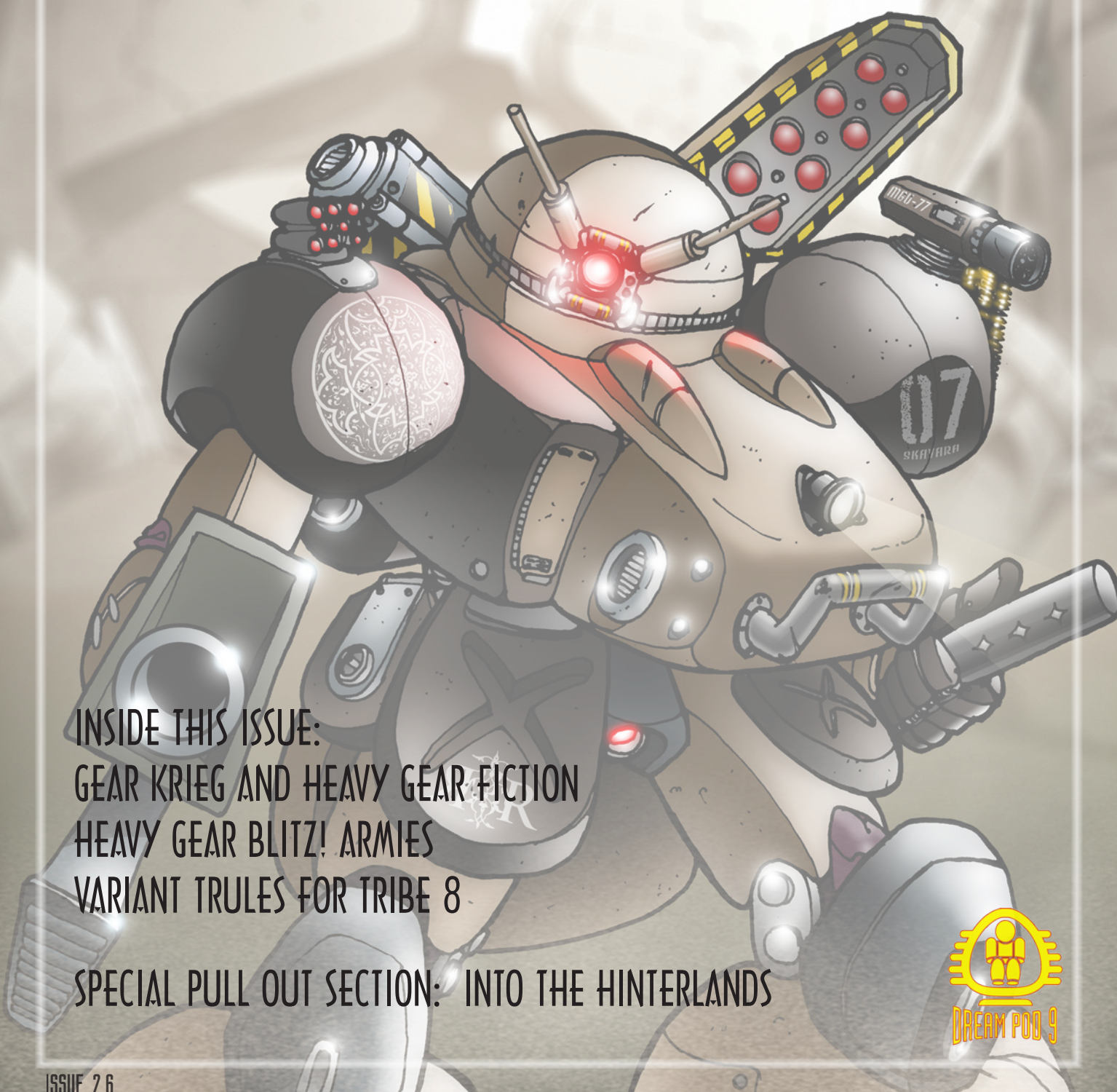


AURORA

THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
GEAR KRIEG AND HEAVY GEAR FICTION
HEAVY GEAR BLITZ! ARMIES
VARIANT TRULES FOR TRIBE 8

SPECIAL PULL OUT SECTION: INTO THE HINTERLANDS



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AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

SHADES IN THE NIGHT

From the Editor...

Everyone has a story to tell. The stories themselves vary -- the stories of the frontier will likely differ than the stories of the city for example -- and even when the events are shared each individual will have their own story. Yet, at their core, the stories are in fact the same for they deal with what people (and humanity) truly want: fulfilment, harmony, being free, full self-expression and being known and being related.

Characters within a work of fiction, naturally, also live within that realm. They are a reflection of our own personal story we craft as we go through life. Ditto with the worlds and the characters within our games. It is what transforms the flat statistics on the sheet of paper into something lively. What's the story of Bob the Gear pilot? Who is he being? Where is he headed?

With worlds as richly created as in the DP9 line of games the environment (no pun intended) is ripe for this kind of exploration. You have faction X, you have faction Y, and you have those in the middle; within each you have different groups and existences, and each in turn play off each other until the possibilities are growing exponentially. We bring our own window to the world and grow from there.

It is with great excitement (I get excited a lot here in POD central, can you tell?) that Aurora has it's first Special Pull-Out Section™ in a long time, exploring a corner of the planet known as Terra Nova. The microscope is turned to high magnification, exploring the genesis, its raison d'être, and the conditions in which the stories of today are created. Truly created as a labour of love, it's an example of world building from deep roots.

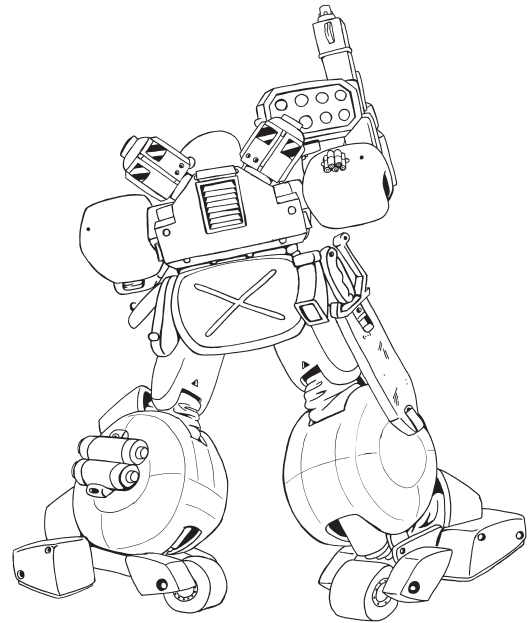
More also awaits within the magazine pages, exploring several of Terra Nova's Micro Leagues, we visit the lands of Tribe 8, take a quick jaunt through the alt-history world of Gear Krieg, and as a bonus we have some veritable world building in the form of terrain.

Chock full, that's how I would describe this issue. Grab your fork and dig in!

Welcome to issue 2.6 of the Silhouette Magazine

Oliver Bollmann
Aurora Magazine Editor

** Note: Special Pull-Out Section isn't really trademarked...*



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

Daniel Hinds-Bond (007@007design.com) -- *Modular 3D Hex Terrain*

Daniel Hinds-Bond is a graphic designer / web designer / programmer / geek of all trades who isn't truly happy unless he has a half dozen projects demanding his attention. He lives in Pennsylvania with his very understanding wife.

Dennis R. Johnson, Jr.(griffon296@msn.com) -- *Harlequin Knights, Chapter 2*

Dennis Johnson is a 27-year old who currently resides in Kentucky with his wife and child. A 6-year US Navy veteran, Dennis currently works at a GameStop where he torments his co-workers with an unending supply of Star Wars and Heavy Gear trivia. He also occasionally plays Warhammer 40K

Greg Perkins (gregoryperkins@gmail.com) -- *Cover Image*

Greg Perkins occasionally works freelance for Dreampod 9 on top of the plethora of other things that consume his time and interests from architecture, to graphic design, painting, illustration, photography, and layout.

Jason Jarvis (jayderyu@gmail.com) -- *Tinker Gear*

Jason has been a lover of Dream Pod 9 since purchasing Project A-ko and Video Fighter. Since then Master of English Mangling has been forcing his gaming group to play Silhouette. Currently living in Vancouver(the Lower Rainland), BC with his very patient and long suffering) wife and two spawn of hell...err beautiful children. (This article also edited by Moriah Lalonde & Autel)

John Bell (jakarnilson@magma.ca) -- *Alfie's Tanners and Oshimoi variants*

He gets labeled a "walking-talking encyclopedia." He draws what goes through his mind. He builds what he can't afford. He walks what others would take a lift for. He'd probably trade in his bike for a real, working Ferret; but then again, who wouldn't?

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.

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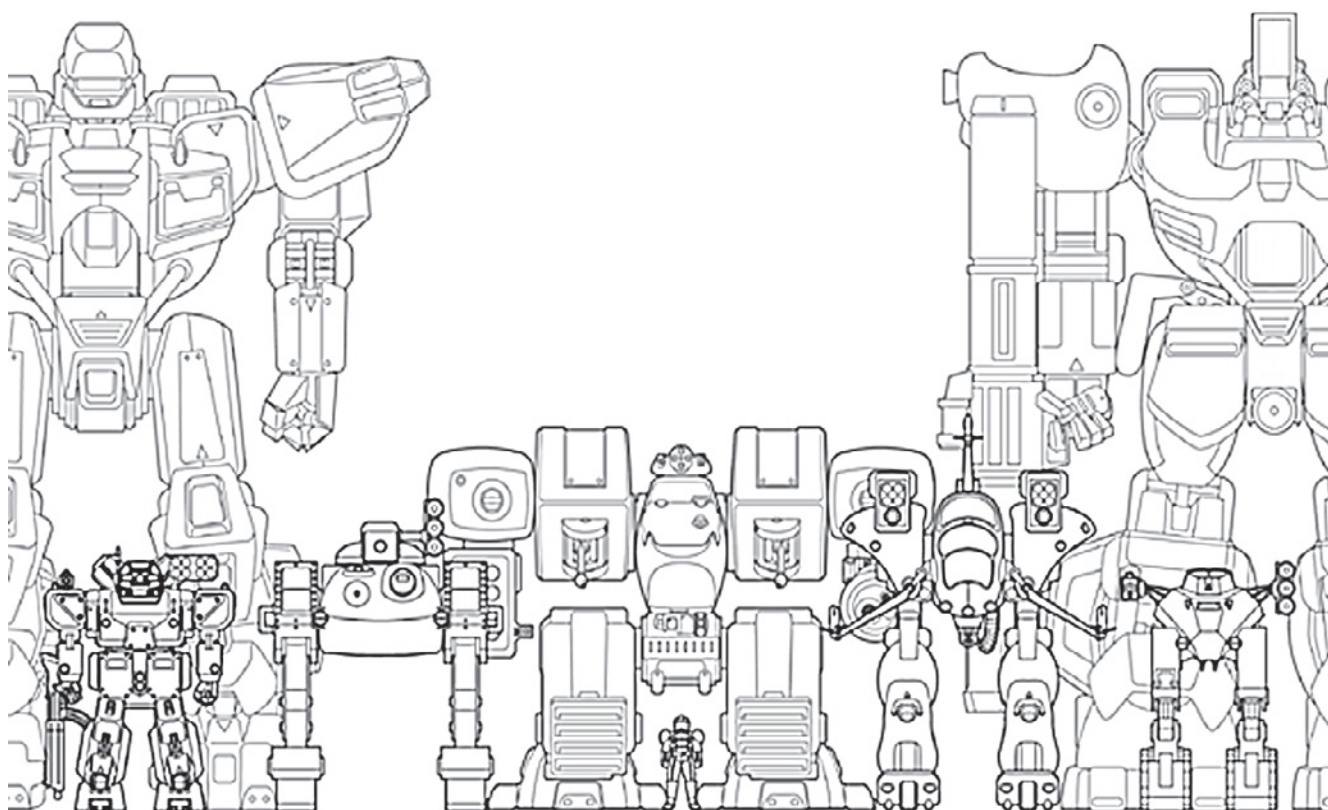
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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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Aurora Magazine, Volume 2, Issue 6, Published November 1st, 2008

The world, at your fingertips... AKA creating a table-sized 3 dimensional board that packs up and fits in a box.

When it comes to terrain I've always preferred a full table-sized board to a few foam hills scattered around a piece of plywood. Unfortunately, I live in an apartment. As such, space is at a premium for me. Years ago, living in my parents house, I could commandeer the basement and make terrain boards from huge sheets of pink foam. Now, however, I need terrain that can be packed away into boxes for storage allowing me to actually eat at my dining room table. It was with this in mind that I began looking for solutions to making modular terrain.

I found a great tutorial on terragenesis.co.uk for making "Modular Hex Boards with Hills" out of foam that would allow you create a nearly endless number of 3D configurations. The concept was brilliant. So I went out and got myself a hot wire cutter and a huge sheet of foam from the hardware store. Unfortunately, I soon discovered that using a hot wire cutter is not nearly as easy as it looks. Even sandwiching the foam between two templates, as in the tutorial, I couldn't get the edges straight.

Not to be deterred however, I developed my own construction method. It's not quite as pretty but, for me at least, it's much easier.

MATERIALS NEEDED

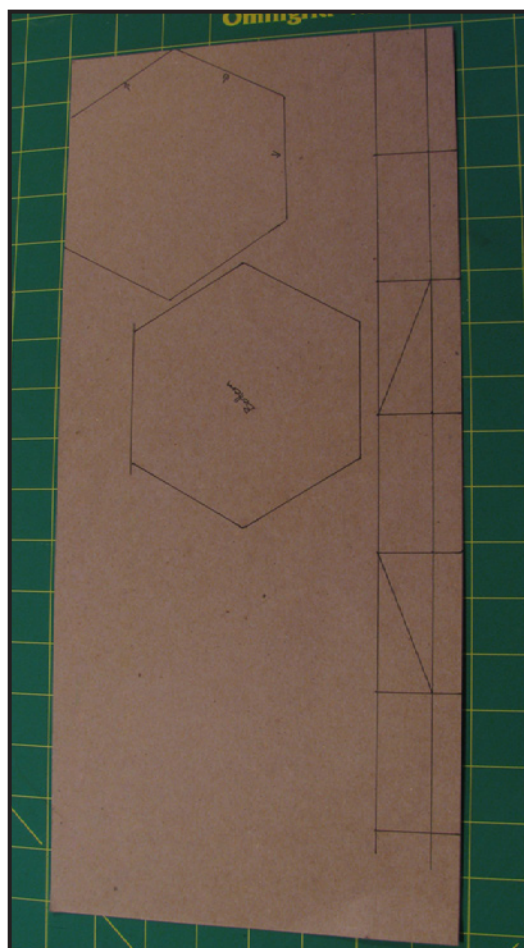
- Cardboard (not corrugated) or heavy cardstock
- Ruler
- Hex templates (you can either enlarge the ones supplied here or download the templates from the address at the end of this article)
- Hobby knife or rotary cutter (rotary cutter is recommended)
- Masking tape
- Paint (the color will depend on the type of terrain you're making)
- Vinyl mat 'grass' or flock

MAKING THE TERRAIN

Start by printing and cutting out the templates. The smaller the templates the more configurations you can achieve but the more of them you'll have to make. The ones I made measure 5 inches between the farthest corners. Each edge is 2.5 inches long and they are 0.5 inches tall at the lower edge and 1.5 inches tall at the raised edge. (I will use these dimensions in this tutorial.) Trace the templates onto the cardboard making sure to mark the lowered / raised edges. For each hex you will need a top, with lowered / raised edges, and a bottom (symmetrical, all 6 edges the same).

