

AURORA

THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

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GEAR KRIEG MODELING AND FICTION
VARIANT RULES FOR SILCORE
ENGINEERING GRIZZLY CUSTOM MINI CONVERSION
OFFICIAL UPDATES AND MORE!

SPECIAL: NORTHERN SQUAD CONTEST WINNERS!



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE
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AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

SHADES IN THE NIGHT

From the Editor...

And from the first snowfall, thus did the land begin to sleep..

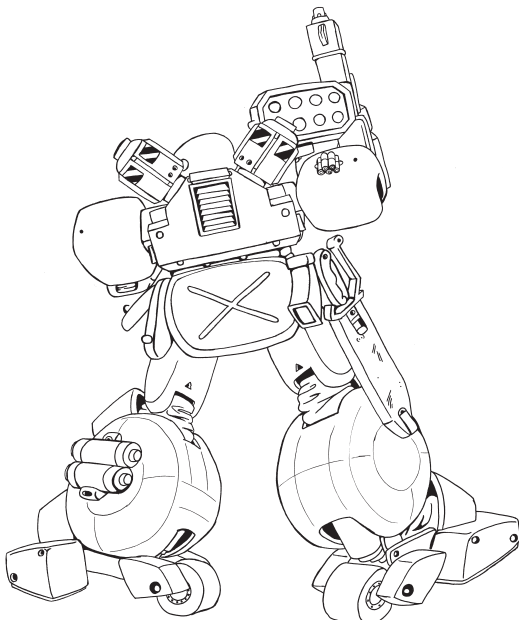
Ahh, the end of the year. Such begins the aptly named “holiday season” for many countries (with some moreso than others). When, inexorably, campaigns get disrupted, players get occupied, and gaming, like many a military excursion, grinds to a halt. At least until after the presents are opened. Then, all bets are off as new minis, games, et al find their way onto the table in a glorious round of shiny new mayhem.

For me, holiday time over the past couple of years has meant prep time. On my visits home I’ve lugged up various books, sources and pads of paper to do get crafting on various gaming projects I’ve been postponing all year long. Sometimes it involves putting in time on doing a long stretch of work on an upcoming campaign, planning out plots, encounters, twists and maps. Other times its fashioning up new and variant rules. And there’s meeting with old friends for a quick rumble across a map.

The regular gaming schedule may be disrupted, but gaming itself never goes far away.

Whatever your gaming traditions, welcome to the end of the year, and welcome to issue number six of Aurora!

Oliver Bollmann
Aurora Magazine Editor



OFFICIAL-DP9

Only articles stamped “Official” are considered to be from Dream Pod 9 for Tournament or similar reasons. Some official material will be noted as optional, and are therefore treated as “Officially Optional”. Said another way, consider the material in Official articles the same though published in a DP9 book.

TEST DRIVE

Articles stamped Test Drive indicates that the rules being presented are in testing. The rules are not official – yet and being considered for later publication as Errata or are products in development. DP9 would appreciate feedback on their use, but they are not to be considered official. Note that they may change at any time or never be seen again.

Anything not so marked is a fan submitted rule not regarded as official and does not change the games or the DP9 game-universes as written in the books. Optional rules should only be used if all players agree upon their inclusion before play.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Beth Porter (thelieutenant@gmail.com) -- *Illustration: p2*

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 End*

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.

Greg Perkins (gregoryperkins@gmail.com) -- *Engineering Grizzly Conversion, Part 2, Illustration p17*

Greg Perkins is a graduate student at the University of Waterloo School of Architecture. His spare time is generally occupied with graphic design or Heavy Gear related creative projects. You can see some of these projects at the following address: www.coolminiornot.com/artist/mason.

Jason Jarvis (jayderyu@gmail.com) -- *Manhunt*

Jason a lover of Dream Pod 9 since purchasing Project A-ko and Video Fighter. Since then the Master of English Mangling has been a forcing his gaming group to play Silhouette ever since. Currently living in Vancouver (the Lower Rainland), British Columbia with his (very patient) wife and two distractions...err, kids. (This article also edited by Alex Ozlins & Moriah Lalonde)

John Bell (jakarnilson@magma.ca) -- *Building a Cavalier, Alfie's Tanners*

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

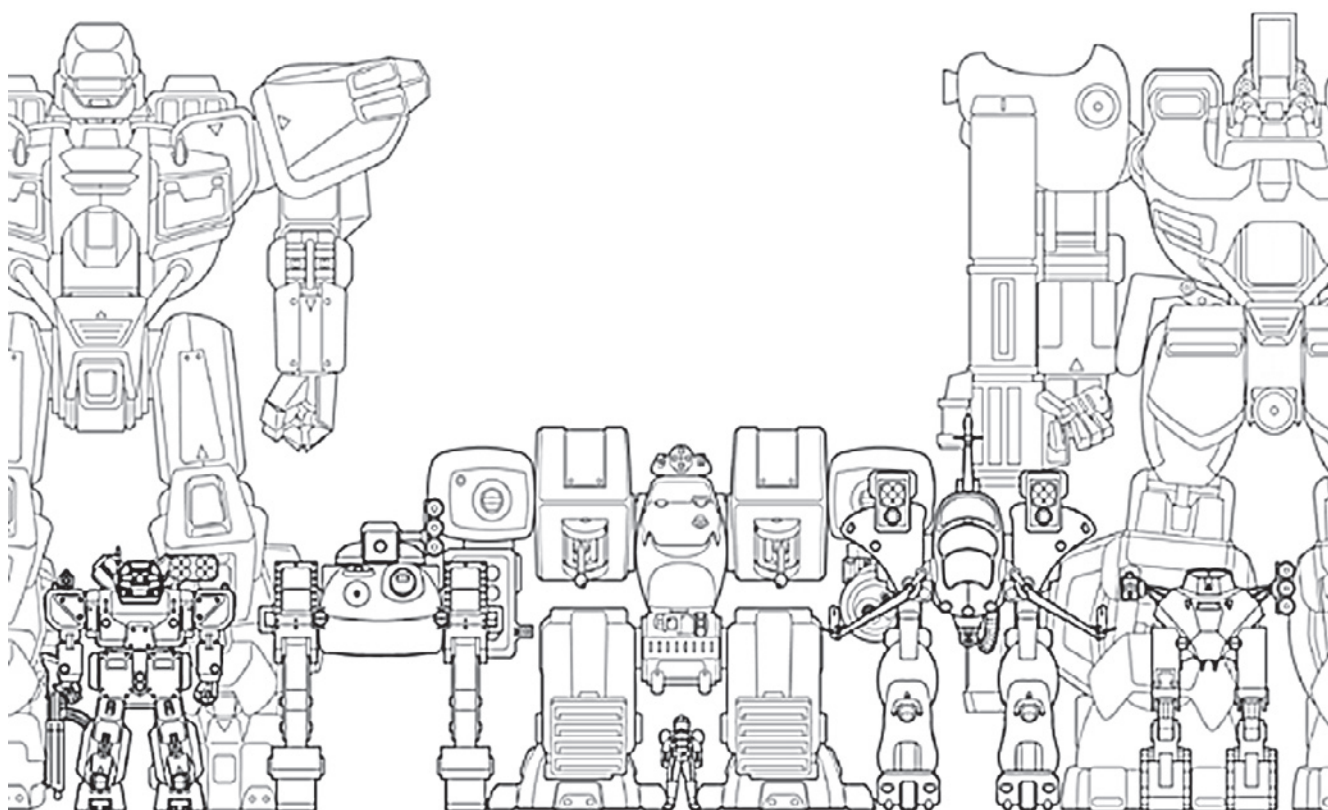
John Buckmaster is DP9's head rules monkey and line developer. He's one of the masterminds behind the whole Blitz thing, and has been a Heavy Gear fan forever.

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.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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"I'm telling you, the Guard is on to us. Every time we've tried to grab a ship, they've been close enough to intercept. We're falling behind schedule!" The speaker's Venusian accent was thick and hard to decipher.

"Nonsense! All the Guard knows is that pirate attacks are up. They don't have any inkling there's a larger purpose. If they did, it would have to be because of those bungling terrorists you've been using." The other man in the room had a slight Mercurian accent just faintly noticeable if you knew what to listen for.

"Don't blame me for this mess. If was your captain who launched his Bael for all the Guard to see. Might as well have hung a sign saying 'Merchant Guild out where we don't belong!'" The Venusian threw his hands up in the air.

"Bah! He had to launch the Bael. Your terrorists were violating their orders – again!" The Guildsman crossed his arms and glared across the table.

The Venusian glared back. "It doesn't matter. What does matter is the level of interference from the Guard is too high. We've got to do something about it!"

The Guildsman leaned back in his chair. "On that we are in complete agreement. I think it's time we arrange for our hapless Guard interlopers to fall in over their heads." There was a very shark-like grin on his face as his Venusian counterpart nodded in agreement.

.....

"Back off, Shu! This has nothing to do with you!" Satsuki Li peeled 12 year old Shuyun off her boyfriend and shoved him back.

"But, Satsuki, he hit you! You're my sister. It's my job to protect you!" Shuyun's fist were balled up and he was shaking with rage and adrenaline.

"Hahahahaha! The little runt thinks you need protecting, Sats. OK, runt. Let's see what you've got." Billy was known for street fighting with his gang, and he just oozed menace. As Billy advanced on him, Shuyun backed away. Billy pulled his fist back to strike and Shuyun flinched, closing his eyes.

