loaded aboard the shuttle. Both craft are in working order, which should surprise both Suskafoo and the PCs, and can be launched from the shuttle in space. They figure this out either by examining the craft or by having one of the Verpine prisoners tell them. Note, if the PCs visited the maintenance area before coming to the hangar, they interrupted Glek and the technicians as they transported the second B-wing from the lower level to the shuttle.

Verpine Prisoners and Stormtrooper Guards. These seven Verpine were captured by the Imperials after the base fell. They are being watched by a stormtrooper detail near the front of the Mon Cal freighter. At the first opportunity, these Verpine tell the PCs that the B-wings are in working condition. Note, if the PCs met these Verpine in the detention cell they will not be here at this time.

Two Stormtrooper Squads. Two squads are presently assigned to the hangar. Each squad consists of eight stormtroopers and one officer. Officers are distinguished by a red shoulder guard and have plus 1D in all skills and attributes. One squad is stationed near the tunnel that leads to the maintenance shop; the other squad stands guard at the rear of the shuttle.

Heavy Weapons Stormtroopers. Three specially trained stormtroopers stand beside a repeating blaster situated atop the catwalk just to the right of the TIE docking rack. The gun starts out pointed toward the hangar opening, but takes only two combat rounds to turn into the room. The gun fires once per combat round and does 6D damage.

Salin Glek and Four Techs. Glek directs these techs as they load the remaining pieces of Project Shantipole aboard the shuttle. Unknown to the PCs, he has docked their ship, *Out Runner*, at airlock #2. Note, if Glek was



A

n Imperial officer.

given the holo-disk in episode one, then he has it in his belt pouch at this time.

The Stormtroopers On Alert

If the Imperials are expecting the Rebels, they deploy so that they can fire into the tunnel the PCs approach from. Where possible, the stormtroopers stand behind partial cover. Glek retreats to the pilots' rec room in this situation.

When the PCs enter the room, the stormtroopers open fire in unison. Five stormtroopers use a combined action to fire at the first Rebel entering the hangar. See "The Battle" for further details on how the NPCs behave.

The Battle

PCs making an Easy *hide/sneak* roll can observe the hangar from the tunnel entrance without being seen. Any Rebel entering the hangar must make a Difficult *hide/sneak* roll to avoid detection.

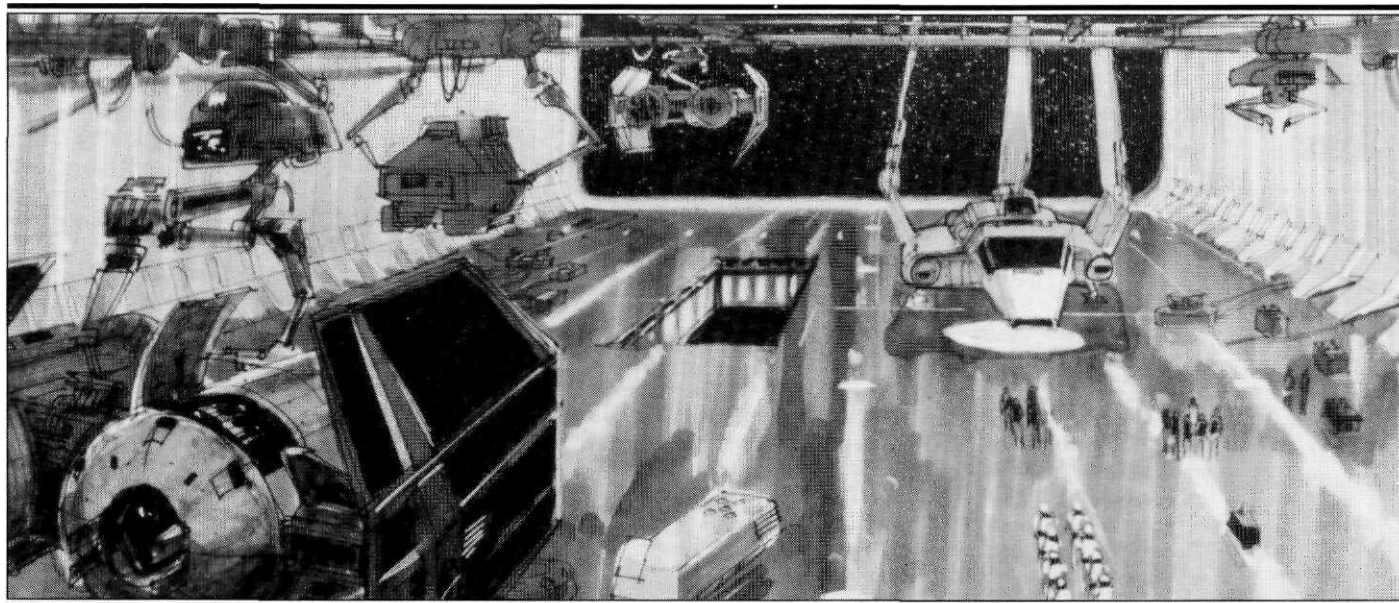
If a PC is spotted, a stormtrooper points and shouts, "Look, Rebels!" The other stormtroopers are surprised for one round; after that it's open season on the PCs.

