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# MATTERS OF FACT

ARES #15 pp 6-8

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**2010: One Mystery Solved**

Stanley Kubrick's now classic film of Arthur C. Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, released in 1968, left moviegoers with a host of questions: Who or what transformed astronaut Dave Bowman into a Star-Child? Was HAL, easily the best known computer in all of literature or film, really insane? And perhaps the most puzzling question of all: What purpose lay behind the black monolith on the moon and its much larger brother orbiting Jupiter? At the close of Clarke's original novel, Bowman takes a space pod out to investigate the Jupiter monolith and utters his final, enigmatic statement - "My God, it's full of stars!"

Before long moviegoers will have answers to several of these questions. Clarke's sequel to 2001, *2010: Odyssey Two*, was published last year, and the film version,



although now snarled in Hollywood politics, is sure to be forthcoming.

Clarke's sequel clears up the matter of the monoliths, among other things. In 2010, the

Jupiter monolith descends to the surface and, after reproducing itself millions of times, turns Jupiter into the solar system's second star. "I know what they are! They're von Neumann machines!" cries one of Clarke's characters as he watches this incredible spectacle. "Suppose you had a very big engineering job to do ... like strip-mining the face of the moon," he explains. "You could build millions of machines to do it, but that might take centuries. If you were clever enough, you'd make just one machine - but with the ability to reproduce itself from the raw materials around it."

The von Neumann machine is the brainchild of mathematical John von Neumann (1903-1957), generally regarded as the father of the computer. Von Neumann, in the 1930s, considered the then widely held notion that machines somehow follow a law of complexity - that the tasks performed by the machine must be less complex than the machine itself. In other words, any machine produced by another machine must be less complex than the original. Noticing that living systems - cells, cats, and humans among them - routinely produced new systems at least as complicated as themselves, von Neumann suspected that there was in fact no law of complexity. He then went on to demonstrate it mathematically, in his "General and Logical Theory of Automata", published in 1950.

Von Neumann not only showed that it was theoretically possible to build a machine that could reproduce itself, but also showed that it was possible to build a machine that will produce any other machine, no matter how complex. All it needs is raw materials and sufficiently detailed instructions. Moreover, such a machine need only have four parts - an assembler or "factory" that puts together raw materials according to instructions, a set of instructions, a duplicator to make copies of instructions, and a controller to feed instructions to the factory. Such a machine can not only reproduce itself, but can produce new machines of superior complexity. Decades after von Neumann's original work on self-producing machines it was shown that DNA, the stuff of life, is made up of four parts and works exactly as von Neumann described.

Fans of the original film will be pleased to know the sequel does not clear up all the mysteries. There are enough questions left open to warrant a third, perhaps even a fourth installment of the tale that begins in 2001.

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## **IN GAMING TERMS**

**by David Cook**

The idea of a reproducing machine was a common one to science fiction even before von Neumann set out to study it. If a referee wishes to include these machines in a STAR FRONTIERS™ game, the following information covers possible situations.

History: The first known use of a von Neumann-type of machine in the Frontier came shortly after the entry of Human colonies into the area. Once the first Human bases were established, the now-overthrown government of Theseus sent 10 Independent Material Processing Plants (IMPPs) into space. Each IMPP was sent in a fully automatic starship with the following tasks to complete:

1. Locate a Human-habitable world currently not recorded.

2. Construct copies of an IMPP unit to computed maximum efficiency number.
3. Process raw mineral resources of a planet into usable form.
4. Proceed with cycle again.

The idea was that the IMPPs would be forerunners of Human expansion into the Frontier. When a colony ship arrived at a new planet there would be a good chance that large quantities of mineral ore would have been mined and refined before the Humans even landed. Unfortunately, there were problems.

The worst of these was the fact that the machines were instructed to only avoid planets they had not previously recorded. Through an immense error, the machines were not instructed to check for life forms before beginning work. This oversight resulted in the environmental destruction of several Human-habitable planets, the destruction of at least one intelligent primitive race, and a full-scale war between the machines and a Vrusk colony. Given the events that occurred, the IMPP project was abandoned and all known IMPPs were destroyed. However, not all the machines were found.

The other major use for von Neumann machines has been recently devised by the Sathar. Fragmentary messages from the edges of the Frontier and beyond have reported raids and attacks by Sathar and machines working together. The new facts available seem to indicate the machines are of the von Neumann type.

Referee's Information: The following gives the information the referee needs if he wants to have an encounter between the player characters and a von Neumann machine. The types of machines covered here are both the IMPP and the Sathar war machines.

### *IMPP* (Independent Materials Processing Plant)

There are 3 main units to an IMPP, They are:

#### ***Starship***

This unit is an unmanned spaceship capable of interstellar travel. It is the heart of the IMPP, containing the level 6 main computer (the controller/duplicator), the memory banks, an assembler unit, 50 hunter units, 8 orbital shuttles, sensors, full maintenance services, the starship controls, and the drives. Upon detecting a suitable planet, the computer places the ship in a geosynchronous orbit above the equator, locates an easily accessible deposit of raw material, and sends the assembler unit to the surface. This unit then begins to build the next major unit of the IMPP, the plant.

The starship unit is 500 meters long and 100 meters in diameter. Although unmanned, it does have access passageways and hatches for Human maintenance crews. The inside of the ship is not pressurized, however.

#### ***The Plant***

This unit begins its work once it is assembled in the surface of a planet. The plant unit has three functions - to create a pre-determined number of copies of itself, to produce hunter units, and to then become a processing center. The plant is a semi-mobile operation controlled by its own level 6 computer. Composed of modules, each module has a set of tracks that allow it to move cross-country very slowly. Once the original plant has created a second, the second moves to a new location and begins to build another plant. The number of plants grows like a spreading wave from the original. After a set number of plants have been built in an area, hunters (the third unit) are produced. Each plant will produce 1000 hunters. These hunters will be under control of that plant, which is in turn under the direction of the main controller. After the hunters are produced, the plant begins to process raw materials, generally in the form of bars or sheets. These are sealed in a urethane coating to prevent oxidation.

A plant looks like a collection of huge tank-like vehicles, interconnected by huge pipes, conveyers, wiring, etc. The area is almost always desolate-looking, with slag heaps, waste, soot, and smoke surrounding the plant.

### ***The Hunter***

*Top Speed/Cruise Speed:* 60 kph/30 kph

*Passengers:* None

*Cargo Limit:* 20,000 kg, 40 cubic meters

*Mission:* Variable

*IM:* -3

*To Hit:* 40%

The third major unit of the IMPP is the hunter. This is a small (6 meters by 4 meters), mobile unit that serves as the legs and hands of the entire operation. The hunter's task is to gather the raw materials, carry them to the plant, and move the processed materials to a storage location.

The hunter resembles a cross between a dump truck and a backhoe with three extra mechanical arms attached. One arm is fitted with a clamp hand and is capable of lifting 1000 kilograms. Any character clamped by this hand will suffer 5-50 points of damage each turn. The second arm is an articulated hard rock drill used for mining. This drill will do 10-100 points of damage to any character it hits. The third arm is a sample probe, used to take mineral samples and perform preliminary analysis on them. If a character is struck by the probe he will only take 1-10 points of damage. However, the probe will inject several chemicals, doing S20/T3 unless neutralized by an injection of an antidote.

Each hunter is run by a built-in level 3 computer. The mission of the hunter is usually to gather raw materials (ore) and carry finished materials to the storage area. A hunter will almost never bother living creatures. However, a hunter will be attracted to large deposits of metal such as a spaceship or a vehicle. If these are in the area, the hunter will attempt to dismantle them and carry the parts to the plant.

## ***Sathar Ravagers***

Very little is known about these machines and there are still serious questions to be answered concerning their true purpose, construction and use. It is considered unlikely that the Sathar would create reproducing war machines without some type of control over their numbers and activities. So far, only one type of machine has been positively identified. However, reliable reports of automated factories have supplied enough information to positively identify these machines as being of the von Neumann type.

### ***Skimmer Ravager***

*Top Speed/Cruise Speed:* 200 kph/150 kph

*Passengers:* None

*Cargo Limit:* Not carried

*Mission:* Unknown

*Weapons:* Turret-mounted heavy laser

*To Hit:* 60%

*Damage:* 8-80 points

*Defenses:* Albedo covering

The Skimmer Ravager is a hovercraft vehicle approximately 2.5 meters long, 2 meters wide, and 1.5 meters high. The entire outside of the vehicle is covered with albedo armor, giving it protection from laser fire equal to an albedo suit. The turret located on the top center of the vehicle gives the laser a 360 degree field of fire. The laser always seems to fire at the same power setting (8). The machine has never shown any inclination to conserve ammunition.

The machine is equipped with full sonar/radar/infrared/visible light/radio scanning. Each machine is connected to a main battle computer located some distance away, but is also capable of independent action if this link is jammed. However, when on independent, the machines are handicapped as they cannot work together as a unit; each machine can only do what it is programmed to think best at the moment.

Although the exact nature of the programming is not known, experience has proven the machines are instantaneously hostile to most lifeforms, including all character races.