You will also need a long strip for the sides. To make the sides:

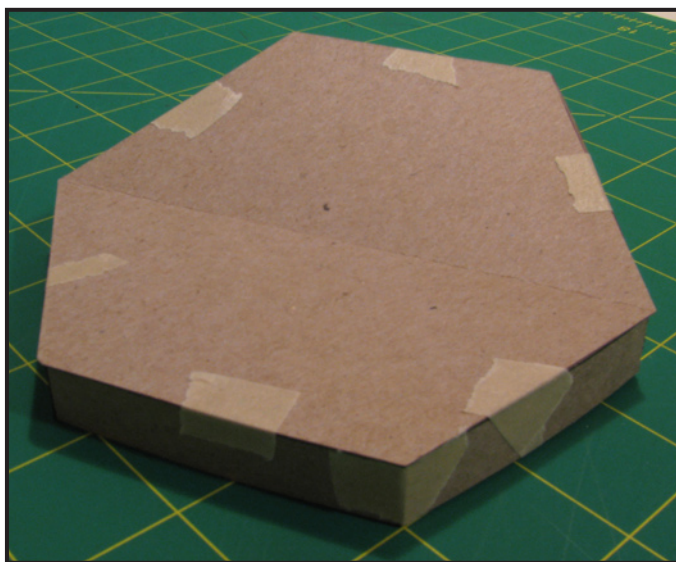
1. draw a line 15 inches long (2.5 inches x 6 sides) 0.5 inches from the edge of the cardboard
2. draw another line 1.5 inches from the edge, one inch above the first line
3. mark these lines at 2.5 inch intervals
4. draw a slope between two marks where the edge will slope. (See photo.)



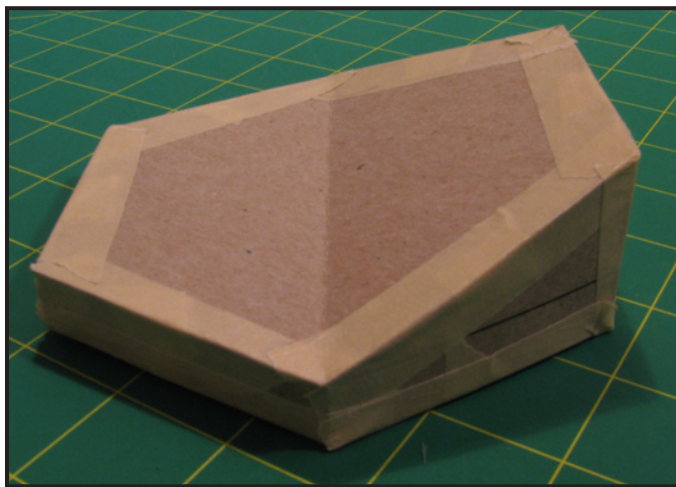
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MODULAR 3D HEX TERRAIN

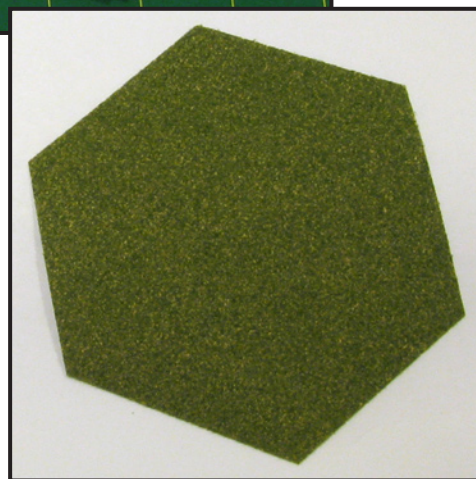
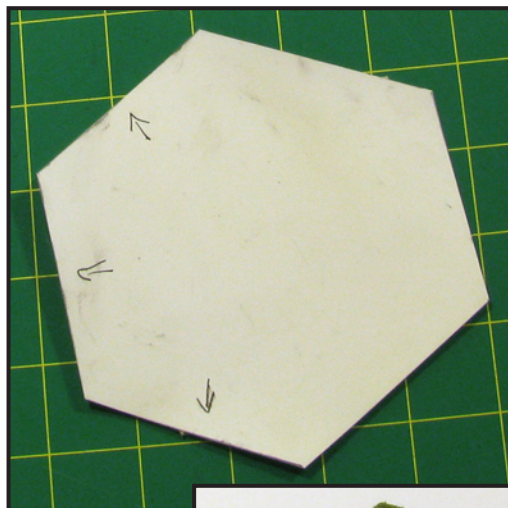
Next, cut out the pieces (I find that using a rotary cutter is easiest) and, very lightly, score the side strip on the 2.5 inch marks and the top piece where it will bend. Be sure to score the side that the edges will fold away from. Using small pieces of tape, so you can reposition as needed, assemble the pieces. Start by attaching the sides to the top piece then to the bottom piece.



Then put tape all along the edges to seal up all the gaps.

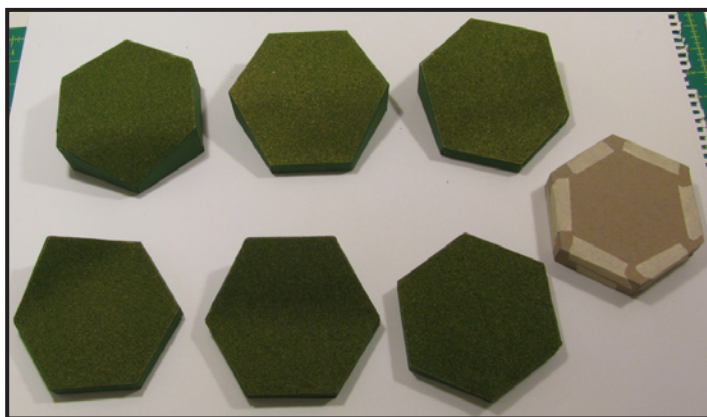


Now it's time to make them look good. I made grassland terrain so, first, using cheap craft paint, I painted the sides green. Using the same template used for the top piece, I cut out a hex from a roll of vinyl terrain mat I got at the local model train store and, using white glue, glued it onto the top of the hex. (Again, make sure to mark the edges so you know which way it will attach to the hex.)



The other option would be to flock the tiles but I found using the vinyl mat quicker and easier.

Using the included templates, you can make 6 different kinds of hexes. This includes a 'flat' hex which is made of two 'bottom' pieces. I also made a few 1 inch 'spacer' tiles that allow me to make higher raised areas.

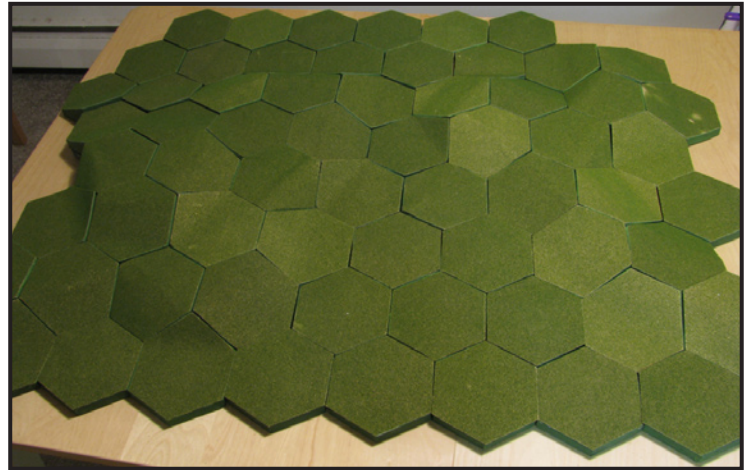


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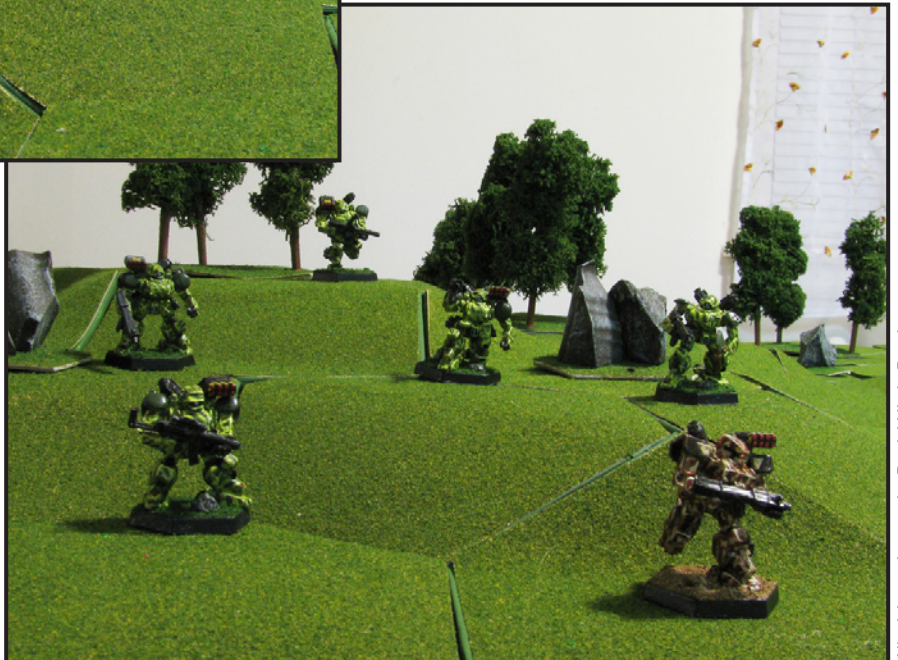
MODULAR 3D HEX TERRAIN

These tiles are a bit time intensive to construct but the beauty of them is that, not only can you arrange them in countless ways to create a table sized 3 dimensional board, but they can be stacked together for neat and easy storage.

To the right is a pic of all the hexes I have arranged to cover my dining room table. See if you can tell which tiles are which.



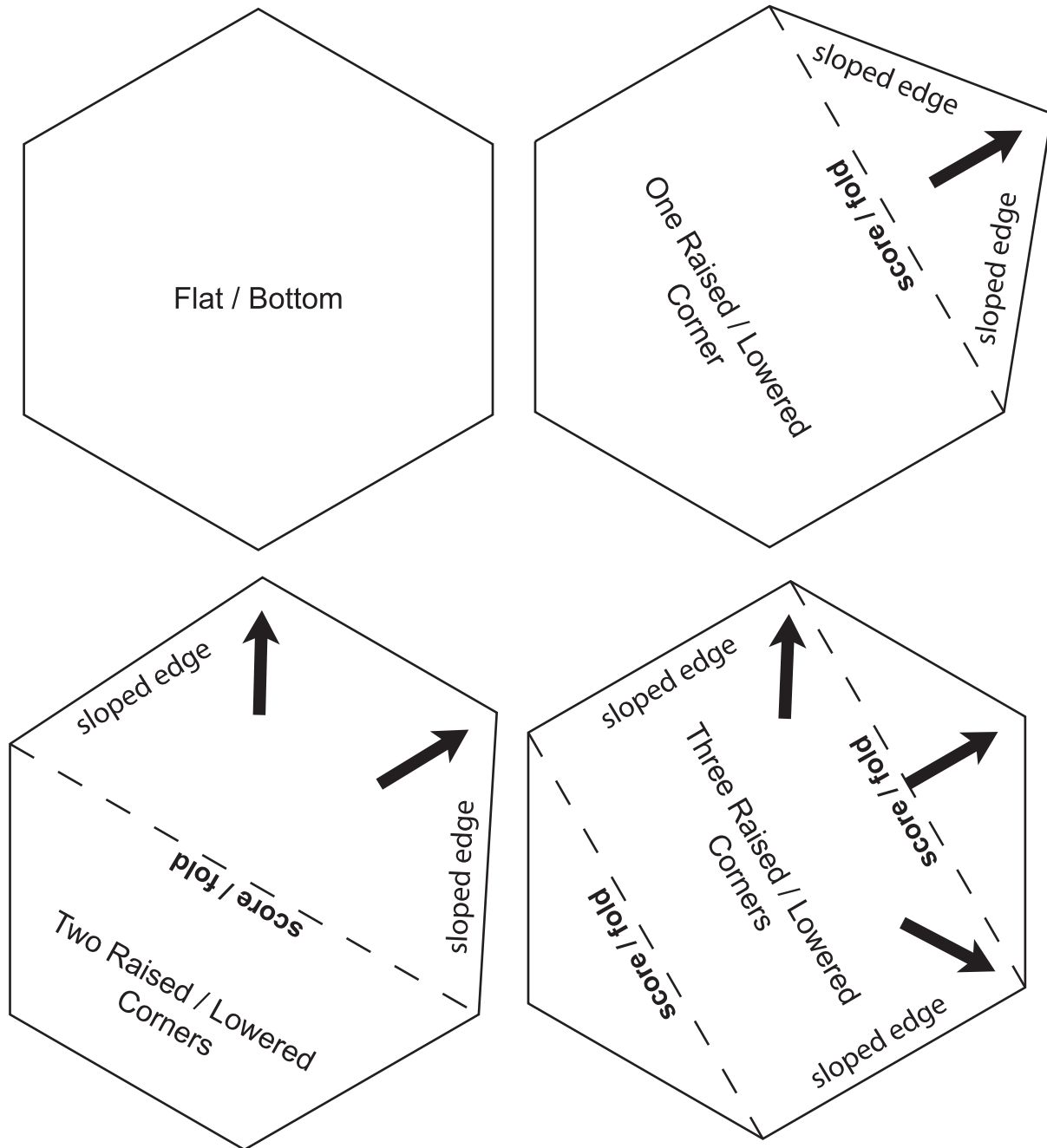
To finish, here are some models-eye view pics, in action. Run Northie run! :D



All miniature images by Daniel Hinds-Bonds

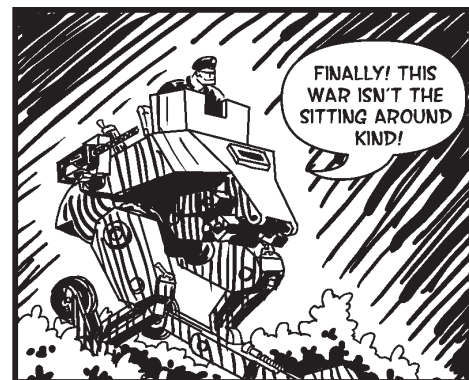
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MODULAR 3D HEX TERRAIN

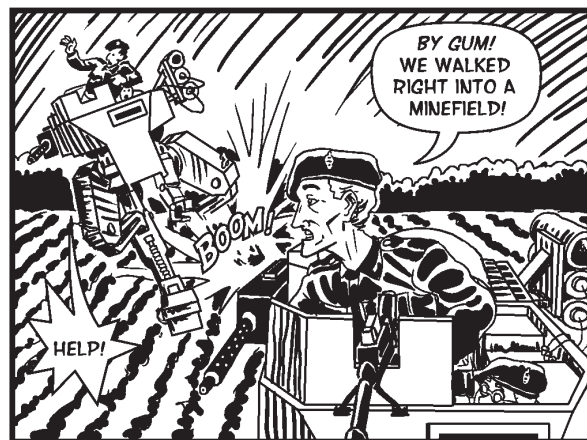


ALFIE'S TENNERS

JOHN BELL

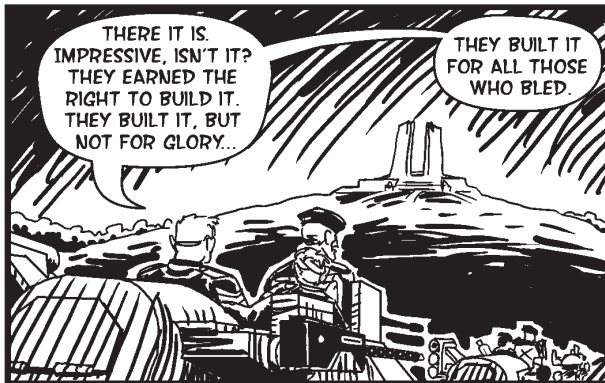
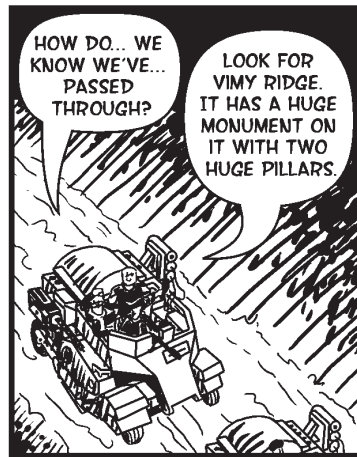
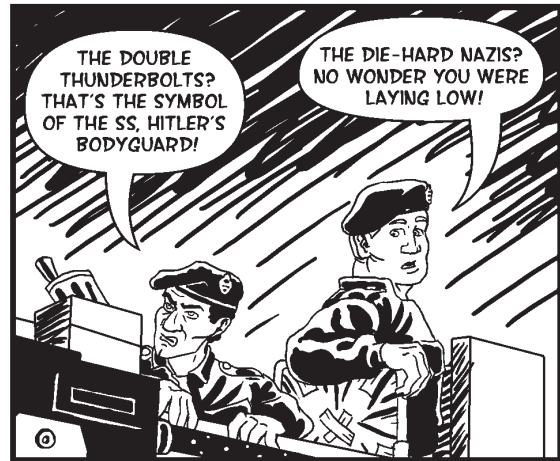
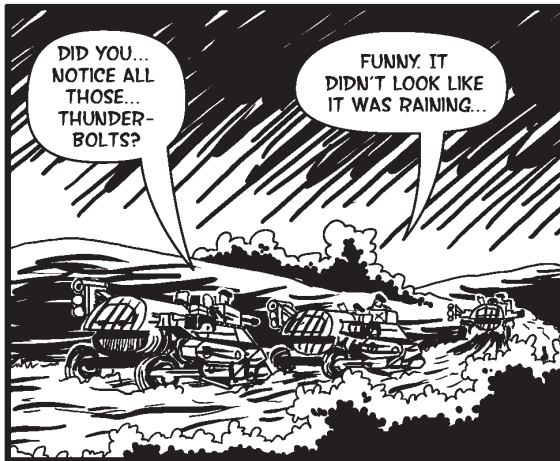


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ALFIE'S TENNERS

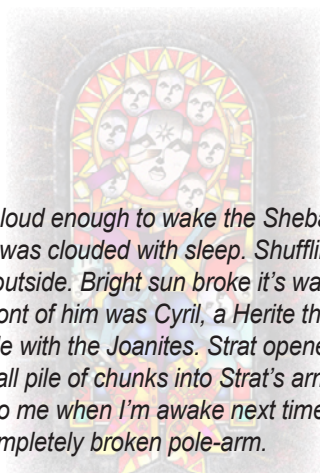


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ALFIE'S TENNERS



NEXT: JOIN THE TENNERS AS THEY "ARRAS" THE GERMANS!