Satsuki stepped between them and shoved Billy back. "Knock it off, Billy! He's just a kid. Leave 'im alone. Shu, get outta here."

"But, Satsuki, Mom said we had to stay together."

Satsuki whirled to face her brother, one hand still on Billy's chest. "Beat it, Shu. I can take care of myself."

Shuyun woke with a start. "*Back off, Shu! This has nothing to do with you!*" echoed in his head. He climbed out of his rack and hurried to the Ready Room, where he quickly logged in to a terminal and accessed his flight recorder from the fight that nearly cost him his Wyvern several weeks ago.

He fidgeted as he skipped ahead through the recording. *Wait...what was that?*

"Attention, Unknown Aggressors! This is the USN Guard. Stand down or be destroyed!" Shuyun unconsciously grinned at the excitement in Wynona's voice.

"Back off, Guard! This has nothing to do with you," a female voice replied.

There! He backed up.

"Back off, Guard! This has nothing do with you."

That's got to be Satsuki. But what is she doing piloting an Explorer? Why is she piloting a pirate Explorer? What is going on here? His mind a whirl, Shuyun was still sitting at the terminal listening and re-listening to the recording as Ship's Dawn came, and the *Resolute* came to life around him.

.....

Resolute was fading fast behind Shuyun and Wynona, as they and the rest of the *Resolute's* flight group pulled maximum burn. The Wyvern, Syreen, three Defenders, two Lancers and a Wraith made for a pretty rag-tag looking group, but they had been fighting pirates for months now, and were a tough bunch.

Captain Anvari's voice came over the comm. "OK, Resolutes, there's a convoy reporting a large pirate attack. Sounds like about a dozen exos. No sign of ship support for the Pirates, but you've got to get there as fast as you can; the defenders can't hold out much longer. We'll get there as soon as we can. Good luck. *Resolute*, out."

"Shu, why don't you threaten the 'rats this time? You've been pretty distracted lately. Threatening 'rats always makes me feel better." Shuyun could hear the smile on Wynona's voice.

"Thanks, Wy. Maybe I will. Why should you have all the fun?"

"They should be coming up on our scopes any second now," interrupted Lieutenant Pavlov from his Wraith. A few moments later, he was on again. "I'm showing five ships and fourteen exos. Too soon, yet, to tell who's on what side."

By now, *Resolute's* strike group was getting close enough that everyone's sensors were starting to make out details.

"Looks like a pretty scruffy bunch. Mostly old Apollos and Hoplites," said Wynona. "Just like the bunch that nearly handed Shu his ass a few weeks ago." There were chuckles over the comm. net. "Ooo, and an Explorer, too. Shu, you think it might be the one that got away? Shu? Shuyun?"

Shuyun was stunned. *Could it be her?* Wy's voice finally got his attention. He looked at his scanner more closely. "I'm showing a Brimstone and a Bael. Must be a Guild convoy. But that's odd..."

"What's that, Shu?" asked Pavlov.

"It's been almost 15 minutes since we got the distress call and scrambled to intercept. By now there should be signs of wreckage. But either somebody's really good, really bad, or..."

"Or, it's a trap!" shouted Wynona.

"Too late now, I think they've spotted us!" Shuyun switched to all his all-frequencies transmitter. "Attention, all units. This is Lieutenant Shuyun Li of the United Space Nations Guard. We are responding to a distress call, and under international law, all units are ordered to cease fire and stand down. I repeat..."

"Oh, look, it's the little runt. Trying to save Sats again?" Billy's voice echoed from the past. Shu's scanner quickly identified the source of the transmission as a Ryu just launching from one of the freighters. It was quickly joined by a second Ryu and an Er-Lang.

"Way to go, Billy. Now he knows we're here." Shu's scanner identified the Explorer as the source of that transmission. *I knew it!* he thought.

"Satsuki? What are you doing here?" asked Shuyun.

Meanwhile, Wynona was taking advantage of the distraction. She switched over to the squadron 'net. "OK, here's the plan. Pavlov, you, Shiner and Wachowski make speed passes on the Apollos and Hoplites; try to even the odds up a bit. Soronovski, keep your Defenders in a group and concentrate your fire. Shu and I, if I can drag him away from the reunion for a bit, will tie up the big boys."

"Think we can pull this off, Wy?" asked Pavlov.

"Sure. I think. Let's just hope *Resolute* doesn't take her sweet time getting here. We need backup." She switched back to the all-frequencies 'net.

"None of your business, Shu. You shouldn't be here. You're supposed to be safely tucked away in the CEGA Navy."

"Sorry I couldn't live up to your plans, Satsuki, but your life kept me under a cloud of suspicion. They got rid of me and sent me to the Guard. Now, please just power down and surrender and we can sort this all out." Shuyun was ashamed of the desperation in his voice. *I'm not twelve anymore!*

"Way too late for that, Runt. You and your little Guard buddies have poked your noses in where they don't belong for the last time. Time to die, Runt!" Billy kicked his Ryu into high thrust and opened fire!

"Now!" screamed Wynona as the fighters pushed their throttles to the firewall and screamed across the battlefield. The three Guard defenders arced to the right and immediately started taking shots at the Hoplites while Wynona started shooting at the Brimstone. Shuyun fell in beside her; ignoring the jibes and potshots from Billy's Ryu.

As the Brimstone went defensive against the hail of fire from Wy's Syreen, Shu lined up a shot with his bazooka. He caught it in the shoulder, damaging the engine pod in the process. Wynona was able to finish it off.

The ferocity of the Guard attack threw the pirates into disorder. The firing pass by the Guard fighters destroyed a Hoplite and crippled an Apollo and drew several of them off in pursuit as the fighters blew through their formation.

One of Soronovski's Defenders disappeared from Shu's scanner after a blistering hail of fire from Billy's Ryu. They had allowed him to get too close and Billy combined his beam cannon with missile pod salvos for terrible effect.

Shuyun tried to lead Wynona on an attack against Billy, but the Bael got in his way. After the Bael's firing pass brought it close enough to see its markings, Shuyun thought he recognized it. "Computer, show me the transponder codes for all of the ships in the immediate area." A near miss from the Bael's heavy railgun forced Shuyun to throw his Wyvern into a dizzying spiral straight down. Wynona swooped in to help and distracted the Bael with accurate shots from her laser.

Straightening out and climbing back up to the fight, Shuyun was able to take a moment to scan the results of his request. *Ah, ha! The Nestor! I bet this is the same Bael! But Merchant Guild and Venusians together with pirates out in the Belt. What's going on here?*

Wynona was using her Syreen's speed to frustrate the Bael as Shuyun rejoined the fight. The problem was that even after another fighter pass took down two more Apollos and the remaining Defenders took down a Hoplite, the Guard squadron was still outnumbered, and the Er-Lang proved how dangerous it was as it blew up Pavlov's Wraith with concentrated salvos from its twin beam cannon. The Bael, aware of Shuyun's approach, whirled and fired a torpedo at him at close range!

His Wyvern's Missile Defense system went crazy pumping shot after shot at the ship-killer, while Shuyun dodged out of the way. Another near miss from the Bael's heavy railgun encouraged Shu to bring his bazooka to bear. The torpedo was too close, though, and at the last minute, Shuyun blew it up with a shot from the bazooka.

Wynona had not been idle, however, and with the Bael's attention on Shuyun, she maneuvered around and took careful aim at the Bael's head.

Shuyun came around the shrapnel cloud of the torpedo's explosion just in time to see the Bael's head disappear and it drifted away on its inertia.

Taking a wide turn with Wynona's Syreen close by, they took stock of the battle. The last Apollo had been killed by the Guard Lancers, but the remaining Hoplites were throwing up blistering counter-fire that caught one of the Lancers and sent it spinning off out of the fight. Soronovski and his wingman were sorely pressed by the Er-Lang and Ryus and were fighting for their lives.

"We've got to go help Soronovski!" exclaimed Wynona.

"But those Hoplites are going to chew up Smith's Lancer if we don't keep them busy!" yelled Shuyun.

"They're too far away right now. Come on!" Wynona's Syreen leapt forward as she went to maximum thrust, leaving Shuyun no choice but to follow. *Where's Satsuki's Explorer?*, he wondered. There was no sign of her on his scanner.

Looking figuratively over his shoulder, Shuyun saw two Hoplites explode as salvo after salvo of missile swarms blew into their formation. Another blip appeared on the scanner. It was *Resolute!*

"All units stand down. This is Captain Raji Avnari of the UNS *Resolute* ordering your immediate surrender. I repeat, all units stand down."

Thank the ancestors! prayed Shuyun.

He turned back to the pending clash with the Venusian exos in time to see Soronovski's Defender blow apart from a blast from Billy's Ryu. The other Defender was damaged in the blast, and the Er-Lang finished it off.

Damn! This is going to get nasty! thought Shuyun.

As the two groups of exos closed, the Er-Lang drew a plasma lance and activated it. *Uh-oh...* Shuyun fired a blast with his bazooka, but it narrowly missed the Er-Lang as it dodged. Then, contact.

The Er-Lang arrowed in on Shuyun, who had no alternative but to shift his bazooka around and swing it like a baseball bat. The Er-Lang's plasma lance didn't even slow down when it hit the bazooka and the follow-through severed Shuyun's Wyvern's left arm.