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# INTO THE VOID

By Carl Smith  
ARES #15 pp 53-60

STAR FRONTIERS: ALPHA DAWN™ and STAR FRONTIERS: KNIGHTHAWKS™ are role-playing rules of conquest and combat in outer space. Man and allied extraterrestrials stand side by side to fight the menace of the dreaded Sathar.

The Sathar are an evil and warlike race. Resembling giant, multi-legged worms, they have infiltrated the United Planetary Federation (UPF). The Sathar's goal is to destroy the UPF and all non-Sathar life forms, and they use traitors and the technology of tomorrow to achieve it. Only a few adventurers and professionals stand between the Sathar and the fate of the universe.

To play this game, players need the original STAR FRONTIERS: ALPHA DAWN and the new STAR FRONTIERS: KNIGHTHAWKS. Also needed are three 10-sided dice and scratchpaper. Beyond that, add a little creativity and imaginative role-playing, and begin your adventure in the future.

This mini-module is meant for the referee. It is based on the short story, "Into the Void," in this issue. If you intend to play a character in this module, read no further. (Sections meant to be read aloud are in large type.)

The scenario begins aboard a freighter, the United Planetary Federation's *Prachil Star*. It is bound homeworld, carrying cargo from several galaxies. In one cargo hold, it carries a precious burden: an experimental escape vessel prototype. Because of the prototype's nature, several agents of the Pan-Galactic Corporation (PGC) have been assigned to guard it while it is in transit.

Pirates have attacked several ships in this area and the possibility exists that Sathar agents would like to steal the experimental ship for its compact void drive system.

Members of the PGC are to guard the vessel, see that it does not fall into unauthorized hands, keep unauthorized personnel out of the cargo bay where it is stored, and repulse anyone seeking to sabotage or steal the prototype.

Colonel Gaedynn is commander of the PGC force aboard the *Prachil Star*. Other members of the PGC are on board the freighter, but are not with the group at the cargo bay. The adventurers have just reported for a four-hour shift of duty.

## CARGO BAY WHERE THE XV-1 IS STORED

The cargo bay is bare metal. A few common tools lie on a work bench near the cargo doors. An emergency repair kit for the hull of the freighter lies under the



work bench. The XV-1 is the only item in the cargo hold other than the tools and repair kit that is not a molded part of the freighter's hull.

Above the door is a speaker and the emergency light. In case of attack, or depressurization of the outside corridor, the light and its accompanying alarm come on. Using the speaker and the on-off switch, a person inside can communicate with someone outside of the cargo bay without opening the cargo door.

A button on a panel to the left of the cargo door controls the two-way speaker. Just below that button are three other buttons which control the door. They read "Open", "Close", and "Lock". Once locked, only a security card and thumbprint can open the door from the outside. From inside, the door can be opened by simply depressing the "Lock" button a second time. When the door is locked, the "Lock" button is red. When unlocked, the button is unlit.

The XV-1 faces the front of the *Prachil Star*. Its starboard airlock is next to the outside bulkhead of the freighter. Anyone on the starboard side of the XV-1 cannot see the cargo bay door.

The floor of the cargo bay has mini-stanchions every ten feet. A safety line can be secured to the stanchions for zero-gravity cargo. A player in a space suit can secure his safety line to one of the stanchions by snapping it on for zero-gravity repairs inside the cargo bay.

## BATTLE IN THE CORRIDOR

Everyone has a duty station. Listed below are where the PCs can be stationed prior to the beginning of this encounter:

<b>Cpt. Llewellyn</b>	Inside cargo bay doors
<b>Hota Lea</b>	Inside XV-1
<b>Violet</b> (robot NPC)	Inside XV-1
<b>Dorf</b>	By starboard airlock of XV-1
<b>Gillimk</b>	By starboard airlock of XV-1
<b>Viyizzi</b>	By port airlock of XV-1
<b>Yoe</b>	By port airlock of XV-1
<b>Slard</b> (NPC)	In corridor outside cargo bay
<b>Col. Gaedynn</b> (NPC)	In corridor outside cargo bay

During this four-hour watch, the ship is attacked. To find out when it is attacked, roll 1d4 for the hour of the watch. If the attack occurs during the first hour, give the diagram of the XV-1 to the adventurers inside the vessel in the cargo area. Do not let others see it until they enter the XV-1.

If the attack occurs in the second, third, or fourth hour, let everyone look at the XV-1 plan. No NPCs are inside the cargo bay, and PCs are never stationed outside the cargo bay.

Every hour, have one of the PCs go outside the cargo bay to check the NPC

on guard duty. When the attack occurs, the PC opens the door and is fired upon by a mercenary NPC.

## SATHAR AND MERCENARY STATISTICS

All Sathar and mercenaries move at a standard human rate. Specific Sathar statistics are: Str/Sta 45/45, Dex/Rs 35/35, Int/Log 40/40, Per/Ldr 55/55, Im 4, Walk/Run/Hour 10m/30m/5km. All mercenaries have the following statistics: Str/Sta 40/40, Dex/Rs 40/40, Int/Log 45/45, Per/Ldr 40/40, Im 4, Walk/Run/Hour 10m/30m/5km.

Eight Sathar, each armed with a laser rifle, are aboard the *Prachil Star*. Each Sathar commands six mercenaries (total 48). Three (of the six) are armed with projectile rifles and pistols; one has a grenade launcher and a pistol, and the other two have laser pistols and rifles. Each mercenary has three magazines for each weapon. The mercenary with the grenade launcher has four grenades. Two of the Sathar-led groups have a heavy laser each. When the PC foes into the hall, start the attack. Read the following to the PCs:

The *Prachil Star* shudders and throbbing floorplates shake the cargo bay. The red light over the door of the cargo bay goes on, and an alarm begins whining - it's the battle alarm. A figure in a PGC uniform kneels in the corridor. Beside him lies another figure, an officer who is not moving. The figures are under fire from someone at the end of the corridor. There is a buzz, the metal of the cargo bulkhead glows, and then blackens. Several figures at the end of the corridor fire laser and projectile weapons.

If the PC checked the two in PGC uniforms, he discovers that Col. Gaedynn lies dead at Sgt. Slard's feet. The Sathar down the hall are firing at Slard and the PC.

There are two Sathar and three mercenaries. The Sathar have lasers, and the mercenaries are armed with projectile weapons. At this range, they have a flat chance of hitting Slard or the PC on:

Laser 10%

Gun 05%

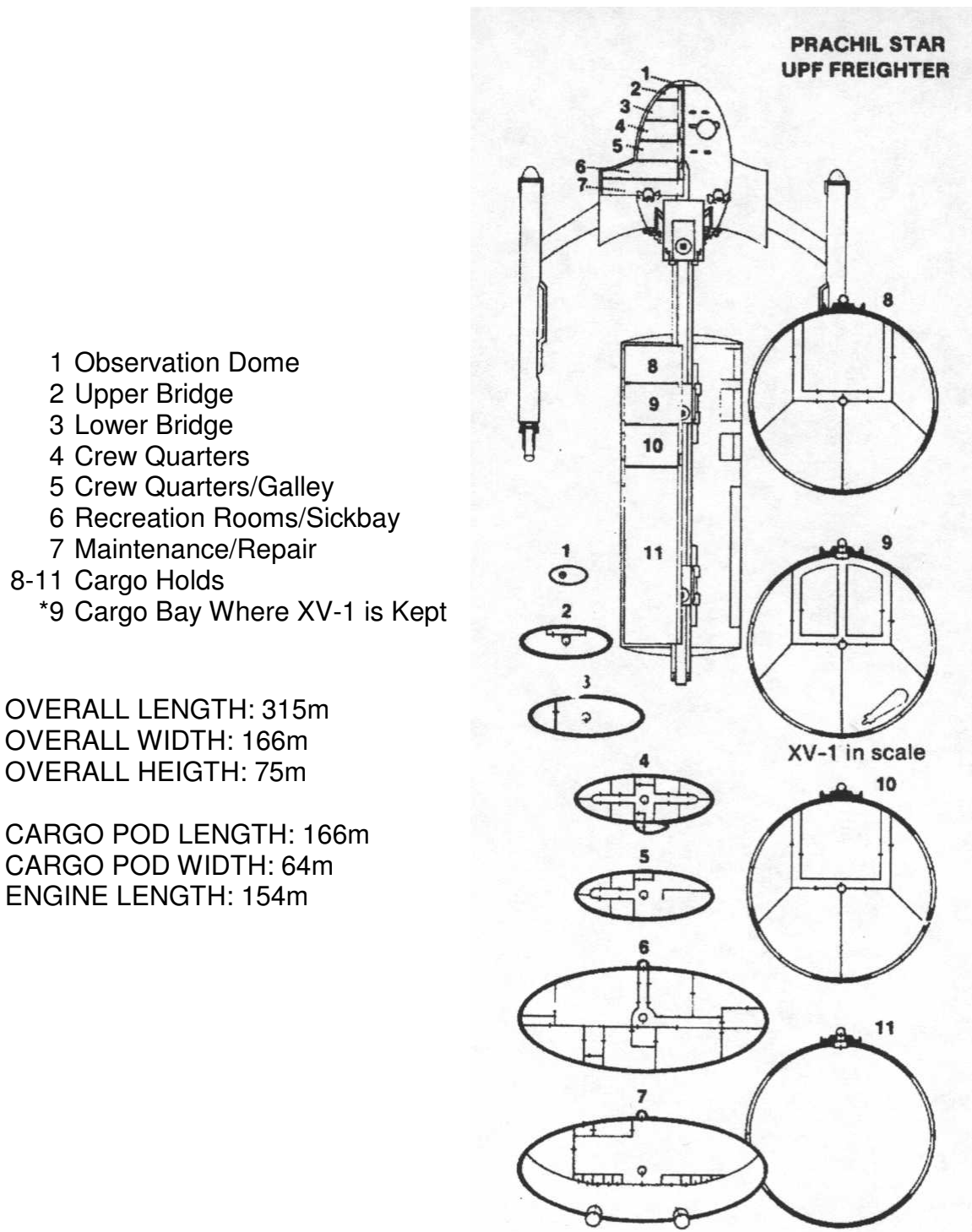
Every turn equals six seconds. For each turn the PC and Slard remain in the hall, a mercenary joins the troops firing at them. The first five have projectile weapons, and the sixth has a laser, and this pattern is repeated as long as PCs stay in the corridor.