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

TINKER GEAR

JASON JARVIS

The knocking at the door was loud enough to wake the Shebans across the river. Strat's mind was clouded with sleep. Shuffling over to the door he peered outside. Bright sun broke it's way in. It was early morning. In front of him was Cyril, a Herite that liked to get into a lot of trouble with the Joanites. Strat opened the door. Cyril dropped a small pile of chunks into Strat's arms. "Again Cyril? At least come to me when I'm awake next time." Strat looked at the completely broken pole-arm.

Items in the world of Tribe 8 are far from ideal. Most of the societies produce makeshift equipment from the scraps from the world before. Weapons, armour and items listed represent an ideal set of equipment, but this is rarely the case. Below are a set of rules to "degrade" current items to better suit the Tribe 8 world from an in game perspective.

NEW SKILL

Craft Tinker

Specializations: Weapon, Armour, Tools

Often Posses by: Fallen, Dahlians, Keepers, Agnite Bullies, fixers

This skill is often used to repair or build makeshift tools from a variety of scraps. These range from basic tools to weapons and armour. Complex machinery and devices are left to the realm of advanced skills or Keepers.

NEW ITEM

Tinker Kit

A tinker kit is a compilation of various tools cutters, peelers, pliers, drivers, awls, etc. A kit should have a majority of the required tools when producing an item, but on the Weavers discretion substitutes or the lack of maybe allowed. The tools are used to produce various items. Like weapons, plows, scissors, studding the leather. Kits come in three basic types. Even the lowest of kits/tools are required to build new items, though a Tinker maybe able to jury-rig a repair.

A Basic Kit allows you to build, but suffer a -1 to rolls. Either the tools themselves don't work so well or maybe a few important ones are missing. This has a medium value on the market. Standard Kits has all the tools and does the job. It doesn't always make the job easier, but when something is needed it's there. A Kit of this level values at High.

Excellent Kits has all the tools and works very well. Cutters cut easily and awls don't damage the the material. These on the

market typically go at Very High value.

Kits also come in a variety of quality levels. These levels range from -2 to +2. The quality levels influence the result of the roll when factoring in time, not the result.

Example: Strat has a Standard Kit of low(-1 quality) this nets him a -1 when determining how long he takes to work on the project.

BUILDING ITEMS

All simple items in the Tribe 8 books can be created or repaired. It is assumed that the Tinker has all the materials to work with the item. The craft skill works on the idea that success is the the most likely outcome so when building or repairing, there generally is no failed result. The Margin of Failure or Success will determine the quality or time to produce the item. Absolute failure is only achieved on a substantial MoF or a botch.

LABOUR DIFFICULTY

Basic item building difficulty is dependent on size and rigorous use of the object. Bigger and more heavily stressed items tend to be harder to make and more flawed. The base difficulty is then modified by the item type.

LABOUR DIFFICULTY	
Base Difficulty:	2
Simple Items:	Size/Weight + Modifiers
Weapon:	(Damage -5)/2 + Modifiers
Armour:	Armour Rating
ITEM CONDITION MODIFIERS	
CONDITION	MODIFIER
Non-rigorous tools	0
Passive tools(armour, wrenches, scissors)	+1 cpx*
Highly rigorous tools(weapons, farming tools)	+2 cpx*
Plenty or Ideal materials	-1
Adequate materials	0
Few or Poor materials	+1
*If using pre-SilCore +1 or +2 respectively.	

Example: Strat is rebuilding the weapon, there is no point in a simple repair. Strat examines the weapon, the changes required and the flaws already presented in the material. Long swords provides a x11 damage and no modifiers. . His Cell mates, the Twisted Crow's are excellent Scavengers and keep the home well supplied. This gives Strat a 2 vs 7 (2 Base, +3 damage, +3 Weapon, -1 Materials)

LABOUR TIME

Once development of the item has begun, roll a single roll for the quality of the item and the time taken. Track the Margin of Success or Failure. Each MoS reduces the time by half. If the roll was a Margin of Failure then the MoF increases the number of lemon dice rolled. Time of course can be carried out over a longer period. Each MoF also adds 3 hours to work time.

$$\text{Build Time} = 4 \text{ hours} \times \text{Difficulty}$$

Example: Strat is working on the Pole arm with a difficulty of 7. Strat ends up with a result of 5. Not only does Strat have 2 more lemon dice he increases the time from 28 hours to 34 hours of work time.

Example: Strat tries again. His endeavors earn him a roll of 6[6,6] + 1[stat] + 0[kit] for a result of 8. This goes over the difficulty which reduces the time by half or 14 hours. Exact time is not required to be kept track of.

ITEM INTEGRITY

This is where the items fall apart. All tinkered tools are inherently broken and gain the Tinker Flaw. To determine additional lemons for the item roll a number of dice to the MoF + 1. There is always at least 1 lemon to the item.

Example: Strat continues to work on the Pole arm. This left him with a total of 3 lemon dice. The results are 6(Roll twice on sub chart), 3(-1BP), 5(Roll on sub chart). This is a hefty penalty for this Pole arm. Stat now rolls on the sub chart 3 times. 3,5,5 this translates -1 Damage, -1 Accuracy and -1 Parry.

BASIC LEMON CHART

ROLL	Effect
1	Heavier, uses extra supplies
2	Heavier, uses extra supplies
3	1 Breaking Point
4	1 Breaking Point
5	Roll on type chart
6	Roll 2 times on type chart.

TOOL LEMON CHART

ROLL	Effect
1	-1 Breaking Point
2	-1 Breaking Point
3	-2 Breaking Point
4	-1 modifier
5	-1 modifier
6	-1 modifier & heavier, uses up extra supplies

WEAPON LEMON CHART

ROLL	Effect
1	-2 Breaking Point
2	-1 Damage
3	-1 Damage
4	-1 Damage
5	-1 Accuracy, Parry choice for Melee or Base Range for ranged weapons -1 Accuracy and Parry or -2 Base Range for ranged items, also uses extra supplies
6	Range for ranged items, also uses extra supplies

* Additional Accuracy or Parry penalties after the first one become a -1 Breaking Point. These are in addition to the weapons default values.

ARMOUR LEMON CHART

ROLL	Effect
1	-1 armour
2	-1 armour
3	-1 armour, uses extra supplies
4	-1 armour
5	-1 movement penalty
6	-1 movement penalty, uses extra supplies

* Additional movement penalties after the first become -1 Breaking Point

FAILURE

It is possible to fail building a tool. If during the building procedure that a tool either ends up with a Breaking Point of 1 then the item is just trashed. Half of the materials used are now lesser quality and may not be adequate to remake the item. There may also be a point where the Item is so flawed it would be best to just start fresh.

Example: Strat Feels discouraged about his pole arm. He takes another attempt at it starting from the beginning. Strat ends up with 4 lemon dice. 6,3,4,5, 2 & 4 translate to -1 Breaking Point each. This reduces the weapon to a Breaking point of 4. The 6 translates to a -2 Breaking Point for a result of 2 and a -1 Defense. The final 5 ends up with a -2 Breaking Point for a result of 0. This is past the Breaking Point and effectively has a useless weapon on his hands. Strat wakes up from his night mare. With the Pole arm sitting in the corner.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

During the Tinker building process, the Tinkerer or Client may decided to reduce some of the Lemons. This is an expensive approach for better weapons. For each Experience Point spent reduce a Lemon roll by 1. This does not effect the number of Lemon dice rolled, just the result of one die. There is no limit to the amount of Experience that can be spent in this way.

Example: Strat takes a look at the weapon come evening. Looking at the Pole arm he sees a few flaws he can work on. Strat spends 2 Emergency dice to lower the result of -1 Accuracy(5) down to a -1 damage(4). Leaving the weapon at -2 Damage and -1 Parry instead. This is more acceptable.

REPAIRS

Repairs aren't as hard to deal with than building. Repair difficulties are equal to 3. Each Margin of Success removes one of the applied penalties from the Tinker Flaw. The repair cannot be better than the original creation. The time taken is half the build time with the Margin of Success reducing that even further.

Example: Some Fallen from Haven have brought him a damaged plow. Strat goes to work. Strat rolls a 6 thus removing 3 Breaking Points and up to a 3 modifier penalty.

REBUILDING

The Tinker takes apart the Tool and rebuilds it with some extra material. This may be the preferred choice if there are far too many long term lemons or the penalties are too much. Keep in mind that this does require some more material. Reusing the exact same amount of material will only produce the same tool.

TINKER FLAW

All pieces of make-shift equipment suffer from this flaw. Make-shift equipment do not last for long periods of time without consistent maintenance. When rolling, for each additional 6 is rolled the item degrades reducing the Breaking Point by 1. Skilled users tend to over stress the tool. Once the tool reaches a Breaking Point of 1 the tool breaks and is unusable. Tools may accumulate additional penalties depending on the Weavers call and the situation. The Breaking Point is a measure of how close the item becomes unusual. Some items break down sooner than others.

All items have a default Breaking Point of 6. Additionally:

- General Tools gain a -1 to their use per scene.
- Weapons lose -1 damage per scene.
- Armour lose -1 armour rating when taking a wounding hit or any additional 6 the attacker rolls.

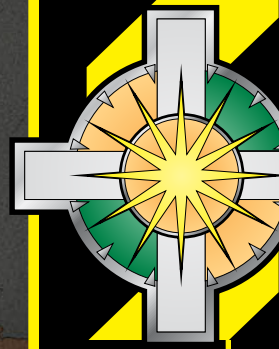


HEAVY GEAR

INTO THE HINTERLANDS



GADIZ



A REGIONAL SOURCEBOOK FOR THE HEAVY GEAR UNIVERSE

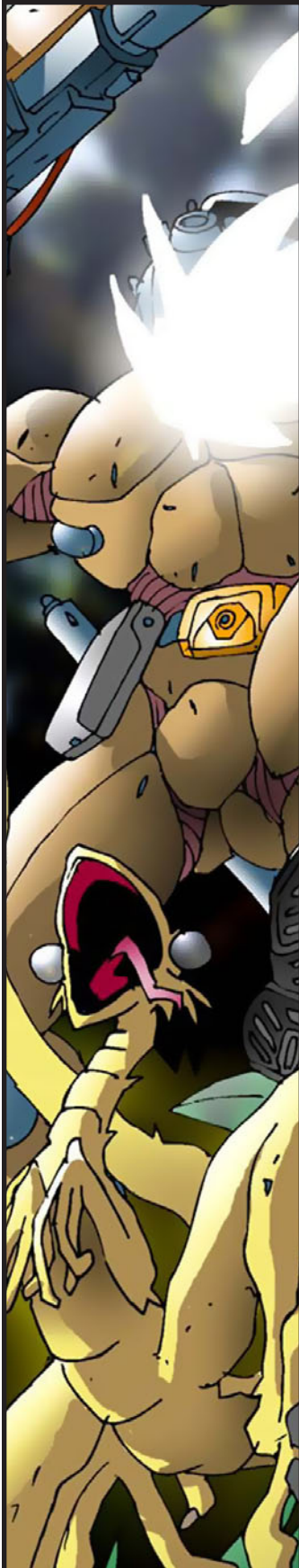
INTO THE HINTERLANDS VOLUME I: GADIZ: DIRECTED by Jason Dickerson GUEST STARRING Charles Webb, Chris Gunter, Chris Hall, Brian O'Connor, DJ White, Mike McTavish, Jason Baker SCREENPLAY by Jason Dickerson BASED ON A GAME by Dream Pod 9 PRODUCER Greg Perkins CINEMATOGRAPHER Greg Perkins FILM EDITOR Andrew Mac Intyre COMPUTER GRAPHICS Masakari SPECIAL EFFECTS Jake Staines, Greg Perkins, Ghislain Barbe, Stephen Fox SOUNDTRACK Children of Dune © Varese Sarabande PRESENTED by Aurora Magazine and Save the Asp Society © MMVIII





COUP

INTRODUCTION



"Your grace, it has been eight cycles since you've seen your son. After what he's done in the Mekong, are you looking forward to seeing him?" Tadash asked politely of his liege. He was the chief solicitor of the court of Gadiz and as close to the emir as one of his station could get. Today was an important day for Tadash. He had personally made all of the arrangements for the banquet and invited all the dignitaries. This was to be the homecoming for Gadiz's favorite son and it was going to a magnificent welcome. The emir had an important decree and she wanted the perfect venue to make the announcement.

"They call him a hero, Tadash. My son. The hero of the Mekong." Isilla remarked casually, but with a hint of pride. No one was more surprised by her son's exploits during the War of the Alliance than she. The emir only knew the horrors of that war from what she had seen on the trideo. The invading Earth forces never reached her territory and the young Patriarch had quickly lost interest in fighting before any of her troops had ever made it to the lines. Isilla had been glad of that. The last thing she wanted was putting a greater financial burden on her territory. Lucilla, her favorite daughter and Ocavian's sister, had been brilliant in managing the resources of the rural emirate, but there was no room for over indulgence and waste.

Tadash rocked up and down on the balls of his feet and nodded in agreement. "Yes, your grace. In fact they made a movie about his exploits. If I may say, young master Ocavian has grown into a truly masculine individual. They say the actor they had playing the part of master Ocavian was a very good match for him."

The girls working on setting Isilla's hair up into the intricate weave that resembled a spider's web of silver and gold giggled at the thought of meeting the handsome man. The movie had already circulated around the palace in the weeks before and Wings of Mercy's leading man, Alistair Yang, was a well known screen action hero. At nearly two meters in height and one hundred kilo's of pure testosterone, Yang was the epitome of masculinity. Many wondered if Isilla's son was really like the man in the movie. Most remembered the bloody affair from eight cycles ago that resulted in his exile. But time forgives, especially for a hero.

