

AURORA

THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

FIRST ISSUE! INSIDE:
BLITZ! SCENARIOS AND RULES
JOVIAN CHRONICLES FICTION
TABLETOP PAPER MINIATURES
PREVIEWS AND MORE!

SPECIAL PULL OUT SECTION: ODYSSEY SEED

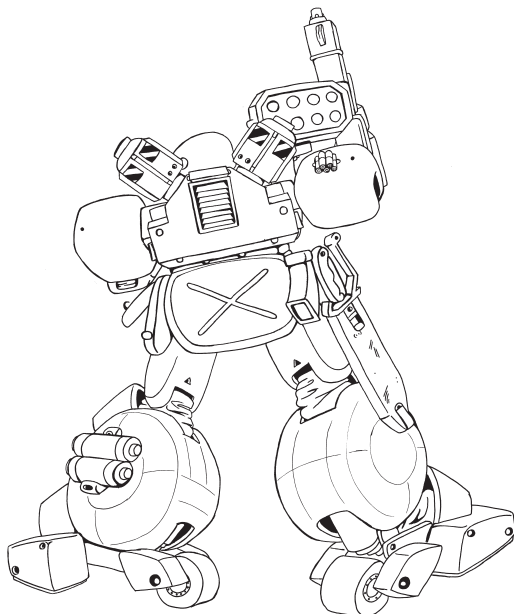


AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

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Shades in the Night...

You hold in your hands the first issue of the new Silhouette Magazine. Its founding story is a familiar one: a game magazine for the players, by the players. Yet as time immemorial as that story is there is a unique twist: this magazine is for the line of games published by Dream Pod 9, and that makes it dear to many a heart.

Any and all game lines from DP9 are fair game for this magazine, from the harsh world of Tribe 8 to the far-flung future of Jovian Chronicles, from the RPG side of things to the heavy action of the new BLITZ! line. For our first issue we've got fiction, rules, scenarios, and as a double bonus we have for you a pair of paper miniatures AND the first instalment of Odyssey: SEED, the original Jovian Chronicles adventure.

What kind of player-based magazine would we be without our fine submission guidelines? Have a read, dust off your great ideas, sit down, write them out and send them in.

For me personally, I'm excited to see this endeavour launching. The Silhouette-based game line has always been a varied one, and to receive this kind of expansion and support should prove not only fun but also a great boon to us players everywhere. It also gives the fans a place to share their ideas and hone their creativity, and I'm committed that this magazine promotes both of those. I've been a fan of Silhouette and the Silhouette System since the earliest release of Heavy Gear, expanding to many of their game worlds and leading up to writing for my own releases as well as the Pod team. From the get-go DP9 raised the bar for quality, rich universes and fantastic graphic layout. While we may be limited in the latter given this magazine's format we will continue these traditions.

Sit back, grab a cawfee, put your systems on autopilot and dig into the first issue.

Oliver Bollmann
Aurora Magazine Editor

"Mayday! Mayday! This is the Merchant Rose to any naval vessels that can hear us. We are under attack by unknown forces, and need immediate help. Mayday! Mayday!..."

Captain Roth turned to her communications officer. "Signal the *Merchant Rose* that help is on the way." She then turned to the rest of her bridge crew. "Conn, get a fix on the *Rose's* position." Touching a switch on her headset, she then addressed the crew of the *Tengu*-class carrier *Braggadacio*, "All hands to Battle Stations. There is a merchant ship under attack. Scramble Bravo 1 and Alpha 1 and 2. Alpha 3 to remain on Alert 5 status. Repeat, all hands to Battle Stations."

Within minutes, Alpha 1 and 2, a pair of Syreen exo-armors, had grabbed hold of the *Manticore*, a Hydra ADB and *Braggadacio's* escort, while Bravo 1, a Wraith fighter, pulled along side. *Manticore* then began accelerating hard to intercept *Merchant Rose* before it was too late. The *Hydras* were small, fast attack boats initially fielded by CEGA to counter the new Jovian exo-armor technology until CEGA could field their own exos and would be able to get the Syreens to the battle in a hurry while they could conserve their reaction mass for the fight.

Meanwhile, Sub-lieutenant Shuyun Li fumed in the cockpit of Alpha 3. Ever since his sister had been arrested two years ago as a dissident for speaking out about the inequalities in society as CEGA grew stronger, Shuyun had been routinely passed over for good assignments and duties. He knew he was under a cloud of suspicion since his sister's arrest, and resented having to work harder than everyone else just to maintain his position. And while *Braggadacio's* flight group had been racking up combat experience dealing with the recent surge in piracy, he had spent most of the recent engagements sitting in the hangar on Alert status.

With the radio chatter of his comrades in his ear as they engaged the pirates attacking the *Merchant Rose*, Shuyun drifted off in a reverie where he got to be the hero for a change instead of the black sheep in danger of being booted out of the service for the slightest infraction.

Klaxons started shrieking. "Danger! Incoming bogies on Lightning Strike! Launch Alpha 3 yesterday!!!" Shuyun was startled out of his daydream.

"How did enemies get here?" he thought as visually ran over his gauges and tested his controls before signalling he was ready to launch. The catapult officer gave him the customary salute as he hit the release. Shuyun's Syreen was thrown off the catapult guide, however, when the ship was rocked with a devastating explosion. "They really caught us with our pants down," thought

Shuyun as he ignited his thrusters. "This is where legs would be useful." The Syreen scraped along the launch bay until Shuyun was able to nudge it up a bit. Some flash of intuition caused him to ease out of the launch bay rather than fly for the sky as fast as he could.

His comm unit pinged, indicating a lock-on from a communications laser. "Alpha 3, where are you?" asked the Captain.

"I'm easing out of the hangar bay now."

"Good. Move over to the port side of the ship and stay quiet. We've been hit by a lightning strike from a *Bricriu*-corvette which masked a *Chieftain*-class cruiser that was decelerating to intercept us."

Another voice interposed itself over the radio. "CEGA vessel! Stand down and prepare to be boarded! Your ship now belongs to STRIKE." Shuyun winced. "This is bad. Really, really bad," he thought.

Captain Roth responded defiantly, "You'll not get this ship, you terrorist."

"Captain, if you attempt to scuttle your ship, we'll fire and destroy you first, and none of your crew will survive. We've crippled your engines and you can't even turn to bring your launchers to bear. Stand down now, and no one else has to die. This is your last warning."

Hovering in the shadow of the *Braggadacio*, Shuyun got an idea. He painted the ship with a communications laser. "What is it, Alpha 3?" queried the communications officer.

"I need to speak to the Captain. I've got a plan."

"What is it, Li?" asked Captain Roth while the communications officer informed the raiders of their compliance.

.....

Shortly, the two squads of Minotaur exo-suits that were the ship's security force began filing out of the port-side hatch. They clustered around Shuyun near the bow of the ship. His comm unit again pinged as he was painted with a communications laser. "OK, Alpha 3. It's now or never. This had better work."

"No pressure, eh, Captain?" Still, Shuyun's heart warmed at the confidence being shown in him. He waved the exo-armor's arms to signal the exo-suit squad leaders and then ignited his thrusters.

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HERO'S REST

As one, the Manticores fired their thrusters at maximum burn, and slowly, ever so slowly, the bow of the *Braggadacio* began to turn towards the enemy. Meanwhile, Shuyun arced over his ship and immediately locked on to the STRIKE cruiser. He quickly cycled through his targets and selected what should be the enemy bridge, then transmitted the coordinates to the ship.

Belatedly, the cruiser's guns began to open up, but this time, they were the ones caught completely off-guard. At maximum thrust, he quickly closed the gap between the two ships and began skimming the hull of the *Chieftain* as the *Braggadacio* completed its turn, and began launching salvo after salvo. Shuyun fired and destroyed the PDS turret, leaving the enemy ship vulnerable to the incoming missiles. He veered off, anticipating explosions, and got caught in some of the cruiser's desperate fire.

Tumbling uncontrolled, it was all Shuyun could do to wrestle the controls of his exo. Missiles and lasers made a kaleidoscope of colors around him. The pinging of near-misses was like hail on a tin roof, and with one last lurch, Shuyun finally managed to kill the thrusters and bring the battered Syreen under some semblance of control. Another errant shot found him, though, and Shuyun Li's world went black.

.....

Shuyun's first sensation was that of stiffly starched sheets. With an effort, he managed to open his eyes. A nurse quickly appeared, and he was submitted to the usual poking and prodding. After some water that ripped down his parched throat, a doctor came by and told him how lucky he was to be alive, much less unhurt beyond a few bumps and bruises. Shuyun didn't realize he had been holding his breath until it exploded out of him with relief.

A bit later, Captain Roth came by.

"Well, Li, your plan worked. Congratulations," she said with just a hint of distaste.

"Thank you, Ma'am."

"I put you in for a commendation for both saving the ship and enabling us to capture a Venusian vessel in STRIKE service. The engineers hope to learn a lot from that *Chieftain*."

"Thank you, Ma'am!"

"Don't. You won't be getting a commendation. It wouldn't do to parade the brother of a criminal around as a hero." Shuyun was engulfed with despair. He had been the hero, and it still wasn't enough!

"However, I owe you my life and the life of your shipmates. Your plan was audacious, clever, and desperate enough to work. It cost me dearly, but I have gotten you a promotion and a transfer." There was a hint of a bitter smile on Captain Roth's face.

"Ma'am, I don't know what to say. Transfer where?" Shuyun was anxious, and he had the feeling the deck was about to drop out from under him.

"Lieutenant Li, you have been transferred to the United Space Nations Guard fleet. Your initiative and bravery should serve you well there. And the USN doesn't care what crimes your sister has committed. Good luck to you, Li." And with that, Captain Roth turned and left.

.....

USNS *Templar* was a *Poseidon*-class battleship, and the flagship of the Guard. Shuyun was amazed at the turn in his luck. He was given a hero's welcome by his flight leader.

"Welcome aboard, Lieutenant Li! I read the report your Captain had filed on the battle with the terrorists. That was pretty incredible!" exclaimed Commander Wilson.

Feeling a little sheepish, and unused to so much positive attention, Shuyun responded, "I just got lucky. I'm just glad it worked."

"Hey, lucky counts in my book. Now such a hero shouldn't get a Syreen or a Pathfinder; he should get one of our two Wyverns!"

"Thanks! You guys see much action?"

"You mean us guys, right?" Commander Wilson winked. "Actually, we don't. Not too many pirates want to tangle with a *Poseidon*. You should have plenty of time to get acquainted with your Wyvern and catch your breath a bit." Wilson put his arm around Shuyun and began to steer him towards the hangar bay. "I imagine you'll want to check it out as soon as possible?"

"ALERT! ALERT! All shifts to Action Stations! All Shifts to Action Stations! Merchant shipping under attack. This is not a drill. ALERT! ALERT!"

"No rest for you, Hero. Time for some OJT!" shouted Commander Wilson as he broke into a run.



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CORE INJECTION: VARIANT RPG RULES

OLIVER BOLLMANN

Core Injections are meant as supplements to the existing set of rules and expansions; an addition of material to enhance game play. For the most part, these rules can be used piecemeal at will; that is, one does not depend on the other in order to function correctly. What rules to include also greatly depends on what RDL level being used, and also the tone of the campaign. Whether you call it variant rules, alternate rules or house rules, lay some down and expand your campaign to its fullest.

Combat Traits

Combat is an art that tests the body in extraordinary ways, calling upon all aspects of a person's talents and skills in order to survive. What gives an edge? Is it quickness, is it resolve, is it awareness... or is it all of the above? For this reason, sometimes a combination of Attributes best represents their governance over certain combat skills.

Under this optional rule, there are four new Secondary Traits, and two that are changed:

COMBAT TRAITS

TRAIT		CALCULATION
Close Combat	CCV	AGI + FIT
Ranged Combat	RCV	AGI + PER
Initiative	IN	PER + WIL
Melee Damage	MD	3+STR+BLD
Mechanized Init	MIN	PER + CRE

- **Close Combat** - used in all Melee and Hand to Hand situations (including attacks, parry, dodges, etc). Dexterity, speed, power and balance all play a role.

- **Ranged Combat** - used in all Ranged situations (again, attacks and defences). Reaction times and hand-eye coordination are enhanced by quick vision and awareness.

- **Initiative** - used when rolling Combat Sense. All the knowledge in the world will not help you without guts.

- **Melee Damage** - replaces the separate Unarmed Damage and Armed Damage (see note below).

- **Mechanized Initiative** - for vehicular actions, add to the commander's Tactics roll (see note below). Situational awareness and a sharp mind will help here.

Note on MD: as the various skills already helps one to get a good strike (higher MoS and thus damage) there is need to bump the damage up further by including the skill level in the MD trait.