If the Rebels aren't spotted, let them study the situation for as long as they want. However, don't forget any detonite charges they may have set. Your players should realize that by stealing the shuttle they can actually save the B-wings, a goal beyond Ackbar's wildest dreams. In fact, the prototypes are combat ready and can be used to break the Verpine fleet out of the asteroid field. Suskafoo also insists upon saving the Verpine prisoners.

To defeat the stormtroopers the Rebels must hit quickly and hard. A long, drawn-out battle allows reinforcements to arrive. Below is a summary of the NPCs' tactics during the battle.

The Stormtroopers' Tactics: The PCs biggest obstacle are the two squads of stormtroopers. One round after the shooting starts, both squads open fire. They fall prone or take cover wherever possible.

During the battle, stormtroopers of the same squad use combined fire if their squad leader is still alive (and not incapacitated). Without a leader, the stormtroopers simply fire at the nearest Rebel without using combined fire. They fight to the death.



Imperial Officers' Tactics: The round after the firing starts, the officers lock both control tower doors. Thereafter, they use the hangar bay com system to direct three stormtroopers in combined fire against one Rebel. They will not call for help unless things look extremely bad, as defeating these intruders will earn them points with Commander Nothos. If the PCs break into the tower, the officers surrender.

Salin Glek and the Techs' Tactics: If Glek survives the first round of combat, he uses a full combat dodge to dive into the shuttle. The techs break for the pilots' rec room. Glek spends the next five combat rounds preparing the shuttle for flight. On the eighth combat round, he starts the repulsorlift engines. On the tenth round, he lifts off.

Heavy Weapons Team's Tactics: If the PCs don't knock out the repeating blaster immediately, they're in real trouble. Beginning in round three, the heavy weapons team fires the repeating blaster at the most dangerous-looking Rebel. The entire team must be killed or incapacitated to silence the blaster.

TIE Pilots' Tactics: Six TIE pilots are relaxing in the pilots' rec room when the shooting starts. On round two all six rush out. Four run toward the catwalk to reach their TIE fighters. Two head toward the shuttle. It takes four rounds to reach a TIE, two to reach the shuttle. Two rounds after the pilots reach the TIEs, the starfighters launch. See Salin Glek's tactics for details on launching the shuttle. Once launched, the shuttle flies straight for Nothos's flagship. TIEs which escape circle the asteroid. Rebels who fly a captured ship are attacked by the TIEs as soon as they leave the hangar.

TIE Pilots: DEX 2D+1; MEC 3D, starship piloting 5D, starship gunnery 4D; STR 2D.

Verpine Tactics: On the first round of combat, the Verpine prisoners scurry and hide. Thereafter, use the Ver-

pine to balance the combat. For example, if the PCs start to lose, have the Verpine create diversions, using their own lives, if necessary, to give the Rebels a chance.

Ten rounds after the battle opens, reinforcements start arriving. Roll a six-sided die at the start of each round to see how many show up.

- 1-2: No reinforcements
- 3-5: Two stormtroopers
- 6: Stormtrooper squad

The PCs can commandeer any ship in the hangar, including TIE fighters. If any TIEs escaped during the battle, the PCs must fight them as they break out into space. Refer to the battle in episode one for statistics and special rules for fighting in the asteroid field.

Ideally, the battle ends with the PCs fleeing in a stolen ship (or ships) just seconds before their detonite charges explode and Shantipole is consumed in a tremendous fireball.