Two knocks at the entry to the throne room warned the occupants that someone one was entering. Tadash looked over at the doors and wondered who that might be. No one was scheduled to have an audience with Emir Isilla. He bowed to his liege and waved to the guards. "Find out who that is. The emir is not ready to receive guests." As the two guards turned the massive Northern oak doors opened to let in a short teen well-dressed in fine red and gold silks. His blonde hair was wildly out of place contrasting sharply to what he was wearing and his cold blue eyes hungrily assessed the room's occupants. Tadash looked at the boy in wonderment. It had been eight cycles ago, when he had last seen Ocavian, but he had not aged a day. The realization and the uncomfortable presence of the exiled prince made Tadash break into a cold sweat. There was a wrongness about Ocavian and the solicitor felt it.

Striding past the guards and in front of Isilla, Ocavian bowed to his mother. "Mother, I have returned as you requested," he said with an eerie smile.

Isilla waved the girls away and stood up from the throne. "Welcome home, son," she replied warily. Isilla had been emir for over forty cycles now and her instincts often warned her of impending dangers. Today, she felt threatened by her son. Isilla felt the same way as she had eight

cycles ago. Her son was a dangerous and uncontrollable predator. "I am surprised to see you so early though. I had planned to formally welcome you back at the banquet tonight."

Ocavian approached his mother with open arms, "Why should I not greet my mother in private before the festivities. It seems rude not to see your own flesh and blood before strangers have a chance to gawk at you like an animal at a Ngorongoro zoo."

Isilla sat upright, "Ocavian, dear, if I had known you felt that way, I wouldn't have had the banquet."

Shaking his head, Ocavian crossed his arms and shrugged, "It really doesn't matter. I won't be attending it anyways. I've chosen to attend a different sort of party. One with much better entertainment."

Tadash's mood sank quickly and he looked at his liege. Isilla's face was turning pale but she maintained her composure. "Ocavian, I see that you have developed ill manners while you were exiled. I had hoped you would learn to control yourself while you were gone, but I see that you're still an arrogant little brat," Isilla seethed as she tightly gripped the arms of the ornate throne.

Shrugging at his mother, Ocavian laughed, "So right. I have no respect for you, Isilla Paolo. How can I? Your inaction in saving the one you loved the most lead to her death and when I prosecuted the murderer you exiled me. No respect. Nothing. I find you negligent in your duty as ruler and will see to it that you do not hold your Emir's title for much longer. I only came here to make that declaration."

The guards rushed forward to detain the small youth, but as they moved up Ocavian turned quickly and launched thin blades out from the sleeves of his coat. Both hit their targets with lethal accuracy. As the guards collapsed to the ground, Ocavian turned slowly back to his mother. Staring in shock at her son, Isilla's mind did not register the violent act. Ocavian approached the throne, "I won't kill you tonight. That wouldn't be right. I want you to see and feel what I've felt all these cycles, mother. I'm going to let you live so you can see me dismantle your world. My bad manners aren't the only thing I've picked up in the Mekong. I've also picked up some friends."

Isilla's face contorted with rage as she stood up from her throne. Her carefully arranged hair flew into disarray as she screamed at Ocavian, "You ungrateful little bastard! I gave you life and I can take it back! Guards!! Guards!!"

Ocavian grinned wickedly and began to laugh as he turned around and walked out the door. "They won't be coming, Isilla."

Outside the sounds of autocannon fire and rocket explosions rumbled through the thick walls of the palace. Tadash looked at his liege utterly stupefied. "Why would he... you were going to give it to him, but instead..."

Isilla scowled. Ocavian's words stung her. Not because he was declaring a coup, but his accusation that she was responsible for Sirinda Veno's murder. Then there was the ever present paranoia of why she had made the deal with that devil in the mountains. Prophecies be damned, she thought to herself. Isilla had fought wars against her kinsmen before. She wouldn't be stopped by her runt of a son. Son. He hadn't even truly been hers or Sirinda's...



WELCOME TO GARDIZ



GADIZ: THE GATEWAY OF THE SERPENT



OVERVIEW

The rural emirate of Gadiz is located 1200km east of Cimmaro and covers a wide swath of land that extends deep into the Serpentine Mountain range of Major Akarum down to Lake Vihar. Gadiz is the closest of the rural emirate landholdings to the city state and has historically been closely tied to the Barjhal family. Like most rural emirates, Gadiz had been economically tied to the larger city state's ability to process raw materials. The former emir of Gadiz took steps to modernize and invest in her lands to free her family from dependency on Cimmaro and for the most part was successful in being able to raise the standard of living of the people in the region, while also seeing a large return on her investments. The raised standards of living have had the added effect of a population boom within the last generation. The current emir has continued his forebear's economic and social policies allowing a continued level of growth for the region. This upward shift of a formerly poor emirate has many wondering what sort of reaction it will elicit from the long standing alliance with Sirrano Barjhal. Many of the lesser emirs believe that it is only a matter of time before the upstart rural emirate will suffer from an untimely demise and be absorbed into the territory of Cimmaro.

GEOGRAPHY

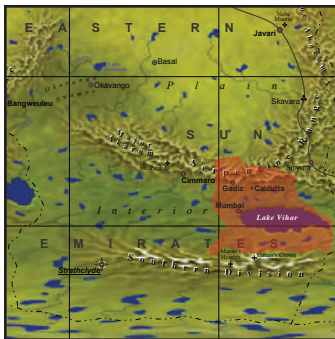
Officially the territory of Gadiz covers thousands of square kilometers of territory between the Major and Minor Akarum Mountains down to the Lake Land regions of the Interior. Functionally, the rural emirate has kept its development and control within 500km of the capital of Gadiz. The natural valleys of the Blanco Frio Range provide a temperate verdant zone where most of the emirate's inhabitants reside. The humidity of the valleys is tempered by cool winds and mountain streams, making the region very pleasant to inhabit. The regions south of the Blanco Frio are dense fern-wood forested hills that are occasionally broken up by small to mid-sized lakes. The temperatures of these forests can become uncomfortably cold especially at night.

Major population centers in the region are predominately found near Gadiz. The capital is located in the Amhal Valley. This valley is located in the extreme west of the rural emirate's territory. The small city of 80000 is located on either side of the Ganges River. The entrance to the valley is guarded by two massive stoneheads called the Pillars, which can be seen from the Dolores Highway. The highway is paved in a way similar to the methods that the Mekongese use. Strong acids defoliate the area and the area is sprayed with a resin polymer that hardens into a navigable road. This stretch of road extends from the border to about 750km east.

Following the Ganges River to Lake Vihar, one will find the oldest settlement in the region, Mumbai. This town boasts the second largest population in the region with 58000 residents. Most of the region's food is harvested in this area's farms and fisheries.

In the extreme east of the Dolores Highway, the other major population center, Calcutta, is located near the end of the paved road. This town is nearly as old as Mumbai and has a population of 30000. The main industries in the area are lumber harvesting and agricultural in nature, but they are also a major stop for most eastward bound caravans heading to the city states located in the Minor Akarum region.

Other population centers can be found in the area, but most of these do not amount to more than small villages or the occasional township. Most of these are populated with less than 500 people. Conditions within these locations can vary from decent to primitive. Generally the places located closer to the three major population centers have a greater degree of amenities available to them.



ECONOMICS

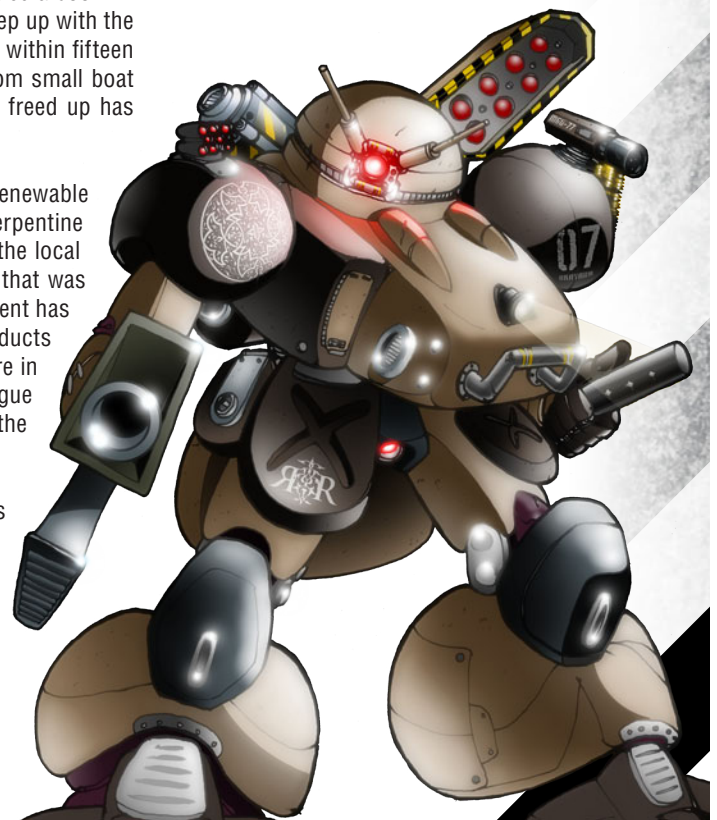
The region has historically depended on mining raw ores from the Blanca Frio Range and selling the unprocessed ore to the city state of Cimmaro. Over many centuries this arrangement provided the emirs of Gadiz enough capital to meet their needs. In last two centuries the relationship with Cimmaro has continually degraded to the point where the emirs of Gadiz were slowly becoming indebted to creditors due to the lack of income from their refining facilities. The bad management and poor maintenance of equipment resulted in less and less ore being harvested in the region.

A few emirs have tried to repair the economy with little success. In particular the eighteenth century produced two emirs who tried to fix some of the issues plaguing the region. Emir Todash Paolo, who reigned from TN1712 to TN1716, was the first to issue an edict to his solicitors to find ways to increase revenue into the region. He hired scientists from the Humanist Alliance to survey his lands. The survey had indicated some ideal locations for further natural resources, but before Todash could enact his planned expansions, his sister, Amala, poisoned him and seized the throne. Three decades later, Oyen, Todash's son, murdered his aunt in her sleep and took back the throne. Oyen had spent his formative years acting submissive and unintelligent around his family to stay alive. Sick of Amala's excesses and worried about his survival, he finally acted in TN1746. His reign lasted twenty cycles, but ten of those cycles were spent consolidating and just trying to survive. In TN1755, Oyen was able to pay back all of the creditors and begin to invest in the region. Eleven cycles of investment made some significant gains in the region, but by the late nineteenth century most of these gains had dwindled to a negligible level.

The current level of economic prosperity began with Emir Isilla's Long Term Economic Growth Edict in TN1880. The plan called for fifty cycles of growth with benchmarks to meet in the plan. The second part of the economic development plan called for expansion into agricultural exportation, not merely looking to agriculture as a means to provide subsistence to the shajhalin of the region. Both edicts were the brainchild of Sirinda Veno. Her capable administration of the edicts for twenty five cycles with the avid support of Isilla truly transformed the infrastructure of the region. The largest investment in the area was the oil and ore refineries north of Calcutta and the oil exploration and recovery near Mumbai. Mining safety was brought up to modern standards and shajhalin were given better training to improve the recovery of ore from the mountain range. Road projects in the regions were instituted to help promote caravan trade and have continued to grow each cycle. The eventual goal is to have traversable roads that lead from Cimmaro to the extreme eastern border of the region. Calcutta has benefited tremendously since the edicts. The increased travel from caravans and the refineries have created a boom in the area. Regent Lucilla has had to purchase more manpower from Barjhal to keep up with the demand in the last decade. Calcutta is expected to reach a population of 50000 within fifteen cycles and 80000 within thirty cycles. The economy in Mumbai has shifted from small boat fishing to larger commercial fishing with automation. The manpower that was freed up has gone to the oil industry.

In addition to these raw resources, the edict concentrated on the harvesting of renewable agricultural resources such as fern wood harvesting, fresh water fishing, Serpentine cawfee, and high grade wool products. All of these activities had been part of the local economy, but the low output of these goods meant that it was not something that was commonly exported. The second edict was easier to implement and the investment has borne a respectable amount of profit from exports. The high grade wool products are a high demand item in Port Oasis. Fernwood, cawfee, and freshwater fish are in demand all over the globe, but the Free Emirate rebellion in the north of the league has severely curtailed many of these exports to markets in the Badlands and in the North.

One less publicized business is the members of the Ramius Raiders that work as slavers. They primarily operate in Free Emirate regions, but use the region as a point to sell their goods at private auctions in their facilities in Gadiz.





HISTORY

AGE OF THE CONSORTIUM AND COLONIZATION [TN800]

The region of Gadiz was settled in TN800 by settlers from the Indus Valley region. The Allara Mining Company, a member of the Consortium, paid for the settlement and development of the area around Mumbai in hopes of finding oil and gas reserves in the area. The seemingly resource rich region proved to be a disaster for the Terran company and the Allara Mining Company went bankrupt after a dismal return on their investment in the region. The Consortium mediated a sale of rights to the land to the managers and executives already living in the area in TN850. The new owners abandoned looking for energy sources around Mumbai and in TN864 they built Calcutta to explore the mountain ranges for ores. The endeavor proved to be mildly successful and the region enjoyed a degree of economic success until the withdrawal of the Consortium in TN1454.

WARLORD'S PLAYGROUND [TN1454]

The chaotic times following the withdrawal hit the region hard, but as most of the owners of the area were already vested there for generations the desire to leave Terra Nova did not grip the executives. Most of the shajhalin accepted the news without much thought and placed their trust in the executives and managers.

This system worked for three cycles and the region managed to barely survive. In TN 1458, warlords grew out of the chaos of Cimmaro and descended on the regions around the city in search for anything of value. The Allara region as Gadiz was called in that time, was utterly crushed by a warlord named Timoz. The executives and their families were rounded up and executed for 'crimes against the people'. Most of the management also suffered the same fate, but a few families survived by capitulating to the demands of Warlord Timoz. For twenty cycles Timoz ruled the area with an iron fist. His men collected slaves for his needs back in Cimmaro and pillaged the cities of Mumbai and Calcutta repeatedly. The population of the region fell from 200000 to 80000 within that time period due to the terrible conditions inflicted on the residents.

In TN 1492 Emirs Barjhal and Sethyra were joined by Batiste Paolo, the HCS Eastern Sun's science officer, in the conquest of the region of Cimmaro. The reclusive Batiste had been assigned by the Concordat to harvest soil and fauna samples for the University of Oxford before the total withdrawal of the Concordat from the colony. The grant had been made by a wealthy industrialist with connections to the bureaucracy of the Concordat. With Batiste was his young son Valantino Paolo, who looked remarkably like his father. Both Paolo's were natural born geniuses with an amazing propensity for the sciences. At twelve years old, Valantino had graduated Oxford with a degree in Genetic Sciences. He followed this up with a PhD in Advanced Genome Theory three years later. Batiste was also an exceptional man, who rarely sought the spotlight. He worked in the background and mostly onboard colony bound ships. After the crew of the Eastern Sun survived the crash, Batiste was secretly overjoyed. He would be able to continue his research in the field and disappear into obscurity amongst the chaos. Unfortunately for Batiste, he was joined by Barjhal and Sethyra on exploring the Serpentine Mountain Range and was kept under close scrutiny by the paranoid Toshiro Sethyra, who thought little of the diminutive scientist and his son. Simon Barjhal, one of the ship's officers, went out of his way to befriend Batiste. The friendship between the two men encouraged Batiste to contribute to the establishment of the Eastern Sun Emirates.