Note on MIN: if only a few pilots are currently engaged in the fray and are rolling Piloting for initiative, use the IN trait instead.

Additional Actions

Skill. It's what separates the veterans from the rookies and the grizzled old hand from the novice hotshot. Those with skill are better able to perform under unusual situations, to better adapt when the pressure is on. For them, the motions are second nature. The skill is there to line up the perfect shot from miles away -- or to blaze away while retreating and holding onto a ladder and still have a chance to hit anything at all.

When taking multiple actions in a turn, a character is penalized by one die off all skill/attribute rolls made during that turn (this is instead of the standard -1 modifier applied in SilCore). Additional actions can reduce a skill's effective (penalized) level into the untrained range (0 dice). If a skill would be reduced to below the untrained range, the action automatically fails. Emergency dice can be used as normal in all cases, and can be used to buy the skill back up to the untrained level or above.

Essentially, a character acting quicker or more often in a turn is for practical purposes reducing their skill level by acting quicker; they are unable to perform their skills to their fullest potential. This, of course, will impact less-skilled individuals more so than those who have experience and a higher skill level. This is akin to the 'Acting Fast' skill application, found in section 6.4.2

As an example, a skill level 4 character firing a pistol 3 times would roll 2 dice each time they fired (four minus two extra actions equals two dice). Similarly, the same character could reload, fire twice, while manipulating the lock on a trap door, which would incur a 2 die penalty (simple action, three standard actions) to all skill rolls that turn.

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CORE INJECTION: VARIANT RPG RULES

Hit Locations

In the base SilCore rules, there are no hit locations. For some game styles, however, more detail may be desired, either for flavour text, for specific injury decisions or as a more gritty and detailed variant of SilCore combat. The standard 2 die mechanic provides for an easy way to create a hit location chart:

HIT LOCATION CHART		
ROLL	%	LOCATION
1	2.8%	Hands
2	8.3%	Head
3	13.4%	Legs
4	19.4%	Arms
5	25.0%	Abdomen
6	27.8%	Chest
7	2.8%	Feet

For further detail an additional single-die roll can be used to determine whether the left or right side was hit: odd indicates left side, even even indicates right.

Location Damage

Appropriate mostly for gritty campaigns, hit locations can further be used to modify the damage done to a character's System Shock track. This is done by modifying the wound thresholds for each body location, as follows:

DAMAGE MODIFICATION BY LOCATION	
LOCATION	MODIFY BY...
Chest	1x
Abdomen	1x
Head	0.5x
Hands	2x
Arms	1.75x
Feet	2x
Legs	1.5x

Apply the multiplier to the character's STA, using the modified STA to determine the wound thresholds. Record these values on the character sheet for reference during play.

Remember: Do not modify the Armour Rating on these locations, only the base Wound Thresholds. Add the armour value to those modified values.

Location Imparement

The use of Location Damage brings with it a particular problem: as damage to limbs (especially the hands or feet) has a higher wounding threshold than the norm, it is possible for a character to be hit solidly yet not suffer any penalty performing tasks with that limb. To account for this eventuality, whenever damage is done to a limb is equal to the character's base STA (not modified for location as per Hit Locations), that body location is said to be Impaired.

Impaired limbs incur a -1 penalty on all actions performed with that limb. An impaired legs halves the character's movement rate, in addition to all other effects. Any heavy exertion on the limb requires a HEA test against a Threshold of 4; if the test is failed, the character suffers a point to their system shock track and the limb becomes Disabled (below).

If a limb suffers an Impaired result twice, or suffers two times base STA in one hit, the limb is said to be Disabled. Using the limb becomes extremely difficult (and painful), imposing a -2 penalty to all actions. Disabled legs force the character to crawl, and standing without support is considered exertion. Even light exertion on the limb requires a HEA test against a Threshold of 4; if the test is failed, the character suffers two points to their system shock track.

Note that these penalties are cumulative with all other penalties, including System Shock. Thus, if a character is suffering from an abdomen flesh wound, an impaired hand and an impaired arm, any pistol fire from that hand would suffer a -3 penalty (and if the pistol is of heavy enough calibre, it may force a HEA test from the exertion).

Continuing Damage

Characters are heroes. They are meant to go on even when others would have fallen (and fallen messily). Continuing Damage removes the Overkill effect for PCs (and possibly important NPCs). Overkill simply follows the progression with a three hits to the System Shock track.

At (minimum) -3, the characters may not be doing much of anything, but they're still alive... for the time being.

*"You are watching SNS- Sorrento News Service™ -
Current. Objective. Moral. News for today's
Norlights."*

Thom Hartman: "Welcome back! As part of our continuing coverage of this month's blessed pilgrimage from Sorrento to the Holy City, we now take you live to Carli Tsang, for part five of her series: 'In the Footsteps of the Prophet.' Carli?"

Carli Tsang: "It's been a difficult few weeks here with the pilgrims, Thom. Karaq is one of the most inhospitable places on Terra Nova; and these devout Norlights are discovering first-hand what sort of man crossed this desert four hundred and forty seven years ago. Of course, these pilgrims are not without food and water as the Prophet was. Nor are they without protection- the NAF's 18th Regiment, the renowned Blue Angels, are here accompanying the pilgrims against any potential threats."

"For security reasons, the NAF has declined an interview with Blue Angels personnel until after the conclusion of the pilgrimage. However, I did get a chance to speak with Sister Delyah Vargas of the Peregrine Order of Cantara, a friend and mentor to Colonel Fulan of the Angels."

CT: "Thank you for finding time to speak with SNS, Sister Delyah."

Sister Delyah: "Thank you, Ms. Tsang, for speaking with me."

CT: "The Blue Angels have always been associated with the defense of Massada, an image often extended to the defense of Revisionism itself. This pilgrimage in particular has seen a drastic increase in the size of the escort. Does this imply that the NAF anticipates some sort of Republican aggression, either towards Massada or the pilgrimage itself?"

SD: "They do not anticipate any violence, Ms. Tsang. Historically, pilgrimage has been a rather dangerous enterprise and we must put the safety of the pilgrims first. The first role of the military escort is making certain that the pilgrims have the necessary supplies to survive in Karaq. Beyond that, wildlife and opportunistic bandits pose a far more immediate threat to the pilgrimage. Despite recent tensions, the Republic would have little to gain from a hostile act against such a peaceful mission as—"

CT: "Sorry for the interruption, Sister Delyah, but I've just received word that a MILICA battle group has been spotted just two kilometers west of our current location, in the Bethaven Pass. The pass lies on the northern edge of Karaq, and is a crucial leg of the pilgrimage's itinerary. No official word at this

time regarding the intentions of the battle group, but the NAF commander has ordered the pilgrims to stop their advance until the situation can be resolved. We will bring you more on this story as information becomes available. Thom?"

TH: "That's incredible, Carli! What's the feeling amongst the pilgrims on the ground?"

CT: "Confusion and disappointment seem to describe the mood here right now Thom. Speculation is inevitable that the MILICIA is somehow trying to interfere with the pilgrimage. I've just gotten word that the NAF commander has radioed to Colonel Fulan in Massada for backup. The pilgrims cannot alter their course, especially not after coming so close to Massada. However, it seems that the MILICIA is completely unwilling to stand down."

TH: "Official sources are claiming that the MILICIA is engaged in a containment operation involving an alleged rover group—"

CT: "Hold on one moment Thom- by the prophet- Shots have been fired! I've just heard what sounded like a cannon of some sort! I'm being ordered by the NAF escort to cease transmission. I'm not sure how much longer we'll be able to—"

TH: "We apologize, but we seem to be having technical difficulties. We'll be back with Carli Tsang and the latest on this unexpected standoff in the Holy Land as soon as we reestablish contact. Now a word from our sponsor..."



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BLOOD FOR THE PROPHET

Heavy Gear Blitz! Scenario

Situation: 16.SP.35: A pilgrim caravan bound for Massada encounters a MILICIA force blocking their path. The pilgrimage includes several high-profile Norlight citizens, and is thus escorted by the renowned NAF 18th "Blue Angels" Regiment. Despite repeated radio warnings to maintain distance from the caravan, the MILICIA commander refuses to stand down. Unfazed by the demands of "a rabble of religious fanatics", the MILICIA battle group's orders are to hold at their current coordinates and await further orders. Just then, an insubordinate group of Convict Jäger pilots decides to make trouble by provoking the Norlight force. The unauthorized attack on the pilgrims incites a righteous retaliation.

What you need to play: The scenario has been designed with a variable Threat Value, so it can be played with an army of any size. Both players should agree on a TV for the scenario ahead in advance.

The Heavy Gear Blitz! rulebook is essential for play. You will need a number of Northern and Southern Heavy Gear miniatures, compatible with the Blitz rules (1/144 scale). The scenario also includes pilgrims which are easily represented by Heavy Gear Infantry miniatures. The Behemoth transport vehicles are available as paper models in this issue of Aurora, with special thanks to Paul Lesack. Terrain effects appropriate to the Badlands location (Blitz p.66) are recommended, but not essential.

Use of Hammers of Faith - Armies of the North (DP9-9031) and the optional Morale rules is encouraged but not mandatory, alternate rules are presented.

Force Construction: Norlight Armed Forces vs. Southern MILICIA.

The NAF player should construct a Blue Angels Regiment army as detailed in Hammers of Faith - Armies of the North (DP9-9031). This player must choose the Honor Guard squad in place of a single General Purpose Squad. If Hammers of Faith is not available, use the Northern Guard "Gear" army type from the Blitz Rulebook. One general purpose squad is replaced with an Honor Guard squad consisting of five Jaguars for 300 TV. The squad has the same skills and options as a Veteran General Purpose Squad, except it must be composed of only Jaguars.

The Honor Guard automatically becomes the Command Squad of the NAF. The commander is Colonel Neel Garner Fulan, a noted officer who served in the War of Alliance. Colonel Fulan has the following skills: Attack 3, Defense 4, EW 2, Leadership 4. This costs 35 TV and replaces the army commander presented on pg.49 of the Blitz Rulebook.

The Command Squad is automatically held in reserve until turn 2. During the turn 1, use the highest available leadership for command points command points, leadership and initiative rolls.

The MILICIA forces are constructed from the Blitz Field Guide, using the Convict (Gear) army type. One Convict Cadre may be placed in the Neutral deployment zone. This Cadre is Insubordinate (see scenario rules) and must have valid LoS to the NAF.

Location: The Karaq Wastes 18.5 km east of Massada

Terrain Type: Badlands, Broken Ground (1/2 table rough terrain or hills with 2 elevation changes). Terrain effects should be arranged to create a clear path leading through the table's center, representing the Bethaven Pass which the Pilgrims must traverse to reach Massada.

Weather/Lighting Conditions: Clear/Daylight or randomly determined (Blitz Rulebook p. 68). For dramatic purposes, experienced players may wish to use the "Sandstorm" Weather condition.

NAF Objective: as *Breakthrough with the following:*

Victory Points Gained:

(1) Pilgrims units that reach the far edge of the MILICIA deployment zone are removed from the game, add their full TV in Victory Points.

(2) Pilgrim units that reach any other edge of the battlefield are removed from play, but not destroyed.

Victory Points Lost:

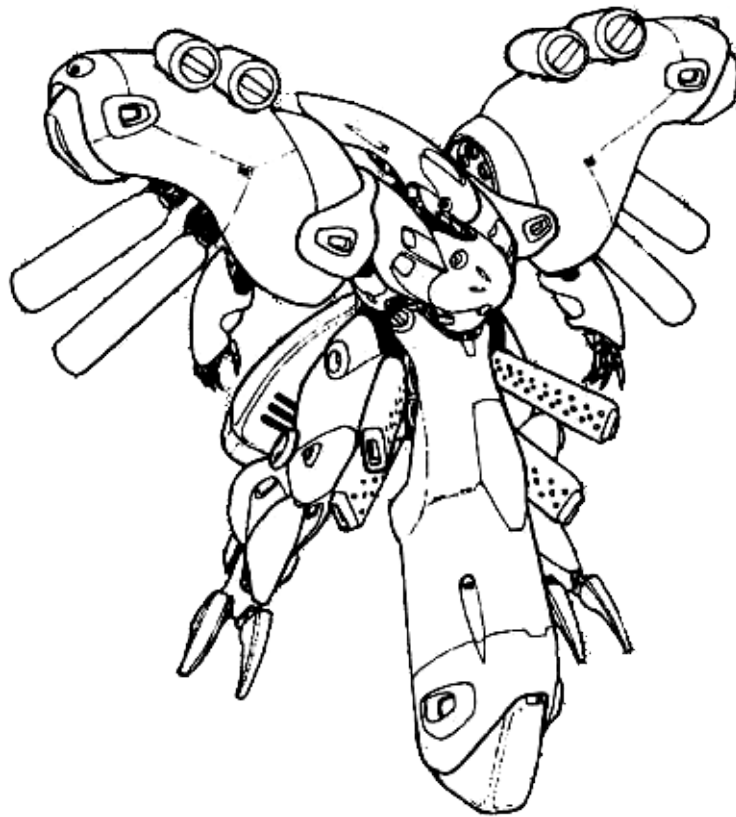
(1) Pilgrim units destroyed cost double their value in victory points.

