

Aurora



**The
Kampfer Couple**
Battle of France
Sweethearts

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE
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SHADES IN THE NIGHT

From the Editor...

Trust men and they will be true to you; treat them greatly and they will show themselves great.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Ahhh, the middle of the year has arrived. With the arrival of the longest (or shortest, depending on your hemisphere) day we mark a passage of time and head on into the next one. This happens in our games too, whether it be the single tactical combat (when half our forces are gone, when we've made first contact, when there's only 30 minutes left on the clock) or the long and involved RPG campaign (almost too numerous to list).

This just happened to me in a campaign I'm running – the current chapter/module has just completed, part three of four planned modules. As we take a break to play in another's game everyone took a deep breath and reflected on the world, their accomplishments, the questions remaining, and how they played. For me, as the GM, I took a look at how well I ran the game and at the group dynamics for the past couple of years. And I discovered something rather valuable. It deals with trust.

Now, trust in a game situation is something everyone, I think, takes pretty much as a given. At least insofar as the base level of, "I will abide by the rules and the dice, and I expect you to as well." Without this level of trust the quality of a game (and the game experience) is likely to suffer. However, there is another level of trust that, if lacking, also can dilute the quality of the game. I found it best described in a recent quote (paraphrased here) from an article by Chris Perkins on dndinsider: "We [the players] have trust [that the DM] will guide the game/adventure to a place that is awesome."

I take that to, at its root level, mean that the Player's trust the GM, and the GM equally trusts the Player's, to guide the adventure through twists, turns, ups, downs, and even sideways, to a place that ultimately is satisfying to all. The adventure and the shared journey and creation is key, and we trust that we are indeed all on that same path.

It is a sacred trust, and it needs to be generated 100% by the players and the GM alike, not "50% and I'll see if you fulfill your side of the bargain" (that I've not told you about, or what you're being judged on, or being scored by, or what I want – this is the importance of communication). When both sides are waiting for the other to "prove their worthiness of trust" then there's 0% trust and 0% ownership on both sides.

With that trust, a GM can throw curveballs at the party and not be decried as unfair. If something doesn't go the way the PCs anticipated they can take it as a setback or as something consistent within the (campaign) world, not the GM just trying to thwart something or be an ass.

With that trust the GM doesn't need to worry that the players will take actions that will derail the nature of the game world, disrupt each other, or launch an arms race lodged in loopholes in the rules.

With that trust, true communication can happen and anything that isn't working can be resolved. Desires and expectations can be clearly expressed and the crafting begins. It is not about who has the "power" in the relationship, as some might put it... GM vs Player. It is about the interplay between the world (GM) and the protagonists (players) and the journeys they travel on.

When trust is there it becomes a dance that lets the most fantastic times, adventures, missions, heroics, and even heroic defeats, happen. The kind you tell to your mates around the camp stove at Zulu Base 218 on night overwatch patrol.

Do you have some great gaming stories born out of group trust? Give us a shout out about them on the forum or on our Facebook page! The best could find their way into a future issue of Aurora.

A short(ish) issue for you this go around, but only in quantity not in quality. Four (!) awesome pieces of work by John Bell, great exploration of the tank technology from New Coalition, and a bonus! Crater Town was a product solicited by the Pod many moons ago and never saw the light of publication; the author has made it available to us here at Aurora for publication! It is a draft manuscript, so there are rough edges... which is just perfect for a hardy settlement in the middle of the badlands.

Welcome to issue 6.3 of your Silhouette Magazine.

Game on,

Oliver Bollmann
Aurora Magazine Editor

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OFFICIAL-DP9

"Official" Dream Pod 9 rules, updates and materials can be found in the Gear Up magazine, available at DP9's store on RPGnow.com.

HOME BREW RULES

All material inside Aurora is fan submitted and are not regarded as official and do not change the games or the DP9 game-universes as written in the books. Aurora material may not be used in tournament or other official play and may differ from current or future books. Any Aurora rules or material should only be used if all players agree upon their inclusion before play.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Brandon Keith Fero (thanatos_storm@hotmail.com) -- *New Coalition Tank Technology*

I can honestly say that Heavy Gear has provided me with many opportunities to write, and it is always a pleasure to do so. The universe created by the gentlemen at Dream Pod 9 provides a great deal of background to work with, and I hope to add to that with this installment. God bless!

Brian Laxson (b1laxson@yahoo.com) -- *Crater Town Part 1*

Brian Laxson is the author of the JC Ships of Fleet Jovian 1, CEGA 1 and the unpublished CEGA 2. Also the American section of the Gear Kreig Allies sourcebook and various HG designs including the dread Naga Long-Fang.

Jason Dickerson (JDDWolf@yahoo.com) -- *From the Pod*

Jason is the Line Editor for Heavy Gear and has been an advocate of all things Heavy Gear since the first edition came out. He is also the founder and President of the Save the Asp Society (S.A.S) on the DP9 Forums.

John Bell (jakarnilson@magma.ca) -- *Cover Illustration, Alfie's Tanners, Kraut Patrol & Jovian Koma*

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?

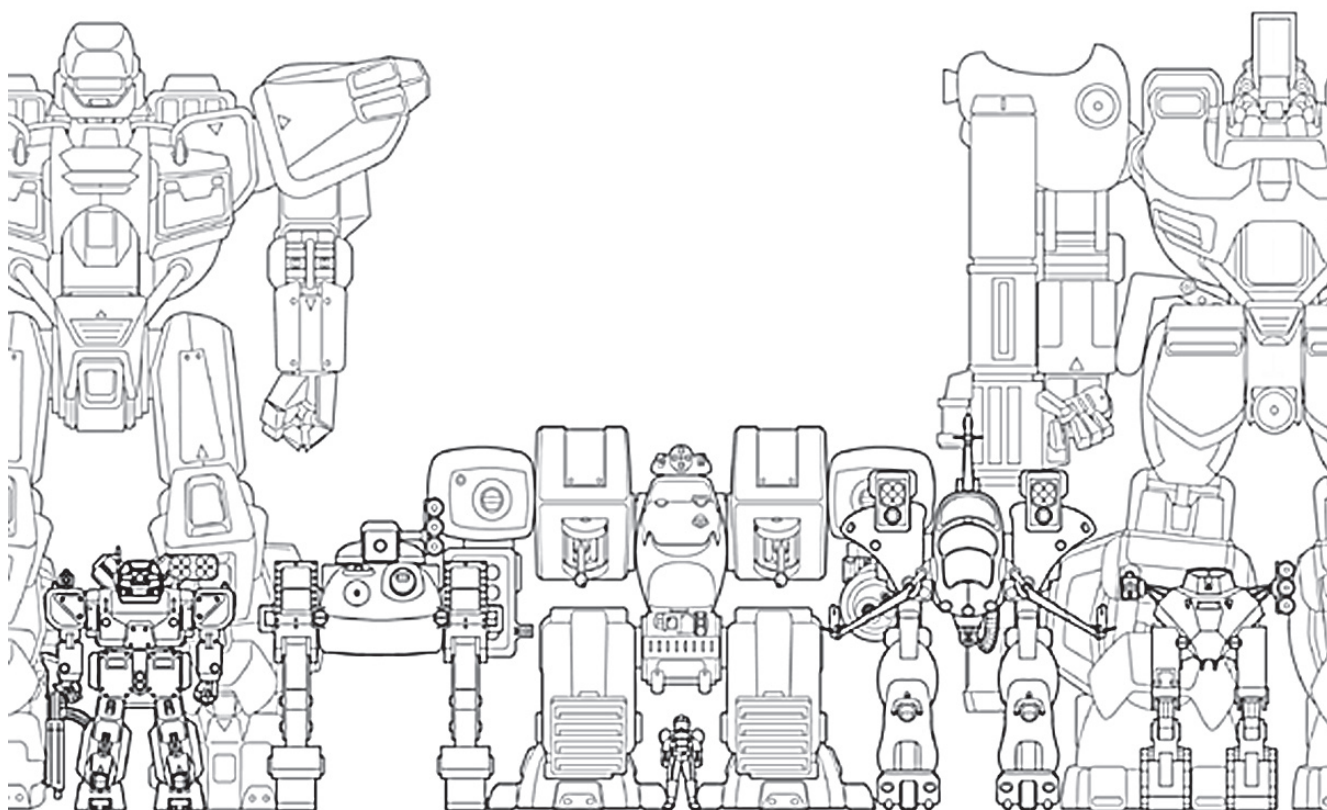
Oliver Bollmann (auroramag@gmail.com) -- *Editor*

It all started in a hobby store one day twenty odd years ago with an odd box containing something called Top Secret. Since then games have just become a big part of his life. He's been in love with the DP9 universes since the first HG release and began his direct involvement with the Pod crew a couple of years ago. He also runs a gaming imprint *Kannik Studios at rpgnow*:

http://rpg.drivethrustuff.com/index.php?manufacturers_id=291

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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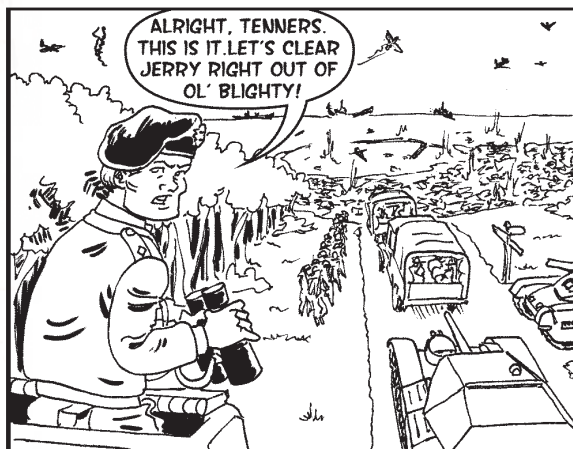
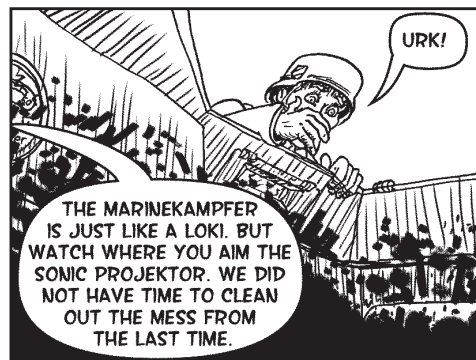
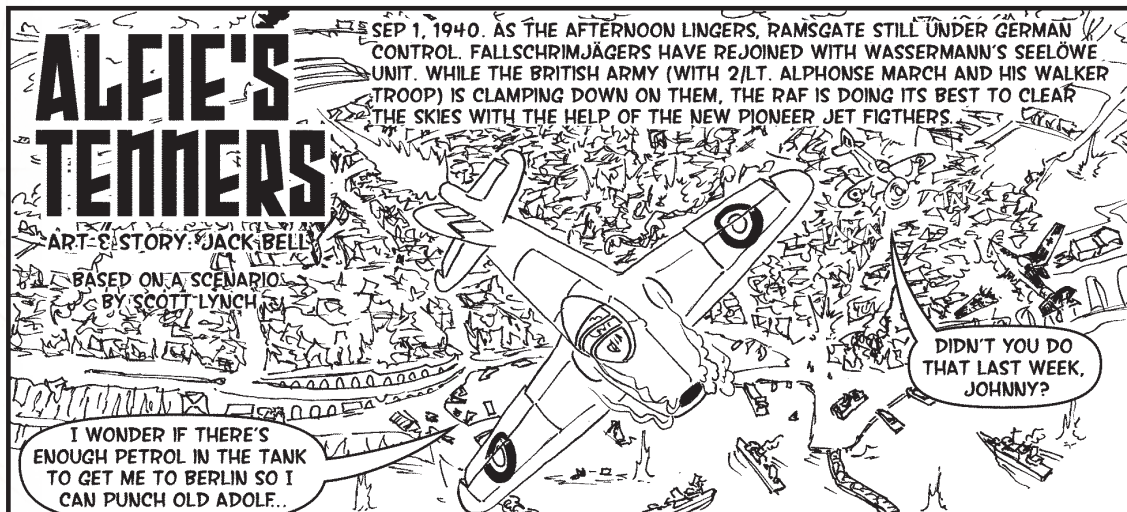
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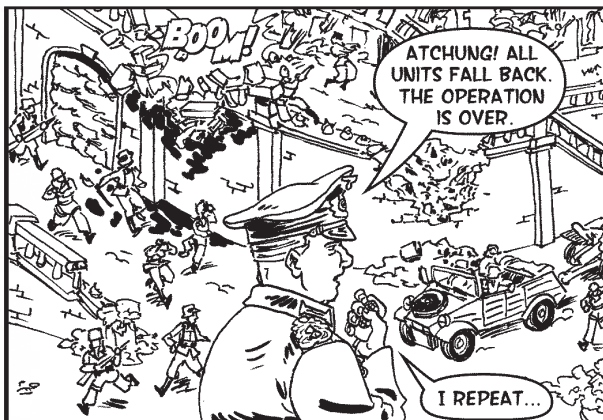
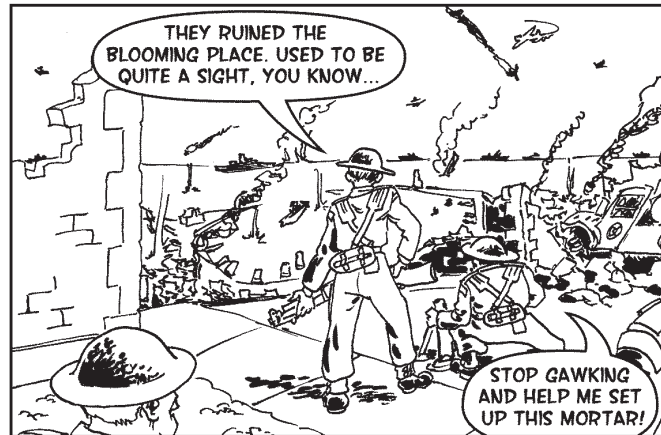
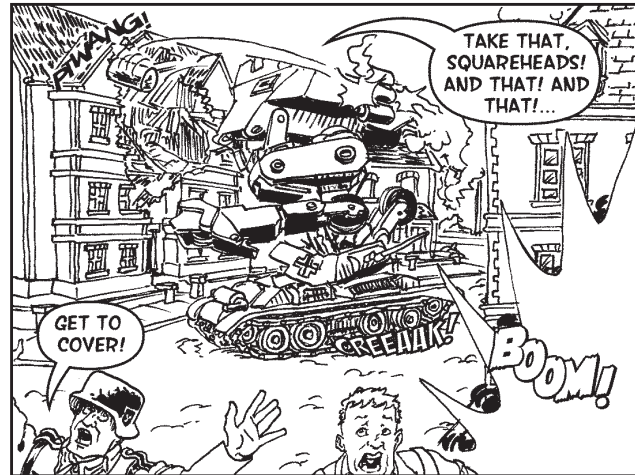
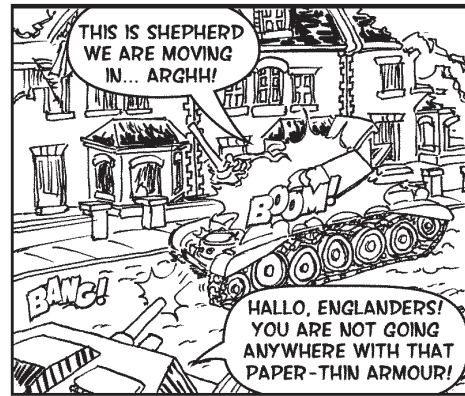
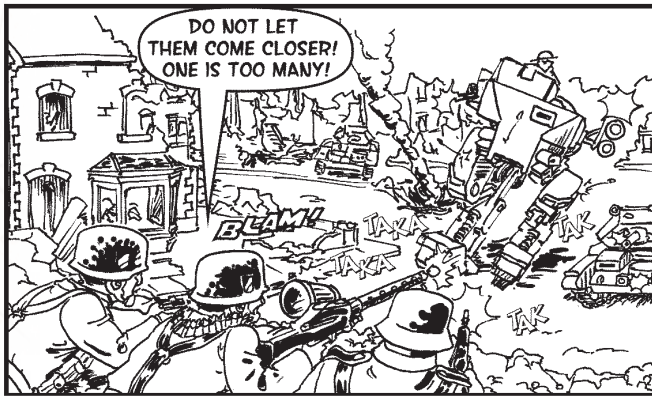
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JOHN BELL



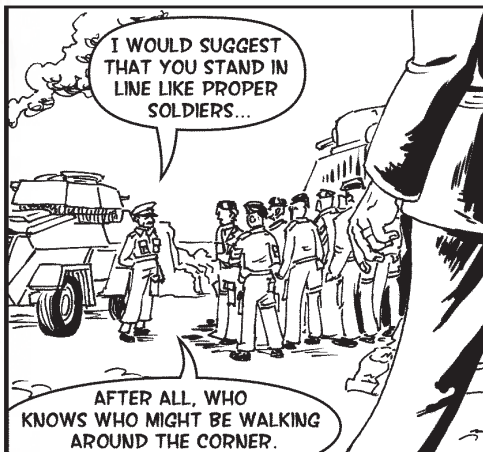
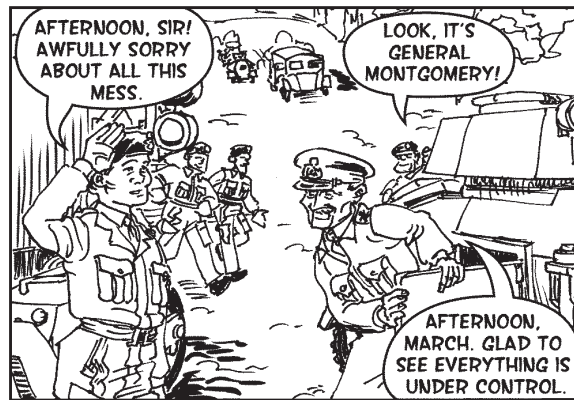
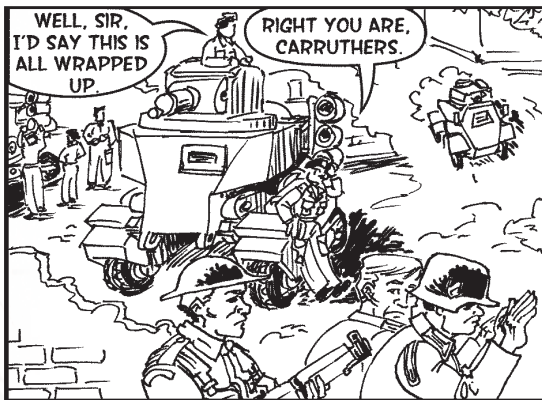
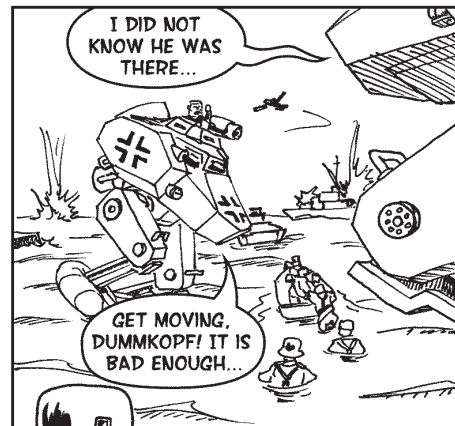
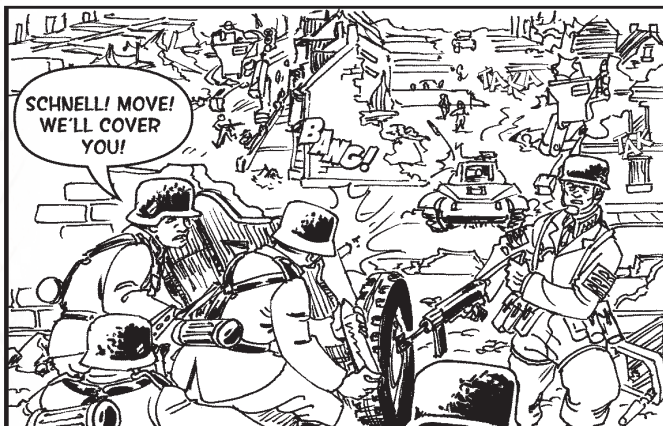
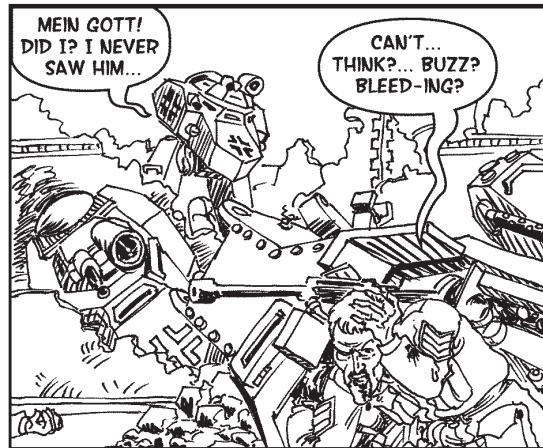
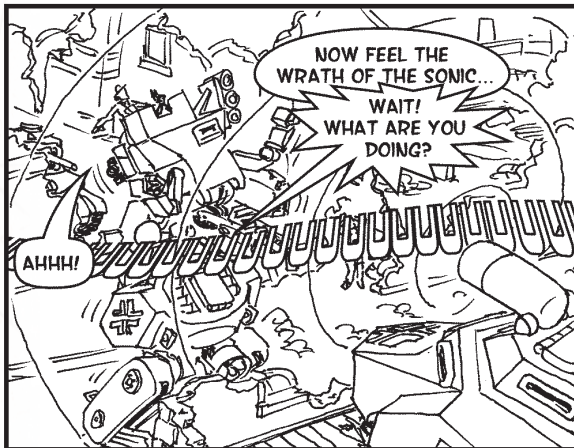
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ALFIE'S TENNERS



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ALFIE'S TENNERS



The New Coalition is a force unlike any other on Terra Nova. Using ideas, technologies and the expertise of their allies the Humanist Alliance, Port Arthur and various other city states, the New Coalition's military hardware are sights to behold.

NM-23CA-01 FUSILIER

The Fusilier is a hover/ground-effect armored fighting vehicle designed for scouting in force, rapid deployment and high-speed interdiction. The vehicle is manned by a crew of three; driver, gunner, and tank commander.

Driver

The driver sits in the hull, center-line and forward of the turret assembly. Three cameras in his hatch provide a 140-degree field of view directly forward of the tank, which are transmitted to a single wrap-around holoscreen located in front of the driver. The driver also has two rearward-facing cameras that provide him with a 120-degree view so he may back up without needing direction from the tank commander or gunner, helping them to focus on fighting the tank. All five cameras have daylight capability as well as low-light enhancement, or 'night-vision'. The driver controls the vehicle through a modified VTOL cockpit set-up; his right-hand control stick provides pitch and yaw to the Fusilier's movement system, while the left-hand control throttle providing both forward and rearward thrust. Setting the left-hand control at center-line will place the vehicle in stationary hover, but the driver is able to provide both yaw and pitch to the vehicle's fans and thrusters, in order to turn it and, if necessary, dip the vehicle to avoid incoming missiles and rockets. This job is simplified by the vehicle's neural net, which processes the information given to it by the sensors on board the Fusilier and can effect evasive maneuvers in an emergency situation where the vehicle is tagged by an enemy laser-guidance system and also warns the crew when an enemy laser rangefinder has been beamed over them.

The NNet processes topographical map-reading data and can provide the driver with a wire-frame diagram within his holoscreen, and can also beam information regarding possible cover and concealment, dangerous terrain, minefields, and even the paths of other friendly vehicles that are in communication with the Fusilier directly into the driver's Heads-Up Display, or HUD. The HUD can also display information regarding the tank's altitude, speed, heading, the main gun's orientation, along with cautions and warnings regarding mechanical and electronic malfunctions, although Fusilier drivers often opt out of this extra symbology and gain a 'feel' for the powerplant's

revolutions and the tank's velocity. Finally, the neural net has an auto-pilot setting for steering the Fusilier on its own, although the use of this auto-pilot is normally used when enemy contact is not expected and the tank is on prolonged patrols. In the event of electronic damage to the holoscreen or the viewing systems themselves, the cameras can be swapped out with periscopes to provide the driver with an unobstructed view to the front of the vehicle, obviously without the assistance of the neural net.