CONQUEST OF CIMMARO AND THE FOUNDING OF GADIZ [TN1492]

The conquest of Cimmaro was a bloody and violent conflict with numerous casualties from both the warlords and the fledgling ESE forces. Batiste had little stomach for war, but his son, Valantino, reveled in it. He proved to be a genius at warfare as well as science. In late TN 1492, a company under Valantino's command raided Timoz's compound and killed off the warlord and his officers. In the seasons leading up the raid, Valantino had been managing the expedition's intelligence gathering functions and had learned about the dynamics of the three major warlords in Cimmaro. Using this information he determined that Timoz was the easiest target to remove and also the stabilizing element between the other two. Indeed after the death of Timoz, the warlords began to fight each other for control of command and logistics. Valantino targeted the stronger warlord's supply dumps repeatedly which forced the warlord to raid his weaker ally,



Warlord Nigh Veno. Enraged and seeing the writing on the wall, Veno surrendered the city to Barjhal and aided the Emirs in destroying the rest of the opposition. Veno's family was awarded a prestigious position by Simon Barjhal, which it continues to enjoy to this day.

With the conquest of the city over, Valantino asked for and received permission to continue the expedition to subdue any remaining forces in the region. Batiste accompanied his son to the east and eventually the two found the Allara Region under the control of remnants of Timoz's men. Valantino's forces crushed the warlord's forces and re-established control of the region. The grateful population immediately recognized Batiste as the new ruler of the area and Batiste convinced his son to stay in the region. He wrote to Erik Masao seeking permission to become emir of this region and was granted the title as a rural emir. Valantino continued his expedition into the Interior and disappeared in TN 1499. His son's disappearance devastated Batiste. No longer interested in science, he threw himself into rebuilding the region and establishing Gadiz. In TN1500, Batiste married the granddaughter of an Allara executive who had survived Timoz's purge. Lena Fatine had helped Batiste overcome his grief and gave him the drive to build the region's capital. Upon completing his town, Batiste renamed the region Gadiz in honor of his homeland. Batiste was well regarded by the people of the region for his kindness and his love of those in his care. His scientist background coupled with a drive to improve the region left his emirate incredibly prosperous. In TN1510 the couple had a daughter, Indira, who would inherit the emirate and continue the line. When Batiste died in TN1515, the population venerated him as a deity and enshrined his body in a NeoHindu temple built the following cycle.

BLOODY ISILLA [TN1872]

The period between Batiste's death and TN1872 was marked with little growth and generation after generation of progressively inactive emirs that rarely spent time in their native lands and most of their time in Skavara or Strathclyde. This pattern of abandonment especially after the end of the Southern Unification War, left Gadiz as impoverished as most rural emirates. In TN1872, a new emir took the reigns of power after a series of carefully planned assassinations. Isilla Paolo was unusual in that she remained in Gadiz for most of her life. As a young girl she visited her hereditary lands frequently with her father's chief solicitor. She fell in love with the lands and determined to drag them out of the poverty and disuse she had witnessed first hand. As one of the youngest members of the Paolo household, she had little hope of attaining her desire, but Isilla was undeterred by her standing. She left the ESE for a few cycles to study in Perth in the Humanist Alliance. Though she did not complete her degree, Isilla was regarded as a brilliant student, though many of her preceptor professors noted a disturbing tendency towards cruelty and a lack of empathy with her fellow students. In TN1870 she returned to the ESE and approached an old family alliance in Cimmaro. A rather plain featured woman, Isilla tried unsuccessfully to seduce Arras Barjhal, father of current Emir Serrano Barjhal. Arras was impressed with her intelligence and thoroughly amused at how enthusiastically Isilla embraced the city state's blood sports. After spending most of TN1871 in Cimmaro, Isilla was introduced to Simeon Veno and his young sister Sirinda. The Veno family had prospered under their association with the Barjhal family. Over the centuries this influential solicitor family had tied its fortunes to the dominant family and by TN1870 they managed a number of the city's infrastructures and some of the Barjhal's extensive networks of criminal enterprises throughout Terra Nova. Simeon was officially responsible for the main bloodsport arena in the city-state of Cimmaro. Unofficially he ran Arras Barjhal's hit squad. As a regular at the arena, Isilla became intimately associated with the man. In TN1872, her association with Simeon allowed her to remove all of her rivals to the emirate throne. The opportunity presented itself, when Isilla's father, Ulhar unknowingly insulted Arras when he bought a dancing girl Arras wanted for himself. The two men had previous occasions of conflict ranging from the price of ore and accusations of Cimmaro underweighting shipments. Arras was tired of Ulhar's belligerence and decided he had had enough. Simeon Veno was brought in to remove the nuisance. Simeon suggested that Isilla would make an excellent replacement and would prove to be a loyal rural emir to Barjhal. Arras was very agreeable to the idea. Simeon brought the idea up to Isilla and made the arrangements. In exchange for the murders of all of the claimants, Isilla would provide Arras with loyalty and Simeon wanted to see the Veno's married into Isilla's family. Isilla agreed and the young Sirinda was chosen as the Veno that would be brought into the family. Three weeks later, the Paolo family had been reduced to a single member. Isilla was confirmed by the Sunites in Skavara late in the cycle. After the coup, Isilla sent Sirinda to the Southern Republic to be educated and cultured. Though Isilla made the deal with Simeon, she had no desire to



raise the child. From TN1872 to TN1880, Isilla consolidated her region by executing over a thousand solicitors and shajhalin that were closely tied to her father and older sister, Zenia, who had been heir apparent until her assassination. She only visited Strathclyde twice during this turbulent time. Both times, she was compelled by her feudal obligations and her visits were kept to the minimum obligation to the court. Her popularity with the people during this period was incredibly low. Most shajhalin grumbled that they preferred their emirs to remain out of the region. In TN1878 the local Thugee cult initiated an assassination attempt that failed dramatically. Infuriated by the threat to her life, Isilla ordered all NeoHindu temples closed and made all the priests permanent guests in her palace in Gadiz. During this period, Isilla struggled with finding capable solicitors to implement her desired goal of reestablishing the Gadiz region as an economically viable force. Many of her younger nieces and nephews' lives were spared after the coup. Some of the younger ones were adopted by her after the Thugee incident, but she had by this point produced a number of heirs from the harem of women she derisively called her breeders. Very few of her harems even remotely interested her. She spent a great deal of money having them act as surrogate mothers for men she took as lovers. The thought of pregnancy revolted her. The remaining nieces and nephews, Isilla arranged marriages to capable men and women from outside the ESE in exchange for their services, thus she was able to secure a new type of solicitor class. The traditional solicitor families were upset by the turn of events, but Isilla retorted that they were incapable of carrying out her needs and had no grounds to complain. Angrily she exclaimed that the solicitors abdicated their own positions when they failed to educate themselves. If they could train their next generation then she would consider placing them back into the positions of power they had enjoyed. Most families took the drubbing and sent their children to be properly educated.

GADIZ'S REVIVAL PLAN [TN1880]

In TN1880, Sirinda Veno returned from the Southern Republic. The young precocious girl grew into a stunning beauty with intelligence to match. Sirinda thrived in the university environment and graduated at the top of her class. Though she dreaded coming back, Sirinda's familial obligations gave her no choice. Isilla was completely taken by the older Sirinda. After spending a cycle with Isilla, Sirinda was drawn into the emir's vision for the lands and the two women laid out the plan to fulfill the dream. In TN1884, the couple went to the Humanist Alliance to have their first child. A cycle later they had a daughter named Lucilla. Then in TN1893, they had a second child, a boy they called Ocavian, who would be known as the Exsanguinated Emir to the world in later cycles. Ocavian was not conceived in the Humanist Alliance like Lucilla. Nobody knows for certain where he was conceived. Interestingly, in the cycle that Ocavian was born the NeoHindu priests were released from their incarceration and the temples were reopened. The temple dedicated to Batiste Paolo was reconsecrated to Kali and Ocavian was rumored to have had strange rituals performed on him shortly after his birth in the temple as well.

The twenty cycles between TN1880 and TN1905 was a period of rapid growth and modernization for the region of Gadiz. Among the improvements in the region was the construction of ore and oil refineries near Gadiz, oil derricks near Mumbai, and the improvements to the overall mining and agricultural pursuits in the region. The Gadiz palace saw some major additions as well. Renovation projects had begun in TN1873 and additional wings were added in TN1880. The cycles with Sirinda were Isilla's greatest. Isilla was able to see her region's economy and infrastructure grow to a level she had hoped for. In TN1905, Isilla and Sirinda had a falling out due to solicitor politics in Cimmaro. The Veno family had been involved in internecine feuds with rival solicitor families for decades, but in TN1904 Sirrano Barjhal had instigated a bloody fight between the Veno clan and the Gerrint clan. Both clans had a bitter hatred of each other and had competed for positions in the criminal endeavors of the Barjhal family. By TN1905, the Veno clan was progressively losing ground to the Gerrint clan. Desperate for help, Simeon approached Sirinda to call in a favor from Isilla. Pressured by her brother and her family, Sirinda begged Isilla for help, but was severely rebuked by Isilla. Isilla was concerned with her standing with Sirrano and had no desire to irritate and alienate him. Many of Isilla's other lovers took this series of rebukes as an opening for them to further antagonize the couple. Cycles of favored status had made Sirinda a target for jealous heirs and Isilla's other consorts. In particular, Tamil Quint, one of Isilla's longest consorts and a member of one of the lesser emirate families, seized this moment to personally murder Sirinda at her estate in Mumbai on 10 Winter, 1905. Tamil visited her on the pretense of interceding on behalf of his family, but he had his retainers murder the staff and he strangled Sirinda with a steel garrote. The only witness to this barbaric



event was a young Ocavian, who had been playing hide and seek with one of the servants at the time and had hidden in a wardrobe in his mother's room. The event severely scarred the young man.

After the grisly discovery, Isilla interrogated her son to discover who had committed the heinous act. The brooding young man swore vengeance for himself. He refused to tell Isilla, who had murdered Sirinda. Infuriated and desolated at the loss of her closest companion, she exiled Ocavian and Lucilla from Gadiz and placed them into the care of Simeon Veno. Strangely this was taken as a sign of favor to the Veno's and the Gerrints hesitated to attack the Venos. Soon after Simeon found an advantage in the conflict and crushed the Gerrints. Ocavian was under Simeon's guidance at the time and took the lessons of violence to heart. Lucilla was sent to the Southern Republic to be educated in the same manner as Sirinda. Ocavian's education continued in Cimmaro among the Veno family's tutors as well as his atypical education among the arena. Simeon took an instant liking to the young boy and fostered his unhealthy fascination with murder and vengeance. The young Ocavian also spent time with Sirrano Barjhal at the emir's palace. Sirrano was impressed with the young man's charismatic nature, good looks, and incredible intelligence. Barjhal was equally impressed with Ocavian's bloodthirsty appetite. During Ocavian's time in Cimmaro, he was often found in Barjhal's personal box at the arenas.

PARANOID TIMES [TN1910]

In Gadiz, Isilla went into a deep depression and lost interest in anything related to the region. Then some of the heirs saw a potential opening to rid themselves of Isilla and seize the throne. In TN1910, Yurina and Wesson Paolo staged an unsuccessful coup. Isilla ordered the execution of both of her children and their entire households. Sickened by her children's betrayal and longing for some part of Sirinda, she called Lucilla and Ocavian back in TN1912. In TN1911, Lucilla had returned from the Southern Republic and met with her brother after being separated for six cycles. At this time Ocavian revealed to his sister the person responsible for their mother's death and his intentions for vengeance. Seeing Ocavian's transformation into a bloodthirsty young man and convinced of Isilla's abandonment of both of them, Lucilla chose to bind her brother closer to her by proposing a marriage alliance. They were secretly married in Skavara that cycle by Sunite clergy with Sirrano Barjhal as a witness. When Isilla summoned the two siblings back from Cimmaro, she was unaware of the marriage and Ocavian's secret desire to punish Tamil Quint. In order to secure the resources needed to exact his vengeance, Ocavian used Simeon Veno's contacts to locate the Thugees in Mumbai. Simeon saw a potential in the siblings and wanted to tie them to his family even further. In exchange for help, Simeon required Ocavian to marry his eldest daughter, Adina.

Within a week of returning home, Ocavian and Lucilla had identified how they were going to kill the Quint household. The Thugees gladly joined Ocavian's desire to spread death. On 10 Winter, TN1912, exactly seven cycles after his mother's brutal murder, Ocavian enacted his vengeance. Tamil Quint and his entire family were tortured and brutally dismembered over the course the thirty six hour day at Sirinda's former home. Tamil met his demise in the exact same manner as Sirinda. Ocavian had the family's heads mounted on pikes outside of the home. Isilla was secretly thrilled when she found out who was responsible for Sirinda's death and equally approved of Ocavian's dispensation of justice. Publicly though, she had to take steps to appease the other heirs, who believed that Ocavian was looking to kill them as well in a bid to secure his position as the only heir. He was at the time twenty fifth in line, but after the annihilation of the Quint line, he was tenth in line. Fearing a blood feud in Gadiz, Isilla exiled Ocavian from the ESE. Lucilla was exempted from the exile and kept in the palace with Isilla, who was extremely infatuated with her daughter.



THE EXSANGUINATED EMIR (TN1913 TO CURRENT)

Satisfied with his vengeance, Ocavian found work as a mercenary in the Badlands with help from Simeon. He would help found a notorious mercenary group called the Ramius Raiders and perform exemplary during the War of the Alliance. Using a portion of this group he returned to the ESE in TN1920 and engaged in one of the most well publicized and brutal campaigns against his own family. After two cycles of conflict, Ocavian had captured and consolidated his hold on the region. Every member of his family except his sister Lucilla and a half sister named Vera were executed. His mother Isilla was executed on 10 Winter, 1921 for complicity in Sirinda's murder. Unknown to most though, Ocavian did honor Isilla's final request to be buried next to Sirinda. It was rumored that Isilla had finally fallen out of favor with Sirrano Barjhal and the emir of Cimmaro offered Ocavian the means to take the throne. Lucilla had written to Ocavian that Isilla was going to offer the emirate to Remalla, a clear indication that both of their lives were in jeopardy. Remalla was nearly as bloodthirsty as Ocavian and would surely follow Isilla's example of exterminating any rivals. Ocavian chose to protect his sister and their daughter.

After two cycles of cementing his hold on Gadiz, he left Lucilla in regency of the region and returned to his life in the Mekong. Since TN1923, Lucilla has continued in promoting Sirinda and Isilla's vision. The solicitor class has bloomed into an efficient bureaucratic model and exports of refined metals and agricultural products have been gaining tremendous ground in the Humanist Alliance and the Southern Republic. Profits from these exports have gone back into the region's infrastructure.

FESTIVAL OF FOLLY



Calcutta was overflowing with excitement and it was the first cycle that Rani had come up to the festival with her family. She was thrilled to see all of the temples painted up in bright colors and flowers everywhere. Most of all Rani wanted to see Lady Ashura. There was a rumor that Ashura Paolo would be presiding over the award for Hanuman's Games and Rani had been infatuated with the beautiful daughter of the Gadiz's emir.

Rani's parents had let her explore the markets with her younger brother, Bhanu, and she was determined to make it over to the Monkey Lord's shrine, but after two hours of searching for it, Rani was feeling depressed that she would miss seeing Lady Ashura. Bhanu had been complaining about not being able to buy sweets at the stalls that they were passing, but Rani didn't have time to be stopping at the different vendors.

"Bhanu will you please stop asking me to stop for candy! We don't have any money and don't you want to see Lady Ashura?" Rani demanded.

Bhanu stuck his hands in his pant pockets and shrugged. "Why should I care about seeing some emir's daughter? I mean really what's so great about her anyways? And what happened to the money that mom and dad gave you?" he asked.

Rani took a deep breath and tried to calm herself. Bhanu was really annoying her to no end. Then she came up with an idea. "Fine! Why don't you take the money and get yourself some sweets. I'm going to go find the shrine. Come and find me there when you're out of money ok?"



Bhanu smiled as he took his hand out ready to receive the money, "Sure thing, sis. Monkey shrine."

Shoving the money into his hand, Rani rushed down the alleyways trying to find her way to the shrine. The maze of stalls and the crowds made traveling through the town difficult but Rani's determination finally paid off when she found where the caber tossing was happening. Surely the awards would be happening here, Rani reasoned to herself.