Morale Notes: High Priority Mission. Each time a pilgrim unit is destroyed, all NAF combat groups accrue +1 morale, regardless of their distance from the unit destroyed.

all material © - see last page

Odyssey SEED

EPISODE #1: DREAMS OF PHANTOMS



Odyssey SEED

By Nicholas Pilon

What is it?

Odyssey SEED is a rewrite of the Odyssey, the original Jovian Chronicles campaign published in the Green Book way back in 1993. Yes, that's where it all began. While it was an excellent campaign for its time, times have changed. The Jovian Chronicles universe has been fleshed out a lot since then, in the White and Blue books, and RPGs have developed a lot in ten years. So, just as the basic story of Gundam has been retold many times since the original Mobile Suit Gundam first aired over twenty years ago, with each incarnation building upon what had been learned in the development of the shows that came before, I felt that it'd be worthwhile to rewrite and update the Odyssey.



Campaign Assumptions

The Odyssey SEED writeup assumes that the players are playing JAF exo-armor/fighter pilots, JIS agents, reporters, or one of the other standard archetypes. Some mix of the above three would work and could provide a good variety of skills, but this would also require the GM to put a wider variety of action in the episodes and possibly split the party more.

Campaign Format

Each episode is centered around a general scenario, such as protecting Elysee station or rescuing a scientist from the grips of CEGA. The general scenario is all that should really be considered fixed about the episode. After that, a list of sample plot points and NPCs are provided. These should be considered mere suggestions - NPCs and plot points that I think work well for the scenario. Often, a given NPC or plot point will have more than one use suggested, both to give GMs more ideas and keep any players reading this on their toes. Some, like Ranho Garand, will take more work to replace than others, like Yanna Summers.

Thanks To

- * Gerald Rodberg, for the original Dragonstriker stats that I then mutilated to better suit my purposes.
- * Joseph Riggs, for picking apart every single episode.
- * Julian Fong, for his help on Episodes 3, 4, and 5.
- * Nelson Eisel, Jeffery Watkins, and "Evil Dr Ganymede", for their suggestions for Episode 5.
- * Pierre Borque, for his help with Episode 2 and generally convincing me to pick up JC in the first place.
- * John Buckmaster, for helping me brainstorm for the rewrite and sanity-checking my vehicle stats.
- * Marc A. Vezina, for creating Jovian Chronicles and the original Odyssey campaign.
- * Terry Pratchett, for Night Watch. Freedom, Truth, Justice, Reasonably-Priced Love, and a Hard-Boiled Egg.

AURORA Edition

By Oliver Bollmann

The adventure that started it all! Aurora will present Odyssey SEED in five episodes plus the Mechanical Catalogue over the next few issues. Grab your intrigue, strap into your exo-suit and prepare for the quintessential Jovian Chronicles adventure.



EPISODE #1: DREAMS OF PHANTOMS

The Venusians have been conducting illegal technology tests and expeditions into the Jovian atmosphere from a secret base orbiting close in to the gas giant. The high pressures and composition of the Jovian atmosphere combined with the powerful radiation and magnetic fields provide an excellent test environment for high-performance vehicles. The same magnetic fields and radiation effectively hide them from any watching eyes above. In the course of this work, they have discovered the Floaters - strange aliens in the Jovian atmosphere, attracted by the emissions of Dr. Peyjare's CAT system.

These Venusians have captured several of these strange aliens and shipped them off to secure labs in Venusian orbit for further examination. Tests have confirmed the bizarre properties of the creatures, and the base has received orders to retrieve more specimens. This work has been delayed by the need to refurbish their prototype CAT-equipped exo-armors and probes - descending that far into the Jovian atmosphere puts the machines under incredible stress.

The players should somehow be involved in finding and eliminating the Venusian research station, code-named Slumbering Eidolon. This discovery and operation forms the foundation for the rest of the campaign, so the players should play an important role in the discovery or elimination of the station.

► CHARACTER INVOLVEMENT

JAF pilots are the easiest to involve at this stage. They can easily be central to the discovery or destruction of the station. They could discover it by finding a supply or courier ship headed there during a patrol, or stumble across a supporting organization on a Jovian colony. If you choose to have them take place in the assault, remember that the Valiant has not yet been built and that Athenas and Javelins are very, very rare. The assault force would most probably consist of two or three Thunderbolts and at most one Javelin or Athena. The ships would most likely be escorted by a small number of Pathfinders and Retaliators.

JIS agents and reporters are harder to integrate with the destruction of the station, but are more easily involved in the discovery process. Slumbering Eidolon could have a support organization based on one of the Jovian stations, to procure or ship supplies and provide emergency rescue if necessary. The PCs could stumble upon it in the course of another investigation and follow up, resulting in the discovery of Slumbering Eidolon. JAF pilots could, of course, also be involved here, but the GM has to remember that they will probably be much less skilled in the relevant areas than JIS agents or reporters. This is, of course, completely in-genre, as mecha pilots wind up out of their depths in such situations all the time. A good location for the support organization would be the largely lawless Joshua's Station.

If the party consists mainly of JIS agents, it might be a good idea for the Agora to decide to capture Slumbering Eidolon instead of destroying it. Even JAF pilots can be integrated here, if they can pilot exo-suits. Of course, this doesn't mean they'll be successful in capturing the station - a hurried scramble as a self-destruct timer counts down and bulkheads slam shut is just as exciting as an action-packed firefight in the command center, after all.



►NPCS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND PLOT POINTS



Devon Malachai

Suggested Stereotype: Specialist or Expert

Suggested Archtype: Official

Devon Malachai is always a useful individual when one needs a villain for a shadowy Venusian operation. This rewrite of the Odyssey gives the GM an opportunity to foster his hatred for and involvement with the player characters from an earlier date for extended campaigns. His scheming and manipulative nature makes him an excellent villain for an intrigue adventure revolving around Slumbering Eidolon's support organization. As a former Ronin operative or HDF pilot, depending on the needs of your plot, Malachai can also be an opponent for pilot characters. He would think nothing of getting his hands dirty to crush those who foil his plans, though he usually prefers to operate from behind the scenes.

There are several covers that could be used to explain Malachai's presence in Jovian space. The simplest is that he is using no cover at all - he was slipped onto Slumbering Eidolon and resides there in secret. While this works well for a shadowy figure pulling strings, it doesn't work as well if some interaction with the PCs is desired. Towards this end, Malachai could be "assigned" to the Elysee or Joshua's Station Bank branch offices as some sort of executive or manager, directing Slumbering Eidolon's operations from behind this facade. Given the lack of living space in the Jovian habitats, he doesn't even have to do much work to slip away when his real work demands his attention. Being a Bank official, he can easily afford to reside aboard a private yacht.

GMs should try to avoid killing Malachai if at all possible, as he's very useful later in the campaign, and in future campaigns.



Avram Thorsen

Suggested Stereotype: Veteran

Suggested Archtype: Soldier

The GM can (and probably should) use this adventure to introduce Thorsen, who is still the trusted and admired head of the JAF at this point. Since the players won't be coming back to the Jovian system for a good, long while, this provides an excellent opportunity to provide a contrast for Thorsen's future. Thorsen could step in once the nature of the players' discovery becomes apparent and (covertly) try to redirect them or delay them long enough for the Venusians to escape or destroy evidence. He could also aid the players, only to turn against them later in the campaign. The exact nature of Thorsen's betrayal and who was paying him have never been revealed, so the GM should feel free to use whatever is convenient.

Throughout the rest of the campaign, Thorsen should be a distant presence, sending orders and encouragement. He won't be mentioned in any of the other write-ups, as he has no real involvement with the action. Though he can be used to get things moving, by hooking the PCs up with contacts or JIS agents.



Project Dragonstriker

Dragonstriker is the top-secret CECA program to develop next-generation exo-weapons systems, to provide an edge against the advanced weapons of the Confederation. The prototypes produced so far push the envelope of even what Jovian exo-engineering can achieve. This is thanks in part to the collection of skilled scientists assembled by CECA (some willing, some not), but also to assistance provided by Venusian technicians and engineers.



The real power of the project comes from the CAT and Rapid-Scan systems, developed by Dr. Peyarje. These highly advanced systems allow a pilot to control an exo-armor with his mind alone and absorb the information from the machine's sensors directly. While powerful, these systems are also extremely primitive and expensive. At this point, only an exceptionally disciplined pilot can utilize them, and adapting sensors and control systems to interface with them is difficult. Several early prototypes, employing both human- and AI-controlled CAT and Rapid-Scan systems, are being stress-tested by the Venusians at their Slumbering Eidolon station, as a favour to their CEGA allies.

At this point in the campaign, Dragonstriker should be a mystery wrapped in an enigma surrounded by uncertainty. The early prototypes aboard Slumbering Eidolon incorporate some of the project's developments, but bear a much greater resemblance to traditional exo-armors than to the Dragonstriker prototype. Most are equipped with early (and thus, very hard to use) versions of the CAT/Rapid-scan systems, if they carry them at all. These are recognizable as implementations of Peyarje's cyber-linkage technology, but without the genius that constructed them, their secrets will remain locked away.



Project Methuselah

Deep in the Jovian atmosphere during the stress tests of the prototype exos, the Venusian personnel of Slumbering Eidolon found something they did not expect. Strange, jellyfish-like lifeforms, drifting on the currents of gas and feeding off Jupiter's magnetic fields and radiation. The creatures were skittish and fast, but also strangely attracted to the emanations of the CAT/Rapid-scan prototypes. Several specimens were captured and secretly shipped out to Venus, probably several months before this episode began.

Secret dissection and examination (possibly aboard Station VII) revealed two surprises. The first was that, like humans, the creatures were DNA-based organisms. The second was that they survived in the intense and hostile environment of Jupiter through a remarkable regenerative mechanism that repaired the damage from radiation and aging. This led to the creation of Project Methuselah by the Venus Bank. Even though it was a blatant violation of the Edicts, the lure of artificial life was too tempting for the Bank's executives to ignore.

Unfortunately, all efforts to duplicate their regenerative mechanism proved futile, and the laboratory life of a Floater is extremely short. Orders were quickly sent to Slumbering Eidolon demanding more specimens, along with the authority to requisition the spare parts needed to refit the prototypes for another descent to the high-pressure areas where the Floaters dwell. These parts shipments could easily be what tip the players/Jovians off to Slumbering Eidolon's existence.

The Jovians have no idea that the Floaters exist. The Bank is aware of the importance of the operation and the damage Slumbering Eidolon's capture could do to it, so there is little information about the creatures aboard the station. There might be information about the initial encounter in a prototype's logs, or strange, unexplained, pictures in the station mainframe. No more than a hint that something unusual is going on.



Slumbering Eidolon

Slumbering Eidolon is a secret Venusian research station, orbiting very close-in to Jupiter itself. The station uses Jupiter's intense magnetic fields and radiation to hide from prying eyes, and contains a number of small laboratories where Venus tests Edicts-violating technology and other things it shouldn't have. The station's staff is small - a dozen each of scientists, technicians, test pilots, and security personnel. The station itself is very nearly an Edicts violation. It has incredibly strong screens, to keep out sudden radiation storms, and an impressive computer network, to store and process all the information gathered by the tests. Most of the station is currently given over to testing CAT-equipped exo-armors or retrieving more Floater creatures.

The PCs should be involved in the discovery and elimination of Slumbering Eidolon. Being so close to Jupiter, it probably has a support organization on one of the Jovian stations. Its relative lawlessness and heavy traffic seem to make Joshua's Station a natural choice, though any could do in a pinch. This organization would provide Slumbering Eidolon with the food and other consumables its crew needs, the parts needed to keep it operating, and materials for the experiments being run. The players could stumble across this - most likely literally, in the case of JAF pilots. For reporters or JIS agents, their discovery could be more elegant. They could discover the support organization in the course of an existing investigation, or find a trail of clues leading to it as part of a routine data review.

If possible, the PCs should also be involved in the destruction or capture of Slumbering Eidolon. The station has some decent defenses, including a PDS, a couple of capital weapon batteries (probably KKC's), and the prototype exo-armors being tested there. This is, as mentioned above, ideal for pilot PCs. Reporters and JIS agents could be involved in fighting (or reporting on) a battle through the corridors, as the Jovian forces try to take the control room before the Venusians can arm the self-destruct. They could also be involved in the aftermath, put to work extracting information from the station's systems/personnel. Or, if more tension is desired, they could be doing so while the battle rages on, trying to get what they can before the Venusians scuttle the station.