Gunner

The gunner sits on the left-hand side of the turret. His station is equipped with a single holoscreen in front of his station that provides him with information obtained through the Gunner's Primary Sight, or GPS, colloquially known as the 'doghouse', located in a small mount on the left-hand side of the turret directly forward of the gunner's hatch. The GPS contains a daylight sight as well as a thermal imaging system, both having magnification settings at 3x, 13x, and 25x power. The GPS is the same as that found on board the Voltiguer main battle tank, with similar sight symbology between the two vehicles that allows both to be repaired using the same sights, easing maintenance in the field. Higher magnification settings were deemed unnecessary by gunners and engineers alike due to the rapid movement of the vehicle in combat situations as well as the sensitivity of digitally-enhanced viewing equipment which would have been necessary to clear up high-magnification views at extreme distances. The doghouse also contains the Fusilier's laser rangefinder, which has an estimated maximum range of 10,000 meters +/- 10 meters. Standard engagement ranges for gunner's training courses generally run between 1,000-1,500 meters, although gunners often engage in 'knife fight' drills of less than 600 meters' distance to targets.

To the right of the doghouse and located directly above the main gun's mantle is the Fusilier's forward-facing active/passive ladar emitter/receiver. These sensors are more advanced than those found on the Voltiguer, but actively sweeping presents a danger to the Fusilier in that it produces significant emissions on passive sensors, thus eliminating any opportunity for surprise maneuvers. The gunner is equipped with the same control handstation as the one found in the Voltiguer main battle tank, another standardization of equipment that eases logistics and repairs; it also makes it easier for cross-training between units equipped with the different vehicles. The gunner has an auxiliary sight that is directly mounted into the mantle slaved to the main gun with a fixed 8x magnification power in the case of electronics failure with the gunner's primary sight. A ballistics computer is installed to the left side of the gunner in the event

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that the neural net is incapable of performing the calculations on its own, although this requires that the gunner maintain his knowledge of his weapon systems and the ballistics charts for both the main gun as well as for the tank's remaining weapon systems. A full cupola containing multiple periscopes provides an external view for rapid scanning of the vehicle's immediate surroundings, although neither the GAS sight nor the periscopes have any input provided by the neural net.

The main gun of the Fusilier is a 40mm autocannon in a stabilized mount with a bore evacuator located halfway down the length of the barrel. The fact that the breech and nearly a third of the autocannon's barrel is shrouded within the turret mantle gives the appearance that the bore evacuator is only down one-quarter the length of the barrel. The autocannon is also wrapped in a thermal sleeve meant to lessen the barrel's heat signature on enemy thermal imagery and Forward-Looking Infrared, or FLIR, sights. Both the gunner and tank commander are capable of using dials on their weapons' control panels to select the type of ammunition that is indexed and loaded into the 40mm cannon.

There are three types of ammunition used by the Fusilier. The first is an armor-piercing fin-stabilized discarding sabot (designator APFSDS-T), comprised of tungsten alloy. The second is a high explosive incendiary (HE-I) round for engaging lightly-armored vehicles and troops, and the third is a Pre-fragmented Programmable Proximity-fuse - or P3 - round, with five different programmable modes set to air-burst in the vicinity of a known target with a shower of tungsten shards. Standard payload includes 54 rounds of each type in ready belts located directly next to the breech of the main gun, with an additional 72 rounds of each type stowed. The main gun has an 'end-of-belt' stop that will cause the main gun to cease firing when there are 24 rounds in the individual type's belt, although either the gunner or tank commander can choose to override the stop and continue firing. This presents the gunner with additional loading time if ammunition in a belt is completely expended. The rounds are linked in clips of 6 apiece, and are clearly marked in their stowage bins to keep mix-ups from occurring while reloading. The ammunition belts and stowage bins are not separated from the turret compartment, increasing the threat that a round which penetrates the turret will result in a 'cook-off' of the ammunition and causing catastrophic damage to the tank. Another quirk comes with the autocannon being flipped upside-down in the turret so that the expended brass casings are ejected out of the turret mantle, up and over the tank in a high arc.

Tank Commander

The tank commander sits on the right-hand side of the turret with a similar cupola of periscopes for external viewing, with a single master control stick on his right-hand side that provides him with the ability to override the gunner and scan using the main gun, or he can do so with the Fusilier's secondary weapon system; this has a separate daylight camera and thermal imager with 3x and 10x magnification power. Both gunner and tank commander have dials providing them with control over the Fusilier's secondary and tertiary weapon systems, which could include a light 60mm guided mortar system, an 82mm unguided rocket pod, a light laser cannon, or a Javelin-3 anti-Gear guided missile launch rack. All Fusiliers are equipped with anti-personnel grenade launcher tubes which can be set to fire on manual command by any crew member, or to automatically discharge if the neural net detects the presence of an enemy infantry force in the vicinity of the vehicle. This latter option is not used often by tanker crews, who want to avoid the NNet registering a friendly infantry force as enemy and causing a blue-on-blue incident.

The secondary weapon system's camera and thermal imager can be used by the tank commander to slew the turret using a 'designate' button located on his master control stick, allowing him to bring the gunner around to address a more immediate threat or to expedite targets after the gunner has engaged his own target. It requires great teamwork, and Fusilier berm and combat drills often focus on having all three crew members work together to spot targets in high speed engagements to address the most likely threats first and follow-up with less dangerous targets in order. In addition to his master control stick, the commander is also equipped with a pair of holoscreens to his station's front. One screen has the option of viewing through the gunner's primary sight or through the secondary sight's view, and one shows a topographical map which he is able to use to identify the location of all friendly units in the area, as well as reported battlefield threats such as minefields, large enemy formations and other reports made from the higher command echelons. The lay-out of these screens is entirely up to the individual commander, and it is not unlikely for commanders to use their datagloves and other computer uplinks to load music into the crew's headsets through the multiple ports provided, though this practice has never been confirmed by any unit commanders, commissioned officers or enlisted personnel to date.

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The neural net assists both gunner and tank commander by providing additional information through their helmet HUDs, tagging known enemy vehicles and also accounting for the majority of ballistics work, referencing the Fusilier's speed, pitch, yaw, cant, ammunition temperature, atmosphere temperature, crosswind sensor, muzzle reference sensor, laser rangefinder, and the estimated speed and direction of enemy targets. It also provides minor corrections in thrust and lift to the vehicle's fans and thrusters to offset rapid scanning of the turret while the gunner or tank commander is slewing the weapon system onto a target, and also provides stabilization while weapons are being fired; this does not interfere with the driver's task, merely simplifying it by keeping the Fusilier on an even level to present the gunner or commander with a steady sight picture while engaging targets on the move. Crews have also been known to employ the tanker's version of a Gear pilot's 'macromoves' into their neural nets to provide them with even more advanced maneuvers in the middle of combat situations at the touch of a button.

Armor

The armor of the Fusilier is a classified compound, most likely a composite mixture with ceramics that is resistant to kinetic-energy rounds, double shaped-charge munitions, with an ablative coating to dissipate and deflect high energy output lasers. Conservative estimates place the frontal hull and turret armor's equivalent anywhere from 1200 to 1300mm of RHA, or Rolled Homogenous Armor steel. The Fusilier is not known to be equipped with spall liners, thus there is the chance that non-penetrating munitions might cause pieces of the turret's interior to be broken off and turned into shrapnel that could endanger the crew; rounds that over-penetrate always cause a shower of super-heated shrapnel, hence the need for all NSDF and HAPF personnel to wear light flak vests while operating the tank.

Powerplant

The powerplant of the Fusilier is a revolutionary new design based on advances provided by the Port Arthur Korps' hover-tank fleet mechanics and Humanist Alliance Protection Force's design teams, with great advice gained through Neil MotorWorks. The 2,500-horsepower ceramic gas turbine provides power to the vehicle's hover systems and can be rapidly maintained and replaced while in the field, providing the Fusilier an extended combat lifespan previously unheard of in any vehicle of its class. Insight from the Fusilier's drive systems also went into the second refit of the Sampson armored personnel carrier's own hover-fan system, and both units share many common parts and components.



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NM-30HS-A VOLTIGUER

The Voltiguer is a fully-tracked main battle tank designed for heavy combat operations, including but not limited to breakthrough assaults and defense in depth. The vehicle is manned by a crew of three – driver, gunner, and tank commander.

Driver

The driver sits in the center of the hull between the launch tubes for the Voltiguer's missile complement. His sensor equipment includes the wrap-around holoscreen found in the Fusilier tank, providing him with a 140-degree forward view and 120-degree rear view through the multiple cameras mounted over the Voltiguer's hull. All these cameras have daylight and low-light enhancement options with wireframe topographical map information provided by the tank's neural net to assist the driver in his duties of seeking cover when moving into a battle position. The driver's controls are a conventional T-handle design, similar to those found on a motorcycle, along with a foot-operated manual brake and emergency brake.

A master control panel on the driver's left-hand side provides access to the Voltiguer's powerplant, wireless communication, and also gives him control of the tank's multi-spectral smoke launchers - this system is always included with gunners and tank commanders, but is employed by Voltiguer drivers on a regular basis to help fight the tank when needing to cover movement during contact with enemy forces. The driver's HUD provides the same information as the Fusilier in regards to the powerplant's revolutions, the tank's heading and mechanical or electronic malfunctions, but there is a secondary screen mounted to his right that monitors these as well. Through it and the master control panel the driver can troubleshoot malfunctions and attempt rebooting different systems, or bypass them and go with back-up systems. Putting the main systems in bypass requires less computing power on the NNet's part, and in emergency combat situations drivers have been trained to 'use their ears' in regards to the vehicle's powerplant and tracks, and place powerplant monitoring systems in bypass, giving the NNet greater focus in assisting the gunner and tank commander in fighting the tank.

Gunner

The gunner sits on the left-hand side of the turret, directly next to the main guns. His sensors include a single holoscreen to his station's front; this is linked to the gunner's primary sight, or doghouse, located directly over the turret mantle of the 100mm M-series guns. The GPS includes daylight and thermal sights, with 3x, 13x and 25x magnification, the laser rangefinder, muzzle reference sensor, and is also used for boresighting the main guns.

On the Dalton C-series-equipped Hammer variant, the doghouse is moved forward onto the 120mm main gun's turret mantle, another minor design change that is sometimes considered a flaw due to its peculiar behavior in regards to firing on targets. The smaller 100mm doghouse uses a dual axis head mirror for both elevation and horizontal movement, which maintains a steady sight picture on the target regardless of the lead and elevation being processed by the ballistics computer and NNet. By contrast, since the 120mm's sight is slaved directly to the cannon, the reticle parts in the narrow field of view mode can freely move within the 2-dimensional space observed by the gunner. After lasing, the sight jumps to the required superelevation required by the fire control computer and moves in the horizontal plane depending on how much input the gunner gave to his control handstation in the 1.5 seconds before the lase. It also moves after the gunner lases the target, depending on how much input is given to his handstation. This can cause the target reticle to possibly leave the gunner's view completely off-screen, even after sending a round downrange. In such instances, standard operating procedure requires the Hammer gunner to dump lead by releasing his cadillacs, returning the main gun to 0-degree elevation and picking up a good track on the target to witness round impact and adjust as needed.