Break Out

Once the PCs have commandeered a ship and started it up, read:

Your ship lurches forward, slipping through the atmosphere shield and out into the asteroid field. Back in the hangar bay, two more squads of stormtroopers pour in through the tunnels. Some fire from extreme range, but their shots bounce off your ship's hull.

The sublight engines kick in and Research Station Shantipole disappears behind you. Then an orange explosion rocks your craft and Shantipole is no more.

Seconds pass. Your radio crackles to life. You recognize Ackbar's voice as he says, "Good work strike team, proceed with the original plan. May the Force be with you."

E

pisode Six To Run the Gauntlet

Summary

The Rebels fly through the G147 corridor to the weakest point in the blockade net. The Verpine fleet has arrived ahead of them and is locked in a one-sided battle with an Imperial Nebulon-B escort frigate. Unless the PCs intervene quickly, both Ackbar and the fleet will be lost. This episode includes a starfighter combat scenario with modified rules for battling a capital-class ship.

The Situation

As time ticked away and Imperial patrols closed in, Ackbar decided to move the fleet into the corridor ahead of schedule. Long-range sensors indicated that the Imperial frigate guarding the corridor was moving away, probably to fortify the more obvious route leading from Shantipole to the field's edge. When Research Station Shantipole exploded, Ackbar ordered the fleet full speed ahead. He hoped the Rebel strike team had commandeered a combat craft fast enough to catch up with them because there was no slowing the fleet now.

But Ackbar didn't count on the combat genius of Commander Nothos. Nothos figured out Ackbar's plan, and by ordering the frigate to leave its post, set his trap for the

Verpine fleet. Unknown to them, he slowly moved his own ship in to replace the frigate, approaching from the sensor-blind asteroid storm that frames one edge of the corridor.

Now Nothos's flagship, a combat-ready Nebulon-B, has engaged the Verpine fleet. Confident that the unarmed ships cannot harm him, Nothos leisurely begins to destroy all but the largest command vessels. He has ordered the rest of his blockade to capture the Rebels who destroyed Shantipole, expecting them to break through the field at a spot closer to the now-destroyed research station. That simple flaw in his logic could prove to be Nothos's undoing, provided the Rebels can think of a way to distract his ship while the Verpine jump to lightspeed.

The Verpine Shooting Gallery

As the Rebels near the end of the asteroid corridor, read:

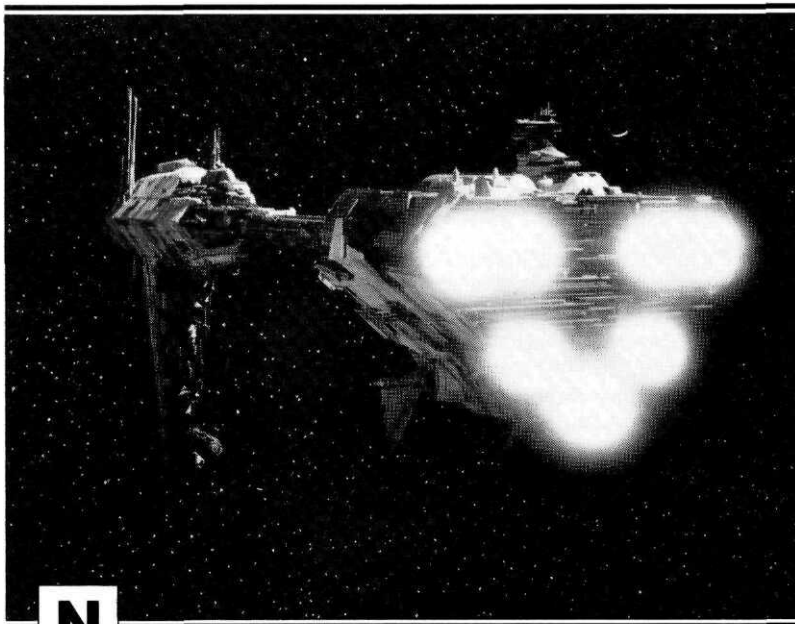
The asteroid field thins as you reach the end of the natural corridor. Moments later you break clear into open space and see a chilling sight. The Verpine fleet is already out of the field and engaged in a one-sided battle with an escort frigate! Your com units pick up a broadcast from the Imperial ship; "Rebel scum! I am Imperial Commander Bane Nothos, and my flagship will take great pleasure destroying your fleet one transport at a time until Ackbar and his project team surrender. And in case you think I am bluffing..." A barrage of blaster fire leaps from the frigate to punctuate the Imperial's statement and a fully-loaded Verpine transport explodes into flaming shards.

