

Baggage, A Project Members' best friend and worst enemy.

In the Morrow Project, the players have the bestest, newest and most plentiful gear going. These unfortunate, but by common status, very wealthy people are waking up in a strange new world. When you consider that the average MP member has approximately 45lbs, of brand new gear on them, this is a substantial source of wealth.

The items that we in our advanced society take for granted such as, radios, flashlights, compasses and the like; are almost magical in a primitive society. Even if the survivors have seen or used an item like what our heroes possess, their's are shinier. It will not be uncommon for a Project Member to be killed for their boots. This is a fact that eludes most players. As a game master, we cannot ignore the giggle factor inherent in this.

To take this into a whole new realm of giggles, I encourage my players to come up with a list of personal items, and make two copies, one for them, one for me. This represents ties to their characters past. Some examples include:

Pictures of the family, pocketknives, souvenir coins, under wear etc.

This is to fit into a container roughly the size of a styrofoam beer cooler, 24"x 18"x 18".

I do put a limit on the amount of metal content in their "personal storage", to 2.5kg or 5lbs. This prevents them from bringing in their favorite UZI, grenade launcher that Mom gave them, etc. To put more into it greatly unbalances the magnetic field of the hyper-sleep bed.

When combined with the personal gear and weapons that most teams are already blessed (burdened) with, this can make for an interesting time of it. As noted in the design notes of many Project modules and resources, many teams will fight to the last man to defend a vehicle and gear that will never move or work again.

I also encourage teams to do at least a sight inventory of their individual equipment caches. They will inevitably take even more gear from these caches with them. That Commando Ranger that had so much room in it for a small recon team, all of a sudden, gets very crowded. This gets hilarious in the following anecdote:

The V-150 with 50cal., MG and its 5 man team. This vehicle is packed with as much extra ammo, explosives and grenades as it can hold. Two party members are acting as brush scouts on MP Motorcycles. The team is parked on the prairie at dawn.

In the distance the guard on duty sees a dust cloud approaching. Using his handy binoculars, he sees 5 mad-max specials closing in on them from the east. Upon alerting the team, the two brush scouts, attempt to flank the approaching vehicles. The team sniper, sets up in place to defend the campsite.

Prior to this, the team reloads as much gear as they can BACK into the vehicle. Two team members mount up in the V-150 to break thru the middle. The gunner is doing well until the .50 jams. The driver elects to perform a boot-legger turn, and fire a long burst at the approaching baddies. This is a bad time for a fumble, guess what he rolls. After (graciously) allowing a luck roll, which he fails, the following occurs:

The gunner decides this is a bad idea and bails. The driver fires his long burst alright, into the vehicle, as it begins to flip over sideways. This guys' luck is just starting to go bad however. Several rounds from his long UZI burst penetrate items in his cargo area that don't react well to bullets. Suffice to say, with the load of munitions present it takes 2 hours for the wreckage to cool off enough to approach. Oh by the way, the others completely destroyed the attacking vehicles. I guess you had to be there.

This is only one example of a team equating its gear and vehicles to some type of invulnerability. The most successful character I've ever seen was a Texas Ranger, that carried all of his necessary gear in one set of saddlebags. His philosophy was, If I can't carry it without a horse, or vehicle, I don't need it.

He did take advantage of the high-tech goodies when available, but didn't rely on them. Of course, as a survivor, he did belong to the school of thought that goes as follows:

Bang (head shot)
Bang(head shot)
Bang (head shot)

“Come out, we don't want to hurt anyone!!” George Robison.

The assignment of vehicles to a team is very important. With many recon teams I've started up over the years the preferred mode of transport was something fast, maneuverable, and quiet. My choices are as follows:

Mule/Quad runner

Crew: 1
Length: 2.5m
Width: 1m
Height: 0.8m
Ground Clearance: .4m
Turning Radius: 2.0m
Max. Road Speed: 84KPH
Fording Depth: .5m
Climb Gradient: 70%
Vertical Obstacle: .5m
Trench: .5m
Armament: None.

Dirt Bikes

Crew: 1
Length: 1.5m
Width: 0.4m
Height: 1.5m
Ground Clearance: .5m
Turning Radius: 1.8m
Max. Road Speed: 100KPH
Fording Depth: .5m
Climb Gradient: 70%
Vertical Obstacle: .5m
Trench: 1.2m
Armament: None.