A secondary screen and master control panel to the gunner's left serves a dual purpose; either a read-out for the ballistics computer, or as a feed link to the tank commander's station which gives the gunner the same map information as that fed to the tank commander. The gunner's cupola includes a ring of periscopes, but they serve little purpose as his station is located further forward and below the cupola; gunners sometimes remark that this is one of the small design flaws that came with the demands of NuCoal requesting that hatches and other equipment on the Fusilier, Voltiguer and Sampson be of a standardized variant to ease maintenance in the field. To compensate, the gunner's station has two unity sights facing directly forward and left of the turret's forward arc. These unity sights are periscopes with no magnification or electronic input. The gunner's handstation is the same as the one found in the Sampson and the Fusilier; unlike the latter two, the Voltiguer's trigger settings obviously do not have the capability for automatic weapons fire, unless the gunner selects the 7mm machine-gun mounted in a remote weapon station located on top of either the gunner's or commander's cupola.

The remote weapon station's 3x sight can be wirelessly beamed into the gunner's and tank commander's HUD at their option, as well as the light laser cannon's sights, which has its own 3x and 10x daylight and thermal sights. Both of these weapon systems have 'look/voice-to-kill' routines whereby the gunner or tank commander can look in the direction of a fast-moving target and

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use voice commands to activate the weapon systems, greatly increasing their reaction time on multiple targets in intense combat situations. In the event that the weapon systems would cause damage to the tank itself, the NNet can lock the weapons momentarily until the line of sight to the target is clear; the NNet can also do this in the event that a registered friendly unit crosses the line of fire, although tanker crews still train to clear their engagement ranges of friendly units before ever engaging. Like the driver's station, the 'look-to-kill' options can be bypassed to give more of the NNet's computing power to the main gun and detection systems, and some gunners and tank commanders use their holoscreens and manual triggers instead of the voice commands on a permanent basis. A scientific study was proposed by several leading Humanist Alliance preceptors regarding the efficiency of such practices; their request was denied in a surprising joint rebuttal by NSDF forces as well as Humanist protectors. One NSDF tank commander with the Second Prince Gable Regiment, a known 'look-to-kill' user who requested anonymity, was quoted, "The scientists and engineers make these weapons so we can defend our cities, towns and loved ones. I do not presume to tell them how to do their job, and I would ask them not to tell me how to do mine."

The Voltiguer's Dalton M-series main guns are formidable .44-caliber 100mm smoothbore cannon, fitted with bore evacuators near the end of their barrels. These do not lessen the recoil of the main guns (their original function was to test the turret's feasibility in regards to the recoil of the larger .55-caliber 120mm smoothbore Dalton C-series cannon); instead, they allow residual vapors from the firing of the main gun cartridges to be evacuated from the barrel, greatly decreasing the likelihood of possibly flammable vapors and residue from igniting into a 'blowback' flash fire through the breech when fresh air returns to the barrels. The 100mm M-series are also equipped with thermal sleeves to insulate and mask their normally high heat signature from enemy thermal sights.

The larger 120mm C-series cannon is not fitted with a bore evacuator or thermal sleeve; it does have a seven-baffle muzzle brake that decreases recoil pressure and minimizes the muzzle blast of the larger cannon. This latter function keeps the C-series from kicking up a tremendous amount of dust to the front of the tank, helping to keep the crew's forward vision clear of concealment and also reducing its visibility when firing on other armored vehicles in the heat of battle. Standard engagement ranges are reported to be 1,500-2,000 meters, with anything closer than 800 meters considered 'knife fight' drills. Voltiguer

gunners and commanders address knife fights as extremely dangerous due to limited flight times of enemy guided missiles and main guns, and train to use their overwhelming firepower in such situations to get out of the kill zone and back to stand-off distance where they can use their guns to their maximum efficiency.

Both series of cannon use a modified 'clip' auto-loading magazine system in their designs, the smaller M-series cannon capable of carrying 20 rounds in its ready magazine, the larger C-series carrying 15. The clip system works through a hydraulic jack located underneath the magazine. Upon firing, the breech is locked in an open position. Once the hydraulic jack has raised the next round into position, a mechanical scoop holds the round securely in position while the breech is 'cocked' forward. While the entire process from the aft cap being expended to the next round being 'up' in the breech is kept at a respectable 4.5 seconds, crews have been known to modify the NNet's programming slightly to increase their load times to 4 or even, in three rare cases, 2.5 seconds. This security bypass is considered hazardous due to the chance that a scoop might not have the round fully secured and the 'cocking' of the breech might cause the new round's cartridge to bust open and spill its propellant into the turret, and it is the standing official policy of the NSDF and HAPF to reprimand tank crews found doing so. The tanks also have semi-ready ammunition stowage racks directly forward of the turret within the hull. To access the semi-ready racks, the turret must be placed over the rear of the tank, the semi-ready doors opened through a hydraulic knee switch, and the ammunition manually set into the magazines by the gunner and tank commander. The 100mm-equipped Voltiguer can store up to 40 rounds in its semi-ready racks, the 120mm up to 30. To increase crew survivability, the semi-ready doors are blast-proof, and the racks have blow-out panels located directly next to the two rearmost missile launch tubes; if an enemy round should cook off the semi-ready rack, the explosion's concussive effects will be directed out and up through these missile tubes, rather than into the driver's station and turret.

The ammunition of both the 100mm and 120mm cannon is a programmable multi-purpose anti-tank round that can be set in one of three modes, officially 'AT' (Anti-Tank), 'AB' (Air-Burst), and 'BB' (Bunker-Bust), more commonly referred to as 'tank-buster', 'fly-swatter' and 'shell-cracker'. In AT mode, the MPAT round explodes on contact with a heavily-armored surface, transferring its full explosive energy directly into the enemy vehicle and sending a 'stream' of super-heated armor into the

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confines of the enemy crew compartment. In AB mode, the round's proximity fuse will cause the round to explode upon coming into proximity of the last-known range given to it by the Voltiguer's laser rangefinder and ballistics computer – this mode can be used against infantry, lightly-armored vehicles and enemy hover-tanks and VTOLs with extreme efficiency. In BB mode, the MPAT round's contact fuse delays in exploding for approximately .04 seconds, allowing the round time to punch through embankments or fortifications before exploding.

The six missile launch tubes on board the Voltiguer are canted outwards in order to assist the missiles clear the barrels of the main guns when they are launched. If the gunner or commander selects to launch a missile while the tube is covered by the main guns, the NNet is capable of selecting a free tube for launch. Otherwise, the NNet will give warning to the gunner that the main guns will have to be moved to launch the tube, in which case the gunner has final authority to allow the override if he feels he can bring the main guns back on target after the missile is launched.

The laser cannon and its secondary weapon sight are kept charged by the high-output battery capacitors banks located behind the tank commander's station and shielded off from the remaining turret area by a heavy armored bulkhead. These capacitors are capable of being charged through internal wiring from the Voltiguer's powerplant, although this generally takes a great deal of time and requires the driver to keep the engine peaked at higher revolutions, thus burning more fuel comparatively to when the main battle tank's gas turbine is idling. In order to charge it more swiftly, an armored port is built into the rear of the turret which allows external generators to charge the laser cannon's capacitors directly, which can take less than an hour.

Tank Commander

The tank commander's station is located directly underneath his cupola on the right-hand side of the Voltiguer's turret, off-set to the rear and above the horizontal of the main guns. From here the commander can see the auto-loader is in action; if he notices a hazardous situation he can lock down the guns to avoid a busted cartridge and troubleshoot the problem. His own cupola is fully functional because he is directly beneath it, and he has the same master control stick as the one found in the Fusilier, though Voltiguer commanders sometimes remind their comrades that the stick was designed for the Voltiguer first, mostly as friendly banter between the two groups. While the 'look-to-kill' routine of the secondary weapon system is hardwired into

both gunner and commander's HUDs, the master control stick's 'designate' button is the only way for the tank commander to override the gunner's controls and slew the turret onto a threat he feels is more dangerous.

The tank commander also has two holoscreens located to his direct front and to the right of his station, with the master control board directly forward of his seat and a selector button located between the two screens. This selector button swaps the two holoscreens' positions. In combat, most tank commanders keep the gun-sight-view directly to their front and delegate the topographical map and reports to their right side in order to focus on fighting their tank, using their secondary weapon system's sight as an additional set of eyes. Platoon leaders and commissioned officers often reverse these positions, trusting their gunners to the operation of the main guns while they focus on the tactical and strategic situation surrounding them. In the Command Variant, an additional control panel is jacked into the master control panel providing the commander with electronic counter-countermeasures to maintain steady communication with the other tanks, armored vehicles and infantry in formation.

Armor

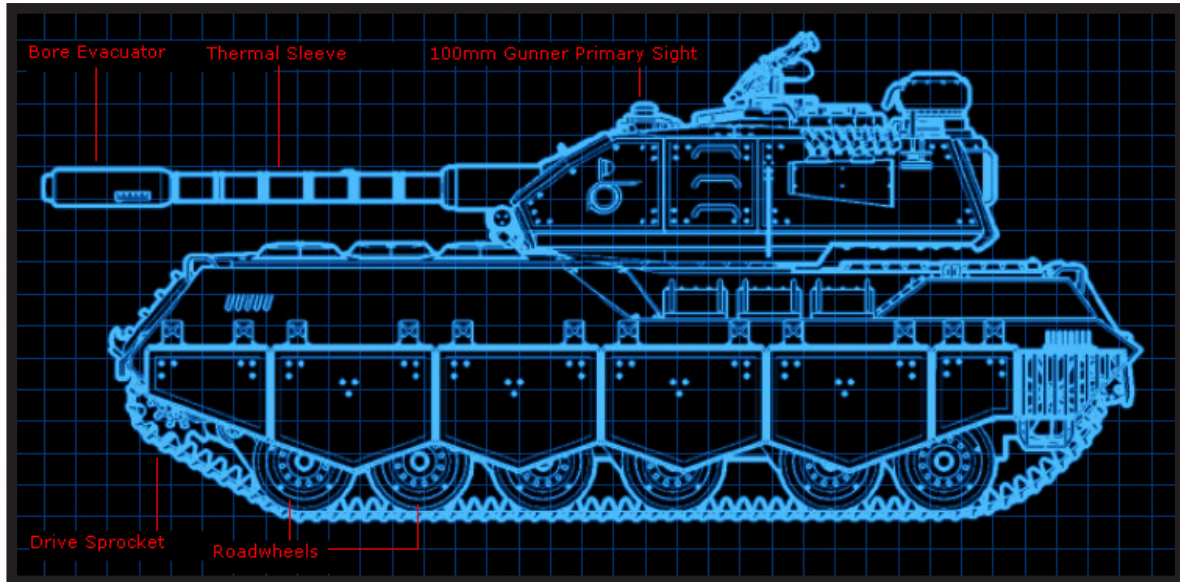
While the armor of the Voltiguer is classified, experts presume that the compounds are the same composite/ceramic mixture found in the Fusilier, with more robust layers and a depleted uranium up-armor package inserted into the frontal arc of the hull and turret in order to provide increased durability from hyperkinetic rounds. Reports also reveal that the Voltiguer has spall liners within its frame, although Voltiguer crews still wear their flak vests on a regular basis on patrols.