Alarms and flashing warning lights were all Shuyun could see momentarily, and it wasn't until he heard Wynona's screams over the comm. that he was able to find her to see the shattered remains of her Syreen drifting away. The bottom thruster unit was gone as were both her arms. All that was left was the head and torso of her exo-armor.

Shuyun twisted his Wyvern around looking for the Er-Lang. What he found was one of the Ryus charging him. His missile defense system was still functioning and Shuyun praised whatever engineer had decided the Wyvern needed such a system as it knocked down a salvo of missiles. Short an arm and his bazooka, all Shuyun could do was close and grapple with the Ryu.

Suddenly, Shuyun's countermove came to an abrupt halt. His sensors revealed that the other Ryu had grappled him and pinned him in place. *Billy!* The Er-Lang pulled up in front of Shuyun, its plasma lance flaming brilliantly, blinding Shuyun.

"Bye, bye, Runt. Any last messages for your sister?" Billy's laugh cut through Shuyun's soul. *Not like this!*

The universe then began to spin as missile swarms from *Resolute* came smashing in. When Shuyun was finally able to regain control of his battered Wyvern, he noticed one of the Ryus was gone. Billy and the Er-Lang were still around, however.

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HERO'S END

"WARNING! INCOMING UNITS ON BALLISTIC TRAJECTORY. WARNING! INCOMING UNITS ON BALLISTIC TRAJECTORY." The Wyvern's AI was alerting him to an incoming Lightning Strike. The last Lancer made a pass on the Er-Lang and got some good hits on it as the Venusian pilot fumbled with his twin beam cannon. *Hmmm*, thought Shuyun, looking at his scanner, *looks like three Bricks. Theirs or ours?*

Billy and the Er-Lang turned towards Shuyun as the three Bricrius approached the battlefield. The Lancer came around for another pass, but the two Venusian exos were ready for him this time, and between them, they gunned the Guard fighter down. Shuyun continued to evade as best as could as he tried to work his way back to the covering shelter of *Resolute*.

It was not to be. As he neared his ship, the Bricrius entered the battle space. Which side they were on became terribly clear, as fireballs mushroomed all over *Resolute's* hull. She fired defiantly at the three incoming corvettes, but it was more than the *Intrepid* class was built to withstand. To Shuyun's horror, *Resolute* began to break up and large chunks of the once proud ship began to separate until a massive explosion launched him away as *Resolute's* heart, her reactor, blew up.

Shuyun tried again to regain control of his poor, battered Wyvern, but all he could manage was to get it down to a slow spin as his reaction mass gauge flashed empty. *Something must have penetrated the tank*, he thought.

Billy's Ryuloomed in his viewscreen.

Oh yeah, I'm not alone. Shuyun's heart was heavy, and he was sick with despair. *Wynona! Satsuki! Captain Anvari! They're all gone. And soon I'll be with them.*

Billy grabbed Shuyun's Wyvern, bringing him to a halt. A harsh wrenching sound was soon followed by more warning lights and alarms. The life support gauge plunged into the danger zone.

"So long, Runt. Have a nice life! What's left of it!" Billy's harsh laugh again filled Shuyun's ears and consumed him. It filled his cockpit and seemed to echo back and forth through Shuyun's head. He screamed. The life support gauge slipped to zero.

The universe began to close in on Shuyun. From very, very far away he heard, "This is Captain Shannon McDaniels of the UNS *Renown*. All units stand down and prepare to be boarded. You will not get this offer again."

Shuyun knew nothingness as sight, sound, *everything* disappeared. All was darkness.

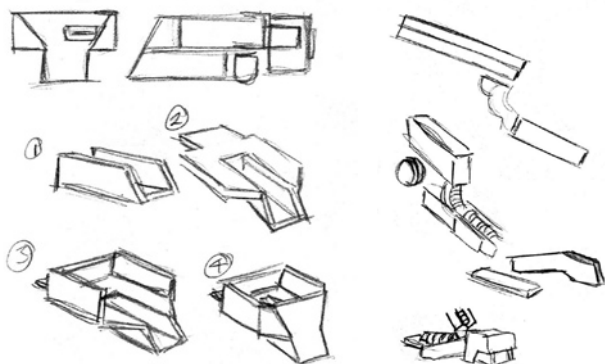


End of the Resolute

I am not a wealthy man, and so, what I cannot purchase, I must build instead. So it has been with many of my gaming projects. And yet, I end up with leftover, the mere presence propels me to come up with new projects. It is indeed a vicious circle.

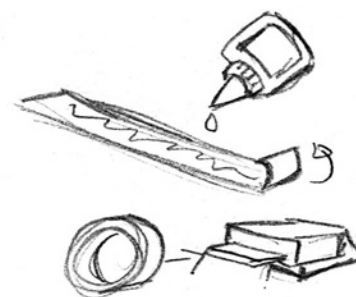
There I was with a few backpacks from Games Workshop's Chaos Space Marines. How could they be used? Then the little gears and hydraulics gave me an idea: gears, legs, walkers. These would be the basis of a squadron of 15mm walkers, perfect copies of the Gear Krieg range. Problem was, of course, that I didn't have any models.

The first thing was to get all the necessary research and to choose a model as the basis. All the different books, the blueprints, and every single picture I could find on the internet. And then, one had to get the scale right. It's a good thing that Dream Pod Nine had the paper fold-outs on their website. With a little Photoshop and a little math, one can print out the correct dimensions. Of course, the fold-outs only display the front and rear, so you can see the necessity of proper research.



The legs were the first things to be assembled. The idea was to chop the "exhaust pipes" of the backpacks and use them as the "knees". At this point, I was unsure if I was going to build a Japanese Shiki, or an Early/Cavalier. Both designs are fairly simple and angular, which is a great if one is starting out. After having glued on a short matchstick to serve as the femur, it was clear that the leg was taking on the shape of the thick-ish allied designs rather than the thin Japanese counterparts. The femur was doubled out with a second matchstick of the same length (I will be skipping all measurements throughout the article) and was thickened with a couple of strips of cardboard. The lower leg consisted of a plastic rod with cardboard on the sides with a back wheel made from a couple of thick punched-out pieces of cardboard. The foot had three cardboard pieces: a heel, and two pieces for the ankle joint/toe. The heel spring and the outer heel were sculpted.

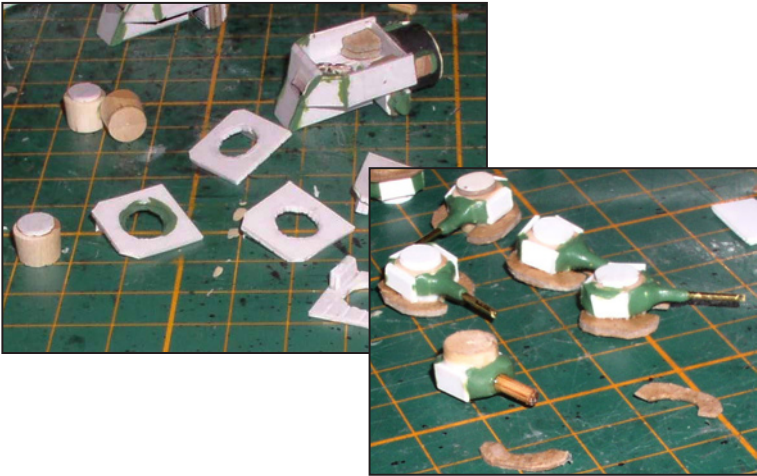
The next step was to make the basic hull frame and the hip. These were all made of sheets of plasticard, with a bit of kneadatite (otherwise known as green stuff) to even out any gaps. The "floor" extended behind the cockpit to serve as a support for the engine compartment. Funny thing is that most pictures of the Early/Cavalier show only the front, which lead to a mishap early on. That was quickly fixed. The engine compartment is simply a long sheet of thin card rolled up tightly to the right diameter with a round piece of card at the end. On each side is a rectangular block where the secondary armaments are installed. The many rows of rivets that adorn the sides were to be ignored. There leads the path to madness.



I wanted to be able to field any version of the Early/Cavalier, so it had to have a removable roof. This was also useful as a model for Alfie's Tanners, so I needed a reasonable interior. After a bit of searching, I found a picture of a blister on Ebay with just the right info. The interior was bits of cardboard and plasticard cut to the right proportions. The crew were from Battle Honours/Old Glory 15s, and were cut at the waist and given a plasticard backrest.

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BUILDING A CAVALIER



There was a question concerning how to base the walkers, and it was split between some leftover Clix bases or Flames of War bases. The FoW bases won out, partially because they were lower and they wouldn't need to be extended outwards. The hip joints were small balls of kneadatite that were given a few ribs (too much Patlabor influence, I guess), and the legs were placed in different postures.



On the initial version of the walker, the commander sits to the right of the driver in a little firing post. I wanted to make sure that the armoured screen would stay in place when gaming, so the decision was made to make the whole commander's seat removable. That feature came in handy with the later turreted versions. The turrets were wooden dowels that were built upon with plasticard and kneadatite. The machine guns were shish kebab dowels and the 1.2 pdr. Cannons were brass wires. This was to easily identify them; some early British tanks used Vickers machine guns.



I started painting the interior and the crew before the crew were inserted and glued down. Far simpler than later down the road.

The secondary armaments came next. The grenade launcher was easy enough, using lollipop sticks and plasticard. The Browning machine guns were a bit trickier, consisting of various bits of brass wire, matchsticks and plasticard at various angles. There was talk of using magnets so as to upgrade the walkers (could a Cavalier lift a PVAT?), but in the end, they were simply glued down.