If Slard or any PC is hit, they take a standard 1d10 of damage, because all weapons are set on their lowest setting to minimize chances of damaging the XV-1.

Attackers keep coming until Slard and the PC retreat to the door of the cargo bay. If anyone stays in the corridor for more than two minutes, he comes under fire from the corridor behind him. Sathar agents have worked their way behind the PCs by way of the port cargo door corridor. Any shots fired by the five Sathar attackers miss the first turn they sneak up behind the PCs. Thereafter, those

Sathar behind the PCs stand the same chance of hitting as the Sathar in front of the PCs.

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## THE BATTLE IN THE CARGO BAY

Treat the cargo bay door as having  $50 + 2d10$  worth of structural points. The first turn after the PCs go inside the bay, the Sathar fire a grenade rifle at the cargo door. The grenade hits the wall beside the door, causing half its normal  $8d10$  damage to the door.

There is a loud, muffled explosion in the corridor. It sounds as if someone threw an explosive charge against the cargo door.

On the third turn, the Sathar use a heavy laser on the door. It is set to use 20 Standard Energy Units (SEU) per shot/turn. A Sathar continues shooting the heavy laser at the door until the door is burned through. The first turn after the door is burned through, the hole is too hot to enter. It is cool enough not to burn through space suits on every turn thereafter.

The door then begins to get warm. The metal changes colors, glowing, sagging, and turning molten. A 24-inch hole appears.

On the first turn the door is burnt through, one Sathar mercenary may fire either laser or a projectile weapon through it per turn. Through the hole in the cargo door, the mercenaries can see only the port side of the XV-1.

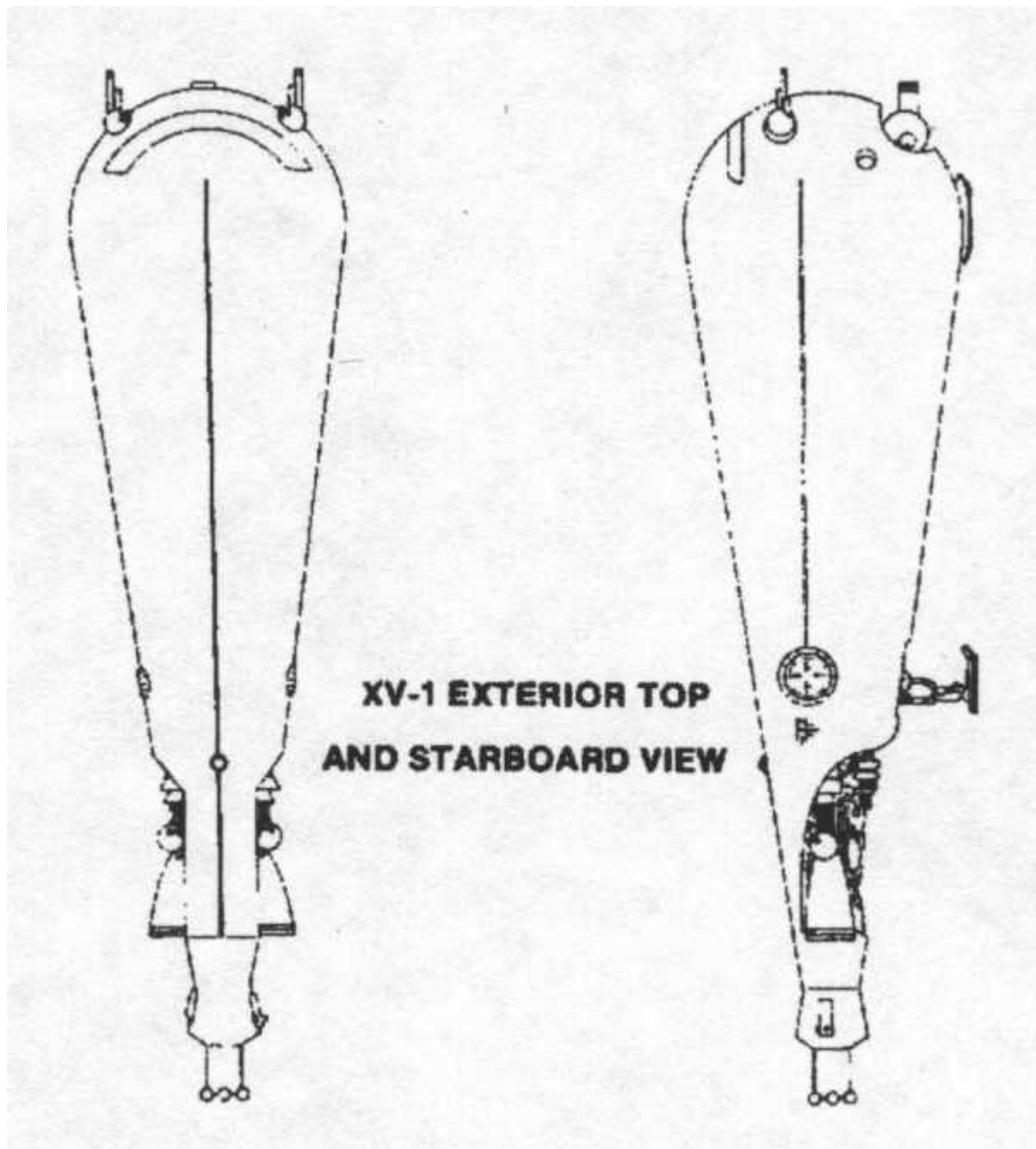
Sathar mercenaries fire at targets in the following order:

1. Anyone close to the door.
2. Anyone in the cargo bay not near the XV-1.
3. Anyone in the port airlock of the XV-1 or hiding behind the vessel and shooting at them.
4. The XV-1 itself.

Players may fire at the Sathar or attempt to board the XV-1. To board the vessel, they must go to an airlock and step inside. They may not fire during that turn, as they need both hands to get aboard the XV-1.

PCs firing at any Sathar coming through or firing through the door do so with the penalty for firing at a target behind cover. Sathar receive a penalty for firing at PCs on the starboard side of the XV-1 (treat as hard cover).

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## INSIDE THE XV-1

PCs inside the XV-1 cannot see what is going on outside unless they are in either the pilot or co-pilot/gunner's seat. All PCs have some ship-handling skills, but Llewellyn is the best pilot, followed by Yoe.

It takes one turn to ready the XV-1's weapons, sublight, void, life support, and communication systems. Using the console microphone, those inside can communicate with Llewellyn (or any PC) who is wearing an exo-suit (s space

suit) equipped with an intercom.

Once someone takes one of the two pilot's chairs, the others may choose any seat #3-7. Slard, an NPC, automatically takes seat #8.

Once aboard, Slard voices his uncertainty about the safety of the craft. He complains about the risk they are taking in using an untested experimental vessel, and how dangerous flying near the Sathar warships is once the XV-1 gets outside the *Prachil Star*.

Whoever is in the pilot or co-pilot's chair knows what is going on outside the XV-1. Tell that PC (and he can inform the others):

You see the PCs outside the ship moving away from the cargo door. The cargo door appears to be melting.

If the PCs switch on the vessel's power so its sensors can be used, they hear a PC say shots are being fired. Once the door has a hole melted through it, the sensors reveal life forms in the corridor outside the cargo bay.

The XV-1 is capable of sublight and void travel. Its console is no more complex than an orbital craft's.

Players inside the XV-1 should be made aware that they have very little chance of fighting their way through the corridor. If necessary, they may contact other areas of the freighter. The advice they receive from the other areas of the ship is to stay put and not attempt to enter the corridors.

Make the players aware of the capabilities of the FF laser cannon on the XV-1. The cannon has a possible 10,000 SEU at its disposal. It can be fired in increments as small as 10 SEU or as large as 100 SEU.

As soon as the players are aware that the FF laser cannon can destroy a portion of the wall, it is up to one of them to know that the XV-1 can blast a hole through it, and they can escape. If they do so, point out that one of the primary directives is to keep the XV-1 out of unauthorized hands.