The Jovians could, at the GM's discretion, capture some or all of the station's memory core. This should, however, provide only hints of what the Bank is up to - nothing that could do more than arouse the JIS' suspicions. There should also be nothing that can conclusively connect it to Venus. Though there should be enough to work out what the Venusians were doing. (Exo-armor tests in the upper Jovian atmosphere)

►TIMING AND OBJECTIVES

This adventure should be a short one; four or five sessions at most. Get the players used to the system, technology, their characters, and their home. Introduce some hints about the bigger machinations of Operation Methuselah, and possibly a long-term subplot or villain. And, as always, kick off some character-based subplots! Though don't do anything too dependent on things or people that will be stuck in Jovian space, as the players will be taking off for Venus at the start of the next episode.



►NEXT EPISODE

The Jovians, of course, shouldn't be able to find any conclusive evidence linking Slumbering Eidolon to Venus. They should, however, find evidence of CAT system research, prompting closer consideration of Dr. Peyarje's request for asylum. (See Episode #2 for more details) This will lead to the players, already involved and familiar with what is rapidly becoming a highly classified and sensitive situation, being dispatched to Venus to investigate the hints of Venusian involvement in Slumbering Eidolon and to free Peyarje from the hands of CEGA.

►TRANSITION NOTES

Those familiar with the original Green Book Odyssey will note that I've smushed episodes one (Mystery Ship) and two (The Workshop of the God of War) together. The primary reason is that I never really liked the idea of Venusians operating in Jupiter's atmosphere from a hidden base in Martian orbit. Or a passenger liner being used to transport top-secret exo parts. I think this works better..

►TECHNOLOGY NOTES

The early prototypes being tested at Slumbering Eidolon will probably be Wyvernstrickers, or Syreens with similar modifications. They will definitely have the HEP: Extreme Pressure and CAT packs. One or two should have the beam cannon equipment.



The CAT/Rapid-Scan System

This revolutionary system, developed by Dr. Agram Peyarje, allows an exo-armor pilot to process sensor information and control his machine with his mind, eliminating the need for a linear frame. Not only does this make the exo more responsive and improves the efficiency of the sensor systems, it allows the linear frame to be replaced with a "g-cockpit". This provides more acceleration protection for the pilot, allowing more powerful PCCs and maneuvering motors to be used safely.

Early versions of the CAT, like those used on the Dragonstriker, should be a Thought Interface: Mind Link, Unshielded system affecting one crew with a WIL threshold of 5 or 6. Really early prototypes could have a threshold as high as 7. Later versions, like those built into the Prometheus, should have a threshold of 4 or 5. It should add +1 or +2 to the sensor rating, and 2-4 km to the sensor range. Maneuver should be increased by one.

Unlike a normal Thought Interface system, if the pilot of a CAT-equipped vehicle fails their WIL roll, they lose their maneuver and sensor bonus. They also gain the Inefficient Controls flaw.



CEA-05X WYVERNSTRIKER

The Wyvernstriker was a test platform used by the Dragonstriker project in the early stages of its research. Instead of constructing a prototype from scratch, the team modified existing Wyvern units to test out subsystems before incorporating them into the Dragonstriker itself. Most were officially listed as destroyed, but were in fact handed over to Venus and shipped off to Slumbering Eidolon. The modifications will generally be very obvious to any sort of detailed scan or visual observation.

To convert a Wyvern to a Wyvernstriker, add one or more of:

* CAT Prototype: Thought Interface: Mind Link (1 crew, WIL Threshold 6 or 7), add +1 to Sensor rating, +2 to Sensor range, and +1 to Maneuver.

* Continuous-Fire Beam Cannon (replace LACW-8):

Qty	Name	Type	Arc	Acc	DM	BR	RoF	Ammo
1	Cont-Fire Beam Cannon	Energy	F	-1	x30	4	+0	6
	HEAT, Haywire, AD(2)							

Note that the Continuous-Fire Beam Cannon is NOT Hand-held. Because of the mass of the weapon, it has to be integrated into the Wyvernstriker's shoulder.

* Armor +5 or Ablative Armor +10 and HEP: High Pressure

Northco NV-225 Behemoth
CNCS Armoured Gear Transport

The size of a small building (or maybe a large residence), the Behemoth transport can transport and repair gears in the field. Its large sensor profile makes it an easy target, so the crew has a tendency to avoid combat if at all possible. Despite its large size and high visibility, the 99th Heavy Gear Regiment (Blue Angels) still paint their Behemoths in their blue and yellow dress colours.

Equipment needed:

Sharp knife (and spare blades)
Ruler, preferably steel
PVA Glue (Lepage Bond Fast, Elmer's, etc.)
Brush for applying glue (not the sable hair one used for detailing painted models)
Tweezers for holding and clamping small parts
Stretched sprue for making struts for the visor

Tips and tricks for assembling your paper model:

Important:

Make sure you have "fit to page" turned off when printing your model, or the Behemoth will not print out to scale!

Score all the folds before cutting out your model. Use something that will not cut the paper (actual paper scoring tools are available), such as an empty ball-point pen or a small metal crochet hook. Avoid using a knife to score -- this will seriously weaken the paper and show white lines at every seam.

Use the tabs on the model as a suggestion only. Depending on the thickness of the paper you're using, you may not need some or all of the tabs. If the tab seems to deform the piece, remove it and glue it on the edges, or make a separate tab out of a piece of paper to put on the inside.

Colour the edges of the model with markers (greyscale markers are ideal) or paint to hide the white edges. Doing this before any assembly takes place is much easier than trying to do it on a completed model.

If you think some faces of a part are unnecessary, cut them off and discard. It's difficult to know what thickness of paper all modellers will be using, so the model is designed for relatively thin paper. Removing some faces may make it somewhat easier (for example, on the radiator grille).

Work in sub-assemblies, and use an assembly line approach if making multiple identical parts. For example, glue one or two faces together on each identical part, rather than completing one part and moving on to the next. This will allow the glue to dry, giving you a stronger model.

If you're printing the model out on an inkjet printer, be aware that many inkjet inks are water soluble. To prevent any unseemly runs, spray your printed sheets with Testor's Dullcote, which will act as a fixative on the ink.

1. Hubs

The hubs and wheels are the most time consuming parts, and arguably the most difficult to assemble. Work in assembly line fashion for best results. Curve the spiral pieces with a pencil or brush handle, and glue the ends together to form a ring. Glue the small circle to the top of the cone, and brush on glue on the inside to make a nice filleted joint. When the all the parts are dry, glue the larger circles to the cone. You can apply glue along the seam with a brush as well. The glue will be transparent, and the hubs will be on the underside of the model anyway.

2. Wheels

The wheels go together the same way as the hubs. Form a ring with the tire, and then fold and glue the outward facing side first. Glue on the inside and set aside to dry. Fold and complete as per the hubs above.

3. Complete wheel assembly

Each hub needs to be glued to a wheel. The seam of the wheel is the bottom, as it's both darker (in shadow) and quite likely slightly flatter because of the join. The flat part also gives the wheel a weighted appearance. Glue the hub to the inside of the wheel, with the seam of the hub facing up (diametrically opposed to the wheel seam). This seam will be hidden by the main body of the Behemoth. Repeat five more times until you have six wheels.

3. Chassis

The chassis forms the core to which all the parts are glued, so assemble it very carefully. It's pretty much a box with sloping ends, but the top has a section that's notched in the front. When gluing together, make sure that the top, bottom and sides form a nice, right angled box shape. Pressing the chassis gently against a flat surface like a tabletop while it's drying can help get the perfect shape.

4. Main Body

The main body is simply a box with tapered sides. The right-angled side faces the front. As with the chassis, gently pressing the model against a flat surface will ensure that all the angles are correct. You may wish to cut off the front face entirely and put in your own small paper tabs (leaving an open hole for the front).

5. Cabin

There are four folds on the cabin which are valley folds (i.e., the folds are towards themselves) -- these folds are marked

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

PAPER MODEL: BEHEMOTH

with a dotted line. Begin assembling by gluing the roof line to the sides. Then glue the lower sections of the doors to the sides. To get a nice join, you may wish to remove the three tabs on each side on the middle section, and replace them with paper tabs glued to the inside of the cab. This will insure a nice, smooth seam on the outside. Glue the underside of the cab to the sides. Finally, glue the back flap to the back of the cab, making sure it is as flat as possible. Or, you may wish to cut this whole back face off.

6. Basic Assembly

The cabin, main body and chassis glue together to form the core of the Behemoth. The notch on the top of the chassis faces forward, and the cab is very slightly lower than the main body. It is possible that the front of the chassis will not actually touch the front part of the cab, because of the thickness of the cardstock used. If the flaps from the cabin and main body are removed, the fit will be much better, but the structural strength of the model will be greatly reduced. In practice, the chassis is largely invisible because it's on the underside of the model, and if you're planning on using the model as a gaming piece, leaving all the faces as is recommended.

7. Axles

There are three axles, all identical. They are boxes with a sloping bottom (the pointy side faces down). Glue the axles to the chassis. There are three faint guidelines marked on the chassis to indicate the position of the axles. Centre the axles over the lines.

8. Turret

The turret is a tiny cylinder. The black dot faces forward.

9. Turret Mount

The turret mount forms a pyramidal shape, with the square facing the top

10. Turret Assembly

Glue the mount to the front of the Behemoth. The location is noted by a faint V shape. Make sure the turret assembly top is flush with the top of the Behemoth. Glue the turret to the mount and roof of the model.

11. Radiator Grille and Light Assembly

Depending on your cardstock, the faces in white and tabs may not be needed. Glue the sides of the assembly together from the inside first, making sure that all the angles are maintained. Glue the back together (if using). Glue the entire assembly to the front of the cab. The longer notched piece (when looking from the side) is the top.

12. Lower Light Bar

The lower light bar goes together as a prism, with the white

face being glued to the cabin. Glue the completed assembly to the cabin, with the assembly being centred horizontally, but just slightly up from the bottom (i.e., not flush with the bottom of the cabin).

13. Upper Light Bar

The upper light bar is a box with one sloping side (the white one) which is glued to the model. Glue the light bar to the sloping front face, about 2mm up from the bottom of the second coffered section.

14. Rear Bumper

The rear bumper is a long box. The safety strip faces the top. Glue the completed bumper to the chassis assembly (there's a small flat bit just for the bumper)

15. Doors

The doors are straightforward wedge-shaped pieces. You may wish to remove the entire back face but, like the cabin and main body, if you leave them in the model will be significantly stronger. The doors will go together more easily if you glue the faces assembly line fashion instead of completing one door before moving on to the other.

16. Final Body Assembly

Glue the completed doors to the main body of the Behemoth, making sure that the thin edge of the wedge is flush with the lower edge of the body. The doors are numbered, but their arrangement is optional. It's rumoured that the 99th randomly numbers their doors to confuse the enemy.