These come with a smaller MP fusion pack, and tool kits. In the place of gas gauge, odometer, speedometer etc, I included an Autonav, CBR Counter, and radio. The mike and headphones are in the helmet. This meets the recon directives but just doesn't give you much room for storage. I do this out of genuine generosity to my players. They will inevitably trade up to a larger vehicle at the first opportunity. Their loss.

Of course, those of you who have been reading this with the cheese eating grin on your face also know, that the following is also a problem:

1. No Armor.
2. No protection from the elements.
3. No protection from gases, disease, or radiation.
4. Replacement parts will be hard (impossible) to find.

An excellent adjunct to these vehicles is the Air-Scout. The model in the book is very good, but as usual I just couldn't resist tinkering with it. As follows:

Airscout (Modified)

Crew: 1

Length: 3.71m (2.3m with Tail boom collapsed)

Width: 1.64m

Rotor Dia.: 7.01 (3.505m folded)

Height: 2.34m

Weight (empty): 280kg

W/Armament: 383kg

Max. Take-off Weight: 540kg

Landing Gear: Tricycle wheels

Max. Speed: 250KPH

Max. Cruising Speed: 168KPH

Min. Speed: 24KPH

Max. Rate of Climb: 330m/minute

Service Ceiling: 5000m

T - O Run: 31m

Landing Run: 0 - 6m

Range between Maintenance: 1800Km

Armament: 1 chin mounted M-207 LMG (5.56 X 45mm) EF=15.

Ammunition: 900 Rounds for M-207, 8- M26A1 Frag. 8-M34 WP, 8- AN-M8 Smoke, 1,200 extra rounds 5.56 X 45mm. **Note: M-207 ammo is loaded 4 ball, 1 Tracer.**

Features: (1 Million CP Searchlight), (1 FLIR), ****{ (1 CP-7 Laser range finder, 1 Pair AN-TVS-5 Electronic Binoculars, 1 AN-PAS-7 Thermal Imaging System) }**, (1 AN-PPS-05 Radar), (1 Multi-Power VHS Camcorder/Player) (AN-PRC-70 Radio), (PA Speaker), (compass, RDF, Autonav), (Battery Recharger), (M1 CBR Detection Kit), 1 Personal Medkit, Modified Personal Basic Pack, 1 pr, Zeiss 20X Binoculars, Tool kit and Lubricants.

Armored Crew Capsule: Armor Factor 35. Sealed and pressurized with filtered outside air. Ejectable forward, and up, via rocket motor with parachute landing. Contains crew, instruments, modified personal pack, personal weapons, and self-destruct device.

Modified personal pack

Resist Weave Coveralls (AC=7), KCB-70 Bayonet, M17A1 Gas Mask, M1 CBR Kit, Medkit, AN/PRC - 68 Personal Communicator w/Scrambler, Backpack with: 1 Liter Canteen with Cup, 7 Days Dry Rations, 1 Compass, 1 Generator Flashlight w/Extra Bulb, 3 Boxes Matches, 50 Meters Nylon Rope (150KG Breaking Strength), 1 Sleeping Bag (Water Proof), 1 Waterproof Poncho, 1 Web Belt w/ Ammo pouches, Knife Sheath, Holster, and Equipment Pouches, 1 Swiss Army Knife.

****{ Listed equipment is built into armored helmet. Battery life: 6 hours external use. Helmet Armor Value 10. Includes microphone and earphones for AN -PRC-70 radio or AN-PRC-68 } ****

You lose the rockets, but the overall effect of having a true blue thunder type mini-gyro is well worth the loss.

Sometimes bigger is not better. Sometimes it just makes you a bigger target. Oh, and did I mention what impact these marvelous horseless carriages have on the local populace. In a truly disreputable area, this can get a team killed off faster than a horde of starving Maggots.

When coupled with the teams general desire to be helpful and follow the project directives, this sets our heroes up as very convenient patsies.

This brings to mind the let's you and him fight, circumstance. With all those new, shiny, fully loaded weapons, and vehicles, you are just the thing to help us in our struggle against, the "BAD" guys in the next town, valley, etc.

Lets face it, the world is a harsh place. When you have to deal with poor, desperate, and in some cases starving people, all bets are off.

The teams equipment and vehicles are what allows them to survive, and in part; do their job. It is our duty, nay our calling; to prevent them from beating our worlds up too much with it.