The exterior wall of the ship has a value of  $50 + 2d10$ . If the PCs attempt to blast through the wall, the canon is set at 50 SEU. To create a hole large enough for the XV-1 to pass through, the PC must get three hits on the wall, or a total greater than the value of the wall.

When the PC makes his first hit on the wall, the cargo bay depressurizes. Anyone or anything in the cargo bay or just outside its door is sucked into space unless secured to something or safely inside the XV-1. A safety line from a spacesuit can withstand the strain of depressurization, although the sudden loss of pressure will knock a secured PC off his feet.

Any PC outside the XV-1 after the decompression must fight in zero-gravity conditions, and make his way inside the escape craft. On the third turn after decompression, more Sathar mercenaries come to the door and begin firing at anyone in the cargo bay. They all have laser rifles set at 20 SEU.

Should the players be reluctant to blast a hole through the outer hull of the *Prachil Star* and escape, the Sathar and their mercenaries enter the cargo bay. The Sathar and mercenaries take two turns to reach the XV-1. Once they have reached it, they can open the airlocks by pressing the button on the outside. There is no effective way of "locking" it, although the airlock between the cabin

and the entry room can be locked from the console; so can the airlock going into the engineering and tail section of the craft. The Sathar can open the "locked" airlocks by firing at them as they did with the door to the cargo bay. Each airlock has a structural value of  $50 + 1d10$ .

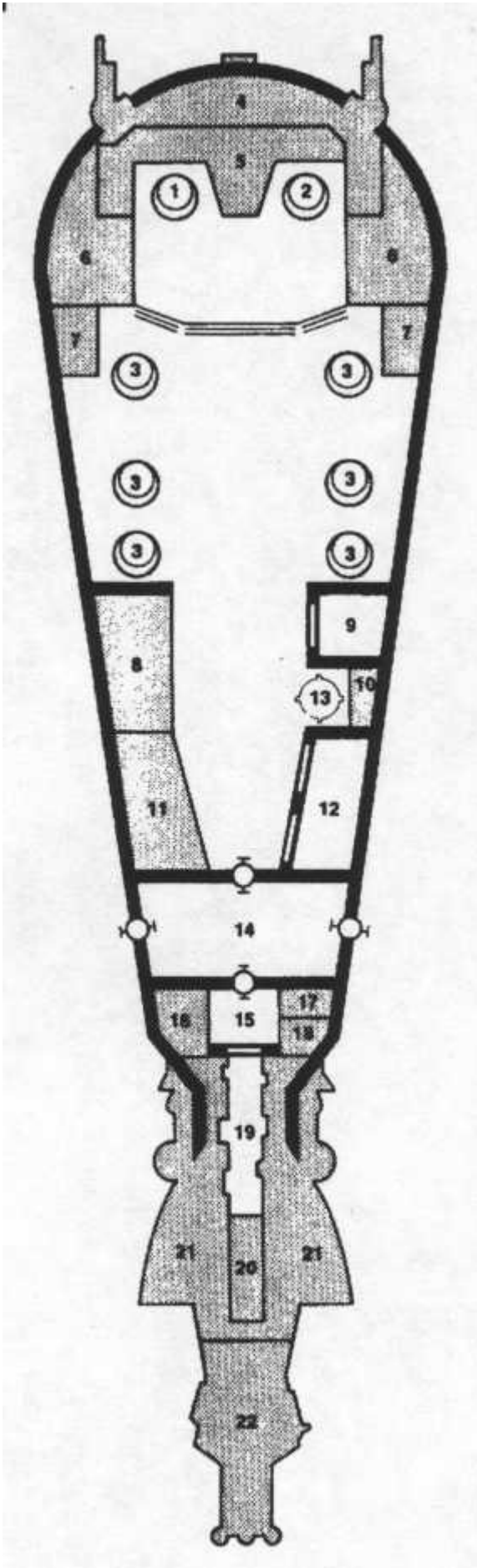
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## KEY TO THE XV-1

Locations on the XV-1 are numbered for specific locations. General areas are simply referred to as forward, or the passenger compartment; the airlock entry; or the rear section. The key to the deck plan is:

- 1 Pilot's Grav-Couch
- 2 Co-Pilot's/Gunner's Grav-Couch
- 3 Passenger Grav-Couch
- 4 Gunnery Control
- 5 Flight Control Console
- 6 Life Support Console
- 7 Shield Unit
- 8 Food Processing/Recycling
- 9 Chemical Toilet
- 10 Robotic Charging/Service Center
- 11 Medical and Exo-Scanner
- 12 Computers
- 13 Exo-Suit Storage
- 14 Robotic Mooring Station
- 15 Airlock/Pressurization Area
- 16 Engineering Area
- 17 Astrogation Unit
- 18 Sublight Communication Computer
- 19 Void Communication Computer
- 20 Sublight Drive Access Way
- 21 Life Support System
- 22 Sublight Drive Unit  
Void Drive Unit

Total Length: 22m





## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

**Item #10, Captain's Control Console.** On the console are tie-ins and screens for all computers. From this console are tie-ins and screens for all computers. From this console all interior airlocks and hatches can be locked, as well as all fired weapons and powered defenses. Radio communications outside the hull, to anyone in a space suit on the same band, sublight communication, and void communication originate with the radio here.

**Item #17, Robotic Charging and Tie-in Computer.** This unit allows Violet to tie-in directly with the XV-1's computers and to inform the crew the extent of any damage. The computer can also fix any damage to Violet requiring fourth level skills or less. violet has the equivalent of three power-packs, and they can be recharged from this unit.

**Item #18, Medical and Exo-Scanner Computers.** Using these computers, the crew can determine if any accessible asteroid can support human life. Also, the medical computers can identify damage to characters, and recommend treatment. The computer has the equivalent of 10 stimdose, a freezefield with a 2,000 SEU power pack, first aid, diagnosis, minor surgery, 10 anti-tox, communication interpretation, a built-in polyvox, 10 staydose, and 10 telol. It has a success rate of 20% in identifying/treating any life form which is not a PC.

**ITEM #19, Exo-Suit and Weapons Storage Locker.** Inside are five laser rifles each with three power packs; three laser pistols with a total of 30 power packs; a heavy laser with four power packs and tripod; four machetes; two vibroknives and power packs; three automatic rifles with three magazines each; three automatic pistols with three magazines each and 2,000 rounds of pistol ammunition in a box; six holoflares; eight all-weather coveralls with arctic inserts; and three exo-suits with helmets.

When the PCs use the XV-1 to exit the freighter, they must do so at sublight drive speed. If they attempt to use void drive, the void computer automatically cuts the void drive off. A second attempt results in a flashing message from the computer: *Void drive cannot be activated in a confined space. Move to open space and reactivate void drive unit.*

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## ATTACK BY SATHAR FIGHTERS

Once outside the hull of the freighter, the PCs are attacked by Sathar Fighters and a Sathar Frigate. The Sathar ships fire bursts of increasing strength (10 SEU, 20 SEU, etc. . . .) until it is evident that the PCs do not intend to stop. The Sathar may increase their power to 100 SEU once the XV-1 fires on one of them

and achieves a hit. After that happens, or when the PCs go into void drive, the Sathar Frigate fires its last torpedo.

The torpedo hits the XV-1, but does negligible damage. It damages three different areas of the XV-1 using the STAR FRONTIERS: KNIGHTHAWKS™ Advanced Damage/Location Table. None of the damage is multiple. If the d% indicates more than one hit in an area, roll again. If the void drive is hit, it is damaged. If no die roll results in damage to the void drive, assign damage there. The XV-1 does into the void one time, and thereafter the void drive malfunctions as follows.

After the first void drive attempt any further trials will force the XV-1 to jump backward 10,000 km. The XV-1 may successfully jump into the void as it fights the Sathar Fighters and Frigate the first time, and then it takes void drive damage. Thereafter, any attempts to jump the void results in the XV-1 going backward as outlined.

The XV-1 may take damage to the ammunition supply of its cannon. Treat each 100 SEU as one shot. Under no circumstance is the XV-1 to have less than two shots at the final scenario. Other ammunition may be destroyed, as long as 200 SEU remain.

## INTO THE VOID

The XV-1 has jumped into the void successfully. It now lies far away from the ships attacking the *Prachil Star*. The portion of space it occupies is known to all aboard the vessel.

A vast expanse of space lies ahead. The astrogation computers show that the ship has jumped across space into the void.

If the PCs attempt to use the astrogation computers further, give them computer feedback that is gibberish. If the player's think to have the command console run a check on the XV-1's systems, reveal that they cannot fully access void drive, void communication, or astrogation.

If a player thinks to link Violet to the void computer, tell him that the system has sustained minimal damage.

Any further attempts to jump into the void result in the XV-1 jumping backward 1d6 x 10,000 km in a straight line. If the players do not think to jump backward after a reasonable period of time, let Hota Lea attempt to fix the computer. After a brief interval, she announces:

With the equipment we have onboard, attempting to fix the computer is like trying to fix void drive with a screwdriver.