A couple of coats of paint and some details later, and this troupe of Cavaliers was ready to be sent into action.



ALFIE'S TENNERS

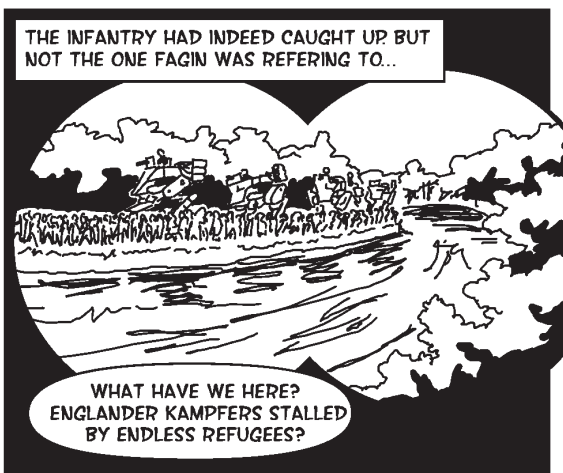
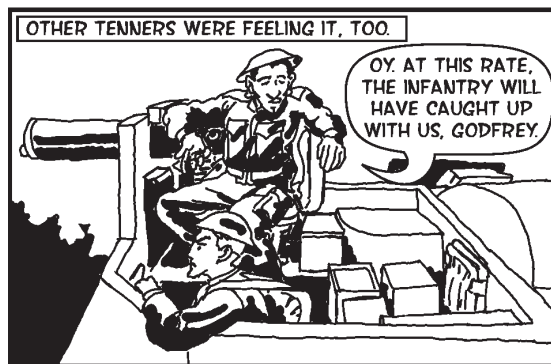
JOHN BELL

ALFIE'S TENNERS

ART & STORY: JACK BELL

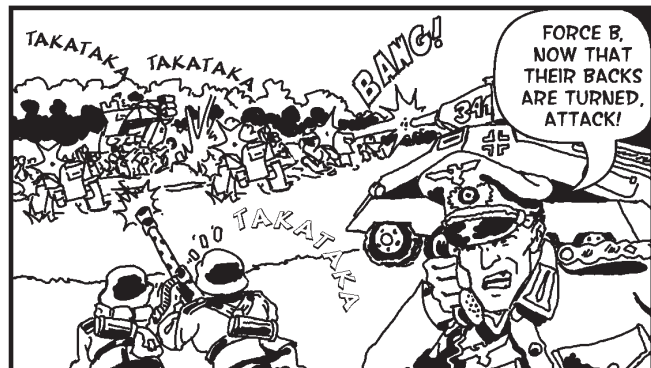
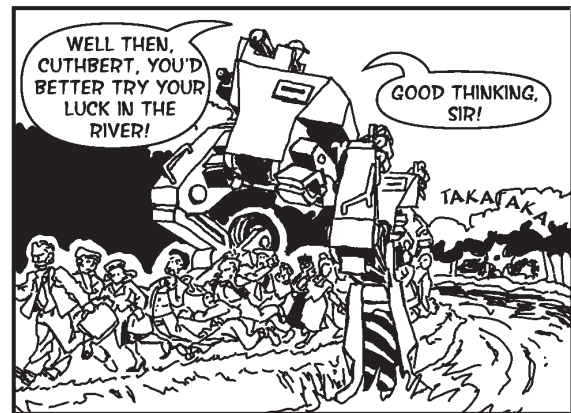
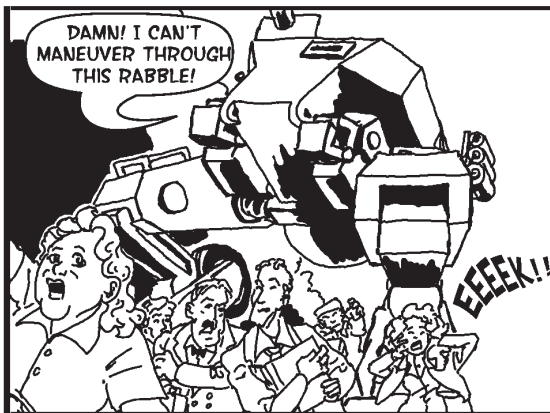
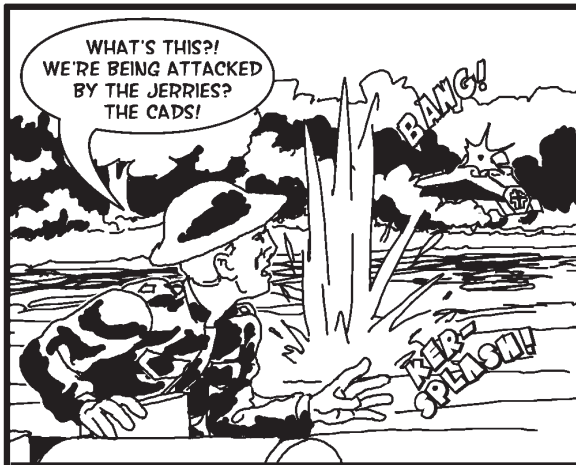
MAY 1940. THE INVASION OF BELGIUM WAS A FEINT, TO LURE THE BRITISH AND FRENCH ARMOURD DIVISIONS OUT OF THE PATH OF THE MAIN GERMAN FORCE. THESE DIVISIONS OF PANZERS AND KAMPFERS ARE BLITZING INTO FRANCE THROUGH THE "IMPASSABLE" ARDENNES. THE RACE IS ON TO STOP THEM, AND THIS IS WHAT 2ND LT. ALFIE MARCH AND HIS WALKER TROOP ARE RUSHING TOWARDS.

IF YOU CAN CALL THIS A RUSH...



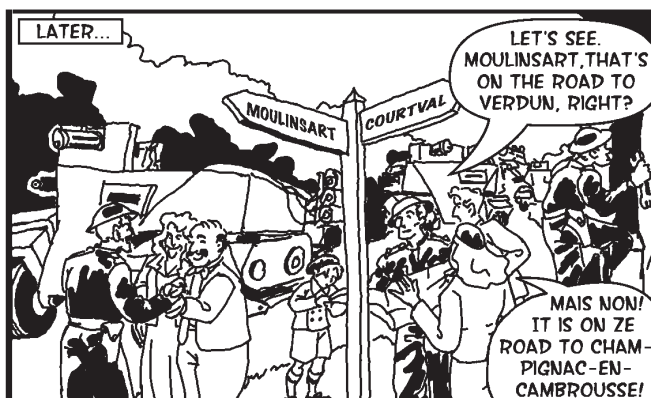
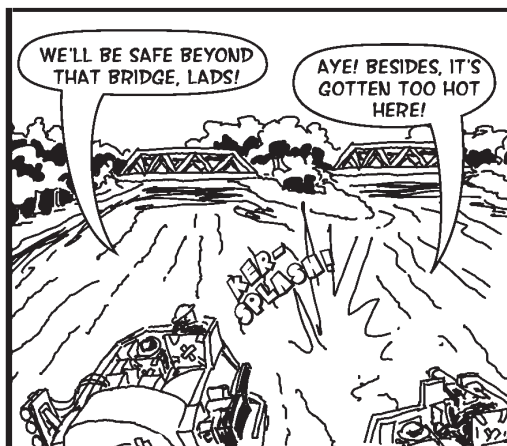
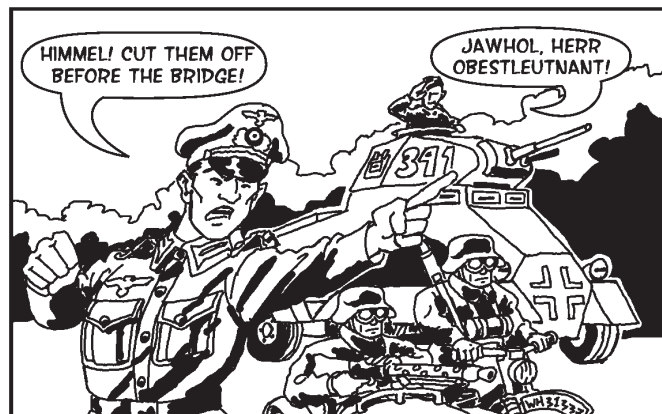
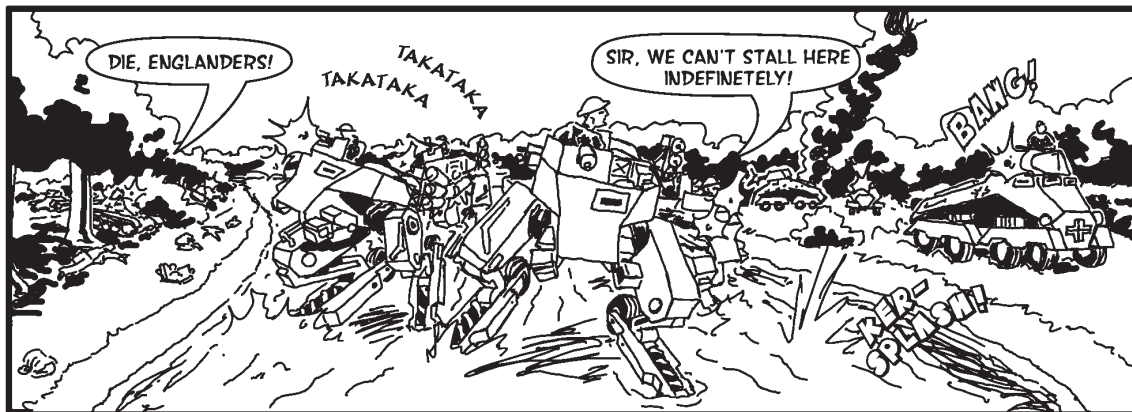
AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ALFIE'S TENNNERS



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ALFIE'S TENNNERS



NEXT EPISODE: THE TENNNERS TAKE A SHORTCUT THROUGH THE WOODS! WATCH OUT FOR THE BIG BAD WOLVES!