17. Visor

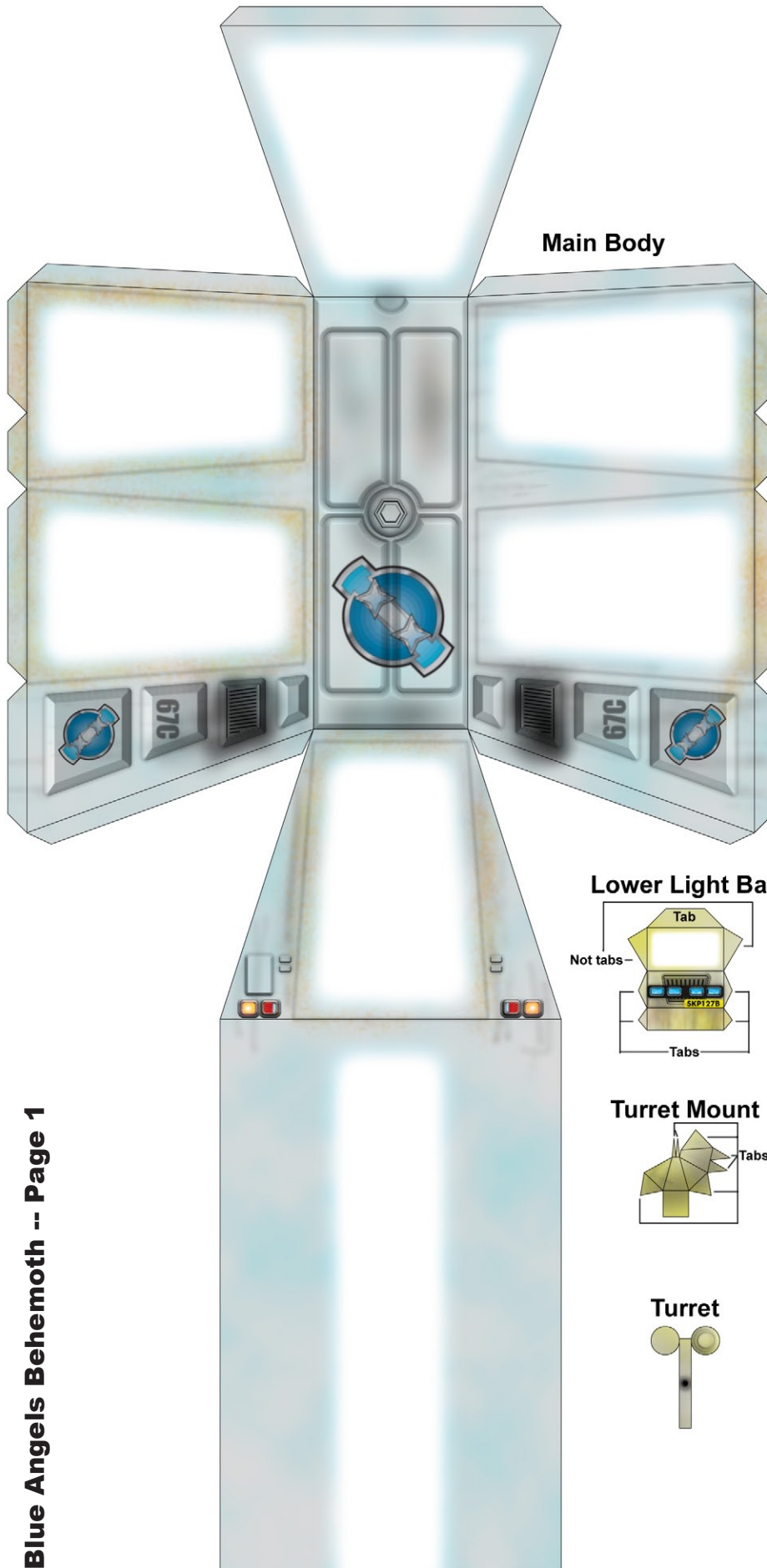
Fold the visor piece in half and glue the halves together (to form a double-sided piece). While the glue is still wet, fold the edge of the visor over to form a right angle. Allow to dry. If you wait until the glue is dry to bend the visor, the cardstock may crack.

18. Final Wheel Assembly

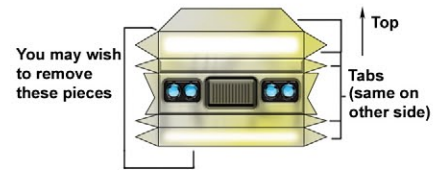
Glue the wheels onto the axles and chassis. Vertical alignment can be made slightly easier by aligning the middle horizontal treads with the base of the chassis. Make sure that the seam of the wheel is facing down. Make sure you use sufficient glue to support the entire model when it is turned upright.

19. Visor assembly

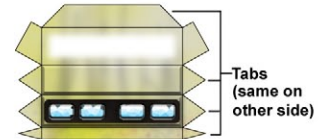
Glue the edge of the visor to the edge of the cab at a slight angle (i.e., angling up from the roof line). When the visor has dried in its final position, cut two pieces of stretched sprue (or whatever other strut material you would like) to the right length, and glue underneath the visor.



Radiator Grille



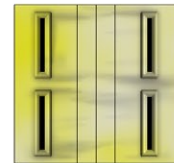
Top Light Bar



Bumper



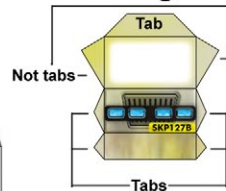
Visor



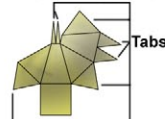
Chassis



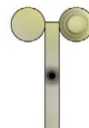
Lower Light Bar

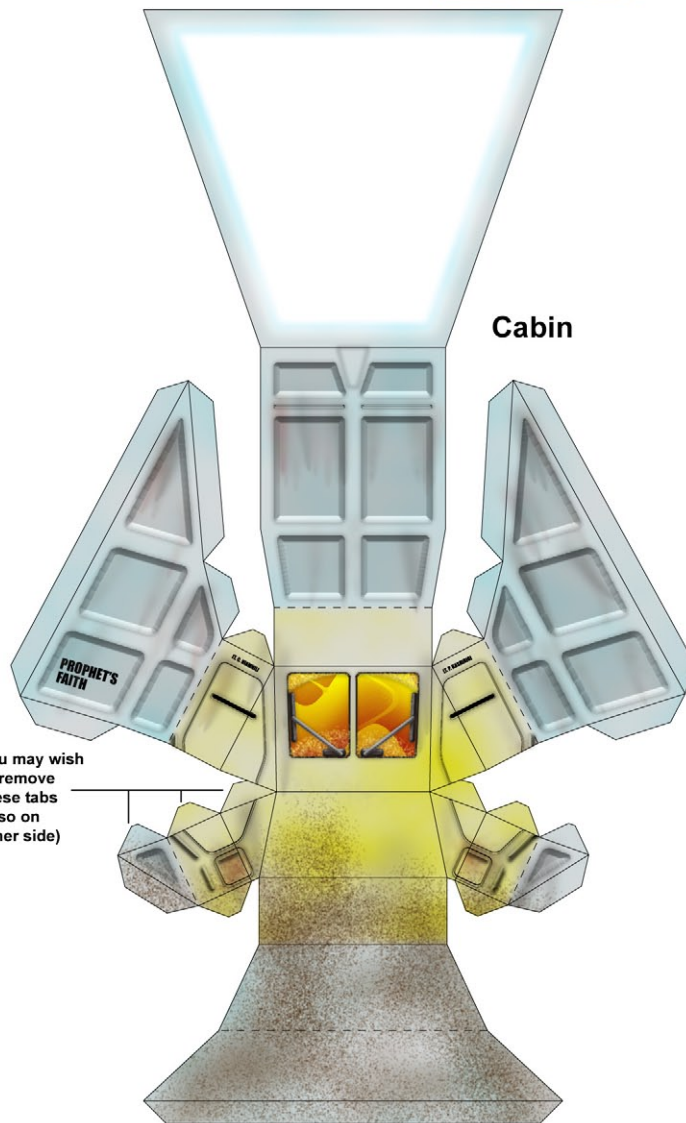
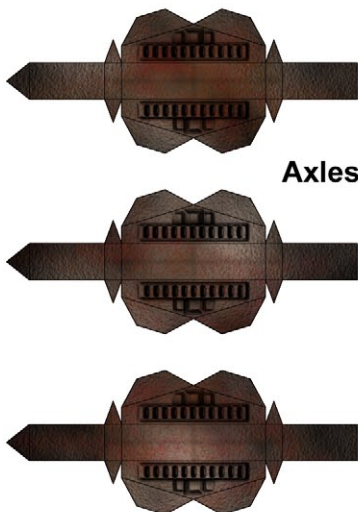
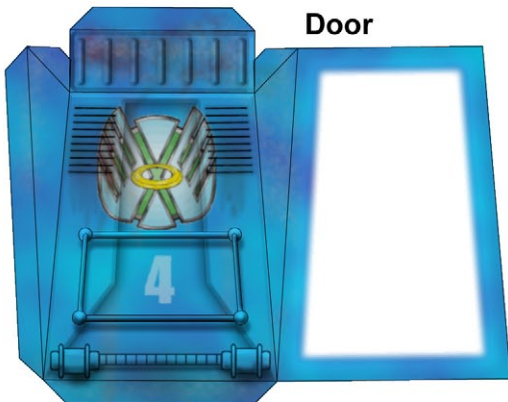
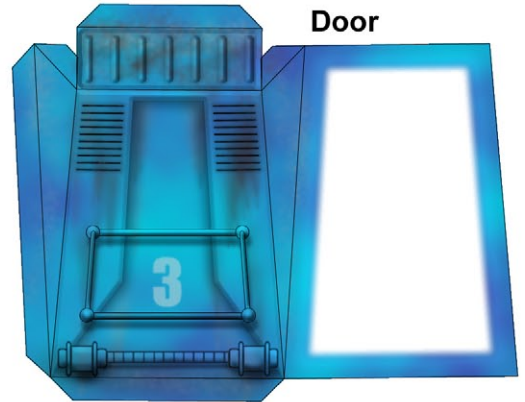
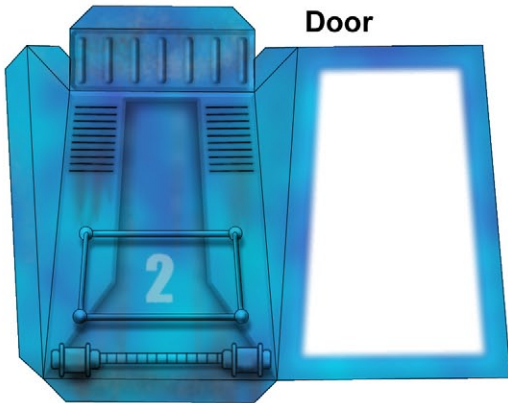
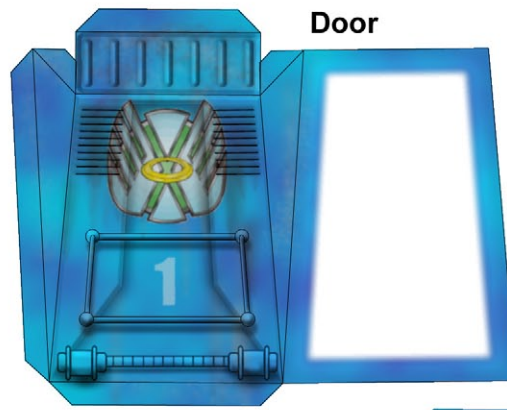
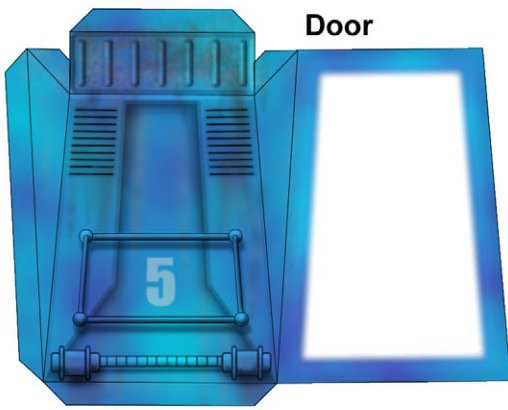