Violet can diagnose what is wrong with the ship, if asked. She can also indicate what will happen if the PCs attempt to use the void drive, i.e., the XV-1 will jump backward up to 60,000 km. If asked to attempt to repair it, Violet answers:

I am one of the finest diagnostic medical robots available. I am not a surgical robot. I am not a robotic repair unit. The damaged circuit is in such a place on the panel that we would have to chance leaving the XV-1 a floating hulk, totally without power. The chances of such an operation succeeding with our limited

repair facilities are 11 in 3,736, 941. The chances of compounding the damage with human error are prohibitive. It would be unwise to attempt repairs outside of a qualified and well-fitted repair facility.

Aboard the XV-1, all computers, drives, and numbered areas have an access panel from both the interior and exterior of the ship. To attempt repairs on any of these computers or drives requires a tech Level 5 repairing machinery, and a robotics skill Level 6 altering mission, as well as Level 6 repairing computers.

For sublight drive, a Level 3 repairing machinery is needed. Anyone with any operating machinery skill can fly this simple craft. In order to operate the FF cannon, a person must have a military skill with beam weapons, or the ability to operate machinery, as firing is integral to the operation of the XV-1.

## SLARD, THE TRAITOR

Once the vessel has been explored, and the damage assessed, the NPC Slard begins having what the PCs may interpret as "second thoughts" about escaping the battle. He talks to them about how badly damaged the ship is, and how it might be wiser to seek an inhabited planet or habitable asteroid and send out a distress signal on all operating bands. Slard says:

I don't know how much damage this vessel can take. How do we know Violet's right? After all, it is primarily a medical robot - it might have made a mistake.

If the PCs think Slard's assessment is correct, Slard plays along with them until a suitable asteroid is found. To find a habitable asteroid, roll 1d10 every turn. A result of 1 means an asteroid capable of supporting life has been located.

If the PCs do not find an asteroid within then turns, or if they do not agree to Slard's plan, he acts as if nothing is the matter. Soon as he has a chance, he secretly pulls out his weapon, a laser pistol, and orders the XV-1 to go in the direction from which they came: Slard says:

All right, listen to me. I am taking over command of this ship. We're going to turn her right around and go back where we came from. Nobody do anything foolish, and we'll all live a lot longer.

If PCs accuse Slard of being a Sathar agent, he tells them the truth: The Sathar want the XV-1 because they heard rumors about how well it works. They want it to use its drive system and computers on kamikaze fighters for attacks on PGC ships, bases, and planets. Slard says:

What's a traitor? I see which way things are going, and I want to be on the winning side. A traitor becomes a hero when his side wins - he's only a traitor if his side loses. The Sathar pay well, and they aren't going to lose.

Slard is alert. A player must have a reaction speed of better than 5 to catch Slard off-guard. If a PC with a reaction speed of 5 or less attempts to draw his weapon, Slard receives first shot at them.

Players in the grav-couches suffer a -20 to their dexterity. If they draw their weapon, they must also make their dexterity roll or Slard will fire first. A player attempting to draw his weapon, but failing his dexterity roll, still is able to fire. Failure means that he did not draw quickly enough to get first shot.

Players shooting at Slard may hit him. If so, consult the star frontiers chart for damage. If they miss Slard, check what is in their line of fire, and have them roll again to see if they hit anything. All interior items (with the exception of airlocks and separating walls, which have already been covered) have 25 + 1d10 of structural points. If the number of points is exceeded, the machinery of computer is damaged.

When fired upon, Slard returns fire at the nearest target firing at him, or moving toward him. If several targets are equidistant from Slard, he returns fire to the one most nearly in front of him.

Slard also has a doze grenade and a tangler grenade in his suit. On the second round of firing, he throws the doze grenade at those firing at him. On the following round, he throws the tangler grenade at the PCs in the pilot/co-pilot area.

Should Slard die or be incapacitated, the PCs become aware of a blip on the sensor screen. If they ask the computer, it reveals that the blip on the screen is most likely the Sathar Frigate which has followed them into the void.

## ENCOUNTER WITH THE SATHAR FRIGATE

When the Frigate appears, the PCs notice a blip on their sensor screen. The Sathar vessel does not attack them at once. It prefers to take the XV-1 undamaged. Over the sublight intercom comes the message:

*Surrender! You will be well treated. It is futile to resist. Further attempts at evasion will result in your vessel being destroyed. We offer you your lives.*

The offer, of course, is only a ploy to capture the XV-1. The PCs who surrender will be brainwashed and sent back to the UPF as saboteurs. Should any resist, they will be executed on the spot.

If the PCs attempt to escape, the Sathar fires on them with laser cannons. The first Sathar shot automatically miss. Thereafter, the Sathar has a 20% chance of hitting the XV-1. the XV-1 has 150 structural points. All damage from the Sathar is non-specific. If it is important that the players know, roll on the Weapons Table in the STAR FRONTIERS Expanded Game Rules to see where damage would occur, and tell the players that the XV-1 is partially damaged in that area.

The PCs may be able to bring the XV-1 about and face the Sathar. If they do so, allow them to fight normally, but the Sathar has the option of using all weaponry, save the torpedos. The Sathar Frigate fired its last torpedo at the XV-1 in the previous encounter when it damaged the XV-1's void drive system.

If the PCs use the vessel to jump backward and put themselves behind the Sathar, allow them to do so. When they shoot from behind, give them two rolls on the Advanced Damage Chart from KNIGHTHAWKSTM to show the severe effects of this unexpected maneuver.

If the PCs have not destroyed the Sathar prior to their fourth hit on the Sathar, the fourth hit will blow up the Sathar Frigate.

Once the Sathar is destroyed, the players automatically find an asteroid which is habitable. They cannot repair void drive or void communication, although they

have sublight capability in both areas. They may wait for help, or explore the asteroid while awaiting rescue.

## PLAYER CHARACTER STATISTICS

Capt. Dai Llewellyn: Str/Sta 50/50, Dex/Rs 55/55, Int/Log 50/50, Per/Ldr 65/70, Im 6. Left-handed human male. Armed with laser pistol, 9 mm service automatic (projectile) pistol, gyrojet pistol and a vibroknife. His skills are: Level 3 beam, projectile and gyrojet weapons, Level 2 thrown weapons, and martial arts; Level 2 operating machinery, detecting alarms, and Level 1 tracking and first aid. He has an albedo suit under his exo-suit (spacesuit).

Viyizzi: Str/Sta 25/25, Dex/Rs 65/65, Int/Log 45/45, Per/Ldr 60/60, Im 7. She is an ambidextrous Yazirian female, armed with a laser pistol, automatic pistol, and vibroknife. She wears an albedo suit, and has the following ability levels: Level 4 beam and projectile weapons; Level 3 deactivating alarms; Level 2 tracking, survival, and stealth.

Yoe: Str/Sta 60/60, Dex/Rs 55/55, Int/Log 40/40, Per/Ldr 50/50, Im 6. He is an overweight Yazirian male able to "glide" only on the lightest gravity planets, and is right-handed. He carries a laser pistol and a vibroknife, and wears an albedo suit. His experience levels are: Level 1 beam and projectile weapons; Level 2 setting charges, following directions; Level 3 operating machinery and repairing machinery.

Hota Lea: Str/Sta 55/55, Dex/Rs 50/50, Int/Log 70/75, Per/Ldr 40/40, Im 4. She is a right-handed human female. She carries a laser pistol and vibroknife and wears an albedo suit. Her experience levels are: Level 1 beam and projectile weapons; Level 2 bypassing security, manipulating programs; Level 3 operating computers, interfacing, and repairing computers; Level 4 repairing robots, altering functions, and altering mission.

Dorf: Str/Sta 55/55, Dex/Rs 45/45, Int/Log 35/35, Per/Ldr 50/50, Im 5. Dorf is a Dralasite who wears an albedo suit, carries a laser pistol and vibroknife, and has a permanent "arm/pseudopod" on his right side due to an accident in the Sathar Wars. His experience levels are: Level 1 beam and projectile weapons; Level 2 martial arts; Level 3 making tools/weapons, and empathy.

Gillimk: Str/Sta 45/45, Dex/Rs 45/45, Int/Log 40/40, Per/Ldr 45/45, Im 5. He is an ambidextrous Vruskan male who wears an albedo suit and carries a laser pistol and vibroknife. His experience levels are: Level 1 beam and projectile weapons; Level 2 operating machinery, repairing machinery; Level 3 first aid, controlling infection.

## NON-PLAYER CHARACTER STATISTICS

Slard: Str/Sta 50/50, Dex/Rs 40/40, Int/Log 45/45, Per/Ldr 50/50, Im 4. He is a right-handed human male who wears an albedo suit. He is armed with a laser pistol, a vibroknife, a doze grenade, and a tangler grenade. His experience levels are: Level 1 thrown weapons; Level 2 beam and projectile weapons; Level 3 making tools/weapons.

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# THE ZAMRA:

## Weapon of the Yazirians

### A STAR FRONTIERS® Game Variant

by William Tracy  
ARES #17 p41

The zamra has been used by the Yazirians for many centuries; it is a metallic disc about 10 centimeters in diameter, with sharp edges, used as a hurled weapon. Yazirians wear a gauntlet of light metal mesh when using this device so they will not be cut by it.