GMs sometimes put players in situations where they are hunted or chased down by enemies. Most of the time the players are hunted for a brief period of time, and then all returns to normal. Most of the time...

However, sometimes these situations can become very drawn out, weeks if not months of game time, and the entire gaming session often transforms into the players fleeing from the hunters, possibly making it more difficult to introduce side-stories not related to the main plot involving the Hunt. However, stressful pacing is hard to maintain, and sooner or later, the GM might run out of potential scenarios for the fleeing scenes or the players could lose the adrenaline rush of their characters risking their lives and fleeing from their foes. The rules below are guidelines and suggestions to help keep things interesting and more dramatic, but without necessarily taking up the entire session, therefore allowing you to continue with extra storyline, in addition to the hunt.

THE PREY (usually the players)

This group are generally fighting an uphill battle; the situation should always seem challenging for them. If the Prey can reach a state where they don't have to run or rest, then they are no longer under a active pursuit(manhunt). While being hunted the Prey's main priority is to find short times of respite while trying accomplish their goals.

THE HUNTERS

The Hunters job is to actively pursue the Prey. Hunters typically don't have to hide and can act freely, generally having resources at their disposal to find their targets, but this is not always the case. The Hunters can be organizations, groups or even individual people. Because of this the Hunter may not be limited to an individual's skills.

TRACKING

The Prey and the Hunters enter into a competition: both need to out think each other. As long as the Prey does not reach a state where the Hunter cannot pursue for whatever reason, the Hunt continues. The Hunter and the Prey continue to make rolls, with the Prey rolling to keep ahead of the Hunters and the Hunters rolling to locate the Prey. The only thing Tracking can do is bring the Hunter to the Prey's location. Depending on how dramatic and intense the Hunt is, the GM should choose to make these rolls hourly, daily, weekly or even monthly in-game time. A Good guideline is base the time on how close to the center of operations the Prey is to the Hunter and the level of pursuit, because obviously logistics are an important factor for the Hunters.

The Hunter and Prey enter into contested rolls of Hide and Seek. The environment in which this takes place will often influence the appropriate skills that are used. The GM should feel free to alter the skill and attribute depending on who, what, why and how thing are being done to fit the situation. A lot of the time this is depends on the Prey's hiding place. Below are a few suggestions and are by no means extensive or limited to. Some skills, specializations or perks can also apply a +1 bonus for being related to the task. Of course, to make things more tense for the players, the Hunter's roll or generated value should be kept secret from the players.

Urban Territory

Prey utilizes known contacts in the area. Streetwise vs Streetwise.

Related suggestions: Contacts, Forgery

Prey tries to find typical places to hide, such as nooks, motels, etc. Area Knowledge vs Area Knowledge / Notice + Affective organization size.

Related suggestions: Contacts, Stealth, Disguise

Wilderness

The Prey tries to out fox the hunter by land misdirection and out thinking. This can be accomplished by, Survival vs Tracking.

Related suggestions: Area Knowledge, Navigation, Wilderness Lore

There are situation factors that influence the Prey and Hunters given situations. The table below presents a list of modifiers that may be applied to the Hunter's resulting roll. The modifiers should remain a secret from the players to maintain tension.

Hunter Situation	Modifier
The Prey are in an area difficult to access or search. (Dangerous Cliffs, Undersea cavern, Unauthorized territory, etc.)	-1 to 2
Hunters are not actively searching and relying on the Prey being reported	-2
Hunters are not under active pursuit but are keeping alert	-1
Population supports Prey	-1 to 2
Hunters are Disrespected/Poor Reputation	-1 to 2
Hunters are actively seeking	+0
Hunters are an organization with available manpower and resources	+1 to 3
Hunters are Respected/Good Reputation/Feared	+1 to 2
Hunters are offering a reward	+1 to 2
Population is unaware	+0
Population is aware of the Prey or knows of their existence.	+1 to 3

ACTIVITIES

The winner gains a number of Activities equal to their MoS. An activity is any action that has a noticeable presence that has the potential to raise suspicion. An activity duration should be relative and appropriate to the situation. Deep in a forest while not being actively pursued could have an activity durations that last seasons or years. Once all activities are spent, then it assumes that the Hunter and Prey are now close enough for a Chase Scene, however this may not happen if the Hunter rolls poorly and is unable to Capture before the Prey Runs. It is possible for more activities to be spent than the MoS. This excess works as a MoS for the opposition. This excess should not go more than three. The Activities below are suggestions and the GM and Players should feel free to make more or modify how they work to suit their own game. {This is one reason why the MoS should be kept secret from the players. It stimulates role playing rather than number crunching actions.}

Prey Activities

Watch

The Prey attempts to keep an alert out as to the Hunters approaching. Each activity spent watching offers a +1 bonus to their next Run roll, the maximum bonus is equal to the skill used to watch. Suggested skills would be Notice, Tracking, or Survival when out in the wilderness and Notice when in Urban territories. Contacts can be used as an additional +1 one time bonus, however the GM may feel inclined to make the player roleplay this.

Gathering Resources

Whatever food or supplies the Prey may have on hand, it is highly probable that they will eventually be used up and will need to be replenished. Going out and collecting supplies is always risky, potentially opening up opportunities for exposure. NPCs may see the Prey around or even interact with them, which could especially be bad if the residents of the area the Prey is hiding in is aware of the manhunt. Foraging or Theft can also open up variables that can/will be noticed by NPCs in the area, whether it be a sizable cache of a farmer's crops suddenly gone missing or a window ledge pie that has been snatched up. These activities arouse suspicion, which will make people wary. Success of Resource gathering are handled by other skills.

Actions

A lot of typical fiction stories will involve the Prey innocent of crime and unjustly hunted down by the law. Occasionally the Victims/Prey may start a personal investigation to find the truth. This may not be always the case however, but whatever the Prey needs to do, this is a general Activity. An Activity is considered

when the Prey exposes themselves and returns to their area of hiding. The GM should determine if the Action counts as multiple Activities or have a shortened period duration due to high exposure.

Run

The Prey decides not to wait to be found and takes the initiative to move on. This forces a new tracking roll. The Prey can plan spending activities to increase their chance of success. Each Activity spent running offers a +1 bonus up to a maximum equal to the skill used for evading the Hunters Tracking,

Hunter Activities

Investigate

The Hunter is unsure of the Prey's location. The Hunters may decide to investigate their surroundings and look for anything unusual that can be linked to the Prey's presence in the area. Methods might include talking to Contacts or simply keeping watch for unusual events in certain areas. Investigation leads to +1 bonus on their next Tracking roll, with a maximum equal to the appropriate investigating skill. Skills may include Streetwise, Investigation, Tracking, or Notice depending on the situation.

Gather Resource

Even Hunters have to spend time to gather resources and replenish supplies, however it's not being exposed that may be of concern, but the time it takes to get what he needs. The general resources Hunters require is manpower when the Capture is called. The GM should determine the resource depending on the situation. Gathering a brigade of commoners and arming them with sticks is easy, but not as effective as what can be offered by larger organizations if time is taken to acquire what they have to offer. Of course, the application of Gathering Resources is up to the GM's discretion. The more activities spent on Gathering of Resources should offer more and better resources acquired. These resources are only available for this Tracking Chase scene and does not carry over, though there may be exceptions.

Planning

The Hunter has a hunch and is fairly certain he knows where his Prey is hiding. Having Manpower or resources doesn't mean a lot if the Manpower acquired is not used in an orderly, thought-out manner. Time is of an essence when the Prey is about to run and planning is a powerful tool. Much like Gathering Resources, the more Activities/Time spent on Planning should end up the Prey in a more dire situation when the Capture is finally called.

The Capture

The Hunter decides to finally make his move. If the Hunter has a positive Activity when this is called, then the Prey is where they expected them to be. The Prey and Hunter/Manpower are in visual sight. If there was a MoS 0, then the Prey is nearby but not in the location when the "Police" break down the door. These rules do not cover the Chase or Capture scenes. If there was no additional Manpower there should at least be a group of standard soldiers/civilians/police or just the main investigator and anyone on the case with him.

MANPOWER

The Hunter may have the benefit of extra people to help locate or capture the Prey. This could either be a skilled individual or a group of people. An individual will provide one extra die for any appropriate skills. A group gains a group bonus when applicable, like searching or investigation.

GROUP PREY

At times the Prey will be composed of multiple people. If this is the case, the Prey has an advantage and disadvantage. The Prey gets one extra Activity, even if they lose. This Activity cannot be spent to Run. The downside is that the Prey gets a penalty to their Tracking evasion roll due to more people in their group. The penalty is equal to value on the Group chart. Numerous Prey with the right skills, specializations and perks can also increase the result. GM discretion on how much of a bonus to allow.

Size	Modifier
1	0
2	2
4	3
9	4
16	5
25	6
...	...