Settling into a spot, Rani watched as burly men lifted towering logs and threw them into the air. She even saw her cousin, Yamir, tossing a log. Rani blushed as she watched him straining to lift the log. Cheering along with the crowd, Rani watched as he managed to get the best toss of the group. Her mother was always saying how nice it would be if she settled down with Yamir. Rani was beginning to see why.

With the caber tossing done, the crowd waited for the awards ceremony at the shrine. Yamir saw Rani and waved her over to him. Rani made her way through the crowd, "Yamir! I saw your throw. That was magnificent!"

Yamir smiled broadly and ran his hand through his hair embarrassed at the compliment. "You did? Well, thanks! Where's your mom and dad?"

Rani shrugged, "Don't know. I think they wanted to have some personal time with each other. Sort of like a date."

"Ha! My parents are doing the same thing." Yamir replied. "I guess they need time away from us kids, huh? Hey. What are you doing after the ceremony? Maybe we could go watch the fireworks."

Rani blushed and meekly nodded. "That sounds wonderful. Sure."

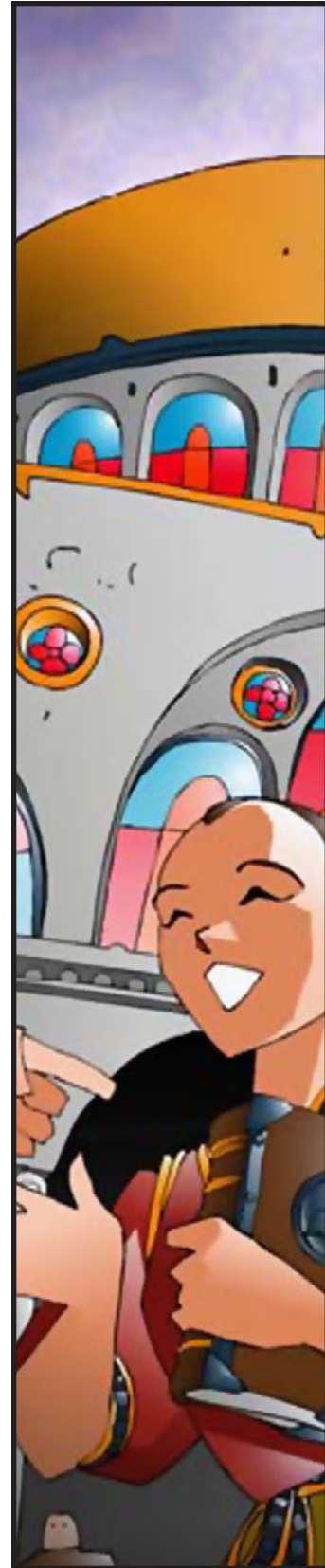
Yamir grinned and was going to say something else, but the fanfare from the shrine stopped him from adding to the conversation. Yamir pointed at the royal pavilion, "Isn't that your brother?" he asked.

Rani gawked when she saw Bhanu standing with Ashura sharing rasgulla with the emir's daughter. "What's he doing up there!?"

With the fanfare finished, Ashura licks her fingers and waves goodbye to Bhanu. The ceremony began with Ashura greeting the people and performing the sacred rituals dedicating the day to the Monkey Lord. Bhanu saw his sister and worked his way over to her. Rani looked at her brother with surprise, "How did you end up on stage with Lady Ashura?"

Bhanu grins mischievously, "Should have gone with me to buy some sweets, sis. You would have gotten to spend the whole day with the lady. She enjoys rasgulla as much as I do."

Rani stomped her foot in frustration and felt it hit something other than ground. Yamir yelped and started hopping around clutching his foot. The ceremony stopped and the crowd turned around to see what the commotion was about. It didn't take long to see what was going on and who was responsible. Poor Rani's beet red face pointed her out as the culprit and Bhanu laughing at his sister and cousin only confirmed it. How was she ever going to live down this festival of follies?





CULTURE

The population in the region is primarily composed of descendants from the Indus Valley region on Terra. In the period after Greater Samarkand, the Indus valley had a cultural resurgence and interest in the culture of their ancestors and many of aspects of Indian culture found a renaissance. From these roots, the shajhalin of Gadiz have developed a rich and unique cultural identity. Over the centuries, the people of Gadiz have been exposed to the culture of the rest of the ESE and have taken on similar characteristics, but at their core the shajhalin are followers of their ancestor's religion and social values.

THUGEES

In the Gadiz region, the most fanatic followers of Kali devote themselves to the Thugee movement. These fanatics train themselves in the art of killing. They are particularly known for their love of strangulation, though they do not limit themselves to this form of killing. The Thugee movement on Terra Nova shares little with the historical Thugees from the mid to late second millennium. There are some things they do share though. The organization is used to assassinate political targets for religious purposes. Both groups venerate Kali, a Hindu god of death. The Gadiz Thugee movement has its own set of rituals and traditions that grew from the teachings of Hamil Indarez, a prolific prophet of Kali that arrived with the original colonists in the region. Interestingly, Indarez predicted the fall of the Consortium, the crash of the Eastern Sun, and the arrival of Batiste (though he called him Lord Shiva and his son). The most significant prophecy of recent times is related to Ocavian. His cycle of birth was predicted as well as his resemblance to Batiste. Indarez mentions that even those not of the faith will recognize his divinity and follow the blood soaked hands. All will fear him. Many of the prophecies make little sense and are regarded as little more than ramblings of a madman. The Indarez Prophecies have been studied by anthropologists in the past, but have never been fully recorded. The prophecies have never been revealed in their entirety and there are rumored to be dangerous secret prophecies guarded by the fanatical Thugees.

RELIGION

The NeoHindu movement was similar to the late twentieth century of the second millennium Wiccan movement. People made assumptions about a nearly extinct culture. Those assumptions turned into a new type of culture that sought to emulate the ancient culture. When the Consortium was offering immigration to a new planet in exchange for work, the dwindling number of people still following the NeoHindu religion wanted to have a place to grow without prejudice and without external influences. Their culture continues to this day though it has evolved in the past millennium. Batiste Paolo gained an air of divinity after his death and was regarded as the living embodiment of Lord Shiva. As such the descendants of Batiste are regarded as descendants of a god. This belief system has kept the Paolo family in power for centuries, though it had been slowly eroding to due to the family's long absences. Isilla nearly destroyed the relationship after the attempted Thugee assassination attempt, but the birth of Ocavian was heralded as a momentous event. The priests of Kali the destroyer claimed that Ocavian was Batiste reborn, but this time he was born as the god of death. They swore fealty to Ocavian at his birth. The very Thugees that had tried to kill Isilla now pledged their lives to one of her children. The event unsettled the woman, but she saw advantage in making peace with the NeoHindus. Since that time, the NeoHindu movement has seen a new resurgence. There are four festivals held each cycle to celebrate the changing of the seasons. These festivals are highly religious in nature and revolve around the concepts of rebirth and death. Various temples hold other festivals related to their patron deity. One of the more popular festivals is dedicated to Hanuman, the King of the Apes. Regarded as the zenith of strength, Hanuman requires his followers to follow in his path. At the festival of Hanuman, worshippers compete in feats of strength. The people enjoy watching burly participants wrestling or caber tossing.

FAMILY

Much like the rest of the ESE, the Gadiz shajhalin are very concerned with the family. The typical family unit in the area is composed of all of the extended matrilineal family called aynas. These family groups are usually tied to a particular temple, which presides over all of the important functions such as marriage, birth, and coming of age ceremonies. Typically, shajhalin in Gadiz have their marriages arranged by the matriarch of the ayuna and the marriages generally occur within an ayuna. Very seldom do marriages occur out of the extended family, but when it does it is considered an honor for the man as he is effectively being adopted into a new ayuna.

Solicitor families are much smaller than a typical shajhalin family group, but the intermarriage between all of the solicitor families means that in most cases a solicitor is related in some way to each other. The exception to this is the new blood solicitors, who were brought in from outside of the league during Isilla's coup. At the time, Isilla needed an efficient way to dispose of her nieces and nephews, but didn't want to execute them. She found a solution by marrying them to skilled individuals in exchange for their help in rebuilding her emirate. These families have kept their bloodline pure of the lesser solicitors and generally marry amongst their group, though in recent cycles this trend has shifted somewhat as both solicitor groups have been under pressure to adapt to the new rulers. There is an irony that both Ocavian and Lucilla are descendants of a solicitor and an emir. If the solicitors were not so afraid of Ocavian, many of them would openly criticize the legitimacy of the emir, but the Sunites have officially sanctioned the line. The new blood solicitors were very interested in the possibility of usurping Ocavian during the first cycle he had been named as emir, but the string of brutal executions before any plots could be put in place crushed any hope of those ambitions.



The emir's family is very small as of this moment as Ocavian Paolo executed all but two of his kin. Of the survivors, Ocavian married his own full blooded sister and gave his half sister, Vera, to the leader of his Bloodhand cult, Heinrich Pulo. Among all of Ocavian's children, only two of them are officially recognized as potential heirs. Ashura, his daughter by Lucilla, is the most likely candidate to succeed in her father's footsteps. His son by Adina Veno is also considered an heir, but Sullust is genuinely despised by Ocavian and the emir has promised his son a slow painful death one day. As punishment for some unknown transgression, Ocavian executed Sullust's lovers and children three cycles ago. The general consensus is that Ocavian discovered a plot against Ashura by Sullust and Adina. Needless to say, this brutal punishment only added to Ocavian's already infamous reputation.

FOOD

The food of Gadiz has its roots in Indian cuisine and relies heavily on curries, vegetables, and breads. With the closeness to Lake Vihar and the heavy amount of fishing, porcine salmon and mugmort fish are popular ingredients as well. Johar and bampfa (a type of grain similar to rice) are also staples of shajhalin diet. Most of their food is served on large pieces of flat bread which absorbs the curry and makes for a delicious conclusion to a meal. Yogurt and cheeses from goats in Gadiz also factor heavily into the diets of locals. Solicitors and the emirate households enjoy lamb and goat dishes in addition to the common fare.

The people of the region have a passion for their cawfee as well. The locally grown Serpentine cawfee is a darker product than the variety found in Reunion. Many Terra Novans enjoy the bitter tasting cawfee, but to many it's an acquired taste. The locals prepare it with goat's milk or yogurt to lessen the bitterness, but they are also known for a type of sweet liquor made from darker cawfee. Sumuz is popular in the ESE and some parts of the Badlands. Surprisingly some people add the cawfee liquor to their regular cawfee instead of cream.

CLOTHING

Much like the rest of the ESE, the popular fabric is silk. Shajhalin and Emir alike wear silks though the quality of the cloth is drastically different by caste. Commoner silks are rough and simple in appearance; whereas, the emirate caste wears nearly sheer silks to emphasize their figures. In addition to silks, the local production of wool provides an extra type of fabric for consumption. These fabrics are popular in the mountainous communities and in the town of Gadiz, where temperatures can be much cooler than the rest of the Interior. The wool is popular in the Southern Republic and in the Northern leagues, especially in places like Ankara or Pioneer. Gadiz wool is also used in cold weather uniforms for the MILICIA and the SRA as the out shell of their dress uniforms.

Regardless of the type of fabric used in their day to day use, the citizens of Gadiz enjoy colorful clothing. Blues, yellows, reds, greens, and oranges are all seen in heavy use. The typical clothing is loose fitting robes or baggy pants with some sort of coat or vest for men and the women tend to wear long dresses with scarves among the shajhalin. The solicitors prefer less volume in their clothing and higher grade materials. Most of their clothing has intricate patterns or prints, and much of their clothing is imported from Port Oasis due to the ties Gadiz has with fashion houses in the Southern Republic. The emirs of Gadiz wear the best of silks, but as of lately they have kept the cloth plain. Both Lucilla and Ashura prefer blues and yellow silks with minimal accoutrements, and they have a number of skilled Shajhalin tailor in their employ under the watchful eye of Jean Fortier, a Republican fashion designer living in Gadiz. Fortier retired five cycles ago and was offered an estate in Gadiz and a small fortune to be the personal designer for the Emir's household.

FESTIVALS

Kali Purja (1 Autumn): A major celebration dedicated to Kali and a time of reflection for the ayunas as they remember and recount their ancestors stories. The festival is held all day and finally ends with spectacular fireworks in Mumbai.

Hanuman Jayanti (15 Spring- 16 Spring) Celebrated in Calcutta, this festival honors the Monkey God Hanuman and is considered to be the grandest celebration in Gadiz. The majority of the shajhalin populace descends on the small town of Calcutta and sets up a myriad of stalls selling a variety of foods and trinkets.

Shivaratri (15 Winter) A somber ritual involving meditation and the marking of three lines on the forehead from the ash of sanctified leaves. This day of rest is used to commune with the divine Shiva and is supposed to make the body and the spirit in tune with the gods.

Ganesha Chaturthi (1 Summer-5 Summer) Dedicated to Ganesh, the elephant god, this festival is held in all three towns for five whole days. For the first four days, the ayunas worship the idol of Ganesh and on the fifth day they bring their decorated Ganesh idols out on palanquins. There's dancing, music, and general festival activities as the idols are taken to the mouth of the Ganges and sent off into Lake Vihar. This act is said to take away all of the ill fortune a family had built up over the cycle.



SPORTING

There are a number of sports popular in the Gadiz region. There is a small gladiatorial school in the town of Gadiz that trains professional gladiators and sends them to Cimmaro cyclically. The successful gladiators are recruited into the emirate bodyguard unit or sometimes hired by the Raiders. Pack lizard fighting was introduced after the coup by members of the Raiders and has become incredibly popular over the cycles. Pack lizard fighting involves either a fight between two starved pack lizards or between a man and a pack lizard. There is a small arena just outside of the Raider base in Gadiz that hosts games on Sunday nights. Gambling is rampant and in competitions between man and beast, the human participant can walk away with substantial winnings if they survive the battle.

In Mumbai the popular sports include competitive swimming and the Vallamkali or the snake boat races. The races are held during the Kali Puja (1 Autumn) and are fiercely competitive. Each ayuna in Mumbai maintains a chundan vallam, or snake boat, which is over 42 meters long and has a crew of up to 140. The crews race these long boats across Lake Vihar and back which usually takes around sixteen hours. The winning boat is honored with a banquet at the Temple of Kali and the winner's ayuna is considered blessed for the cycle.

Calcutta has a long tradition of polo using great pack lizards as mounts. The dangerous sport almost always results in a number of casualties among the players every cycle, but the sport is wildly popular among the shajhalin and solicitors. Caber tossing and logger sports competitions are also popular in Calcutta. The large number of shajhalin employed by the lumber industry and the popularity of Hanuman's legendary strength makes both sports incredibly popular with the men of Calcutta. Among the logger sports competitions are the rapid sawing and axing competitions; tree climbing; and log rolling. Of all the log related competitions though, the caber toss is the king as it is considered the most masculine of the sports. Competitors go through a ritual of picking up and balancing a log traditionally 5 to 6 meters tall and weighing about 60 kilograms. The height of the act is to physically toss it as far as possible. Though this sport is part of the Festival of the Monkey God also known as Hanuman Jayanti (15 Spring), caber tossing is done year round.

The way that helps will not be the same; it changes according to the situation.

-Shunryu Suzuki

While it lacked the resources of Nazi Germany and the United States of America, the Empire of Japan was no less prolific when it came to find new applications for its military vehicles. The Oshimoi, or Walker, with its long arms and bird-like appearance, was a mechanical giant with endless potential. The most widespread model, the Shiki, served as the basis for a number of specialised walkers, including the amphibious Oni and the aptly named Samurai. Most of the variants in this article were built in small numbers. As such, only one in ten oshimoi was a specialised walker.

Japanese Vehicle Nomenclature

Japan's vehicle numbering system was based upon traditional dates related to the foundation of the modern Japanese state, reckoned at approximately 2,586 years as of 1926. Japanese weapons of all types were classified based upon this new system, using the last two digits of the four digit year. Thus, a vehicle, weapon, even a helmet design produced in 1926 would be classified as a 'Type 86' so-and-so. Weapons designed before 1926, such as the Type 38 Arisaka Rifle, which was developed in year 38 of the reign of the Meiji Emperor, did not use this terminology.