Powerplant

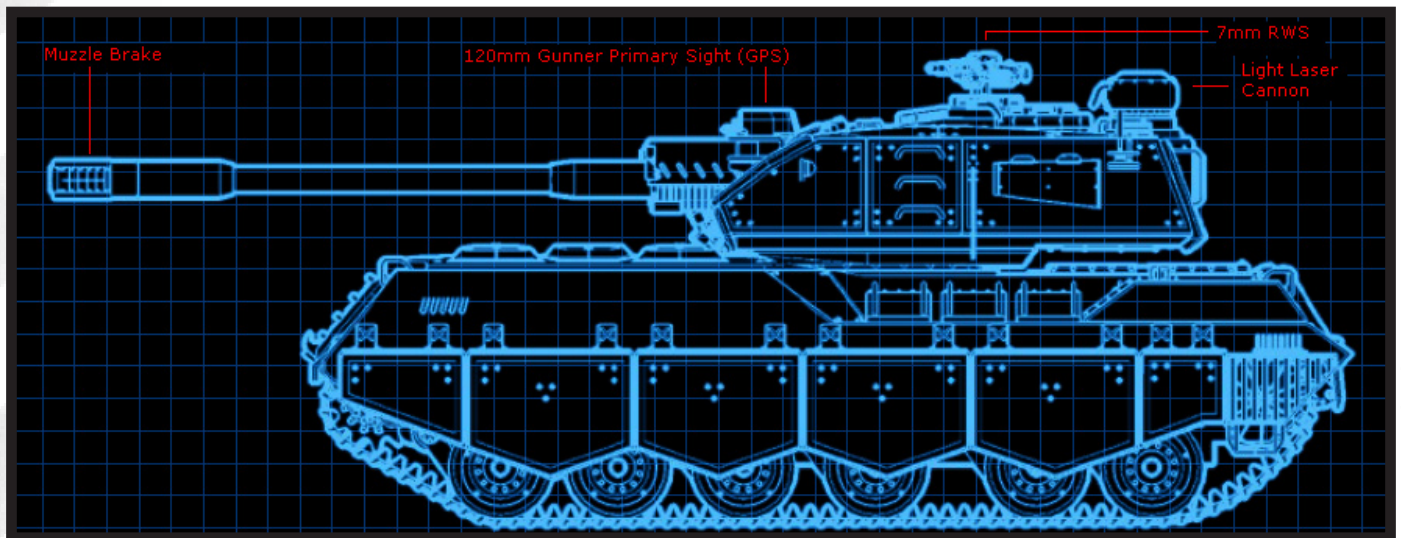
The 1,700-horsepower ceramic gas turbine equipped within the Voltiguer is contained in an insulated compartment in the rear of the tank; the bulkhead between the tank's powerplant and turret ensure that no fire will breach into the crew compartment and ready ammunition, while the insulation drastically lowers the turbine's regularly high heat signature. The turbine is connected through a ceramic driveshaft to the forward drive sprockets while the track's roadwheels are on a hydropneumatic suspension, which both improves the Voltiguer's off-road capabilities and also increases the crew's comfort on long patrols.

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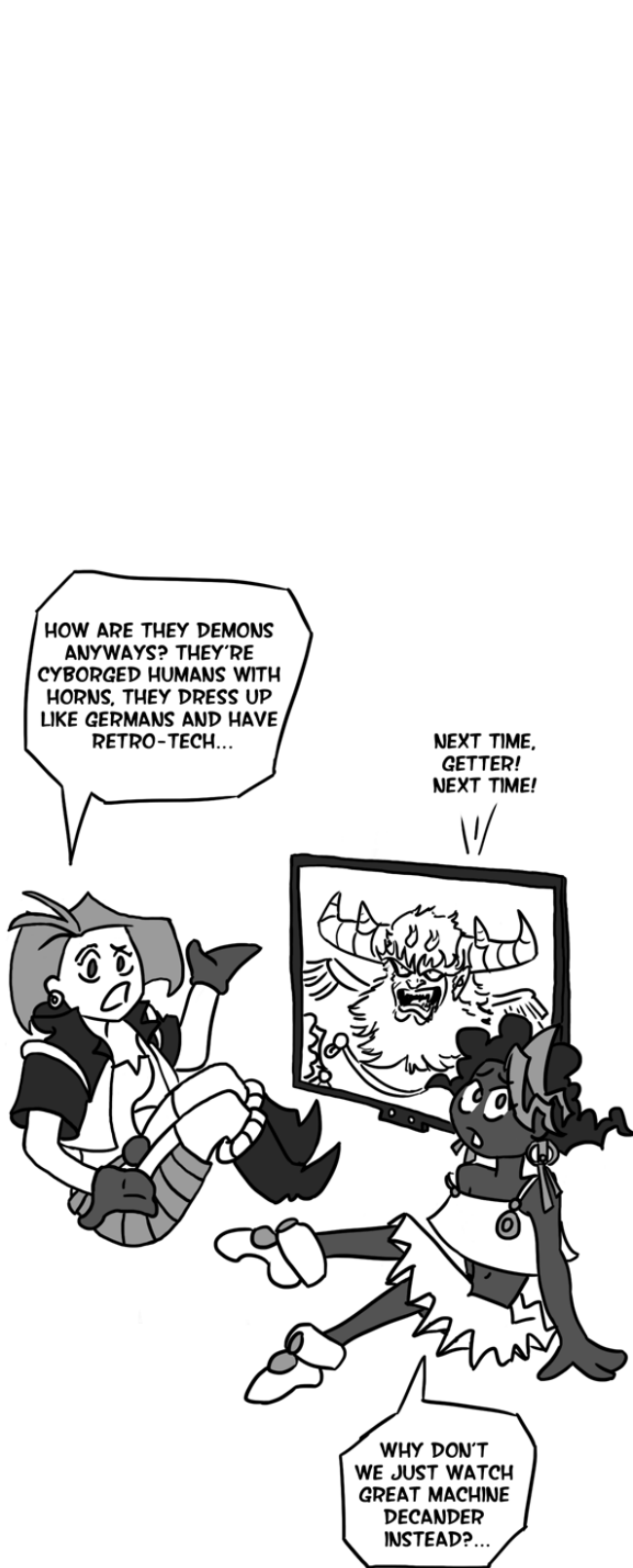
BLUEPRINT: NM-30HS-A VOLTIGUER



BLUEPRINT: VOLTIGUER HAMMER VARIANT

JOVIAN KOMA

JOHN BELL



HEAVY GEAR



CRATER TOWN

A HEAVY GEAR Campaign Setting by Brian Laxson
A Lost Manuscript Presented for the Aurora Community
Layout by Oliver Bollmann. Proofreading by nobody ;)



INTRODUCTION

Billowing sand blew around every one like blinding blizzard. Thick dust began to build up on his goggles as Johan scanned the horizon. The storm had pinned down the convoy of medical supplies desperately needed in Crater Town. Fortunately the Dragoons were the first to answer the convoy's distress signal. Still, Johan wondered if anyone else had heard it.

From out of the swirling sandstorm a four meter tall humanoid appeared, then another and another. The lead figure aimed a rifle toward Johan's position. Dropping quickly to the ground Johan screamed out an alarm, "Bandit Gears!"

Pulses of autocannon fire darted over the heads of Johan and his infantry squad. Fiery tracer rounds creating a dazzling display of light, sinking into the dune behind them. As dirt exploded on top of him, Johan levelled his 50mm rocket launcher. Loosing a speeding dart Johan clipped the lead //Jager// in a knee joint, sending it tumbling into the sand.

Napalm from an approaching //Flamm Jager// roared over Johan's head. His infantry were pinned down. Over the radio he could hear Micaudo leading the Dragoon's Gears in a defensive action. For a moment the flames stopped, making Johan feel safe. Then the //Flamm Jager// loomed over top of the trench.

Autocannon rounds needled into the bandit as Dragoon Brier's //Hunter// raced up to help. Incendary rockets from the //Flamm Jager// enveloped the //Hunter// in a cocoon of flame. Johan ordered his infantry for close quarters combat. Diving beneath the legs of the Gear he fired his second rocket straight into the engine chasis. Quickly the other squad members fired onto all sides of the //Flamm Jager//, blasting it to bits.

Just then a Gear's hand grenade exploded amid the infantry, throwing three of them into the air. The damaged //Jager// was trying to stand up. Brier leapt his flaming //Hunter// over the trench, sending out short bursts of cannon fire.

Tilting its torso upward the //Jager// unleashed a hail of rockets. They struck the //Hunter// in the arms and torso. Collapsing in front of the //Jager// the //Hunter's// cockpit began to slowly seep blood through cracks in the armor.

Pulling out another grenade the //Jager// planned to finish off Johan.

Rockets flew over Johan again, this time smashing apart the //Jager//. Johan turned to see a Dragoon //Jaguar// walk out of the sandstorm, it was the new commander Micaudo Bishop.

"We've beaten them this time," stated Micaudo, "but where do they keep getting these Gears?"



WELCOME TO CRATER TOWN

Crater Town is an expanding community located in the wastes of the Terra Nova Badlands. A group of pioneers, referred collectively as the 'Founders', set out to open new trade routes. They discovered a freshly made equatorial crater just east of the White Sands. Apparently the crater was the result of an Earth C.E.F. ship shot down during the War of the Alliance.

The first construction was an Oasis tower, now converted into the military base known as the //Rock//. Financial backing for this came from the U.M.F. in hopes of establishing new, competitive trade routes. As the population rose the lower basin of the crater was flooded. Additional irrigation and aerial wetting moistened the remainder of the crater.

Crater Town is growing ever closer towards her own independence. Northern politicians are becoming concerned over the possible loss of the trade tariffs. Town elders are continuing to quietly grow their power base without alarming larger military powers.

The strategic location has captured the eye of both the Northern and Southern militaries. Being on the equator place Crater Town equidistant between these two fractions, making it an excellent staging base for either army. Both sides are preparing to take Crater Town for their own.

Nomads and other Badlanders come to Crater Town to purchase goods, sell hides or enjoy the comforts of the town. Trade in weapons, food, parts and other goods has improved the lifestyle of the Nomads significantly. Market Day is particularly popular for merchants and party seekers alike.

Around the town are a variety of interesting sites, from the Mulberry forest picnic grounds to the burnt husk of an old land-ship. Nomads head into the Rockies to visit their religious 'Law Rock' while bandits hide out in secret caves. One will even find hunters tracking down lizards for their skins and meat.

Within the town abound numerous offerings of civilized life. Hotel accommodations are openly available for travellers. Local factories produce parts for vehicles and even civilian Gear designs like the reliable //Hammer//. Greenhouses grow fruits, flowers and imported plants. Servicing tens of thousands of Badlanders the town has an extensive support network of garages, hospitals, churches and schools.

Residents of the town range from Defence Force soldiers to school teachers. Scientists constantly seek to expand the crater's ability to support life. Travelling merchants meet with their permanent brethren to exchange both merchandise and stories. Those seeking to live out their lives under the promise of new beginning constantly add to the population. Diversity is the norm here in Crater Town.

Outside of the crater's rim is a harsh desert of sun and wind. Within the rim one is welcomed by cool brooks and tall trees. Citizenship numbers have grown into the thousands with nomads shifting like the desert's winds. Each time visitors come the guards greet them with, "Welcome to Crater Town. Enjoy your stay."



COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Walking to the top of wind swept dune Vanessa lifted up her desert goggles to scan the horizon of the Terra Nova Badlands. Rocks, mulberry bushes and a few small lizards dotted the barren landscape. From up ahead a thin tower rose out of a massive crater, it's radio beacon providing navigational information.

Months before she could well have tried to plunder this community. The life of a Rover often leads to piracy. Refusing an order to burn down a farm house had made her into an outlaw among her own people.

Edging slowly closer to the crater's rim she could see her new home. Formed out of the rock by a crashing C.E.F. space ship the once lifeless rock has been transformed to a bountiful spring of life. Water was bubbling from a pumping station to form a small lake, houses stood in a line along busy streets and trees rose up in groves.

As she guided the caravan following her to the ramp leading down into the crater she could remember Micaudo's words. "Sand... trees... sand... trees," he had told her. Nothing could describe the sudden break in the endless desert. The rim of the crater forming a dividing line between waste and paradise.

Members of Crater Town Guards, reserve militia troops, approached to inspect the caravan. Passes were quickly approved to permit the caravan rights to begin unloading their goods. Market day was only a few days off. Ali Hasek and Peotro Yavkin had already set up booths in lush Green Park Micaudo Bishop knew Vanessa was a quality pilot and had offered her a place with the Dragoons, and a pardon for any prior activities. Just beside the bottom of the entrance ramp, named the //Gangplank//, she could see several damage Gears meeting with an ambulance. Vanessa thought to herself that she had just gotten here in time.

Looking ahead she noted the armored oasis tower called, the //Rock//. Ontop rose the sensor tower nicknamed //Lighthouse//. It was this tower which had guided the convoy to the town, the uppermost part rising above the outside ground level like a giant antenna.

A footsoldier in the Guards approached, asking for ID. Vanessa produced her records and the letter of invitation from Major Micaudo Bishop.

The guard replied, "Welcome to Crater Town. Enjoy your stay."