ORGANIZATIONS

Large groups are faceless entities. Unless there is a specific Hunter character after the Prey there is no skill to base the Tracking rolls. In these cases assume a default roll of the dice to be 3.

STRESS

Being hunted down is stressful: even if it becomes a way of life, the stress is chronic. Doubt, fear, or lack of decent living conditions eventually get on the nerves. People who end up breaking under the stress go through a Crisis. To Resist the

effect of Stress the character rolls Willpower/Psyche whichever is higher against the current Stress level at the end of a tracking roll. At the end of Tracking, an accumulative +1 starting at 0 determines the Stress level, with a maximum difficulty of 4. Additionally, any traumatic events that occur (such as the death of a close friend or loved one) will trigger another Stress roll immediately. The MoF becomes a level of temporary mental disorder, which should be determined by the controller of the character. The Stress Level can be reduced by taking time to relax and meet certain needs. Generally talking with ones companions, hiding for a two or more days, or even just a good, hot meal and a bath (luxuries when you're on the run) can help to keep the stress down. If there are at least 1 or more Activities left when the Prey decides to Run, then consider not increasing the Stress level.

While in crisis the character may do contrary actions or think irrational thoughts. Unattended Stress should take its toll and cost the Prey elements like Activities, Secrecy or out right risk exposure to the Hunter, giving a +MoF bonus to the Hunters next Tracking roll. Attending to the individual suffering from Stress or Crisis will usually require social time and effort to meet the individuals needs. If this is the case Activities maybe be spent on getting the character to recover.

Stress the final word. Many players have a tendency to rebel against anything that puts them into a negative but realistic situation, such as being captured or being forced to suffer a mental crisis. Players are usually okay with external mind control because it's not their character that is suffering, but a temporary bad guy controlling the situation. The GM should have an understanding with/of their players before if at all using Stress rules. Otherwise ignore and encourage Stress/Crisis role playing. However if they player(s) don't agree, don't make them. NPCs, of course, are fair game.



Mugging and Mayhem

Last issue I described the process of converting and assembling an Engineering Grizzly from a Heavy Gear Blitz! Grizzly, a RAFM Bricklayer, and a Dreampod 9 Type-99 Frame. This issue I will describe some of the techniques used in the painting process.

Rather than paint the Gear in its factory colour, zinc chromate (yellow-green), I chose a colour more fitting traditional construction, Golden Yellow, which is slightly more saturate in hue than the yellow seen on Caterpillar construction equipment. As a counterpoint to help give the scheme a bit of variety, I chose a medium orange for some other armour plates that would be reminiscent of the classic colour schemes of Heavy Gear Fighter.

TOOLS

- Winsor & Newton Series 7 Brushes sizes 1, 0, 00
- Size 2 expendable brush

MATERIALS

- Acrylic model paints
- White Krylon spraypaint
- Fine ballast
- Twigs
- White Glue
- Cyanoacrylate glue

ARMOUR MAIN

BASE:
BAD MOON YELLOW

HIGHLIGHTS:
GOLDEN YELLOW / BAD MOON YELLOW / SKULL WHITE

SHADING:
[1] GOLDEN YELLOW / CODEX GREY
[2] GOLDEN YELLOW / VOMIT BROWN

GLAZE:
SNAKEBITE LEATHER

NON-METALIC METAL

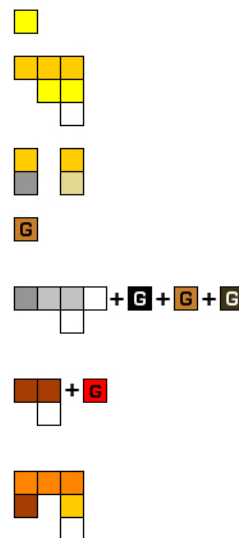
CODEX GREY / FORTRESS GREY / SKULL WHITE
[1] CHAOS BLACK GLAZE
[2] SNAKEBITE LEATHER GLAZE
[3] SCORCHED BROWN GLAZE

DARK RED ARMOUR

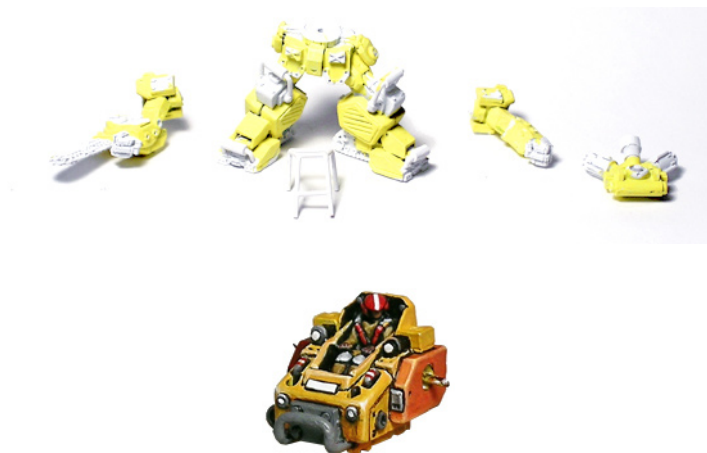
DARK FLESH / SKULL WHITE / BLOOD RED GLAZE

ORANGE ARMOUR

BLAZING ORANGE / GOLDEN YELLOW / SKULL WHITE / DARK FLESH



Greg Perkins: Engineering Grizzly On A Cold Winter's Night



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ENGINEERING GRIZZLY CONVERSION, PART 2

1. All parts were primed with white spray paint.

2. All parts that were to be painted Golden Yellow received a base coat of Bad Moon Yellow.

3. The same parts were then base coated with Golden Yellow.

4. The rest of the details of the model were base coated black.

5. The Golden Yellow was highlighted with a mix of Golden Yellow, Bad Moon Yellow, and Skull White on the top-most facets of the armour. Shading was done on the down-facing facets of the armour with a varying mix of Golden Yellow and Codex Grey or Vomit Brown.

6. Weathering on the armour was done in a series of steps. The working idea is that paint chips would originate from branches falling across armour plates or from stone being kicked up. Therefore, scratches and chips were painted to following a vector originating at the edge of the plate, so the chip is largest here, to correspond with the maximum amount of force being delivered at the initial point of contact. The chip was painted with Scorched Brown to, and then Codex grey with incremental highlights of Skull White were traced within the Scorched Brown pattern, careful to ensure that an edge of Scorched Brown remained.

To give a greater sense of of depth to the weathering, a glaze of Snakebite Leather was applied up to the edge of the Scorched Brown, which helps give the impression of metal rusting beneath the surface of the paint surrounding the chip. The glaze was applied in a gradient diminishing away from the chip.

7. The non-metallic metal details were all based with Codex Grey and incrementally highlighted with Skull White. A black glaze was applied in order to increase the contrast of the highlight. For cylinders, such as those found on the V-engine and crash-bars on the knee blocks and feet, the highlight was painted linearly, across the long side of the cylinder.



Weathering on the cylinders was done differently than on the yellow armour. Divots were simulated by applying short white strokes coupled with a short black stroke just above it, simulating the shadow of the divot, with the edge of the up-facing edge catching the light.

The roll-cage was similarly weathered, with the addition of Snakebite Leather and Scorched Brown glazes to the underside of the roll-cage bars and around the contact point between the torso and the roll-cage, where it seemed most likely that rust would accumulate.

The Chainsaw was treated slightly differently, bands of highlights were painted diagonally across the blade with a white edge highlight along most of it. Rust and grime were added to the teeth of the blade as well as where the blade meets the engine cowling with glazes of Snakebite Leather and Scorched Brown.

8. The base was built up with Procreate sculpting putty, but first twigs were cut and glued to the base with one diagonal cut to simulate the cut of a chainsaw cut on a tree stump. Once the putty was built up around the stumps and had dried, white glue was applied to it and fine ballast was sprinkled over it.

9. Once dry, the base was painted black, and repeatedly dry-brushed with Scorched Brown incrementally highlighted with Skull White and then washed with Snakebite Leather around the tree stumps and then dry-brushed with a mix of Snakebite Leather and Skull White to simulate saw-dust.

That concludes the Engineering Grizzly conversion article, I hope you enjoyed it.



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE 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.

Space Terrain

ASTEROIDS AND OBSTACLES

Space is aptly named: it is mostly empty. While the dense asteroid fields of SF fame are mostly a fabrication (anything that dense would grind itself down to dust pretty rapidly) it does make for some exciting action. Furthermore, not all asteroids must come in droves and debris fields and colony cylinders can all make for a worthy backdrop. This rule is primarily intended for small craft in space battles; capital ships are generally too immobile and too big to take advantage of these obstacles, and in fact may be subject to collisions with these objects.

Whenever an obstacle (defined as any object Size 50 or larger) occupies a hex (or hexes, if large enough) on the map, a small craft has two options if it wishes to cross through the hex: it may avoid the object, or it may skirt the object. Both will allow safe passage around the object, however, the latter takes the craft dangerously close to the obstacle in hopes of gaining some cover from adversaries. In the case of some extremely large multi-hex obstacles, there may be some routes *through* the obstacle itself that require skirting as the only option to cross through the hex.

- Avoiding an obstacle is done with a Piloting test (add the spacecraft's Maneuver to the test) against a threshold of 4. This threshold is adjusted per the Defender Modifier chart in 5.4.2, using the craft's current velocity (not Thrust used per turn, as is normal for this chart when used in space).