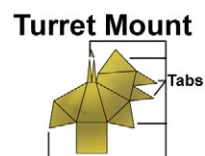
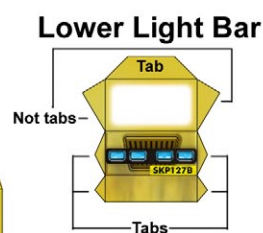
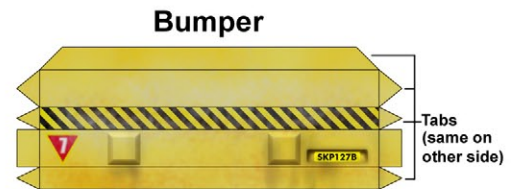
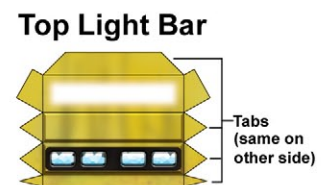
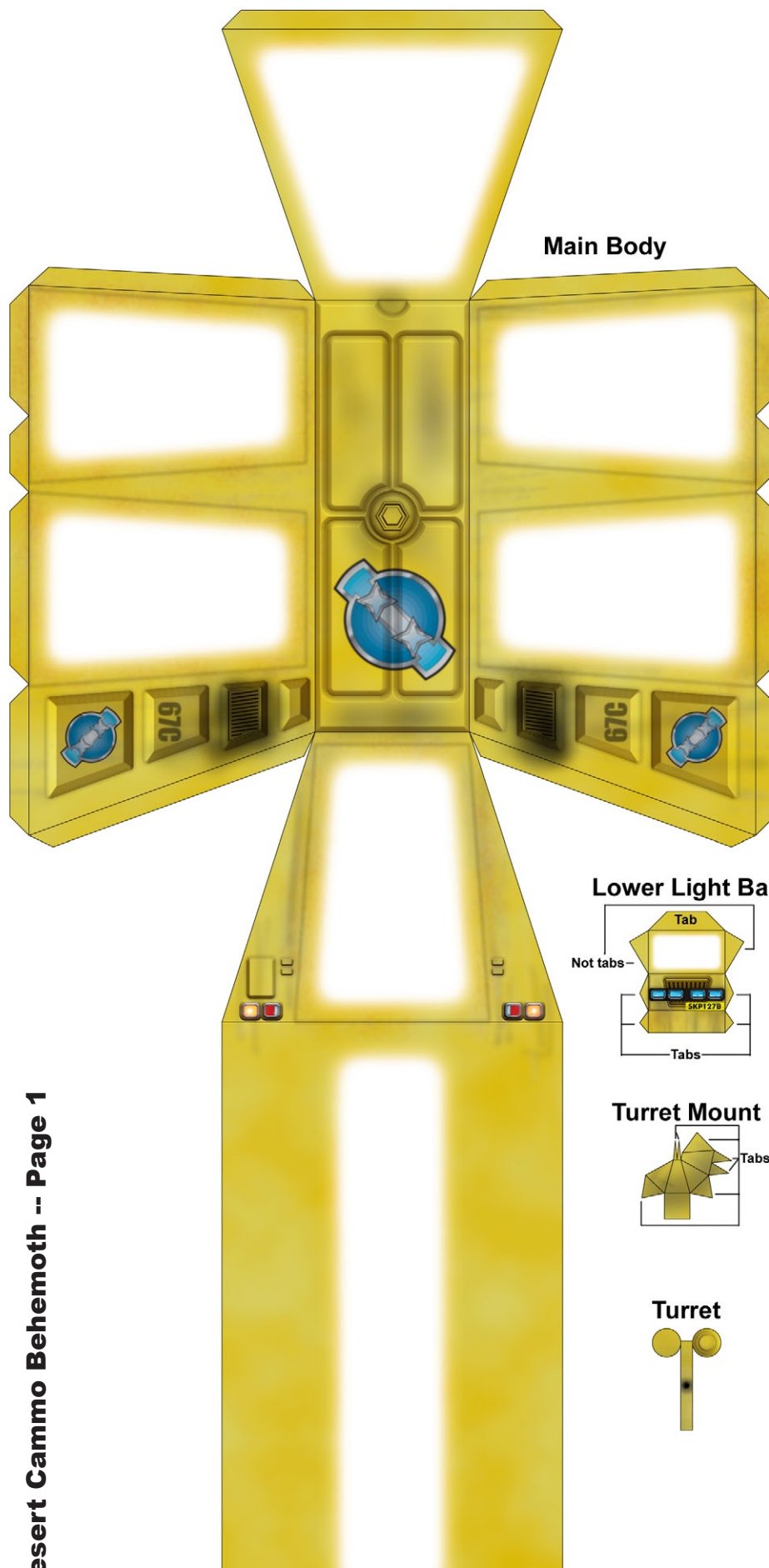
Turret Mount

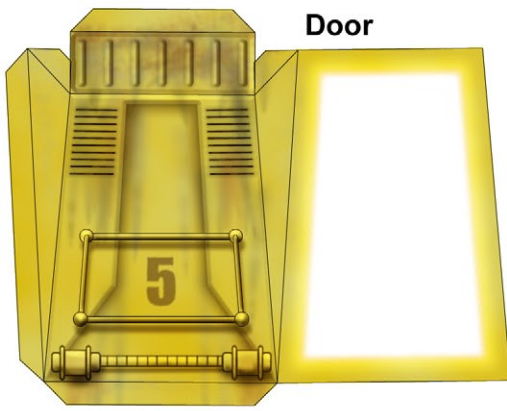


Turret

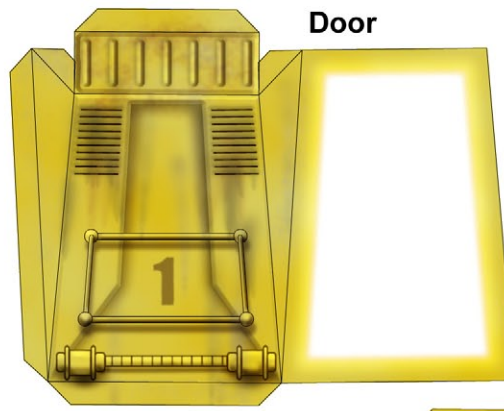




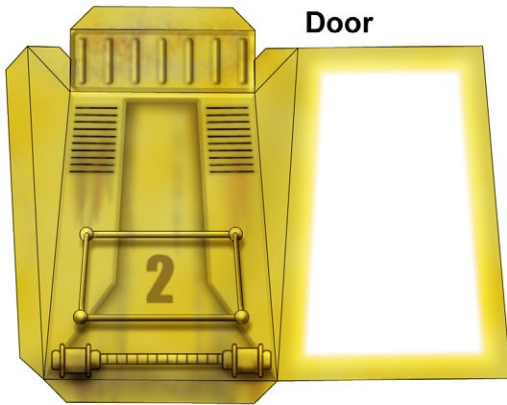




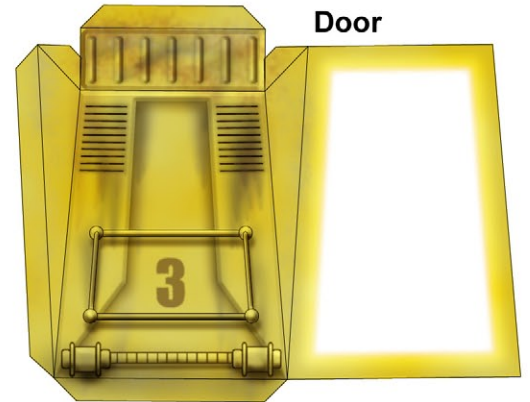
Door



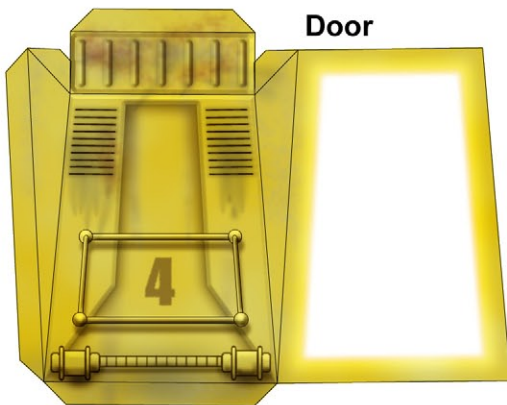
Door



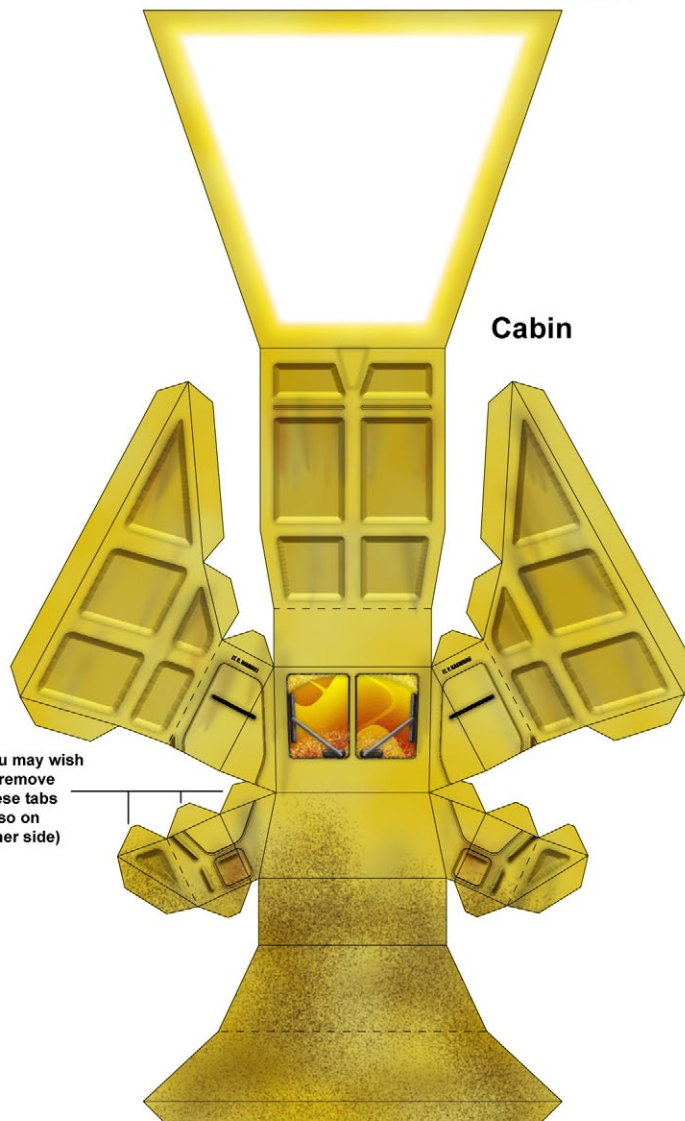
Door



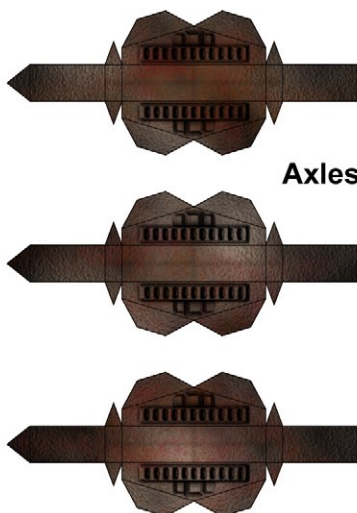
Door



Door

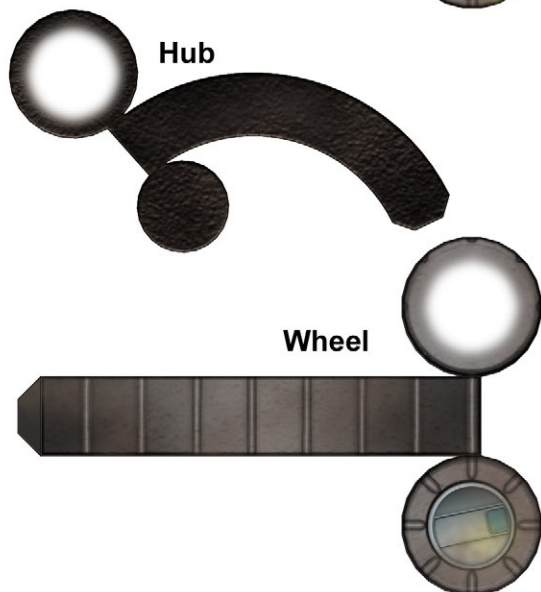
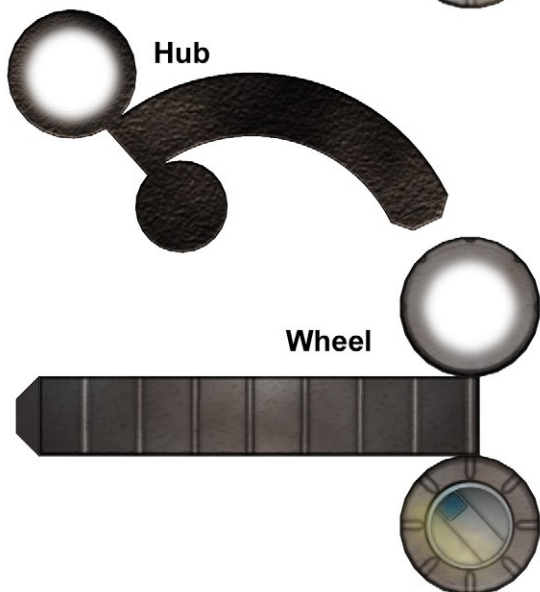
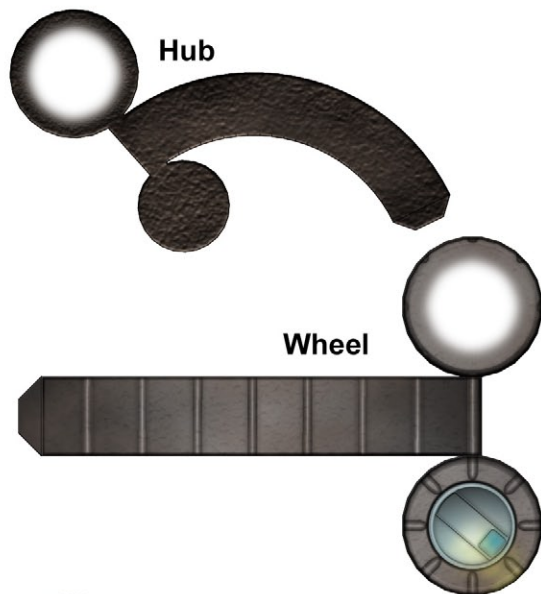
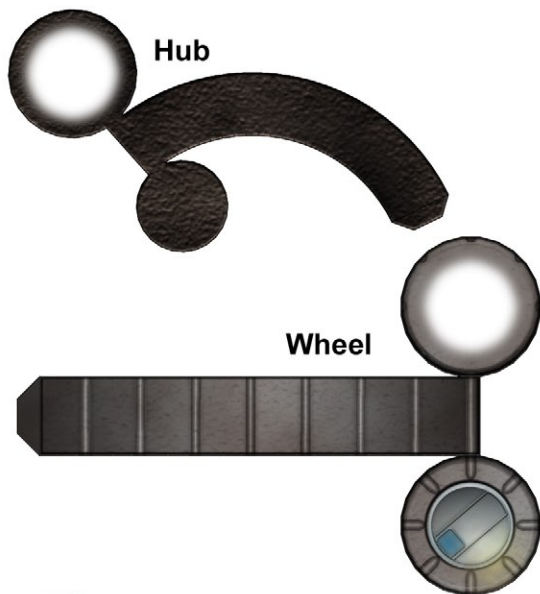
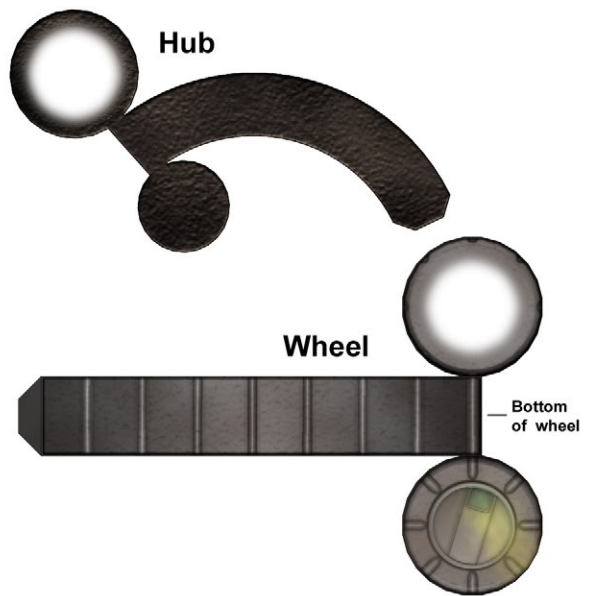
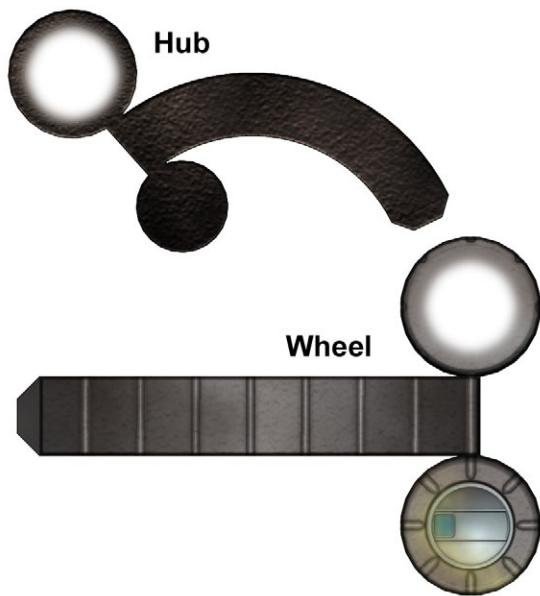