In the same way that Western tanks were often numbered in order of development, Japanese vehicles were often classed using the Japanese alphabet:

The Japanese alphabet is as follows:

I(Yi) Ro Ha Ni Ho He To Chi Ri Nu Ru...

Type 97 Chi-Ha means "third design (ha), medium tank (chi), developed in 1937", regardless of the fact that it came rolling out of the assembly lines in 1938.

Given these facts, Japanese walkers could be renamed as follows:

JAPANESE WALKER NAMES

OFFICIAL NAME	REVISED NAME
Shiki 38	Type 98 Shiki
Shiki 41	Type 98 Shiiki-Ro
Tengu 41	Type 1 Tengu
Oni 42	Type 2 Oni
Ryujin 42	Type 2 Ryujin
Samurai 44	Type 3 Samurai

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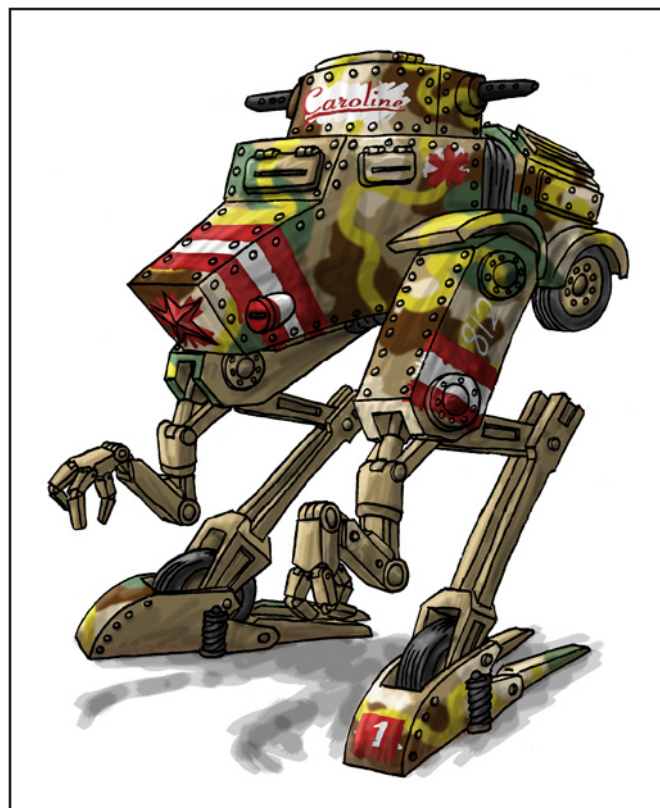
OSHIMOI VARIANTS

JOHN BELL

Captured Shiki in Canadian service, December 1941

The Gear Krieg tactical rulebook refers to the captured oshimoi (named Vivian, Caroline and Jaqueline) at the Battle of Hong Kong (p.28). The location of the battles the walkers were involved in (Causeway Bay, Sanatorium Gap, Wanchai) corresponds with those of the Winnipeg Rifles. However, the question remains as to how two under trained infantry battalions lacking their regimental vehicles (all vehicles destined for the Winnipeg Rifles and the Royal Rifles of Canada were diverted to Manila and never reached Hong Kong) managed to field their own section of highly sophisticated vehicles. Given that this is an alternate universe, let us imagine that another unit was present and was responsible for the walkers. What if members of the Governor General's Horse Guard, being one of the few Canadian regiments to train with walkers, decided to volunteer their services upon hearing prime minister William Lyon McKenzie King's announcement to send troops to bolster Hong Kong in autumn 1941. This small group, dubbed "the Governor General's Gearhead Guards", would have managed to bring their outdated Cavalier I walkers with them.

Once on Hong Kong Island, the captured walkers would have been quickly repainted with Canadian insignias to minimize friendly fire incidents.



John Bell: Captured Shiki in Canadian Service, December 1941

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GEAR KRIEG OSHIMOI VARIANTS

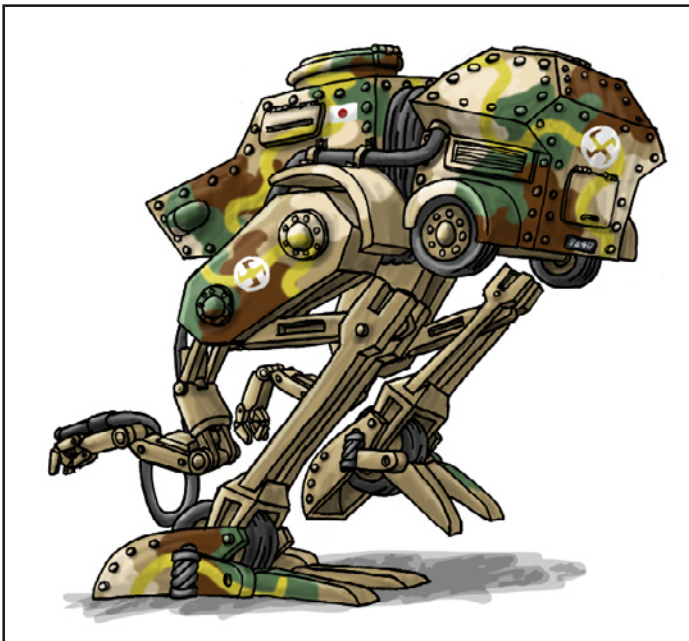
Shiki-Ho 42 -- Mortar Shiki

The spree of invasions of December 1941 throughout South-East Asia (Malaya, Burma, Borneo, and the Philippines, among others) took place in jungle-covered lands. While the Japanese emulated the blitzkrieg tactics of the Germans in the West, the denser terrain was unsuitable for tanks and heavier artillery pieces. Encounters with the Allied light walkers during these campaigns offered an ingenious solution: the open-topped M11s & Cavaliers, while cramped, did have enough space to set up a mortar inside the cockpit. Calls came from troops clamouring for a heavily armed walker to assist them in jungle fighting, but they would have to wait until the Allied South Pacific campaigns to see such machines.

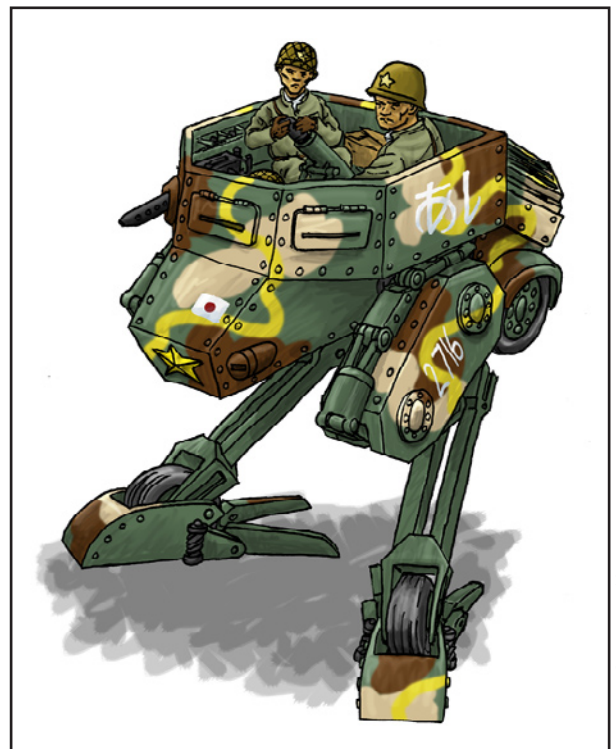
In the end, the venerable Shiki was used as the basis of these conversions. The turret was removed and the cockpit was expanded to allow room for a mortar and another crewman. A Type 97 machine-gun was installed to the right of the driver. The overall appearance of the walker was somewhat similar to an American M11, and caused a number of recorded incidents of friendly fire.

Shinigami 42 -- Flame-Thrower Shiki

Developed in 1942, the Shinigami was the IJA equivalent of the IJN's Ryujin 42, and followed in the tracks of the SS-Ki armoured engineering vehicle and the Type 97 Chi-Ha flamethrower variant. The modifications consisted of an armoured fuel tank was built over the engine, and a hose connecting the fuel tank to a nozzle mounted on the hand of one of the manipulator arms. The turret was removed to keep the weight down. Like most Shiki variants, it was fielded in limited numbers, but served its task to the full extent of its capabilities. Its rare appearances on the battlefield likened it to a walking god of death.



John Bell: Shiki-Ho 42



John Bell: Shinigami 42

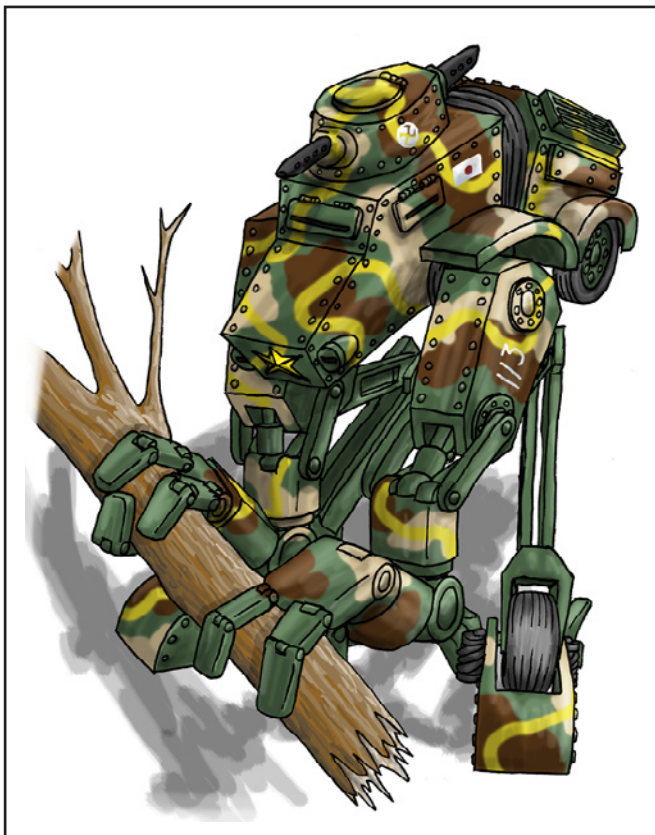
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GEAR KRIEG OSHIMOI VARIANTS

Bastu-Ha 41 (“Cutting Grasping”) -- Lumberjack Shiki

In 1941, the Japanese started using modified Type 97 medium tanks to clear jungles. Known as the “Ho-K” (possibly short for kikori, “lumberjack”), this tank had its turret removed and sported a gigantic plough-shaped blade at the front. The Ho-K was originally meant to be used with another tracked vehicle, known as the lumber sweeper “Brasso Ki”*, which would pick up fallen timber. However, given the relative success and availability of the walkers and of their obvious anthropomorphic appearance, it was decided that these machines would assist the Ho-K. Early tests showed that the Shiki’s arms struggled with lifting a ten meter-tall tree. New stronger arms were quickly designed based on concepts of the PanzerKampfer VI Donner that Dr. Ferdinand Porsche was working on. While comparable to the Soviet “Artilleria Tovarisch” (Artillery Mate), the arms had a tendency to overheat the engine.

*This is what it’s known as in English references, but the symbols (“Cutting & Sweeping machine”) sound like “Bastu-So Ki”. It’s quite possible that the term was corrupted.

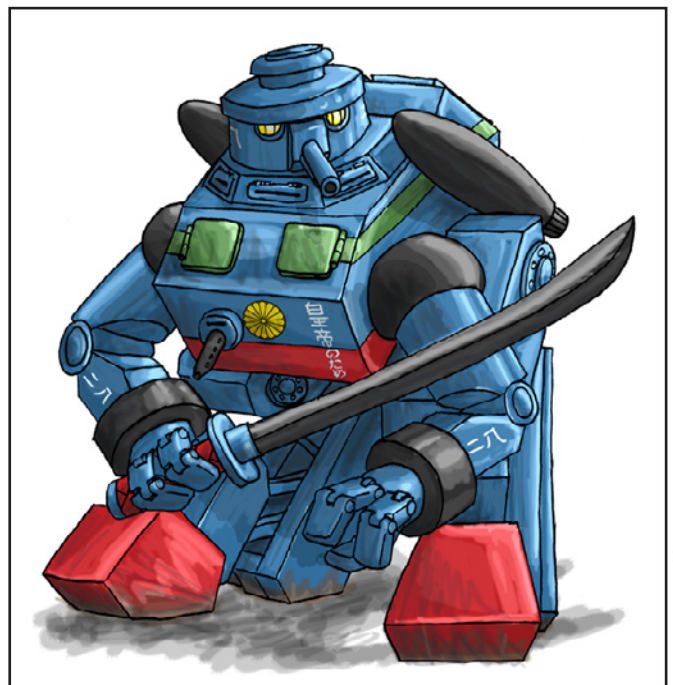


John Bell: Bastu-Ha 41

Type 28

This strange walker was based on the German PzKpf VII Uller. As the war was nearing its end, the high command put out orders for vehicles capable of serving as strong protectors of the Japanese homeland and of the Emperor himself. Aware of the German super-walkers, they arranged for blueprints to be transferred via submarines. The high command greedily looked over the blueprints, and then heavily modified the design to their specifications. The secondary movement system was removed; the armour was simplified to a box shape, a Type 97 Chi-Ha turret was added as well as a pair of rockets to enable limited flight. The arms were designed to incorporate the best features from the Uller, the Shiki-K, and the Longstreet Artillery Mate.

However, the poor state of Japanese industries, due to heavy Allied bombing, prevented the large-scale manufacture of the model. One model is speculated to have survived the war. However, despite the hundreds of eyewitnesses who claim to have spotted it in latter years committing acts of vigilantism, there is no concrete evidence to back this up.



John Bell: Type 28

"Any landing you can walk away from is a good landing!"
 -- Anonymous

*Karaq Wastes, Badlands
 20 Kilometers west of Mol Oasis Tower
 20 August, 1937*

Ayanah made her way through the burning remains of the downed cargo plane towards the first large Gear. The Gear itself was charred and smoking, but appeared to be intact. Ayanah was taken aback by it's massive size, and while she had seen Gears like this one, she had never been this close to one before. When she got to the Gear's side, she held out her gloved hand and touched the metal skin, feeling the heat through the tough leather. It was uncomfortably hot, but no so hot as to burn her, so she quickly removed her desert cloak, rifle and survival pack and placed them away from the Gear so they wouldn't impede her climb up. After taking a deep breath, she clambered onto the arm and began looking for handholds that would allow her to get to the chest. Spying a good location, she leapt from the arm to the chest, pulling herself up onto the front of the massive Gear. The first thing she noticed was that the Gear's hatch wasn't entirely shut, so she drew her pistol and prised the hatch open with her boot. Pistol at the ready, she leaned over to look into the crew compartment. Inside was a pilot wearing a PRDF pilot's suit, unconscious. Ayanah wondered why the pilot wouldn't be wearing either his gloves or his helmet, and a quick look around the cockpit confirmed that they weren't in the Gear at all. Still, he clearly wasn't a rover and certainly not a threat to her, so she holstered her pistol and gently climbed into the cockpit. She checked the pilot's pulse first, which seemed strong before moving on to attempting to revive him. When she couldn't wake him, she unbuckled his safety harness and began dragging him to safety.

After dragging him back to her barnaby, she set up a small tent to keep both of them sheltered from the oppressive badlands sun while she examined him. Now that she wasn't dragging him out of a Gear and across the desert sands, she finally got a good look at him. Ayanah thought he was attractive, in a rugged sort of way. His dark hair, trimmed goatee, and hard lines of his face lent him a dark, brooding air, when conscious she imagined. But now was not the time for idle musings. She needed to get to work.

The first thing she did was to check his pockets for some kind of identification. Inside his vest pocket she found a datachip and an old, worn photograph. In the picture are what Ayanah assumed to be the soldier, albeit much younger, and a young woman appearing to be very close and very happy together.

She quickly replaced both the chip and the picture inside his vest and continued searching. Eventually, she found a military ID card, stamped with the logo of the PRDF.