The zamra was used in the early history of the Yazirians as a dueling weapon. The two Yazirians in the duel would climb separate poles about 20 meters in height with a distance of about 5 meters between them. At a given signal the Yazirians would leap from the poles and glide downwards; each would have one zamra to throw at the other. If the duel was not between enemies, the Yazirians would try to hit each other's wing-like membranes, causing opponents to fall faster. The duelists would try to critically wound or kill each other if they were enemies.

The winner of the duel had to fill several conditions. He had to be alive when he landed, the last one to touch down, and had to land within a two-meter diameter circle which was clearly marked on the ground. One contestant had to meet all these requirements or the duel was considered a draw.

Sometimes duels were carried out using zamras made of softer material. These were generally non-lethal, but sometimes contestants were badly injured or slain with them anyway. Over the years the Yazirians started using the zamra not only in duels but also in any sort of fighting. Even now in the age of space travel, most Yazirians know how to use the weapon.

The statistics for using zamras in STAR FRONTIERS gaming follow:

**Weapon Type:** zamra

**Damage:** 1d10 (1d6 if non-lethal variety)

**Ammo:** 1 (itself)

**Rate of Fire:** 1/turn

**Defense:** Inertia

**Point-blank Range:** 0-5 meters

**Short Range:** 6-10 meters

**Medium Range:** 11-20 meters

**Long Range:** 21-30 meters

**Extreme Range:** 31-40 meters

A yazirian will carry at most two types of zamras. One type is produced in a variety of colors (except red) and can be used anytime the character wishes. The other type is dark red, and can only be used against that Yazirian's life-enemy.

Often the red zamra will be carried as a sign of honor if the Yazirian chooses a life-enemy that is not a living being, such as a disease or a competitive company. Typically only one red zamra is ever owned by a Yazirian; to own more is considered disgraceful. A character may own as many other kinds of zamras as he pleases.

When a Yazirian character is created, a six-sided die is rolled to determine the initial skill level the character has when throwing a zamra. A roll of 1-3 means a skill level of 1; a 4-5 roll means a skill level of 2; and a roll of 6 indicates a skill level of 3. This skill level may be improved over time. A character's base chance to hit targets when using a zamra equals one-half the character's dexterity expressed as a percentage, plus 10% per skill level with the zamra, plus range, movement, careful aiming, cover, target size, and thrower's condition modifiers. Use an additional -15% penalty if cast by a gliding Yazirian (such as during a duel).

Other character races may use the zamra, though Yazirians tend to frown upon such practices. The zamra has a significant place in Yazirian folklore and culture, and Yazirians like to see it treated with proper respect (which they don't feel can be given the device by other races). Although they usually won't attack someone seen using a zamra, Yazirians won't necessarily be happy to see this situation, either.

Yazirian battle gauntlets and zamras are made of strong, light alloy; zamras weigh about .5 kilograms. Game characters can never "modernize" zamras by adding devices to make them some sort of energized weapon.

Note: the zamra will always be used before any other weapon carried by a Yazirian if a life-enemy is being fought.

When a Yazirian is using a zamra against his life-enemy, he gains a +10% bonus to the chance that he will go into a battle rage, which will last as long as he is fighting his life-enemy. A red zamra will be used against life-enemies if possible, though other sorts will do.

## **ZAMRA TRICKS**

If cast at a gliding Yazirian, a roll "to hit" that is less than or equal to 1/10th the thrower's normal "to hit" score may (at the caster's option) disable one of the target Yazirian's wing-like membranes, forcing him to cut his gliding distance in half and land quickly.

If two Yazirians are throwing zamras at each other, each has a chance to catch the zamra thrown at him with the battle-gloved hand. The chance is equal to one-half the character's dexterity plus 3% per zamra skill level. If the gloved character is hit by a zamra yet makes his catch percentage, he will take no damage.

Any character with a zamra skill level of four or better has a chance to try rebound shots. For example, the character may be pinned down by gunfire in a corridor, with assailant firing from around the corner. The zamra thrower may attempt to make the zamra bounce off a wall or other surface and strike the assailant. There must be a hard surface for a rebound shot to be attempted, and



a zamra can only bounce off one surface to make an effective attack. The following procedure must be used:

1. Basic chance to hit: 1/2 dexterity (round fractions up).
2. Bonus: +5% per zamra skill level.
3. Add or subtract range modifiers, adding 5 meters of effective distance for the rebound itself.
4. Use the rest of the modifiers listed on p.22 of the STAR FRONTIERS Expanded Rulebook.
5. Subtract 1-4 points from the zamra's damage if it hits the target, as the rebound absorbs part of the zamra's kinetic energy.

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# "FIRE AT WILL!"

## Miniatures Rules for the STAR FRONTIERS™ KNIGHT HAWKS game

by Carl Smith  
ARES #17 pp 42-46

*The bridge of the UPF Constellation was bathed in blue light. Flipping the protective cover off the switches on the console before him, the captain powered the ship's defenses and armaments.*

*They'd found the Sathar, and it was now or never.*

*"CONDITION RED! RED ALERT!" blared the speakers.*

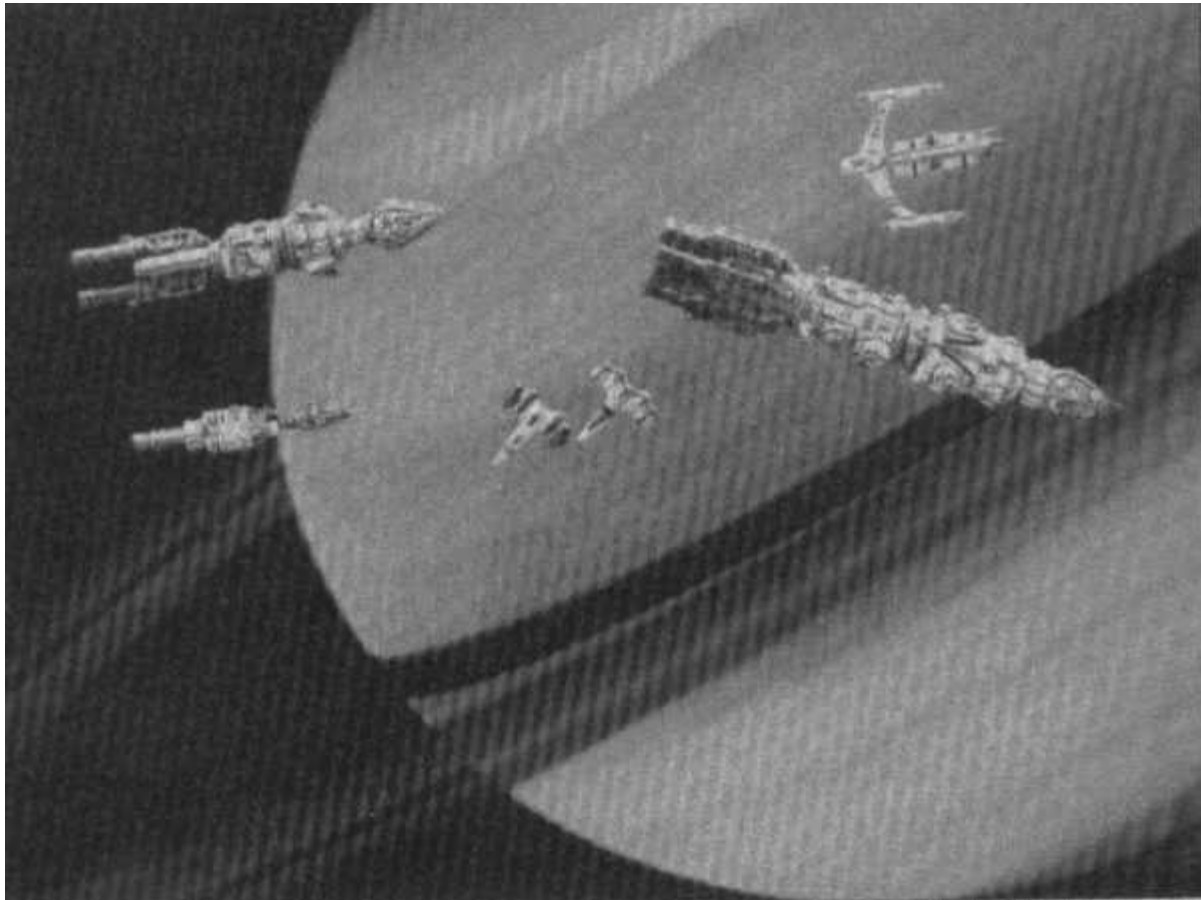
*The captain nodded shortly. "Lasers locked in, Mister Kandrel?"*

*"Locked and ready, sir," called the gunnery officer.*

*"Bring them to bear on target." The target was a white dot moving across the viewscreen, coded symbols flickering beside it. "Fire at will, Mister Kandrel."*

*"Aye-aye, sir!" The lieutenant opened the protective cover for the switches. Without hesitation he triggered four on the top row.*

*All eyes watched the viewscreen intently. A few seconds later it blinked, and the moving white dot was no longer there.*



## INTRODUCTION

These rules convert the board movement and combat systems given in the KNIGHT HAWKS™ game so they may be used with TSR, Inc.'s KNIGHT HAWKS game miniatures to fight battles in outer space. To use these conversion rules, a player needs to be familiar with the KNIGHT HAWKS game.