- Skirting an obstacle requires Piloting against threshold of 6, again modified by maneuver and speed. If successful, while in the hex, the craft gains an obscurement of 2.*

Using either option should the Piloting test be failed, the craft has smacked into the obstacle, causing damage per the SilCore ramming rules (5.4.3). Unless otherwise specified, obstacles do not provide any obscurement nor block line of sight (unless a craft is skirting).

* If desired by the GM, any attack that would have hit the player had it not been for the obscurement instead hits the object providing the obscurement. This could be important if the player is using a colony cylinder for protection...

RINGS, DUST, ROCK

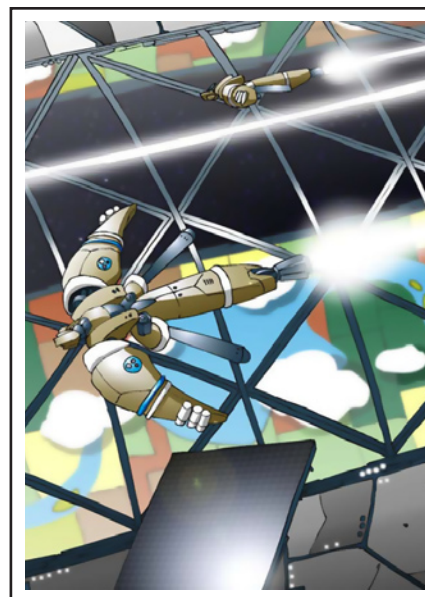
Space is empty... but not always totally void.

SPACE TERRAIN	
Frozen Gasses, Light Dust Ship Venting, Comet Tail	0
Heavy Dust, rocks, small ice chunks Light Planetary Rings, Meteorite "Shower"	1
Large ice chunks, dense debris Saturn's Rings, Destroyed Capital Ship	2

Space Movement and Action

INVERSION ROLL (AKA FLIP)

As a Free Action during movement, a ship may flip itself, rolling 180 degrees along its primary axis to face 'upside down' (though of course in space there is no real 'up'). While a limited tactic, it may be especially useful for damaged capital ships to bring undamaged weapons to bear upon a target. Place a marker of some sort near the ship's counter in order to remind the players that the left and right (port and starboard) sides are now switched.



On Patrol

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

CORE INJECTION: VARIANT RPG RULES

DOCKING/LANDING

Docking maneuvers are among the most hazardous maneuvers performed by spacecraft, yet they are nevertheless a routine part of life (and combat) in space. Generally, whenever possible, the smaller and/or more nimble craft will dock with the larger/more sluggish ship, which will assume a fixed attitude or station-keeping. In desperate situations, however, the opposite is also possible...

For a spacecraft to land or dock with another vessel, it must first match velocities with the 'mothership.' In game turns, the craft must end its movement in the mothership hex (this is an override of the usual stacking rules) with identical velocities in all 3 axes. A Piloting skill check is then made at a base Threshold of 4, modified by the Docking Modifiers table. As with most Piloting checks, the craft's maneuver rating may be added to the pilot's roll.

If the Piloting check is made, the docking or landing was successful. The landing craft is now considered 'attached' to the other ship, and no longer moves independently. This normally will not change the movement capabilities of the mothership (a fighter or shuttle landing/docking), but in some extreme cases (the mammoth dropship onto mothership, for example) the thrust characteristics of the combined ships can be re-calculated, following the rules in SilCore 4.3.2.

If the Piloting check is failed, docking was not achieved, and can be attempted again next turn. If the Piloting check was fumbled, however, the two craft have collided. Add the Thrust spent by both craft this turn (use the previous turn's values if the mothership has not yet moved this turn) and divide by three, rounding down. This is the Impact Speed to use on the Ramming chart for damage purposes (SilCore 5.4.3).

Some specialized craft have launching and landing equipment (assume any craft with the catapult system has an arrestor system as well, unless otherwise noted). This allows the capture of smaller craft more easily, without need for precise speed matching. Ships up to the Catapult's rating in size may land on the craft at a difference of velocity, but only in the axis served by the catapult. The Piloting check is made as described above, adding in addition the catapult modifier (size and velocity are that of the landing craft). Note that the minimum modifier is 0: having a catapult cannot make the landing any easier than a 0-velocity landing

BOMBARDMENT FIRE

Newton's first law states: Every object in a state of uniform motion tends to remain in that state of motion unless an external force is applied to it. In space, this means a vehicle or object that is traveling without means of course correction will follow along a very predictable path until they strike another object (or suddenly gain a means of thrust). With such a predictable path, it becomes much easier to calculate a 'firing solution' against a target: if you know where the target will be relative to where you will be, firing to hit the target is pretty straightforward.

At the cost of one action a craft may make a Navigation: Space (with KNO as the governing attribute) test using the craft's sensors. The base threshold for this test is 5. A successful test divides the range to the target by a factor of two, and the resultant number is used as the effective range for all range penalties as well as the penalties from the Attenuating Damage flaw (while the physical distance hasn't changed, the beam can be held on target longer, canceling out the AD penalty). Before firing, the craft must move three hexes without spending thrust points to properly align to target.

This bonus becomes even superior when dealing with very large bodies or vehicles. If the target vehicle is of the Very Large category, the distance is divided by 3; if the target vehicle is of the Gargantuan (Gigantic) category, divide the distance by 5.

DOCKING MODIFIERS

Target Spent 5-14 burn points this turn	+1
Target Spent over 15 burn points this turn	+2
Catapult/Arrestor System:	
	[Size x Velocity] - [Rating x 20]

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CORE INJECTION: VARIANT RPG RULES

Vehicle Repairs

Repairs are performed using the Accumulated Success Rules (SilCore 1.2.4). For every 2 hours of work the mechanic (or team, see below) make a skill test versus the skill threshold indicated on the Repair Threshold Table. Record the MoS; the total accumulated MoS required to complete the repair is the same as the “Repair Points” necessary in the SilCore standard repair rules (SilCore 5.5.4). A Fumble produces a Light Damage result (but may still accumulate MoS if it surpasses the threshold -- simply something else was broken during repair).

If multiple mechanics are working on the same system, one must be designated the lead mechanic, while the others are designated assistants. Each assistant tests verses $\frac{1}{2}$ the repair threshold. Each success adds +1 to the head mechanic's roll. An unsuccessful test indicates no bonus. If a member fumbles their roll, the team suffers a -1 to the lead mechanic's roll. The maximum team size a lead mechanic may work with and coordinate is equal to the CPX rating of their appropriate mechanic's skill.

Each ‘team’, be it a single person or a true team of people/AIs, can only work on one system at a time. However, there is nothing preventing multiple teams from working on different systems on the same vehicle. This is useful for building a heavily damaged vehicle back up.

REPAIR THRESHOLDS

Armour rating loss	2
Mp loss	3
Maneuver loss	4
Accuracy loss	4
System dest	5
Power trans fail	5
Crew comp	6
Structural failure	7
Aux perk	3

A vehicle that received an Overkill result in battle will require a lot of work. The total Accumulated MoS for such a vehicle and their relevant thresholds would be:

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{Size (6) + Size (7) + } \frac{1}{2} \text{ Armour (3) + } \frac{1}{2} \text{ MP (5)} \\ &\quad + \frac{1}{2} \text{ Systems (4 ea) + 10 (5)} \end{aligned}$$

All repair Thresholds and Accumulated MoS Requirements assume proper tools and parts. A +1 to +2 can be awarded for extraordinary equipment; a -1 to -2 for poor tools. Similarly,

when available parts are insufficient, half (or quarter, for really poor spare parts selection) all MoS results. If parts are abundant, the MoS results can be multiplied by up to three (for the most amazing storehouse, ever).

SELF REPAIR SYSTEMS

Self-repair systems, by their specialized nature (only working on themselves), are more capable. Thresholds for repair are one less than normal (minimum 2). However, as they cannot make use of spare parts, they do not gain any advantage for being in a well-stocked repair shop (nor do they suffer penalties for having a lack of parts, of course).

Unless the vehicle has an AI with which the mechanic can interact, a mechanic generally cannot help the Self-repair system. Usually, in these situations, additional mechanics will work on one part of the vehicle while the Self-repair system heals another.

JURY-RIGGING

As per the skill description, the Tinker skill allows for Juryrigging a temporary repair, or a hack job making do with what's at hand, and/or using parts in unusual ways.

For jury rigging, the GM determines the difficulty of the repair, using the repair thresholds as guidelines. In cases of temporary repair, the greatest benefit is one of time: repairs take only minutes to complete and do not require accumulated successes. In combat situations, the repairs may even be completed within seconds (between one and three turns). However, as listed in the SilCore skill description, the repairs only last as long as they need to, and if placed under duress will almost likely fall apart.

In the case of unusual applications (using a car engine to power a boat, for example), the GM can set both a difficulty threshold, and the time required follows the Repair procedure (two hours between rolls, use accumulated successes). Once installed, while the result will unlikely be as good as the right parts/etc, the system will not break down unless subjected to severe stress (damage or pushing it very hard).

If a character is desperate to need to do both at the same time -- a haphazard jury-rigged collection of mismatched incorrect parts done quickly -- the character must make two skill tests, once for the success of improvisation, and once for the quick repair. The time required would be around double that of a simple jury-rig repair, and whenever the system is placed under duress it is likely very bad things will happen. (The generous use of Genre points may aid the characters at the GM's discretion)



From the rules monkey...

Cobras, Kodiaks and Earth Forces, oh MY!