"Tiber M. Stahl, Captain, Peace River Defense Force," Ayanah read aloud before looking down at the unconscious pilot. "Well, Captain, we'd better make sure you're all in one piece before I try and move you any more." She began feeling his extremities, checking for any breaks or dislocations. Not finding any, she continued to make sure he was well enough to wake up. When finally confident he was capable of moving on his own, or at least being conscious, she reached into her pack and pulled out a small vial of smelling salts. She wafted the vial under his nose and was rewarded moments later when she saw his eyelids flutter open.

.....

Tiber jerked awake, an ammonia smell filling his nose as he tried to bolt upright. A hand restrained him from getting up, and slowly pushed back down as he noticed he wasn't in the Cataphract anymore. It looked like the interior of a small tent, but he couldn't be sure because the room refused to stay still.

"Easy, Captain," a voice said as the hand continued to gently push him back down, "It's all right now, you're safe." Deciding the voice probably meant him no harm, and since the room was still tumbling like a hopper in a sandstorm, he closed his eyes and laid back down.

"Where am I?" he asked between deep breaths as he tried to control his dizziness.

"You're about twenty clicks south of the Mol Oasis Tower. Your plane crashed and I managed to pull you out of the Gear you were in. Is there anybody in the other two Gears?"

"No, I don't think so. It was just the flight crew and myself, and I barely made it to the Gear before it crashed. Did you find any other survivors?" The dizziness was beginning to clear up, allowing him to at least focus on the voice.

"No, the plane's pretty much scattered over a good fifty meters of burning sand. Nobody could have survived that unless they were in one of the Gears. Do you know what brought you down?" the voice replied, somber. Tiber noticed the voice sounded female, but with an accent he couldn't recognize.

"No," Tiber shook his head, "I was going over some files when the plane lurched and next thing I know, we're going down. If we can find the flight data recorder, we'll be able to figure out at least if it was a mechanical failure or outside forces.

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HARLEQUIN KNIGHTS – CHAPTER 2

By the way, what's your name?" Tiber opened his eyes again to the interior of a dark-colored tent, fortunately no longer spinning, and turned his head towards the voice. As expected, it was a woman, her body hid beneath the desert cloak and robes. Her brown hair hung around her face in light curls, framing it and causing her grey eyes to stand out even further, giving her an almost ethereal look. Adding to that look were the thin, ivy-like tattoo patterns that ran across her forehead and down to her upper cheekbone. There were also jewels embedded in her forehead, marking her as most likely to be an Easterner. She smiled when she saw his gaze find her face, an expression that seemed to have a constant sadness to it.

"Hello, captain," she said, "My name is Ayanah. How are you feeling?" Tiber smiled back and replied, "Like I've been rattling around like a hopper in a sandstorm, but I think I'm-" he stopped mid-sentence and drew in a quick breath of air. When he tried to sit up, his ribs began to burn with pain, and he gently lowered himself back down to the ground. Ayanah moved over to his side, a concerned look on her face.

"Where does it hurt, captain?" she asked.

"Ribs," Tiber managed to get out between gritted teeth, "Did you check for breaks?"

"Yes, as soon as I got you here I checked for broken bones. I didn't feel any broken ribs,"

"Probably just bruised then. I'll need-"

"Bandages and padding, plus two to three weeks rest," she finished. Seeing Tiber's stunned look, she replied, "I know a lot about treating injuries, trust me," Tiber couldn't help but notice the sad smile return to her face.

"All right, then. Do you have bandages and padding?" When she nodded, Tiber asked, "What about a radio?"

"No, the closest radio's at Mol Oasis."

"Not good enough," Tiber said as he forced himself back into a sitting position, "I need to get in touch with Mol Oasis so they can send some support out here to retrieve the Gears, or what's left of them."

"Can't you do that at the Oasis itself?"

"I'm not leaving here. I've got to make sure the Gears don't fall into the wrong hands, no matter what happens."

"Are you crazy? You're just one man! Two, if you can convince me to stick around, which isn't going to stop a whole lot of people after military hardware. What makes you think you can hold them off?" Tiber paused, then gingerly reached into his pocket, pulled out a datachip, and held it out in front of Ayanah. "This."

.....

"Just for the record, I think this is a really bad idea!" Ayanah said as she followed Tiber out of the tent and into the hot desert sun. Tiber, stripped to the waist save for the padding and bandages, replied, "Your objection is noted. Now, do you want to help me look?"

"What are we looking for?"

"The Gear with the crest on it's head." Tiber replied, scanning the burning wreckage.

"All right, what's so important about that one?"

"It's the command variant. I was supposed to pilot it out of Mol Oasis to my unit when we got there, so I've got the access codes to it. More importantly, it's got an improved communications suite that might allow us to contact Mol Oasis and get them to send help."

"Oh, in that case- wait, is that it?" Ayanah asked as she pointed to a Gear laying chest-down in the sand. Tiber saw the Cataphract did have the distinctive crest marking it out as a Lord variant and grinned before heading out towards the hulking machine. He only hoped it was still in working condition.

When they reached the Cataphract, they saw it was in rough shape, but intact. Tiber worked his way under the head to the Gear's hatch and entered the code to unlock it. As soon as the hatch popped open a dark shape fell out of the cockpit and onto the ground.

"Ah, excellent," Tiber said as he dragged his duffel bag out from under the Gear and handed to Ayanah. "Watch that for me, please."

"Sure, but where are you going?" she asked as he began climbing up into the cockpit.

"I'm going to make a call. Be right back," he called out as he shut the hatch.

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Now enclosed in the Gear, he got himself into as comfortable a position as possible before keying in the access codes that would bring the Cataphract on-line. Once the access codes had been entered, Tiber mentally crossed his fingers before beginning the start-up sequence. His luck held out as lights across his instrument panel lit up, signalling that he had at least battery power. Tiber decided it should be enough to contact Mol Oasis, so he opened up the emergency channel for PRDF and POC forces and began broadcasting.

“Mol Oasis Tower this is Captain Tiber Stahl, PRDF Seventh Regiment, requesting immediate rescue and salvage crews twenty kilometers south of your location, do you copy? Repeat, this is Captain Tiber Stahl calling Mol Oasis Tower, do you copy?” Tiber waited several seconds, listening only to the faint pop and crackle of the emergency channel before another voice came on.

“We read you Captain Stahl, this is Mol Oasis. Are you a survivor of that transport crash?”

“Affirmative. Requesting salvage and rescue crews ASAP, preferably under escort.”

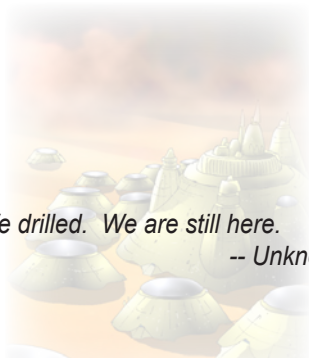
“Already on it, captain. Sergeant Redgrave left with a rescue and salvage team several minutes ago and they should be on your position in under an hour. Sit tight.”

“Copy that, Mol Tower. Stahl out.” Tiber sighed in relief and shut down both the comms and the Gear before popping the hatch. No sooner than the hatch had opened, Ayanah stuck her head inside and said, “I think we’ve got a problem.”



The lands of the desert.

We came. We saw. We drilled. We are still here.
-- Unknown



Looking over the Heavy Gear map, I noted a few places that were more of a Micro League than an Independent City State. New Coalition (NuCoal) being the largest and more visible of them, other Micro League states include Khayr ad-Din (KA) and Erech & Nineveh (ENCS). Micro Leagues consist of a small grouping of Oasis Towers or Homesteads for mutual protection.

I dabbled and came up with the following rules for ENCS (which was the easiest to do).

ERECH & NINEVEH CITY STATES (ENCS)

City Guards: In general, the ENCS uses the Leagueless rules for forming a regiment, except it doesn't use or follow the Special Rules that the Leagueless use (Ill equipped, Individual Styles, Independent Operators, Mercenaries, Command, Veteran, & Specialist Units). Instead the following rules are the only ones that apply:

Chasseur Gears: All compulsory Trooper Gears must be a Stripped-Down Jager or Hunter. All Stripped Down Jager or Hunter and must swap their Ground movement for Hover Movement 9/19 -4/0/+1 and Ram Plates (F) for +5TV.

Pride and Disgrace: When using Morale, Combat Groups have their Morale threshold increased by 1 point; if any Combat Group becomes Demoralized they gain an additional Morale Token. When facing PAK or CEF forces all Combat groups can remove an additional Morale Token when using a Command Point.

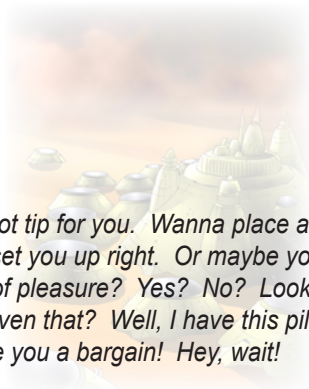
Artillery Gears: One Support Combat Group per 1000TV can have all of it's gears swap or add one of the following; any Size 6 Gear (not Chasseur) can be given a LFM (F, no reloads, Stabilizer) for +20TV, any Size 7 Gear can swap their LGM or their HGM to a MFM (F, no reloads) for +20TV or for +5TV for HGM or added on for +30TV

Elite Guard: Counts as a Standard Combat Group Formation except the requirement for Trooper gears becomes Trooper/ Elite Gears and the combat group counts as an Elite Choice. All Elite Guard can increase their Attack and Defence or Infantry skill by +1 for +10TV and/or can have SG (F, limited ammo 6) for +5TV or VB if infantry for +5TV.

Command, Veteran and Honour Guards: The Army Commander can pay +30TV and increase his Attack, Defence, and Leadership by +1. For Infantry squads this costs +20TV to increase their infantry skill by +1. The Commander and his Honour Guard can have SG (F, limited ammo 6) for +5TV. Infantry can have VB for +5TV. Any Honour Guard or Veteran can have Field Armour for +10TV (Sturdy Box) on any of the following: Hunter, Jager, Warrior, Sidewinder, Tiger/Sabertooth, Cheetah, Iguana, Black Mamba, Jaguar or Warrior IV.



Derricks and Industry



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KHAYR AD-DIN ARMY

JONATHAN HOULE

Hey you. Yeah you. I got a hot tip for you. Wanna place a bet on tonight's matchups? I will set you up right. Or maybe you're interested in a different kind of pleasure? Yes? No? Looking to have someone offed? Not even that? Well, I have this pile of metal to sell... I will give you a bargain! Hey, wait!

This army is built using the Leagueless rules with these exceptions:

Added Gears: Add the Dartjager to the trooper list for +40 TV and the Skirmisher to the Elite list for +45 TV.

Soldier Types: There are three type of soldiers in this army: Duelists, Experienced Mercenary Groups and Freelance.

Morale: If playing with morale, every group that contains a freelance unit automatically have variable morale. Roll separately for each combat group. Only the combat group leader, who is a duelist, is unaffected by it.

Duelists: The best of the best of the best and are the trump card of this army. They may only be a Gear pilot. This type of soldier is automatically a veteran and must upgrade his attack and defense skills to 3 for + 10TV. Also, they must have a minimal value of 70 TV before any skill upgrades. If playing with morale, they must pay +10 TV for an iron will, which means they ignore all morale tests and may never become broken or demoralized. They cannot take the Ill-Equipped modification.

The Experienced Mercenary Groups: These are normal soldiers and freelancers from all over the badlands that joined the army.

The Freelance: These are the militia, volunteer irregulars and wannabe duelists that make up the core of the army. They automatically drop their Attack and Defense scores to 1. Freelance units cannot be in any Elite Gear. If those troops are infantry, drop their infantry skills to 1 and they may only take Light Machine-Gun, Chain Gun or Anti-Gear Rifles as upgrades. Subtract 5 TV of the value of any troop you buy as freelance.

Army Building: When building your army, every unit is considered a Freelance or Mercenary except for the Combat Group Leader of every group who is a duelist. The only exception to this is the duelist combat group. This group follows the following chart for building purpose and counts as an auxiliary group for army building purpose:

Duelist Combat Group (4 to 6 duelist gears)

- 0-6 troopers
- 0-2 scout
- 0-2 support
- 0-2 Elite

Any Combat Group Leader can become the Army Commander. He must pay +40 TV to upgrade his Attack, Defense, Electronic Warfare and Leadership scores by +1.

Every gear in the army starts with Attack 2, Defense 2, Electronic Warfare 1. Group Leader start with a Leadership of 1.

VETERAN UPGRADES

Any Gear, not just the leaders, may upgrade their Leadership by 1 for +10 TV. This upgrade may be taken twice per gear. A duelist that is not a CGL with a leadership of 2 can designate target for coordinated fire and use CP.

Any Combat Group Leader may add a Trideo Link-Up (aux) for +5 TV. This works the same as a Satellite Uplink.

Any Gear with ECM or ECCM may have their EW increased by a further +1 (to 3) for +5 TV.

Any Gear may upgrade his DPG to a LAC (F, reloads) for +5 TV.

Any Gear may upgrade his Autocannon to a FGC (F, reloads) for +5 TV.

Any Gear may upgrade his LAC to a MAC (F, reloads) for +5 TV.

One Gear per combat group may swap his LRP for a EW pod with ECM(3) and ECCM(2) for +5 TV.

One Gear per combat group may swap his Autocannon for a RFB (F, reloads) for +5 TV.

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KHAYR AD-DIN ARMY

Any Gear may swap his LRP for an IRP for + 5TV. LRP/24 becomes IRP/20 (F, RoF 2, no reloads) and LRP/32 becomes IRP/30 (F, RoF 3, no reloads)

One Gear per combat group may swap his Autocannon and LRP for two LACs (F, reloads, linked) or his Autocannon and MRP for two MACs (F, reloads, linked). It costs +5 TV.

One Gear per combat group may swap his Autocannon and LRP for a Snub Cannon (F, limited Ammo 3) for +5 TV.

Any Gear may take field armor for +10 TV.

Any Gear can swap his LRP/MRP, Hand Grenades or Target Designator for one of the following, or pay +5 TV for it:

- Ram Plates (F)
- Sniper Systems (for one Autocannon)
- Reinforced Armour Front Rating 2.
- Backup Sensors
- Backup Comms

Any Gear may take the Improved Off-Road perk for +10 TV.

Any Gear may do one of the following:

- Upgrade his armor value by up to three points. The first one cost +5 TV and remove 1 Movement point. The second add a -1 penalty to all defense rolls. The last one cost +10 TV.
- Upgrade his walker or ground speed by one for +5 TV. He may upgrade a second time by either decreasing the armor value by one or remove one sturdy box. To determine Combat Speed, divide Top Speed by 2, rounded up.

Any Gear may take two of these upgrades:

- Two VibroBlades, VibroClaws (Acc+1, size+2), Vibrorapier, Chainsword, Vibrokatana (Southern model only), VibroAxe, Fighting Staff (two-handed, count as two melee weapons, Northern model only) or Spike Gun (limited ammo 6) for +5TV or swap his LRP for it.
- Heavy VibroSword (two-handed, must be size 7), Heavy Spike Gun or Shield(Sturdy Box) for +10TV or swap his LRP/MRP for it.
- Any Gear having two melee weapons can gain +1 to his melee defense rolls if he pays +5 TV. In this case, shield count as a melee weapon.

Any gear can get an Acrobatic Handling(aux) for +10 TV. This gives +1 to defense modifier when attacked from Point Blank range. This includes melee attack.

Any Gear can take a Fire-Control (except for Black Mamba, Jaguar, Sabertooth, Tiger, Warrior MkIV) for half the final TV cost of the gear. It must be bought after all upgrades.

Any gear can take Advanced Controls for +20 TV. This gives another action. A Gear still cannot use the same weapon during this turn with this action, he must still use a CP for that.



A hive of scum and villany.



From the rules monkey...

It has been a very busy couple of months, working on a host of new things. Here are some of our newest releases, including some of the new two packs. Enjoy!



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 #3.1: December 15th 2008

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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.