Combat results and other game variables are decided by rolling one or more 10-sided dice, to get results from 1-10, 1-100, 2-20, etc. Combat results are shown in the KNIGHT HAWKS game, under the Advanced Game Combat Table.

All miniature figures represent one vessel of a particular class. The only exception to this rule is a grouping of five fighters, molded as a "flight."

## **TIME SCALE**

One game turn equals ten minutes of game time (not real time). During this turn, both players move and conduct all their attacks. Everything occurring in this turn is considered simultaneous.

Players roll a die for initiative before movement each turn. The player winning the roll has the option of being the first or last one to move and fire offensive weapons.

*Note:* Seeker missiles for either side are always moved last in a turn, after both sides have already moved.

## **DISTANCE SCALE CONVERSIONS (HEXES-INCHES)**

One hex from the KNIGHT HAWKS game maps represents an area 10,000 km across; using miniatures, two inches will equal 10,000 km (so one inch equals 5,000 km in the gamescale). A turn from one hex-side to another in the KNIGHT HAWKS game becomes a 60 degree turn in the miniature version.

## **MOVEMENT**

Each ship retains its specific acceleration and deceleration factor (ADF) as outlined in the rules. All ADFs are measured in increments of two inches (10,000 km).

Players may never willingly "ram" one starship into another. To do so would totally destroy both vessels. Players must move so as to avoid collision whenever possible.

Any evasive movement is noted on the ship log, and that vessel is moved at one-half normal speed.

*Turning:* A protractor may be used to determine turning angle. For every two inches of forward movement, a player may make one facing change of 60 degrees or less. This may be done in accordance with MR rate, i.e., a player with 2 MR may make no more than two 60-degree changes in his turn. Players do not have to turn during their move if they do not want to. All ships must move 2" forward prior to executing any turns.

*Exception:* Any player not moving may face his vessel in any direction he chooses, regardless of MR rate.

## **RANGE**

In the KNIGHT HAWKS game, all ranges are measured in hexes (each hex being 10,000 km). When using these rules for miniatures, one inch equals 5,000 km. A weapon with a range of ten hexes thus fires twenty inches. Simply double the range in hexes to find a weapon's range in inches.

*Note:* Mark a white dot on the front (center) of each miniature's stand. All measurement from one vessel to another should use the white mark as a reference. This dot also serves as a point of reference for all forward-firing (FF) lasers.

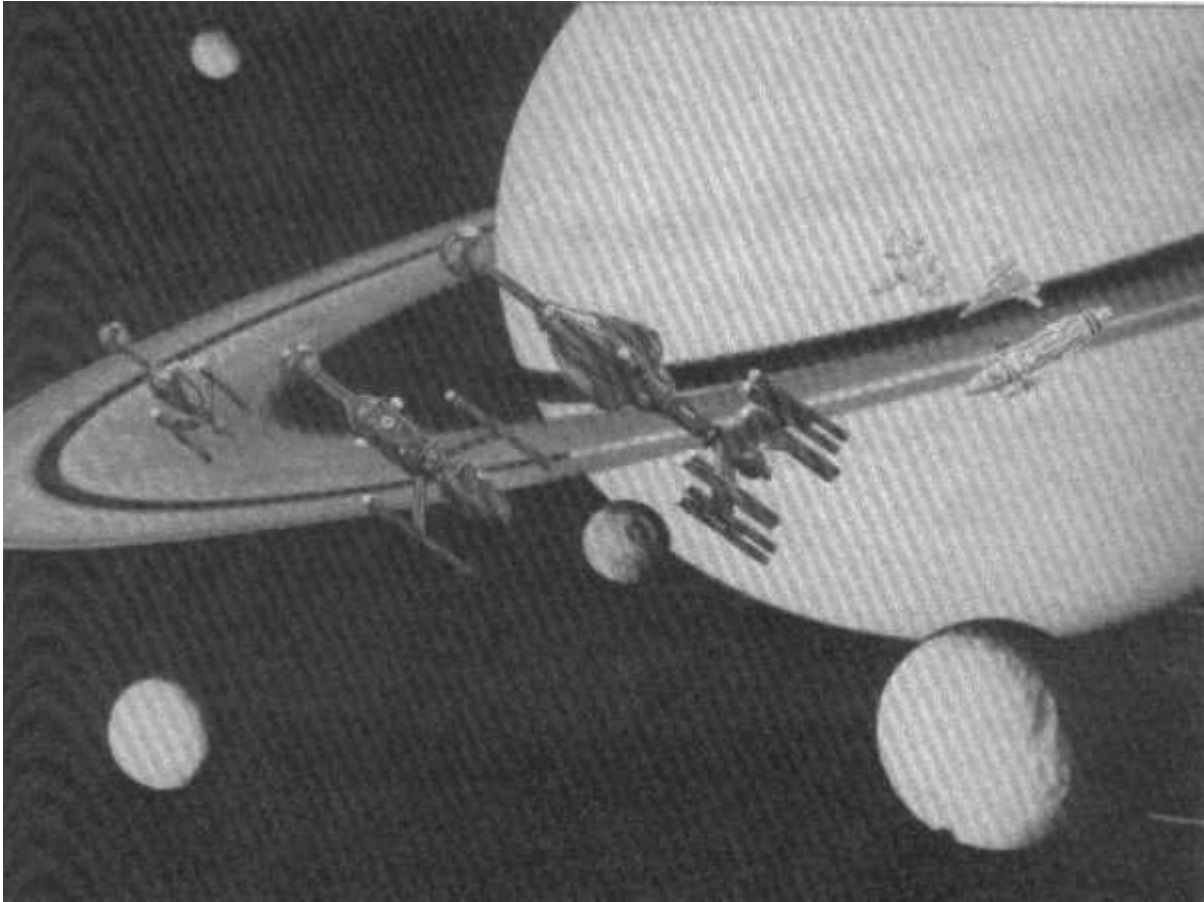
When measuring, round up all fractions of an inch if the distance is half an inch or greater. Round down if the distance is less than half. This is used for determining all movement distances and ranges.

*Optional rule:* All ranges may be estimated prior to being measured. If a target is out of range, you have wasted your shot. All fire must be "laid-in" (i.e. allocated) before combat begins.

## **AREA (ZONES OF CONTROL)**

No ship may move within one-half inch of another ship. No ship may fire through another vessel. All ships must have a direct line of sight between their guns and their intended target. Destroyers will often "screen" larger ships, intercepting fire intended for the capital ship, by blocking the line of sight between it and other ships. Ships arranged with only one-half inch between them "screen" ships behind them from enemy fire.

*Exception:* Fighters may maneuver between larger ships, enter and exit an assault carrier, and fly in formation in any area of one-half inch. Individual fighters conduct their attacks as part of a formation. Generally a group of fighters will attempt to intercept another group of fighters or an unescorted vessel.



## FIRING

Ships with forward-firing weapons (FF) may fire those FFs only within a 60 degree arc, 30 degrees to either side of their bow (front). Turret-mounted weapons may fire in a 360 degree arc, all around the ship.

Vessels firing in a straight line from their front with FF weapons stand a slightly better chance to hit; use the HEAD-ON charts for this. Any ship firing at a target within 5 degrees of its center line receives the bonus for a "head-on" shot. Use the white dot on the stand to measure these shots.

*Defensive fire:* During its defensive phase of turn, a ship may fire at any target which is in its unimpeded field of fire. A ship which is screened may not be fired upon. Only laser cannons, ICMs, laser batteries, and rocket batteries may be fired defensively.

All ICMs must be fired at designated incoming attacks. ICMs cannot be allocated to all incoming attacks, but specific ones, i.e., an ICM cannot be used against both fire from a rocket battery and a torpedo. It must be used only against one or the other. If a player wishes protection from both, he must fire at least two ICMs.

*Seeker missile fire:* Use paper counters to represent Seeker missiles. These missiles have a duration of six turns, and a maximum 24" speed. Because of their size and guidance systems, seekers may change direction up to 180 degrees before moving. Any ship coming within 2" of a seeker will activate it.

Seeker missiles always move last in a turn, after all other movement has taken place.

*Torpedo fire:* Torpedoes have a duration of one turn, and a range of eight inches. Torpedoes must be able to trace a path to their target without coming closer than one-half inch to any other target. If a torpedo comes within one-half inch of a target, it hits that target instead of its original target.

## DAMAGE

As noted in the KNIGHT HAWKS™ game, ships have several means of protection which must be indicated on the ship log if used. Examples of ship defenses include reflective hulls and masking screens, and their effects should be taken into consideration before damage is assessed.

All damage take effect at the end of both players' turns. Damage is assessed according to the hit chart (p. 12) in the KNIGHT HAWKS game rules. Any ship receiving 92-97% results has navigation damage, and must follow the last course written down until the damage is repaired. This means a vessel repeats the entire movement pattern of its precious turn, or follows its last course.

You may attempt to repair damage at the end of every third turn. The KNIGHT HAWKS game rules for damage repair apply.

Ships unable to maneuver may crash into other ships, destroying both. This may occur because of damage to navigation, but never on purpose.