To save the fleet the PCs must distract the Nebulon-B. This means giving it something to shoot at other than defenseless Verpine ships. Suskafoo speculates that "A good clean hit on the main engine should render the frigate's propulsion and maneuvering systems inoperative long enough for the fleet to escape." Questions about how Suskafoo knows this draw one of his long-winded technical replies.

It's likely that the PCs have the shuttle and the B-wings. If so, Suskafoo points out that the B-wings were specifically designed to pack enough power to disable an Imperial frigate's engines, provided they can get close enough for a point-blank shot. The B-wings can be launched out of the shuttle's rear cargo hatch.

Other ships the PCs might be flying include the Mon Cal freighter, *Out Runner*, or TIE/rc fighters.

If the PCs have more ships than they can man, let the rescued Verpine prisoners help out. Each Verpine has starship piloting skills of 2D+2. They will fly any ships the PCs ask them to, but they refuse to fire weapons.



N

othos's Nebulon-B command frigate guards the Rebels' escape route.

Once the Rebels are ready to attack, turn to the section which matches the combat system you're using.

RPG Starship Combat

The Nebulon-B is a sizable ship, carrying a crew of almost 1,000. The PCs don't have enough firepower to destroy it, but they can hurt it, as the engines are especially vulnerable to point-blank hits. It takes three direct hits from blaster cannons, or one well-placed proton torpedo or concussion missile, to temporarily knock out the frigate's engines. This won't be easy, though. Four turbo laser batteries guard the frigate's rear arc.

The battle begins with the Nebulon-B between the fleet and the Rebels. Each round the Nebulon-B fires upon the fleet. For purposes of combat, the fleet has no effect on the battle. Instead, use the fleet to motivate your players. For example, if they hesitate to attack Nothos's flagship, let it destroy a Verpine freighter.

The Rebels begin at long range to the frigate. Every round they can close, until they reach short range. Their weapons will only affect the frigate at short range, and then only if they aim for the engine housing. To hit the fragile engine housing requires a difficulty roll of 6 or better. Any hit that causes actual damage (heavily damaged or better) counts as a direct hit for purposes of knocking out the engine systems.

Four turbolasers fire upon the Rebel ships as they close. In addition to damaging the vessels, every hit that causes heavy damage or better knocks the craft back one range step, to a maximum of long range.

When the Rebels accomplish their goal, three direct hits from their energy weapons or one direct hit from a missile or torpedo, turn to "The Big Conclusion."

Nebulon-B Escort Frigate: Hyperdrive multiplier: x2. Sublight speed 2D; maneuverability 1D; engine hull 5D. Weapons: four turbolaser batteries (fire separately); fire control 3D; damage 4D.

Two-man B-wing: Hyperdrive multiplier: x2. Sublight speed 3D+2; maneuverability 1D; hull 4D. Weapons: Two laser cannons (fire linked); fire control 1D; damage 7D.

Three ion cannons (fire linked); fire control 4D; damage 4D. Proton torpedo launcher (8 shots); fire control 3D; damage 9D. Shields: 2D+2.

The new B-wing requires both a pilot and a gunner. Weapons may be fired by the gunner only, and only one system may fire in a round. In addition, the two-man B-wing's construction gives its gunner a special bonus. When the B-wing's pilot conducts a full evasion, the gunner adds only *half* the evasion roll to his difficulty number (round up).

Star Warriors Combat

To use this battle as a *Star Warriors* scenario, you'll need counters from this adventure or the boxed game to represent the ships the PCs are piloting. Use a Star Destroyer counter from the boxed game to represent the escort frigate. You also need the map, markers, and ship's log record sheets provided with the *Star Warriors* game.