Cabin



Axles

You may wish to remove these tabs (also on other side)



From the rules monkey...

One of the things I want to do with Aurora is get new optional rules, ideas for changes and such out into the public and let players write in and give us their new and nifty rules to show off. For the first issue, I have some new stuff for Heavy Gear Blitz!

First are the optional rules, which as noted, are optional and can only be used if all participants agree. The second is a revised Tankstrider Squad for the PRDF that allows Paxton players to take advantage of all the options the new Red Bull mkII miniature. This may be considered official and any player may use this instead of the options presented in the main rulebook.

Optional Heavy Gear Blitz! Rules

These may only be used with permission of all players in a game

Change to Offensive Stance:

Offensive stance adds one die to Initiative tests instead of rerolls on Initiative when chosen.

Ammunition types:

In the fields of war, many different types of weapon or deployment systems are used. In Blitz, this can be represented by differing ammunition loads on vehicles. If taken, the following ammunition types replace the DM and all other effects of weapons with their own.

Smoke Ammo: Only for limited ammo weapons, creates smoke field equal to (DM/10, min 1)+ natural AE. Swap 1 for 1, so 2 of 3 grenades could be smoke, otherwise costs nothing.

Tracer Ammo: Only on weapons with RoF. At Night, gives +1 to attacks that utilise RoF, but give the unit -1 To Defense until end of round as other units can see the shots. No cost.

Illumination Ammo: Illuminates (cancels all penalties for Night effects and counts as daylight) an AE equal to the 5+AE for a number of rounds equal to the DM. May only be used on weapons with limited ammo. Swap 1 for 1, costs nothing.

Official Update to Heavy Gear Blitz!

The following replaces the Tankstrider entry found on page 64 of the Main Rulebook:

Tankstrider Squad TV: 160


A Squad consists of one Red Bull MkII tankstrider with standard loadout.

Skills:

All members have Attack 3, Defense 2, EW 1. One Red Bull MkII has Ld 2 and is the Combat Group Leader.

Options:

- Add up to two additional Red Bull MkII's for +160 TV each.
- Add Camo Netting to any member for +5 TV per member
- Add a MAC (F, no Reloads) for +5 TV
- Swap the MAAC for 2x VLRPs (T, ROF6, Linked, no Reloads) for +10 TV .
- Add a drone to any Unit (max one per Unit): Hunter-Killer + 5 TV, Recon +20 TV each.



RED BULL MKII

	ATT	DEF	EW	LD
DEFENSE W	3/6	-6	-4	-3
DEFENSE G	5/9	-6	-3	-2
ATTACK		+2	0	-3

	ACTIONS	SIZE
DETECT:	5	
SENSORS:	+1	
AUTO COMM:	4	
COMM:	0	

ARMOR AND DAMAGE

ARMOR: 40 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

DAMAGE: ☐ S ☐ L ☐ H

BACKUP SENSORS, RUGGED MOVEMENT

PERKS/FLAWS: WPN LINK (LFGs, VLRPs), IMPROVED OFF ROAD, SENSOR DEP, LSP 3

AUX SYSTEMS: AP CHARGES 1

NAME	ARC	ACC	RANGE	DAM	SPECIAL
LFG	T	0	8/15/30/60/120	x22	IF, AE1
LFG	T	0	8/15/30/60/120	x22	IF, AE1
□VLRP/128 T	-1	1/3/6/12/24	x8	ROF 6, IF	
VLRP/128 T	-1	1/3/6/12/24	x8	ROF 6, IF	
□MAAC	T	0	3/6/12/24/48	x8	ROF 6, AA
□MAC	F	0	4/9/18/36/72	x10	ROF 1
PHYSICAL ATTACK (Kick/Ram)				x12	M

NOTE: THE RED BULL'S BACK TURRET CAN BE ARMED WITH EITHER MAAC OR TWO LINKED VLRP/128. IT CAN ALSO CARRY A MAC IN ITS CHIN MOUNT.



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

MESSAGES FROM THE POD

Sneak Peeks!

Two sneak peeks this month:

First up are images of upcoming models for Hammers of Faith that Phil sculpted, looking impressive as always. Information on the costs and release dates will be announced on the forum and in the web store.

Next up we have three pages from the just-shipped Heavy Gear Blitz! sourcebook *Hammers of Faith -- Armies of the North*. Here is the back cover copy from the book:

The world of Terra Nova is polarized. The Confederated Northern City-States are once again vying for control of the planet against the hedonistic, immoral Allied Southern Territories. Founded on Faith, strengthened with unity and tempered by war, the armies of the North stand as the bastion of righteousness on Terra Nova. The patriotic soldiers of the Northern Guard stand ready to protect their countrymen and the independent Badlanders against Southern imperialism, and even take the war to the South. But can they really defeat the Southern juggernaut?

Hammers of Faith contains everything you need to know about the armies of the North, including:

- * An overview of Northern politics and history.
- * Backgrounds on all the major war machines.
- * In-depth Field Guides for the Northern Guard and all three Northern league armies.
 - * New squads and options to let a Northern commander handle nearly any situation.
 - * 30+ Datacards, covering all Northern designs and major variants, for easy reference.



Tyburr



Infantry Platoon



Field Gun



Bandit Hunter Klemm

Enjoy the previews, with more to come next month!

HEAVY
GEAR
BLITZ!

NORTHERN MILITARY

GRIZZLY

The Grizzly has been the most common Northern fire-support Gear since the War of the Alliance. Although developed well before then, it did not displace its predecessor, the Bear, until after the CEF was pushed off Terra Nova. The heavy frame needed to support its powerful weapons makes it slow and clumsy, leaving it vulnerable to attack despite thick armor. Its firepower more than compensates for this, and the Grizzly is capable of both long-range fire support and heavy assault, and can be a devastating anti-Gear weapon if screened by lighter units.

While not as simple and easy to work with as the Hunter, the Grizzly is an old, reliable design. It has given rise to a bevy of alternate loadouts and variants, including several engineering models. The standard loadout permits precision long-range strikes, short-range assaults, and basic anti-armor work. Most alternate loadouts focus on enhancing one of these areas, usually at the expense of the others.



KODIAK

Based on the basic Grizzly chassis, the Kodiak was developed during the War of the Alliance to help Gear columns deal with light CEF hover tanks. With considerably stronger armor and heavier direct-fire weapons than a normal Grizzly, the Kodiak is an excellent assault machine. The high cost of constructing and maintaining them limits their deployment, but the legends surrounding their service against the CEF mean that troops serving with them tend to have exceptional morale.

FERRET

This unique scout Gear design was widely used throughout the North prior to the introduction of the Cheetah, and is still found in spotter and recon roles in many regiments. Its design features short, stubby legs and a prominent "butt-wheel". When switching to its Secondary Movement System (SMS), the Ferret's legs lock together and it settles back on the buttwheel, converting it into a low-signature oversized motorcycle. Even though it is largely obsolete as a combat Gear, it has been immortalized in Northern pop culture, and civilian models continue to be absurdly popular. Despite their weak armament, Ferrets are not to be underestimated. Reports from the War of the Alliance tell of Ferrets performing many seemingly-impossible stunts, including taking out a hover tank single-handed with a hand grenade.



FIELD GUIDES

THE NORLIGHT ARMED FORCES



Southerners see the NAF as an arm of the Sorrento Revisionist Church. While not entirely fair, this perception is also not far from the truth. Sorrento Revisionism's emphasis on "forceful peregrination" - using force to protect the faithful, end oppression, or spread the Gentle Word - leads many devout Revisionists to join the NAF to protect their country against the vile hedonism and imperialism of the Southern Republic. This has made the NAF the largest of the Northern armies, and its troops the most fervent. The NAF and the Sorrento Church have close ties, and an NAF regiment is often assigned a chaplain to counsel soldiers, keep morale up and conduct regular services. The NAF is frequently deployed into the Badlands to protect homesteaders and Revisionist pilgrims traveling to Massada and other holy sites. They often work with the Dorothean Monks, a Revisionist holy order dedicated to the protection of pilgrimage routes.

NORLIGHT ARMED FORCES SPECIAL RULES

Northern Rivalries: Due to the UMF restricting exports of Jaguars before the War of the Alliance, many regiments only have Jaguars in their elite squads. A NAF player may swap a base Jaguar for a Tiger for no cost and any Thunder Jaguar for a Sabertooth at no cost. Tigers and Sabertooths pay the same cost as Jaguars if upgraded with Field Armor and may take the same options, except for swaps/upgrades to Jaguar variants.

Local Manufacturing: Shaian Mechanics and Keimuri Gear are both NLC companies, and as such their Gears are more common in the NAF. NAF players may swap any base Hunters to Cheetahs for +25 TV. Hunters upgraded to Cheetahs may have their DPG upgraded to a LAC (F, Reloads) for an additional +5 TV. In addition, the player may upgrade any Ferrets to Ferret MkII's at +5TV, regardless of veteran status.

Chaplains: The prevalence of Revisionism in the NLC is reflected in the makeup of the NAF and many soldiers from the NLC are devout Revisionists. Chaplains or Monks of the Sorrento Revisionist faith often serve as active members of regiments, tending to the souls of their fellow soldiers and, in some cases, joining them in battle.

One Unit in your force may be upgraded to a Chaplain. The Chaplain has the same skills as the rest of the Combat Group and may be the Combat Group Leader or even the Army Commander. The Combat Group the Chaplain is a part of gains one CP per round as if they had a Satellite Uplink, but this CP may only be used on the Combat Group the Chaplain is in and may only be used for re-rolls or removing morale tokens. This costs 30TV. The Chaplain's Unit should be designated with a small goblet or other such symbol painted on it.