TOWN BACKGROUND

During the wars against the Earth forces, a troop space transport was shot down by hunter killer missiles. Smashing into the equatorial Badlands the crash created a crater. Surveyors of the crater measured that the bottom of the resulting crater was just above a large Mac Allen pool. Punching through layers of rock with a powerful drill a geyser of sparkling water was born. This water source became the basis for a new community, Crater Town.

This effort was all undertaken by the U.M.F. to create a strategically located colony in the Badlands. Straddling the equator this colony would generate revenues from trade routes running from North to South. Furthermore exchanges of goods between Badlanders and the community, named Crater Town, would also generate cash flows.

At first a single oasis tower was built. As the community grew they built new homes inside the crater. The original facility was converted into a military base of operations, and the town remained much like a fortified camp for quite some time. However, a great change came to the crater upon the installation of an irrigation network supplied by a powerful pumping station.

This station performs several important tasks. The key responsibility is pumping water up from a large underground river in the Mac Allen network. This water has been flooded into the bottom basin of the crater to create an artificial lake. Filtration, treatment and aeration of the lake is the second task for the station. Third the station creates pressure for the town's irrigation system. Lastly the station nightly sprays water from the top of the station to produce an aerial wetting of the crater, frequently creating a fog in the cool desert nights.

A strategic position this far forward is recognized for its strategic worth by both the Northern Guard and the Southern MILICA. In the processing of developing her independence Crater Town has formed her own Defence Forces, supplanted by arms, aid and patrol craft from the United Mercantile Federation. One day the calm dunes may be filled with the tempests of war.

Central to the defense of Crater Town is a converted oasis tower called the //Rock//. Inside elevators descend to garages, storage bunkers and bomb shelters. Outside are openings to allow weapons fire from infantry squad and turret emplacements. Rising from the top is a sensor spire known as the //Lighthouse// to scan the horizon with sensors and a powerful searchlight. The Defence Forces use this base defend Crater Town and patrol its borders.

Trade with Badlanders has developed both allies and enemies. Favored nomad tribes are likely sources of aid for the town. Hostile clans smuggle illegal goods, sack caravans and ambush patrols. Maintaining positive outside relations while providing protection from desert raiders is a major reason for the creation of the privateering forces, making potential enemies into allies.

Adventurous wanderers, retired soldiers and nomad tribes can apply to Crater Town for a Letter of Marque and Reprisal. This entitles them to safe haven at Crater Town while they conduct piratical activities against theoretically hostile forces. Fortunes can be quick and profitable for those braving the risks. Rumors abound of increasing Southern MILICIA activities near Lincoln Town to counter this.

The civilian population is steadily growing. Nomads are choosing to settle inside the park-like interior of the crater. Refugees fleeing Southern oppression appear in unexpected waves. Meanwhile Northern entrepreneurs continue to set up shops, businesses and trade routes into Crater Town leading to the variety of merchants now present.



CURRENT SITUATION

Crater Town itself currently shows an estimated population of 14,000. The actual number of inhabitants is very hard to determine as travellers constantly move in and out of the community. Still, there is a small surplus of food grown inside the crater to trade out with Badlanders. The current restraint on further town growth is not so much finding people but on balancing the necessities of food and water.

Policing the town is handled by the Guards, a section of the Defence Forces. Although there is only a handful of active personal, additional reserves can be called up in short order. External protection is assigned to the small Dragoon force. Hospital services are also available, frequently aiding Badlanders hardy enough to survive the trip into town.

TOWN SURVEY

A series of surveys were conducted last cycle to determine the state of Crater Town. These surveys were sponsored by the Infrastructure department. Complete copies of the surveys can be obtained at the town hall for a nominal fee. Samples of the tabulated results are provided to show an overview of the Crater Town community.

CENSUS

Resident Citizens	13,842
Transient Citizens	8,643 per year
Transient Non-Citizens	167, 468 per year
Typical Population	19, 866
Highest Population Count in One Day	94, 339
Occuring on	Market Dat, 6131

INDUSTRIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Company	Industry	Owner
Comics & Convience	Small Goods	Timbuktu Exporters
Crater Cinemas	Theater	Cantebury Cinemas
Crater Gazette	Newspaper	S. P. Yiam
Crater General Hospital	Medical	Dr. M. Erlin
Desert Motors	Automobiles	Marathon Motors
Botanical Gully	Edible Ferns	G. Lucas
Crater Warehouse Inc.	Storage	Space Crater Town
Crater Water Works	Water	Crater Town
Industrial Lights Solar Panels	Power	Magic of Ashington
Intelligent Distribution	Household Goods	Amalgamated Waypoints
MacTavish Research Institute	Hammer Gears	E. MacTavish
Mainz Deli	Fast Food	Mainz International
Scooter Logic	Computers	Mr. Chips
Smith Contracting	Housing	G. Smith
'U' Brew Too	Beverages	Public Taps of Aquitaine
Louisville Vibrotronics	Vibro Axes	T. O'Mally
Wendy's Waypoint	Inn	W. Brier
Yavkin Shipping	Transport	P. Yavkin



CITIZENSHIP

Obtaining citizenship to the community is fairly easy. A registration of the person is made at Crater Town. Even the simple background checks can be waived if an existing citizen will sponsor the newcomer. After a three month probation period full rights will be granted.

During the citizenship application process fingerprint, DNA and retinal records are obtained for police work. Blood samples are also tested to protect the town from the spread of disease.

Citizens are the only ones who may purchase voting vouchers. Licenses for trade also require being at least on probational citizenship. Criminal offenses are frequently increased should the culprit not possess a citizenship registration.

POLITICAL SYSTEM

The town is governed by a Mayor elected once every five years. In accordance with the U.M.F. political system only those with voting vouchers may vote. As in the U.M.F. each voucher can only be used once for one of the Town Council seats. In truth all the resident citizens of Crater Town carry voting vouchers as they are bundled with together with the Citizenship renewal packages.

A series of advisors, aids and specialists form the next political level, the town council. Delegation of investigations, minor decisions and day to day activity is handled by the members of the council. Modeled on the U.M.F. political system the council consists of secretaries for Defense, Foreign Relations, Justice, Culture, Natural Resources, Finance, Infrastructure, Human Resources and Economic Development.

The position of Mayor holds a veto right over acts requiring involvement of more than one secretary. This applies also to the annual budget process where town funds are assigned out to the different secretaries. Voting vouchers for the five year Mayoral vote can be obtained only by those who have held citizenship for the two immediately preceding years.



TRADE

Being so well located trade makes up the majority of the town's economy. Convoys, caravans and independent brokers frequent Crater Town for her wondrous Market Days. Arms dealers move weapons, ammunition and even a few vehicles through Crater Town. Caravans frequenting Crater Town to operate //Pelicans//, //Longrunners//, //Behemoths//, //Barnabies// and a handful of gears for protection.

TRADE REGULATIONS

Licenses, fees or tariffs are required for all those who wish to conduct trade inside the town. Obtaining a license requires first having citizenship with the town, creating a legal record of the merchant. Inspections of trade practices are commonplace, with the merchant needing to show the license or otherwise prove to have one. Once familiar with this procedure a merchant often displays the license in open view.

Fees for these licenses vary in accordance with the value of the types of goods covered by the license. Each license also specifies a valid time period of either three months, six months or a year. This allows Crater Town to indirectly obtain funds for all goods traded through her market. Limits are also placed on the value of goods to traded under the license.

Tariffs, based on a percentage of selling value, are another source for the town's income for goods not held under license agreements. These tariffs are generally applied to consumable products such as foods, ammunition and fuels. Furthermore bulk storage of consumable goods is restricted to the warehouses owned by the town.

TRADE ROUTES

Upon the opening of the Crater Town market a number of new caravan trade routes were opened. This routes from run primarily north and south, with Badlanders meeting with them en route. The key northern trade route runs north from Crater Town and connects to the train line running between Red Sands and Ashington. Several homesteaders also link to this route. Sand Riders from the Great White Desert frequently involve themselves with this route. Traders from Baton Rouge occasionally choose this route over the Alpha Maglev, particularly when smuggling excess military goods.

To the South the trade routes run into the Gamma Maglev, where a proposed maglev station could create competition for Khayr ad-Din. The Gamma Maglev provides connectivity to Reunion, Marabou, Siwa Oasis and Port Oasis deep in southern territory. A small amount of trade from Fort James, Fort William and Franklin Harbor reach Crater Town through the northern Gamma Maglev connections. Traders from the New Coalition (see Badlands page 34) compete for the bulk of these goods.

Overland southern caravans run between Crater Town and Westphalia. From there they continue to connect up with two main trade lines. The first runs O vai to Aquitaine to Sargossa to Westphalia and the other stretches out from Hsi-Tsang to Bethany to Timbuktu to Westphalia. A small amount of Ashanti and Ankara trade runs from Timbuktu to the Westphalia merchants.

ILLEGAL TRADE

Comparatively open in the types of goods and services available there is still a large black market running through Crater Town. This market even smuggles military grade Gears to prospective buyers. Other times merchants seeking to escape fees will meet with buyers outside of the 100 km scanned by the //Lighthouse//.

It is also rumored that slave traders from Hsi Tsang (see Terra Nova page 94) traffic and acquire in the Crater Town area. The Kolson Cartel (see Badlands page 58) from Wounded Knee is believed to oversee at least eight percent of the trade running through Crater Town.

In any case the Defence Force can intervene if materials which could threaten the community are suspected. The Dragoons are ready and able to track down threats far into the Badlands. Bandits, Rovers and Privateers add additional risks to in illegal desert trading.



INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT

Within the town there is a constant growing interest in obtaining independence. This was the dream of the Founders. However, political involvements in the North are beginning to act to stifle this movement. There are those that feel the time to act has come. Wise men are issuing caution and further preparation while more youthful members are willing to make the break for freedom. Members of the Badlands Revolutionary Force (Badland's Sourcebook page 56) are believed to be hiding within Crater Town. Their efforts have been largely to gather supplies for their comrades. Increasing MILICIA searches of convoys have been aggravating trade.

Delegations of the Paxton Arms Protectorate have travelled to meet with Mayor Proham to discuss possibly merging Crater Town with them. Considering the extreme distance from Peace River he has been reluctant to gain both their allies and their enemies. Rumors persist that Paxton funds are actually being diverted to bandits in the Crater Town area in hopes of generating demands for their products.

Colonel Arthur, commander of Port Arthur, has sent his own representatives to Crater Town. These delegates were forced to leave town when Morgana class GREL were caught diving in restricted areas of Crater Lake. Protests immediately broke out all across town. The GREL committed suicide upon capture so ties to Port Arthur were never confirmed.

Aware of possible separation of Crater Town from her mothering nation, the United Mercantile Federation has begun conducting war maneuvers with a company of tanks within the area. A supply base is also being considered and a battalion of infantry could be mobilized given two weeks' notice. Since the Defence Force is a colonial power they would officially have to obey the orders of any national troops, although there would likely be strong resistance to any such action.

Southern view on the independence movement is opportunistic to say the least. Their viewpoint on possessing a superior culture coupled to a mandate for expansion places a hungry eye over the humble crater homes. Forces based in Lincoln Town are within striking distance. This of course applies both ways, although the Dragoons alone have insufficient manpower to succeed in any initial confrontation. If sufficient public outcry were to begin heard southern political leaders could declare the 'liberation' of Crater Town as a new southern colony.

Viewpoints among Badlanders vary considerably. Certainly a good number of nomads will support Crater Town in whatever is done. Homesteaders in particular are concerned over the effect on their stable lives. Rovers long for the day where they could legitimately strike against the militaries that so long hounded them.



NORTHERN RELATIONS

Northern relations are currently excellent, after all the town started as a project of U.M.F. merchants. Percentages of trade profits are exchanged for access to Northern military equipment, munitions and convoy protection. However, the turmoil to occur should Crater Town declare independence has northern politicians rightfully concerned. Many families in Crater Town have relatives living inside C.N.C.S. borders.