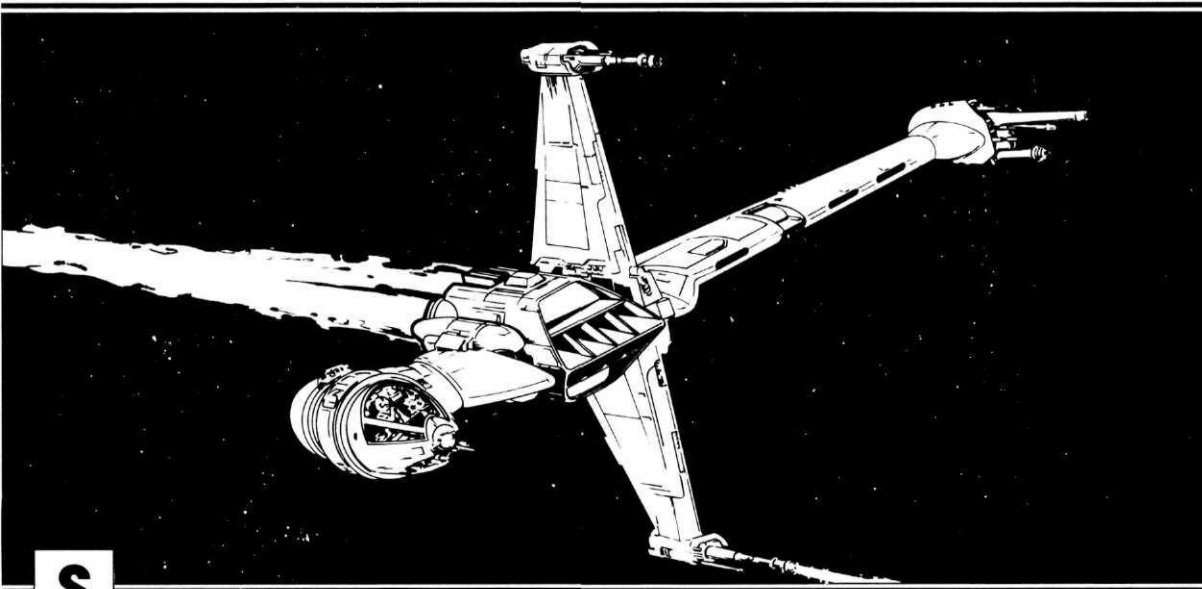
Required Rules: Standard Games rules, Star Destroyer rules (23), and missile rules (22) are required for this scenario.

Set-Up: Place the Star Destroyer marker that represents Nothos's escort frigate in hex 2623 facing hex 2622. The PCs may set-up their ships anywhere between xx29 and xx40.

Game End: The game is over when the escort frigate takes four structure points and is dead in space, or when the last PC ship is destroyed.

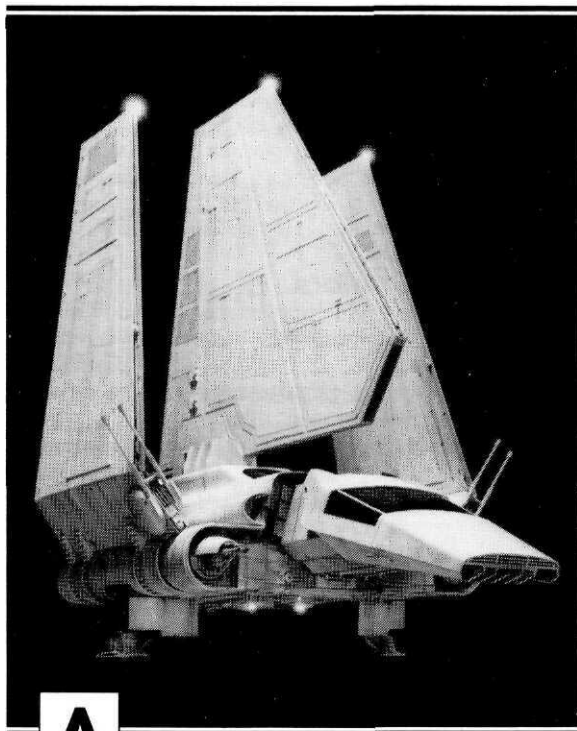
Special Rules: Treat the Nebulon-B escort as an Imperial Star Destroyer with the following exceptions.

- The Nebulon-B has only 3 shields and 4 structure points.
- The gunners have a rating of 4D.
- The Nebulon-B's maximum speed is 6, turn number is 3.
- After it receives 4 structure points, the frigate is dead in space.
- The frigate's body rating is 8 for purposes of special weapons fire.
- A special weapon has no effect on a frigate unless it inflicts 6 or more body points of damage in a single shot. If it does, the frigate loses one structure point.



S

layn and Korpil, two Verpine colonies, developed the B-wing starfighter.



A

n Imperial shuttle.