Warrior Monk: If in a Gear, a Chaplain may be upgraded to a Warrior Monk for +5 TV. The Warrior Monk gains a Gear-sized fighting staff (Range 0, DM is Size +2, ACC 0 and is both Melee and Armor Crushing) and may roll an additional die in Melee Combat.

Army Commander: One Combat Group out of those allowed must be designated as the Army Command Squad. The Squad Leader becomes the Army Commander. The Army Commander may upgrade any or all of these skills for +15 TV each: EW, Leadership or Defense. If an Infantry Platoon is chosen, one squad must be designated as the Army Commander and it may pay 30 TV to upgrade its Infantry Skill by 1.

Command Points: The NAF follows the same Command Point rules as the Northern Guard.

COMBAT GROUP LISTINGS

DRAGOON SQUAD

TV: 300

While Strike Squads are designed for full out assault and heavy assault roles, the Dragoon squads are designed for heavy recon, fast assault and close assault, much like the Highland regiments of old. In fact the WFPA makes it a point of pride that all WFPA Dragoon Squads are known as Highlanders. Dragoons are best used in "blitz" attacks, although some Dragoon Squads are designed specifically for urban combat.

Composition: A Dragoon Squad consists of 2 Cheetahs and 2 Hunters with Standard Loadout, as well as 1 Rabid Grizzly.

Skills: All members have Attack 2, Defense 2, EW 1. The Rabid Grizzly has Ld 2 and is the Combat Group Leader.

OPTIONS:

- Any Hunter may be upgraded to a Jaguar with Standard Loadout for +20 TV.
- Any Hunter can be upgraded to a Rabid Grizzly for +50TV.
- Any Rabid Grizzly may upgrade their LGL to a HGL (F, Reloads) for +10TV.
- Add Field Armor (an additional Sturdy Box) to any member for +30 TV per Hunter variant, +25 per Cheetah and +20 per Jaguar or Grizzly.
- Any Cheetah May upgrade their DPG to a LAC (F, Reloads) for +5TV.
- Add one Recon drone to any member (max 1 drone per Unit) + 20 TV.
- Add one Hunter-Killer drone to any member (max 1 drone per Unit) for + 5 TV.
- Any Unit may swap an Autocannon for a FGC (F, Reloads) and HGs (limited ammo 3) for 3 HHGs (F, Limited Ammo 3) for +5TV.
- Any Unit may swap its LRP for HMG (F, no Reloads), and add HPZFs (F, Limited Ammo 4) for +0 TV each.

Veteran Status Options:

- Increase Leadership of the Combat Group Leader by 1 level (to 3) for +10 TV.
- Increase both the Attack and Defense Skills of any member to level 3 for +30 TV per member.
- Any Unit with an Autocannon may upgrade it to a LGL (F, Reloads) for +10 TV.
- Any Cheetah may be swapped for a Strike Cheetah for 0 TV.
- Any Grizzly, Including the Leader's, may be swapped for a Jaguar for -30 TV.
- Any Jaguar may swap its LRP for 2 MRPs (FF, RoF 4, No reloads) for +10TV and may link these for an additional +10TV.



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Beth Porter (thelieutenant@gmail.com) -- Cover Image. Illustration: p1

Beth Porter is an artist. She's done a lot of Heavy Gear fan art, and has three pieces in the new Hammers of Faith book. She has an unnatural fondness for Ferrets.

Charles Lewis (darthcharlie@gmail.com) -- Hero's Rest

A long-time gamer since way back when, Charles recently wrote Victory by Any Means: Jovian Chronicles, published by VBAM Games. He finds great satisfaction in the blending of anime and sci-fi found in DP9's settings and enjoys both the Jovian Chronicles and Heavy Gear. He lives in Missouri with his wife, daughter and two cats, none of whom were harmed in the writing of this story. He would like to add that he was greatly amused at discovering that tengu is the Japanese word for a long-nosed goblin or a braggart, and named the *Braggadacio* accordingly.

John Buckmaster (dp9.rules.support@gmail.com) -- Messages from the Pod

John Buckmaster is DP9's head rules monkey and line developer. He's one of the masterminds behind the whole Blitz thing, and has been a Heavy Gear fan forever.

Nick Pilon (npilon@gmail.com) -- SEED: Odyssey

Nick Pilon is a DP9 freelancer. He's particularly insane, because he keeps trying to track down and resolve continuity problems and ensure consistent capitalization of game terms.

Oliver Bollmann (kannikcat@hotmail.com) -- Core Injection: Variant RPG Rules

It all started in a hobby store one day twenty odd years ago with an odd box containing something called Top Secret. Almost as soon as he began gaming he began writing, tinkering and adding for and to them, which led to self-publishing and e-publishing several supplements. In the times he's not playing games, practicing traditional Chinese martial arts, designing buildings, or being a stand for the world he continues to write and create for all manner of things. He's been in love with the DP9 universes since the first HG release and began his direct involvement with the Pod crew a couple of years ago.

Owen O'Connell (toyrobots@gmail.com) -- Blood of the Prophet

Owen O'Connell stands about 15 feet tall. He has one central sensor cluster in the middle of his face, and his hull is equipped with ten hardpoints to carry his various armaments. He has dense armor covering most of his body, and runs on a combustion powered servo-motor system. This is his first publication for Heavy Gear after ten years of pure adoration.

Paul Lesack (lesack@interchange.ubc.ca) -- Paper Model: Behemoth and Illustration: p6, bottom

Paul has been designing paper models since he realized that it was less toxic than casting resin ones.

Philippe Le Clerc -- Illustrations: p4 and p6, top. Miniatures: p 16, p17

Philippe Le Clerc is DP9's miniature master. He designs and sculpts the models, and is the other mastermind behind the whole Blitz thing.

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Aurora Magazine, Volume 1, Issue 1, Published January 1st, 2007

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Article Guidelines

The Aurora Magazine focuses on the worlds created by Dream Pod 9. As such, we are primarily interested in, but not limited to, articles dealing with SilCore and Blitz rules (variants, additions, explorations of the rules) and on fiction, mechanized designs, equipment and the like that draw on established DP9 universes. This does not mean, however, that articles that are generic in nature or that do not deal with unique or original material, only that the focus is on exploring Silhouette and it's attendant universes.

Any article that is a promotion piece for another product, be it an excerpt or a lead-in to another product, must be clearly defined as such within the article body.

No articles will be accepted that use another's Intellectual Property or Copyrighted material without an included signed permission to use said material.

Fiction may be a one-off or serial based, as desired. Please note that long works of fiction may be split into multiple pieces over multiple issues for length reasons; if you are writing a long story it is best to indicate breaks in the story (chapters, for example) that allow us to chose the best point to split the story, if necessary. In keeping with the nature of the magazine we ask that fiction be accompanied by Silhouette CORE or Blitz! rules detail of some kind, be it stats for characters or equipment in the story, game scenarios, mechanized designs, new rules or explanations of how to simulate aspects of the story using the Silhouette/Blitz rules. This is not a hard requirement, and you may request that another contributor be asked to create the rules support based on your story.

Aurora is also looking for original artwork. Art may be used to accompany the article and/or for the cover of the APA. Please see below for copyright information regarding images.

Submission Guidelines

All work for Aurora should be submitted in an .rtf (Rich Text Format) file. The text within should be in Arial 10pt font, and single-spaced. Hard returns should be used only to separate paragraphs (with a double hard return) or with bullet points and list items. Do not indent paragraphs. You may use italics, boldface or bullets where deemed necessary.

Tables may be included in the submission. Preferably, tables should be created with minimal lines between cells, instead using background colour and/or cell spacing for clarity. Tables may also be included in courier-font/fixed-formatting. Identify these kind of tables with the following: <<<Table>>>

The article's title should be clearly noted at the beginning of the file, followed by a short (less than 75 words) introductory text. This introductory text can either be a synopsis, a quote, story, etc. It will be used at the beginning of the article to 'set the stage'.

The file should end with the Author's name(s), contact information (if desired) and a short bio (optional). This information will be placed on a Contributing Author's page in the magazine.

Please spell check and proofread your article. English or American spellings may be used as desired.

Photos, drawings or images should be accompanied by photo credits as well as a brief description/caption for each photo (optional). Indicate within your article where the images are to be included like so: <<<Image_Filename.ext>>>. Images should be sent at a maximum of 150dpi for greyscale or colour images, 300dpi for black & white images (1-bit). Given the size of a page, images should be no larger than 7 by 7 inches (18 by 18 cm). If we need a higher resolution image, we will contact you. Images should be compressed with an appropriate method; please check the quality of your images before sending. If by including images the submission would grow over 2 megabytes in size, please place the images on an Internet-accessible server where we will download them (don't forget to tell us where they are located).

Copyright Guidelines

Quotes or information that are attributable to other sources are permissible in appropriate quantities, and should be identified/cited (including page numbers), preferably within the article. Be sure that each quote is written exactly as it appears in the original source.

If you wish to include photos/drawings/images with your article, please provide the photo credits (artist/photographer/illustrator and subject if applicable). You may only submit images for which you have obtained permission to include in your article.

All articles and images used by Aurora remain in the copyright of the original submitters. You, as the author, must consent to release the article for publication by Aurora, with the knowledge that Aurora will not provide any compensation other than what has been listed above, and that Aurora, as an online magazine, will be downloaded by third-parties in a PDF format. All work for Aurora is volunteer-based. Should DP9 decide at a later time to compile and sell articles within a contract will be negotiated with the author at that time.

The End Print

Please send all submissions to the following email address:

auroramag@gmail.com

Thank you everyone for your interest, and we look forward to seeing your submissions soon!

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ARTICLE SUGGESTIONS

Historical Articles

Under this broad category are pieces meant primarily for illuminating or detailing something within the game universe. This can be truly historical in nature (describing history), detailing a region, the language, customs, architecture, technical systems, corporations, social structure, music, and more, to name a few. Articles may either be written from a neutral point of view (impartial observer from above) or written 'in character', that is, in the manner such information may be presented if it were available in the game world. See the Historical Accuracy note, below (especially important for this category).

Fiction

Any story (narrative with characters) that takes place within the established DP9 game worlds falls under this category. See the Historical Accuracy note, below, and also see the submission guidelines for further requirements.

Modules

Also known as adventures, a written collection of plot, character, and location details used by the gamemaster to manage the plot or story in the DP9 RPGs. All manner of modules are open for submission, from espionage to social to military to a combination of all three. Module submissions must be detailed enough for the GM to run the entire adventure, including descriptions and dispositions (where applicable) of major NPCs, locations, accessories and story/plot. See the Historical Accuracy note, below.

Scenarios

These are the tactical equivalent of modules, an encounter between two (or more) factions set up for combat. A complete scenario will detail the background of the encounter (the why), the forces engaged (the who – what physical units at a minimum, regiment and designations to go the full way), the map and terrain (the where) the victory conditions (the how) and any special rules or conditions (the what). Scenarios should be designed to be balanced for each side, either via the types/numbers of units or through special circumstances or conditions. If the scenario is not balanced this must be mentioned in the background. See the Historical Accuracy note, below.

Designs

New mechanical designs/vehicles/ships for use in the DP9 worlds. Designs must be legal and use either the latest SilCore rules (including all errata and the FAQ) or Blitz rules. Please indicate which design rules were used. Mechanical designs should fill a

void that is not already covered by another unit. Background and a description must be included with the design, while artwork is optional and preferred. See the Historical Accuracy note, below.

Artwork

Aurora accepts all artwork for consideration, no matter the media type (rendering, sketch, painting, etc) within the rules set herein. Miniature photographs will also be accepted (dioramas encouraged!). Artwork must relate to an established DP9 universe and be easily identified as such. Artwork with nudity, racial undertones, sexism or sex will not be considered. See the submission guidelines on how to submit images.

House Rules

Original rules for the Silhouette/Blitz system and modifications to existing rules. All rules submittals must include an explanation of the rule's purpose, the rules themselves clearly written, and an example of the rule in play.

Tactics

Have you won countless battles? Have a strategy you would like to share? Write a tactics article. Usually this type of article will be in a step-by-step (or turn by turn) format to illustrate the tactic. An introduction and conclusion is required to create a complete package and to convey to the reader where the tactic is applicable and how it came about.

Miniatures/Modeling

Any article on preparing miniatures, painting, terrain making, sculpting, foliage techniques, etc will be accepted. Photographs and/or diagrams are strongly encouraged.

Note: Historical Accuracy

Aurora is committed to accuracy within the established DP9 worlds. All articles that take place 'within' the game world should be checked for its accuracy within the established timeline, faction dispositions, available equipment, etc. Submitted articles will be run by the game world historians, so check your work! You may, however, submit your article clearly marked as "Alternate History" and if published the article too will bear this mark. Be sure, if you submit this way, to provide in the background all that is necessary to describe what has changed.