POLITICAL OBJECTIVES

Upon discovering the proximity of water to the crater a number of possible uses were considered. Ideas included a military base, environmental test site, trade center or to sell the newly claimed land. A group of religious elders from the Blue Crescent, Revisionist and lesser known Loving Goddess movements obtained financial backing to combine all these objectives in a new colony.

The works of these people, collectively called 'The Founders', has now prospered beyond all initial estimates. The U.M.F. Finance and Economic Development Secretaries wish for this growth to continue while the Defence Secretary has become concerned that a potentially independent Crater Town could pose a threat to national security. Intelligence operatives of the Northern Guard Intelligence Service (Badlands Sourcebook page 40) occasionally make 'requests' to the privateers of Crater Town.

The True North Party sees the strategic positioning of the crater as a vital element in their plans. Operatives of this party are believed to have infiltrated into the Defence Force. This often works to the town's benefit as information considering Southern targets is leaked out to the Dragoons or independent privateers.

MILITARY INVOLVEMENTS

The U.M.F. has made several provisions for the protection of Crater Town. This protection comes from a section of patrol boats under the command of Commodore Rakife currently loaned out to the Dragoons. A supply store is kept inside the //Rock// to service these vehicles. The 58th U.N.F. Infantry Battalion, Desert Paratroopers, are also within insertion range of Crater Town but have other duties currently require their attention.

Furthermore, a company of tanks continually conduct war games in the area. Under command of the Captain Steiner, an old rival of Crater Town's Micaudo Bishop, this group consists of 5 //Aller// Main Battle Tanks (4 x LVL 2/+1 plus see below), 5 //Klemm Light Tanks (LVL 2/0) and 10 //Tyburr// self propelled guns (LVL 2/0). Steiner's own Aller, "Excalibur", is an NT-3k variant with a crack crew (LVL 3/+1). All tanks have been fitted with smoke launchers.

ECONOMIC TIES

Merchants of the U.M.F. are eager to send convoys through Crater Town. Able to trade in otherwise prohibited goods they can realize excellent profits. Convoys coming from the South make it possible for these two, normally cold, alliances to trade goods otherwise restricted from each other. Northern benefactors provided the first live blood to the community which is slowly growing less dependent.

OFFICIAL POLICIES

These policies are reflections of the feelings of these political groups towards the Crater Town community. Approved for official release, the meaning of the statements is for the reader to interpret.

Confederated Northern City States	Protect and secure the Crater Town community and trade routes.
Northern Lights Confederacy	Unconcerned unless the Gamma Maglev is disrupted.
United Mercantile Federation	Encourage growth and ensure continued support to our colony.
Western Frontier Protectorate	A potential trade partner, circumventing The New Coalition movement.
True North Party	We will be entering candidates in the next set of elections.



SOUTHERN RELATIONS

To the south a growing awareness of the effects of Crater Town is developing. As a counter to the possible military uses of Crater Town the south have begun preparing a depot at Lincoln Town, at the disapproval of those residents. Apparently the south is still busy dealing with such matters as the New Coalition to commit large scale resources to this area. Members of the Dragoons suspect that the south is being just a little bit to quiet for things to be safe.

POLITICAL OBJECTIVES

Southern Generals are believed to be providing aid to desert bandits near Crater Town. Currently no proof has been found. The South is still claiming that these bandits have been ambushing their lightly armed convoys and disappearing farther north. Search parties have of course been sent, though whether they are to locate these 'bandits' or sent to spy on Crater Town is quite uncertain.

Operating in line with belief of superior southern morality, an increasing interest of bringing Crater Town to the south has been growing. Currently there is insufficient cause to obtain the community. Protests, possibly southern supported, could provide the necessary public sentiments to take the crater by force. Future increases of banditry in the area could justify the deployment of troops for protection of Southern interests.

MILITARY INVOLVEMENTS

The Allied Southern Intelligence (Badlands Sourcebook page 42), which acts to both support and contain MILICIA expansion in the Badlands, is continually monitoring Crater Town. A MILICIA supply base is being built at nearby Lincoln Town in case large scale troop activity is necessary, currently manned by elements of the 'Etruscan Guard' Gear regiment.

Scouting parties from the Rapiers (see Badlands page 47) have been known to track members of the Badlands Revolutionary Force this far from Lance Point. The troops based in Azov are concerned that Crater Town could be used as a way to cut them off from their supply lines.

ECONOMIC TIES

Southern economic involvement is limited to the operations of independent merchants. These merchants deal directly at Crater Town and then head off along several trade routes. Along the way the goods are traded to members of merchant houses. By the time the goods arrive in southern cities they may have changed hands over a dozen times. This is also true of goods moving northward.

OFFICIAL POLICIES

These policies are reflections of the feelings of these political groups towards the Crater Town community. Approved for release the meaning of the statements is for the reader to interpret.

Allied Southern Territories	Utilize the Crater Town opportunity to ensure the greatest benefit for her citizens.
Southern Republic	Let us open alternative routes around The New Coalition.
Mekong Dominion	Consideration to trade through this community is among our numerous concerns.
Eastern Sun Emirates	We consider the crater an intriguing tourist attraction.
Humanist Alliance	Crater Town is a commendable example of the quest for Utopia.



BADLANDS RELATIONS

Relationships with Badlanders is as varied as the Badlanders themselves. Here in the desert each person must find their own way, creating a different relationship between each Badlanders and Crater Town. Most come and go in peace, finding the crater to be a haven from an otherwise relentless desert.

CITY STATES

Peace River is considering sending a delegation to continue discussions with Mayor Proham. Currently the Paxton Arms (see Badlands page 25) executives are debating whether they could effectively extend the PRDF security zone out this far.

Port Arthur has already tried to sway Crater Town to joining them. The success of this mission being hampered by public protests against the defeated invaders. GREL intelligence operatives are believed to still be operating in the area. This of course adds to the local legend of masked hero known as 'Grizzly, GREL Fighter'.

The New Coalition is further backing the Port Arthur representatives. Crater Town itself does create a competitive trade route on the eastern edge of the Great White Desert.

Cartels from Wounded Knee are already taking advantage of this situation.

Other city states are having mixed reactions to Crater Town. Most have trade agreements with the town but are otherwise uninvolved. Those nearby are preparing for the day Crater Town becomes independent, some to offer alliances while others prepare to attack the town.

NOMADS

To the nomads of the Badlands Crater Town is a haven. The crater walls disrupt harsh winds while water flows into an artificial lake. This wonder of the Badlands is a popular spot to visit. While in town they trade for supplies and weapons.

However, there are those in the Badlands which see Crater Town as another invasion of their beloved desert. Two terrorist attacks have been against the pumping station to date, fortunately with no effect. So too are there the scavengers looking to prey on the juicy merchant convoys picking their way through the dunes.

ROVERS AND BANDITS

Rumors exist the mercenary groups are being supplied by the southern to counter this, including Garrick's Golden. Attacks by other bandits on the caravan routes have been increasing. The Dragoons have been extending their patrols and may well add new sections to handle the threats.

PRIVATEERS

Unique among the Badlands is Crater Town's generosity in granting Letters of Marquis and Reprisal. This has turned many potentially hostile forces into allies. The raiders are permitted to trade in town provided allies of Crater Town are excluded from attacks. Furthermore these privateers can be called upon to assist in military conflicts, creating a loosely organized strike force.

WHITE SAND RIDERS

Appearing out of the dangerous desert just west of Crater Town the Sand Riders frequent Crater Town for many reasons. Trade, particularly for Baton Rouge medical supplies, is the frequently the cause. Jonus Herasi have been known to obtain citizenship for this purpose.

The uneasy feelings of Badlanders to these strange peoples still persists inside the crater. Ratir acquisition is believed to account for over sixty percent of the cases of missing children.



RELIGIONS

Crater Town hosts a great mix of people within her borders. Each group continues to maintain their distinctive cultural base. The religions present include representatives from all across Terra Nova. The founders of Crater Town themselves were of different religions, and therefore made freedom of religious choice a vital part of community's charter.

Blue Crescent: Communes of the Blue Crescent (see Badlands, page 66) are thriving in Crater Town. Travelling members frequently move along the caravan routes while conducting business. Their belief in benevolent communism was revered by three of the Founders.

Revisionist: Revisionist beliefs and studies in the Khodaverdia (see Badlands, page 63) form the majority of the Crater Town religious studies. Mayor Proham himself has openly stated how Mamoud's acts have guided his decisions on many occasions. The majority of the Founders were of the Revisionist faith.

White Sand Riders: The position of an open trading community on the eastern edge of the Great White Desert has attracted repeat attention from the White Sand Riders. Ratir Koreshi are always present on Market Day. Several Jonus Herasi have even gone so far as to obtain citizenship and vote in Crater Town affairs. None of the founders were reported to be involved with the White Sand Riders.

Buddhism: Quiet members of the Buddhist faith are gaining ground among harshened Badlanders looking for an alternative life. The pacifistic ideology of this religion (see Terra Nova, page 138) is leading rovers to accept a quiet life inside the crater's rim.

Jerusalism: Judeo-Christian (see Terra Nova, page 138) practitioners are present in Crater Town in relatively small numbers. Currently they are seeking a pastor who will come to this community to ensure the safety of their souls. Construction of a church is planned to begin shortly.

Loving Goddess: A relatively new religion was among the founding groups of Crater Town. This religion promotes an active involvement with nature. It's basic principal being that we are children of the Loving Goddess sent here to help nurture Her world.

Holy Places

Meetings are held at places full of life. Circles of trees or plant life are preferred. An encirclement reflects upon the circular pattern of life, where those inside seek to enrich the world. The God Heads across Terra Nova are a cause for worldwide pilgrimages. It is believed they were created by those wishing to bond their souls to the world so they may continue to aid Terra Nova. Furthermore if one is able to become attuned to a God Head then the spirits within can be later called upon for aid.

Principals

Beliefs of the Loving Goddess center around becoming a spiritually whole being by enriching one's circle of life. This environment includes animals, plants and people alike. The Goddess herself is seen as the mother of all worlds, the creative womb from which life is born. She is seen as a female manifestation of a worlds Gaia. Her male counterpart is said to laying seed upon yet unfound places and protecting the inhabited worlds from outside influence. Groups will meet at outdoor sites during the night. At this time information is exchanged, prayers are asked and rituals conducted. Those gathered are collectively referred to as a 'circle'. Members will often seek to hide their public identities at these meetings.

The head matriarchs of the religion are referred to as 'Witches'. These women are trained in the arts of herbal healing, caring for the sick and nurturing the seeds planted within a spiritual circle. Lesser roles for the women include Sister, for those who have given birth, and Daughter for the remaining. If a child is born out of wedlock it is to be raised by a Sister; however, premarital involvements are encouraged to praise fertility. All women seek to further understand and enhance the life force within the circle.

Males in the society are given the responsibility of both extending and protecting the circles. This includes protecting the circle's members. Also, they are active in the environmental area of their communities.

Elder males are referred to as Druids and have care for the formal education of those within the circle. Another male title of Bard serves for those who dedicate themselves to expanding the hub of the circles influence. Lastly there are those males who are trained in martial skills, such as Gear piloting and small arms, and are known as Warlocks.



FUTURE COMPLICATIONS

The situation of Crater Town is complicated by interwoven involvements with vast political groups. Each group could certainly take control of the community either by force of arms, economic sanctions or subterfuge. However, it is the presence of the opposing fractions which prevent any one group from taking control. The point of balance is constantly being tested as Crater Town continues to expand her influence.

INTERNAL GROWTH

Rises in town population are being barely matched by expansions with internal food productions. Although greenhouses are quick to build the space they occupy could be better used for residences, factories or businesses. Currently alternative possibilities, such as farming the immediate area around the crater or raising herds of lizards, are being examined.

DEFENCE FORCES

Having brought the guards up to a full battalion in strength a new focus is being placed on increasing the quality of the troops. Each weekend a portion of the reserves undergo training operations to improve their skills. The Dragoons and Privateers are another matter altogether. Appearing as the official external arm of the Defence Forces the Dragoons are seen by political neighbors as the offensive force of Crater Town.