B-WING STAR WARRIORS STATISTICS

Ship Type:	B-wing Starfighter	Slip:	5
Pilot's Guns:	—	Roll:	6*
Gunner's		Jink:	6
Wpns:	DHF, TMF(1)	Bank:	5
Body:	11/9	Overturn:	13
Speed Max:	5	Overspeed:	7
Turn No's:		Accelerate:	4
1	1/1	Over Accel.:	10
2	2/2	Decelerate:	5
3	3/3	Over Decel.:	12
4	4/3	Damage Ctrl:	10
5	5/4	Pinpoint Fire:	3
6	6/5	Snap Fire:	4
7	7/6	Targeting:	4
Stabilizer No.:	4	Angle Shields:	2
1/2-Loop:	8	No. of Shields:	6
		No. of Aux. Fbw.:	5
		R2 Unit?:	No

• The frigate uses only the first column of the "Star Destroyer Attack Table." It has no ion guns.

The Nebulon-B continues flying toward the top of the map where the Verpine fleet is located. It stops when it reaches the map edge. From that point on the Nebulon-B automatically destroys one Verpine ship per turn. The Verpine fleet is not shown on the map.

The moment the Nebulon-B loses four structure points, turn to the section titled "The Big Conclusion" below.

The Big Conclusion

After your players have damaged the frigate (with the set amount of direct hits or structure points) read:

Your last shot explodes along the frigate's engine casing, causing electric-blue sparks to dance over the scarred metal. A rumble tears through the Nebulon-B, and then the engines go dead.

The hail of fire from the ship's laser batteries tell you that the frigate isn't completely vulnerable, however. You direct the Verpine fleet to prepare to jump to lightspeed. Ackbar's voice comes over your com unit loud and clear. "Nice shooting strike team. We owe you our lives. Now let's get out of here. Our sensors indicate that the rest of the blockade is headed this way."

But before you engage your own hyperdrives, another voice cuts through the cheers. It is a cold, menacing voice. "Savor this victory while you may, Rebels. Remember the name of Commander Bane Nothos, for one day I shall find you and make you pay — and dearly — for what you have done."

If Nothos says more you do not hear it, for you follow the last Verpine transport into hyperspace.

Epilog

Back at the Rebel rendezvous point, injured Rebels are treated immediately. Ackbar is promoted to Admiral two days later at a ceremony presided over by Mon Mothma herself. Before the ceremony, Ackbar asks the PCs and Suskafoo to act as his honor guard. Afterward, Ackbar offers the team commissions as Rebel officers.

Rewards

For rescuing Ackbar, saving the B-wings and disabling the Nebulon-B, give each player 10 skill points. Reduce the number of skill points given by two for each part of the mission they failed to accomplish. Feel free to give players an additional two points for exceptional play. At this time you should also replace any Force points spent during the adventure.