## STARSHIP VESSEL TYPES

The following is a list of Federation and Sathar spaceships, with suggested statistics for their speed (S), turning (T), hull points (HP), and weapons (W). All of these miniatures are now available in boxed sets from TSR, Inc.

### Federation Ships

<i>Battleship:</i>	S = 2, T = 2, HP = 120, W = 2 laser cannons, 4 laser batteries, 8 torpedoes, 10 rocket batteries.
<i>Destroyer:</i>	S = 3, T = 2, HP = 50, W = 1 laser cannon, 1 laser battery, 2 torpedoes, 6 rocket batteries.
<i>Frigate:</i>	S = 3, T = 3, HP = 40, W = 1 laser cannon, 1 laser battery, 2 torpedoes, 4 rocket batteries.
<i>Assault Scout:</i>	S = 5, T = 4, HP = 15, W = 4 assault rockets, 1 laser battery.
<i>Freighter (unarmed):</i>	S = 1, T = 1, HP = 75, W = none.
<i>Freighter (armed):</i>	S = 1, T = 1, HP = 75, W = 1 FF laser cannon (or 1 laser battery).

## Sathar Ships

The Sathar have starships that correspond exactly to those the Federation has (use the above statistics). They also possess the following extra ship types.

*Heavy Cruiser:* S = 2, T = 1, HP = 100, W = 2 laser cannons, 2 laser batteries, 6 torpedoes, 10 rocket batteries.

*Light Cruiser:* S = 3, T = 2, HP = 70, W = 2 laser cannons, 2 laser batteries, 4 torpedoes, 10 rocket batteries.

## Pirate Ships

*Frigate:* S = 3, T = 3, HP = 40, W = 1 laser cannon, 1 laser battery, 2 torpedoes, 4 rocket batteries.

*Assault Scout*  
(Classes A and B): S = 5, T = 4, HP = 15, W = 4 assault rockets, 1 laser battery.

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## NEW SCENARIOS

### I. Incident 43-C

Four UPF unarmed freighters were in the company of a UPF frigate and one military armed freighter; all were approaching the star system Ktsa-Kar from Kizk-Kar, their last stop. They were in the military jurisdiction of the planet Ktsa-Kar when they were attacked by a Sathar light cruiser and two Sathar frigates. At first they were not disturbed, because of "reasonable" activity by pirates in the area. The convoy sent information to the local military interceptor base, and an assault scout hunter-killer team of two assault scouts was dispatched. When the assault scouts arrived, they were greeted by empty space and the destroyed hulks of the convoy.

*Set up:* Sathar have one light cruiser and two frigates. They enter at extreme weapon range from the convoy at an eight o'clock intercept angle. The UPF convoy consists of four unarmed freighters, one armed freighter, and one frigate. The two UPF assault scouts enter at a twelve o'clock intercept angle at the beginning of the ninth game turn. All ships are fully armed and ready.

*Victory conditions:* The Sathar must destroy all unarmed freighters for a marginal victory, the entire convoy for a tactical victory, and all UPF vessels for a decisive victory. The UPF receives a marginal victory for destroying one Sathar ship, a tactical victory for destroying two Sathar ships, and a decisive victory if *all* Sathar vessels are destroyed.

### II. Incident 91-K

Four UPF assault scouts, a destroyer, and a frigate, encountered a pirate assault scout (class B, "gull-wing") near Prenglar as it closed with a UPF freighter carrying war material. In the ensuing combat, the pirate assault scout was easily destroyed. The group proceeded on a four o'clock interception course with Prenglar, but were jumped by a Sathar heavy cruiser on a two o'clock intercept course. The Sathar cruiser surprised the small escort group, destroying two assault scouts and the freighter. In the combat, it badly mauled the destroyer before it was destroyed itself.

*Set up:* Option A - The freighter and pirate assault scout start together in the center of the playing area. The UPF force approaches at extreme weapons range from the four o'clock area and engages the pirate assault scout. One turn after the assault scout is destroyed, the Sathar heavy cruiser will enter at extreme weapons range from the two o'clock position and engage the UPF fleet.

Option B - Assume the pirate vessel has been destroyed, and arbitrarily halve the number of torpedoes and rocket batteries each UPF ship has to simulate shots fired in their engagement with the pirate. The Sathar is fully armed. It enters from the two o'clock intercept position at extreme weapon range and attacks the freighter and rescue fleet.

*Victory conditions:* The Sathar player receives a portion of a victory for every vessel he destroys. If the Sathar destroys the freighter, he receives a marginal victory. If he destroys the freighter and either of the capital ships, the Sathar has a tactical victory. If the freighter and two or more of the UPF vessels are destroyed, the Sathar has a decisive victory. The UPF receives a tactical victory for keeping the freighter from being destroyed, and a decisive victory if he keeps the freighter from being destroyed and destroys the Sathar ship.

### III. Incident 217-K

A pirate base was discovered off the farthest planet of Zebulon. A punitive expedition under Admiral Kraal, consisting of the UPF *Constellation* (a battleship), the *Port Yziar* (a destroyer), the *Klikk-T'llicck* (a frigate staffed mainly by Vrusk), two assault scouts, and the military armed freighter, *Rub'n Jamz*, was sent to neutralize the pirate force. Acting as a decoy, the *Rub'n Jamz* fled from the pirates who sent their entire strike force, a frigate and two assault scouts (one a class B "gull-wing", and the other, a class A "arrow wing") after the freighter. Waiting on the sunward side of the planet was the entire UPF assault force.

In the following battle, the entire pirate force was destroyed, with only the loss of one assault scout to the UPF fleet of Admiral Kraal. This region of space remained pacified until three years later when the yacht, *Cassidine Breeze*, was waylaid by an old pirate assault scout which was obviously just passing through the area.

*Set up:* The *Rub'n Jamz* starts in the middle of the playing area. All pirate vessels start at maximum weapon range on a six o'clock intercept angle. On the second turn, the UPF force enters. The assault scouts start from the ten o'clock position at maximum weapon range from the freighter, and all other UPF vessels start at an eight o'clock interception angle from the UPF freighter at maximum



range.

*Victory conditions:* For every vessel the pirate destroys, he receives victory points equal to the number of hull points of the vessel. A marginal victory is 70 hull points destroyed; a tactical victory is 175 hull points; a decisive victory is any score over 225 hull points. If the UPF player destroys one pirate vessel he receives a marginal victory; two pirate ships, a tactical victory; and three pirate ships, a decisive victory.

#### IV. Incident 217-L

After Admiral Kraal's victory over the pirates near Zebulon, he was alerted to a sub-space SOS and took his fleet to pick up survivors. In reality, the Sathar had picked up his communications and had hastily sent a fleet consisting of one Sathar heavy cruiser, one Sathar light cruiser, and one Sathar frigate to the area designated by the SOS. When the UPF fleet arrived, they found the Sathar fleet heading toward them on a twelve o'clock intercept course.

In the ensuing battle, the UPF assault scouts, the freighter and the frigate were destroyed. The destroyer was damaged badly and repairs on her were so extensive that she was not recommissioned until the hostilities of the second Sathar war were over. Even Admiral Kraal's flagship, the *Constellation*, was badly damaged and out of action for the better part of a year. The UPF did manage to destroy all the Sathar vessels involved in the action, but at a terrible cost.

*Set up:* The Sathar and UPF fleets enter on a collision course at maximum weapon range. The Sathar are fully armed, and the members of the UPF have only the armaments remaining to them after their destruction of the pirate fleet (see incident 217-K, scenario III). When the UPF fleet enters, the freighter is screened from the Sathar by the battleship *Constellation*.

*Victory conditions:* The Sathar receive a marginal victory if they destroy two UPF ships. They receive a tactical victory if they destroy three UPF ships, and a decisive one if they destroy four UPF vessels. The UPF receives a marginal victory if they destroy one Sathar vessel. If they destroy two Sathar vessels, they receive a tactical victory, and a decisive victory if they destroy all three Sathar vessels.

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# GAME ERRATA

## *Into the Void*

by Carl Smith

ARES #17 p62

The *Into the Void* module for the STAR FRONTIERS® game, in ARES™ Magazine Issue #15, had some errors/omissions that are cleared up below.

Because of a lack of space, the statistics for the robot, Violet, were omitted. Violet is a V Series Medical Robot with arm-like extensions in the upper torso. The robot's head has vocal, audio, light/infrared, pressure, and sensor circuits for exo-biology. A Level 5 Medical robot, Violet has the equivalent of the following experience levels: Level 5 Medical, Level 4 First Aid, Minor & Major Surgery, Level 3 Control Infection, Cure Disease, Level 2 Neutralize Toxins, Analyze Eco-systems, Level 1 Activate Freeze Field, and Communication. Violet is fitted with a poly-vox, an interface for ship computers, and Level 5 security programs. Violet is used to dealing with Hota Lea, and can be difficult when dealing with other members of the crew if they improperly input information.

All ships listed as Sathar assault scouts should be Sathar frigates. The correction was made in the module, but not in the story.

The gray couches on the XV-1 were incorrectly numbered. They should have been numbered from 3-8, with 8 being Slard's seat. The deck plan key and ship map should then have been numbered from 1-27, with 5 added to each numbered location on the ship and in the key starting with area 4 (9), Gunnery Control.

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