Expansions of the Dragoon rosters are slow, to avoid outside powers thinking that stockpiling is occurring. Currently Mayor Proham is attracting Privateers as an alternative, if rather undisciplined, offensive force. The number and loyalty of these Privateers are impossible to estimate, even for Crater Town.

PRIVATEERS

Mayor Proham is issuing Letters of Marque and Reprisal. Nomads which frequently trade with Crater Town have obtained such letters to ensure salvage rights over anything they find. Dedicated privateers, including the 'Scarlet Witch' are becoming a regular sight. Funds raised by the Letters of Marquis are used to fund the expansion of the regular Defence Forces.

The collective privateer force could potentially be organized to create a powerful military offensive group. Currently there is no leader charismatic enough or a financial prize large enough to get them to co-operate. Of course there is always the danger of what bored privateers could do inside the town.

INDEPENDENCE

Mayor Proham is continuing with the goal envisioned by the Founders to create an independent colony. Citizens which came freely to the town generally support this. Merchants are hesitant on the matter unless new profits could be obtained. Whatever individuals may feel Crater Town is destined to break free or die trying.

Lobbyists are preparing to force a vote for independence. The ramifications of the action will be widely felt. Both the C.N.C.S. and A.S.T. would be quick to forcefully grab hold of the town. Rebel Badland factions have begun acts of terrorism to push Crater Town further towards a free desert.

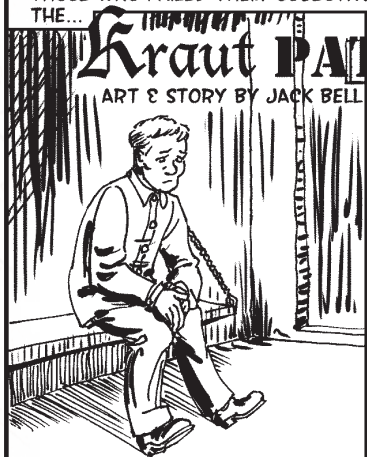
SECURITY

The presence of conflicts between opposing political parties places the young community at risk. Already terrorist attacks have sought to gain attention with bomb threats. Large scale military conflict could also swallow up the Crater Town as a stepping stone to greater accomplishments. Rich merchant convoys are another concern. The Dragoons are being mobilized to secure the vital trade routes. Vast stretches of desert make complete protection impossible so travellers are advised to be able to defend themselves.

1940 - FRANCE HAS FALLEN, BUT NOT ALL GERMANS WHO FOUGHT THERE GOT TO REVEL IN THE GLORY OF VICTORY. THOSE WHO FAILED THEIR OBJECTIVES WERE EITHER PUNISHED OR SHUNNED, AND NONE SO THAN THE MEMBERS OF THE...

Kraut PATROL

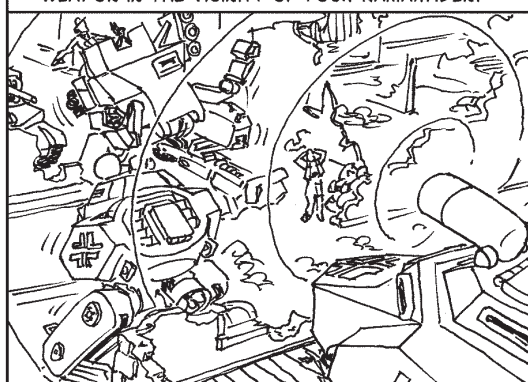
ART & STORY BY JACK BELL



NOTE: YES, THIS IS UNFORTUNATELY TRUE. INTERPOL WAS UNDER GERMAN CONTROL FROM 1938 TO 1945.



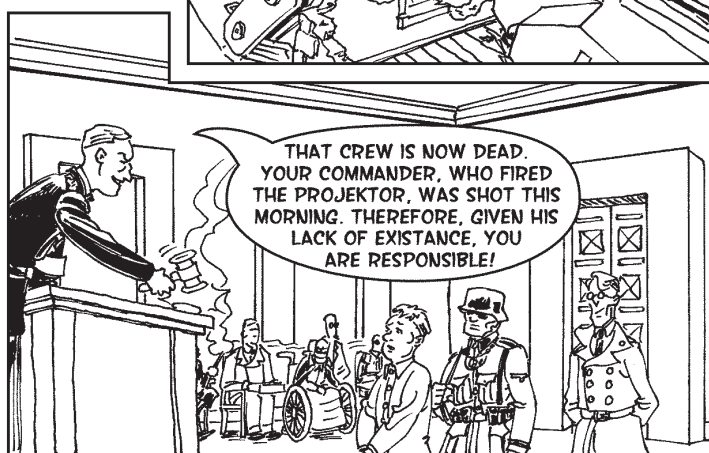
RAMSGATE, 1. SEPTEMBER 1940. WHILE ASSIGNED TO A MARINEKAMPFER I "WALROSS", YOU DELIBERATELY DISOBEYED ORDERS AND FIRED A DANGEROUS WEAPON IN THE VICINITY OF YOUR KAMARADEN.



THIS WEAPON, THE SONIC PROJEKTOR, HAS THE ABILITY TO CAUSE AGONY, DEAFNESS, MASSIVE HEMORRHAGES, NOT TO MENTION DAMAGE GLASS AND SENSITIVE DEVICES.

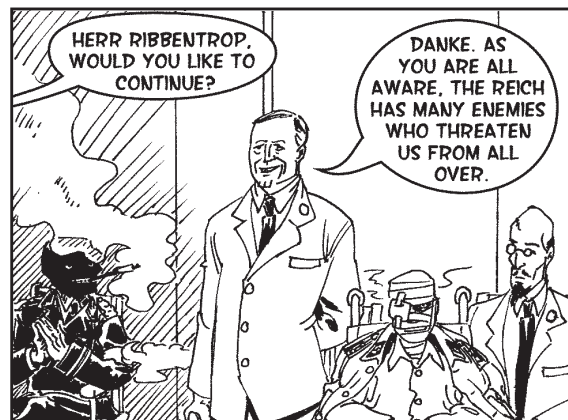
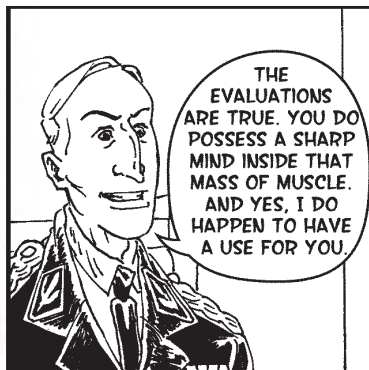
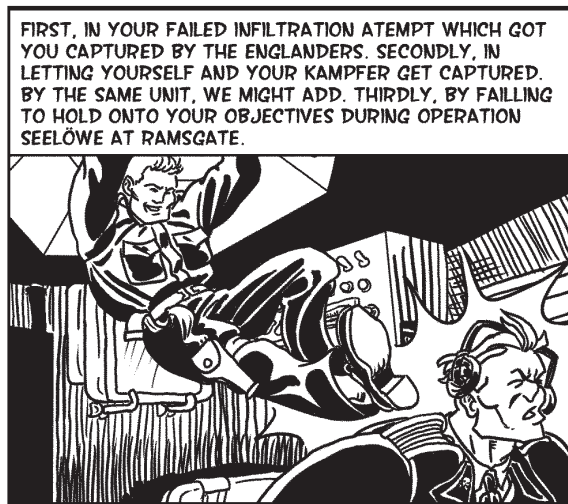


NOTE: SINCE THE MARINEKAMPFER WAS NOT RECOVERED, THESE ALLEGATIONS MUST BE BASED OFF OF WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PREVIOUS CREW OF HUNDT'S MARINEKAMPFER.



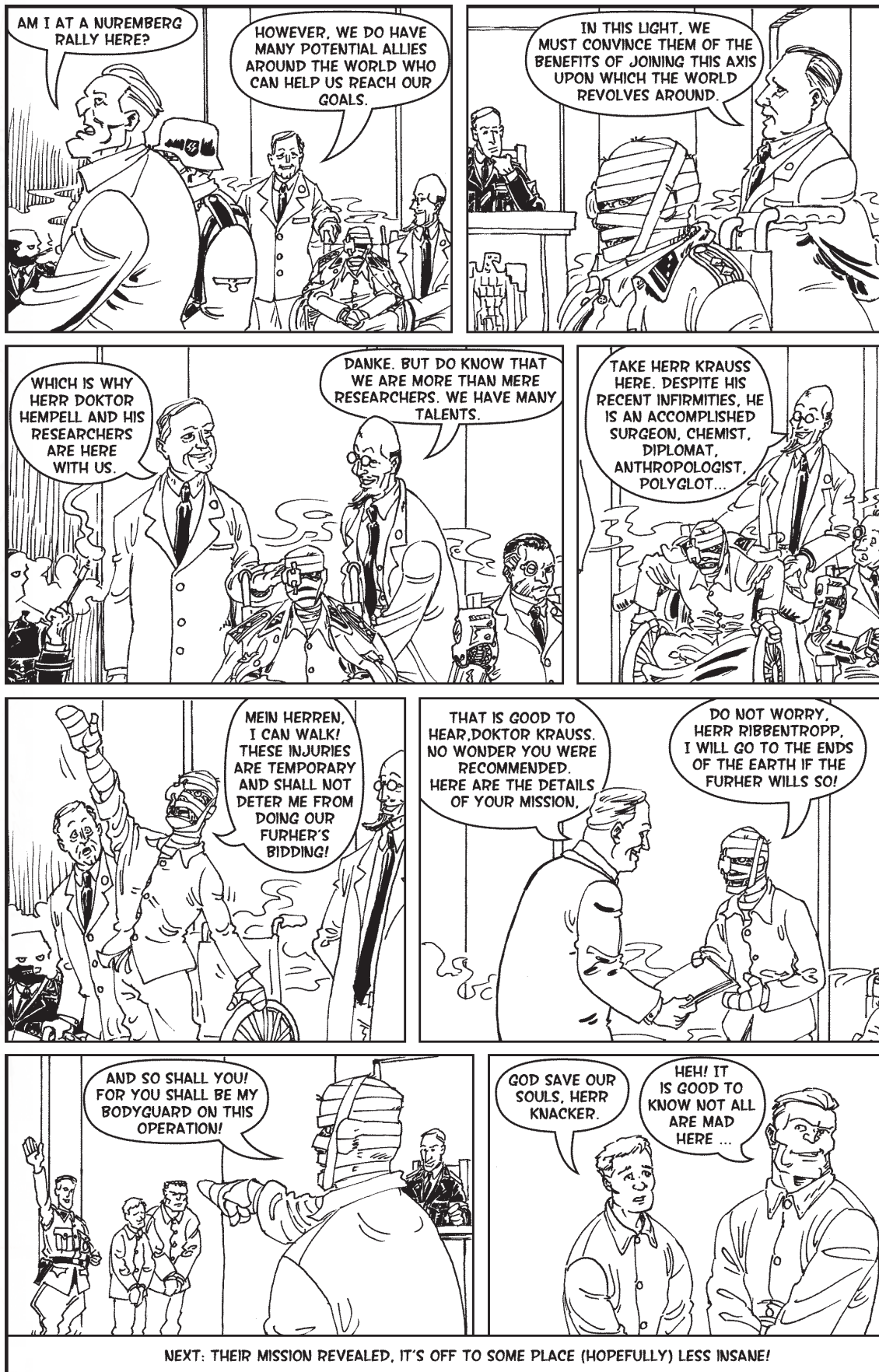
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AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

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.

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 #6.4: September 15th 2012

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ARTICLE SUGGESTIONS

Historical Articles

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

Fiction

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

Modules

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

Scenarios

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

Note: Historical Accuracy

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

Designs

New mechanical designs/vehicles/ships for use in the DP9 worlds. Designs must be legal and use either the latest SilCore rules (including all errata and the FAQ) or Blitz rules. Please indicate which design rules were used. Mechanical designs should fill a void that is not already covered by another unit. Background and a description must be included with the design, while artwork is optional and preferred. See the Historical Accuracy note, above.

Artwork

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

House Rules

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

Note: Blitz! Rules

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

Tactics

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

Miniatures/Modeling

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