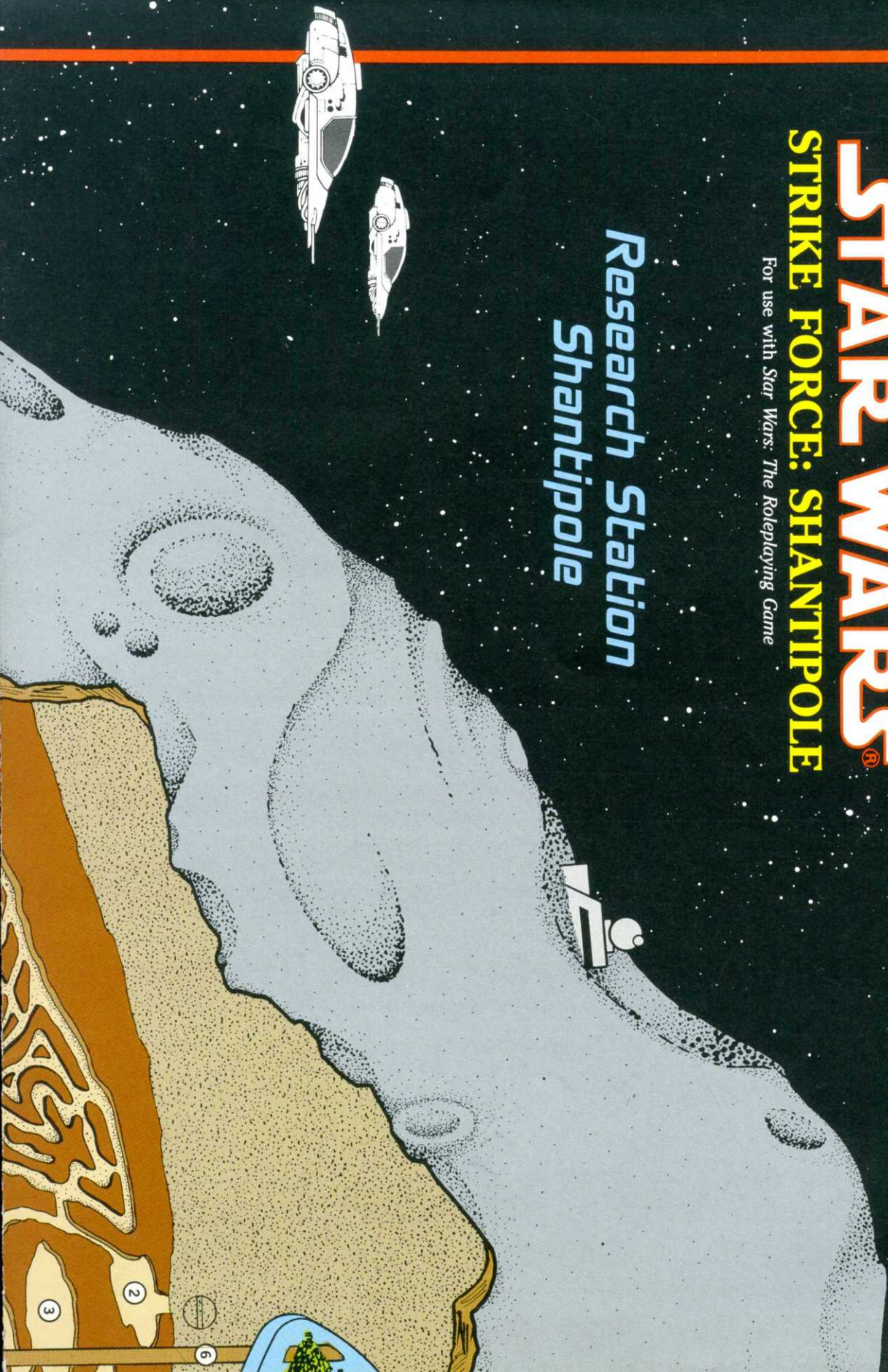
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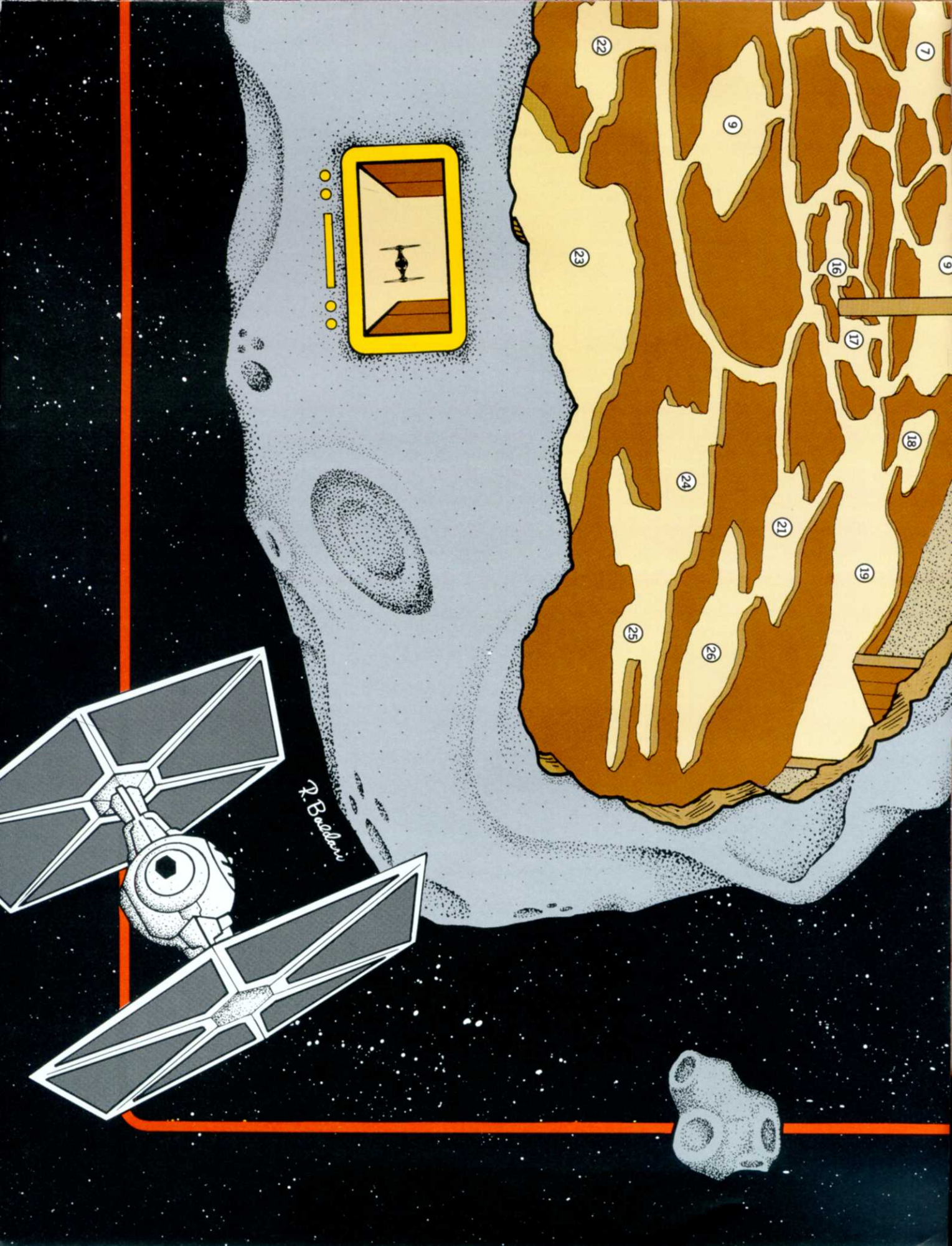
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*Research Station
Shantipole*