NORTHERN SQUAD CONTEST WINNERS

A

First Place: Agis Neugebauer

The contest was a really difficult one for me. The last 3 months I had to participate in a very serious and stressful job enrichment / development program. I was away from home and could only paint at my weekends. So as soon as I read about the contest in Aurora Magazine I started to plan this contest more seriously as ever before.

So what to paint? I checked my Northern minis and stumbled over a blister I bought at ebay years ago: A Den Mother and a Bear. I wanted to paint these!

Next step: I checked out the Hammers of Faith book to make sure that it is a valid option to take a Den Mother or a Bear. I noticed that it is possible for a Western Frontier Protectorate Army to take Bears instead of Grizzlies. A Veteran Fire Support Squad could also take a Den Mother for a Thunder Grizzly!

So I got my squad: A WFP Veteran Strike Squad led by a Den Mother (instead of Thunder Grizzly – upgraded from Headhunter), a Bear replacing one Grizzly, a Grizzly with linked rocket pods and a medium Bazooka and two out of the box Hunters.

When assembling the models in March I noticed some minor miscastings at the back of the Den Mothers right knee. Time for some cutting and repositions... To give the Den Mother a more commanding look I placed the right leg on fallen tree stump. To achieve this look I had to cut the model at some places and reassemble it afterwards. I notice round missile pods on the Mother on some DP9 art, so I replaced the normal one with some of my Southern spare parts.

For the Grizzly I wanted also something special: I running pose and some reequipping. The right leg was cut at the knee and repositioned in a running pose. The two rockets pods were glued on top of each other to create the linked look.

The Bear and the 2 Hunters were just assembled, nothing fancy here. The Hunters, because I wanted them to stand them a bit back from the more exotic Gears and The Bear, because the Bear is exotic enough out of the blister...

All models are placed on sculpted bases to give them an outdoor wilderness look, so fallen trees and snow all around.

So Mid March and the basic assembling was done. After that I painted one at a time over the next 7 weekends. I wanted the Gears on snowy bases, so I needed a fitting camouflage. Since I liked the brown colours of the Den Mother in the HG art book. I thought that a mixture of brown and grey would look fine. I did not apply a too distracting camo pattern; it can look very easily bad on small scale minis. Most of the time I just altered the colours between a knee or a leg etc.

All the while between painting sessions I read the WFP Blood and Honour sourcebook to get a solid feel for this faction. I noticed the strong Spanish roots of the WFP, that gave me the idea for the red and yellow "Spanish" head of the Den Mother, just another detail to (hopefully) make this squad a nice one.

Later I received a Blitz weapon pack which I put to good use on the Bear and Den Mother. The guns of the Hunters remained the old one to make the HACs look even bigger in comparison. I repainted some details and highlights (like the satellite uplink on the Mother) and used some more of the new transfers. I even painted up a Ferret just to realize that it is not a valid option for the squad...

Some transfers to make the Gear identification on the gaming table easier, some varnishing and some Vallejo snow on the bases and – whoops – we are done!



NORTHERN SQUAD CONTEST WINNERS

A

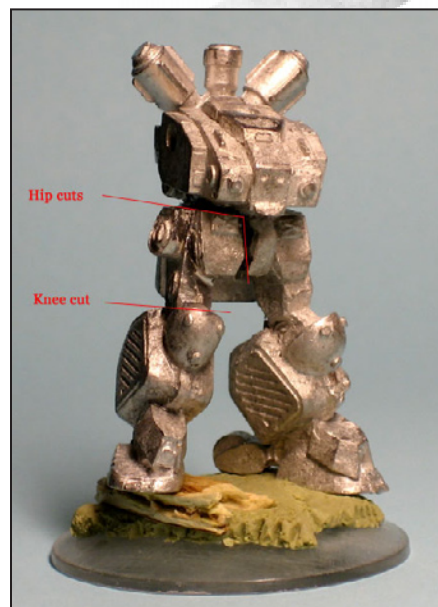
Western Frontier Protectorate Army Veteran Strike Squad





NORTHERN SQUAD CONTEST WINNERS

A





NORTHERN SQUAD CONTEST WINNERS

A





NORTHERN SQUAD CONTEST WINNERS

A

Second Place: Ryan

The 71st Heavy Gear Regiment, then known as the Watchmen, started its life as an amalgamation of border control and regulation Gear units based at Zagreb and grouped together under a single administrative unit. This ad-hoc formation was formed shortly after St. Vincent's War. Its most pressing duty was regulating and escorting trade caravans from the nearby Badlands city-state of Timmins. Other than the odd smuggler-escort Gears, or the very rare MILICIA deep-penetration strike or airborne raid, the unit was largely unused to combat. It was only until the unit played a pivotal (and highly-publicized) role in halting and destroying the mighty 141st Desert Strike Force, renowned as the Eisen Drache after defeating a Veteran armored regiment from the South, of the CEF's III Corps in the killing fields outside Zagreb in Fall of TN 1915 that the unit came to be called by its current name: the Dragons of the North.

Tried as they might, the 141st could not break through the mighty defensive revetments, built up since late TN 1913, manned by the 71st HG, the light tanks and infantry of the Zagreb militia, a collection of remnant commands of all types mauled earlier in the war, and a small detachment of the Black Sabers Gear Regiment. Though ordered to withdraw and give up the city if the situation turned dire, the mostly second-echelon Northern force held fast in the face of repeated Earth assaults. All direct attacks floundered in the face of hardened anti-tank positions and machinegun nests, while any flanking attacks invariably became bogged down by pockets of militia Klemms and infantry. Airpower on both sides was grounded by poor weather for most of the clash. Northern counterattacks also met with disappointing results.

Allied reinforcements from the southwest eventually cut the force off from the rest of the III Corps, and most of the trapped unit died in ferocious close-quarters combat amongst the Gear trenches and knocked-out hovertanks covering the central sector, held predominantly by the Watchmen. What Eisen Drache GRELS and Hovertanks that escaped the Zagreb debacle later died under the guns of the 74th HG Nova Riders as part of the infamous Death Watch armored company at the war's end. Only the success and morale boost of the Zagreb defense saved the surviving Northern officers from all participating units from being brought up on charges, having failed to withdraw as directed.

Though reduced to under 37% operational strength in the week-long clash, the 71st's command staff are quoted as stating it was a price worth paying for extracting vengeance on a unit partly responsible for knocking its sister regiment, the 70th HG Centurions, down to a provisional regiment on the UMF's southern border earlier in the war. Just as the 141st had taken the naming theme of the MILICIA's fallen Desert Wyvern Armored Regiment, the Watchmen rechristened themselves the Dragons of the North. To commemorate their fallen comrades, new-found fame, and high-stature in the North, the renamed Dragons began to use their anti-magnetic mine applique to sculpt dragonscales on prominent surfaces of their Gears, a practice that continues to this day. What surfaces receive these scales has always been left to the pilot's choice.

.....

These five Gears mark the first time I've ever used non-drybrushed highlights on any miniature I've ever painted. I am quite pleased with the results. I used Tamiya Epoxy Putty to form the "scales" on these Gears. I spread it out over the desired surface, and I used a 0.5 mechanical pencil to poke the scales into the putty. This is a technique I picked up from BrushThralls.com.



NORTHERN SQUAD CONTEST WINNERS

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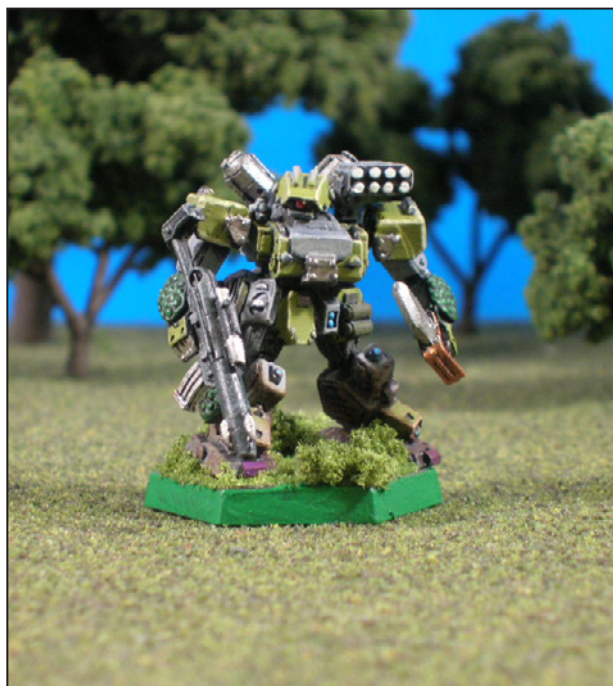
71st Heavy Gear Regiment "The Watchmen"





NORTHERN SQUAD CONTEST WINNERS

A





NORTHERN SQUAD CONTEST WINNERS

A





NORTHERN SQUAD CONTEST WINNERS

A

Runner Up: Donald Lovejoy
33rd Roving Guns



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!

Deadline for Submissions for Issue #2.1: December 15th 2007

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.

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.

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, above.

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.

Note: Blitz! Rules

House Rules covering existing Blitz! Rules will be limited. New Rules covering areas of the game not explicitly contained in the existing rules (as found in the Blitz! line of books) may be submitted freely. House Rules that modify or replace the written Blitz! ruleset (as found in the Blitz! line of books) will be forwarded to the line developer for review and comment. They will then contact you if the idea may proceed forward. Note that this applies only to the Blitz! line -- rules may be freely submitted for any other SilCore game.

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.