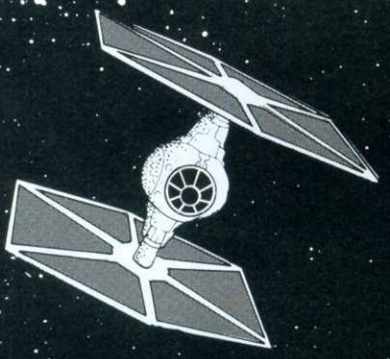




R. Babbler

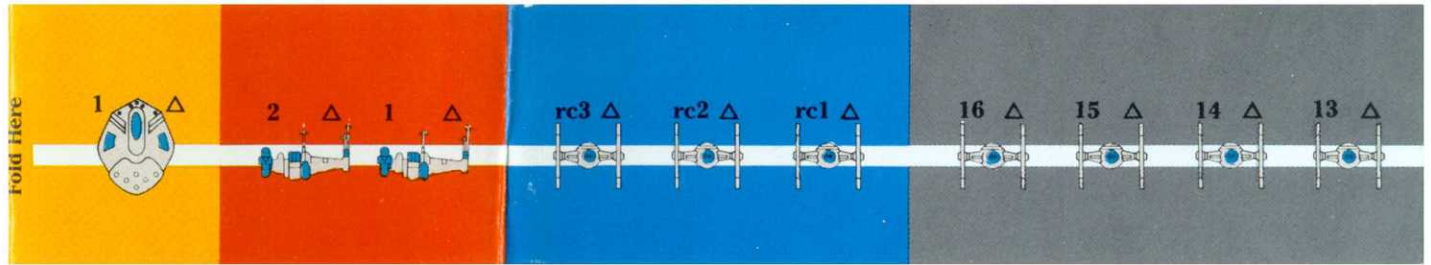
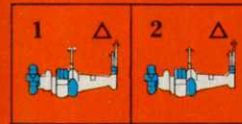
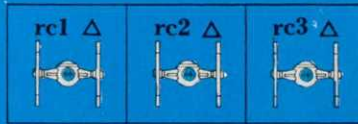
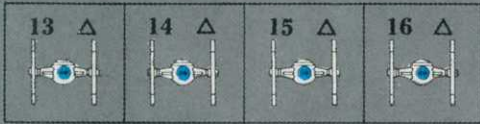


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1831/102 ... 4/1805



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2. Glue the folded strip together, attaching counter fronts to backs.

3. Cut apart each counter along the solid black lines.



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