

GWQ: Is there a quick way to determine the Character Abilities of NPC's?

GWA: The game rewrite, which is coming out around June, will list each creature's abilities. I always give NPC's 12 in all of their abilities if these are not given in the creature lists.

GWQ: How do you destroy vehicles when they do not have armor class or hit points listed?

GWA: This is an obvious oversight that has been corrected in the revised edition. For now, arbitrarily assign hit points and armor classes to each vehicle. If a vehicle loses 50% of its hit points, it ceases to function and must be repaired.

GWQ: What do Serfs look like?

GWA: Grenadier Models, Inc. makes most of the creatures found in the GW rules booklet. The Serf figure is especially nice because it uses a huge ax — perfect for a creature with great strength. I always use them when I am running GAMMA WORLD game adventures.

GWQ: Does a force shield which takes over its hit point limit collapse and, if so, is it broken for good?

GWA: Technologically generated force fields regenerate themselves every melee turn. The force field will be maintained as long as the suit which generates the force field holds up. Further, the rules state that only one mutational force field can be created in a 24 hour period.

GWQ: If players can be mutated plants or animals can they be Yexils or Podogs?

GWA: A very good way for players to learn the game is for them to be creatures from the rules book. Players can have a lot of fun trying to cope with the restrictions that an Obb or an Ark character will place on them.



1920's
Role Playing
Adventure Game

GBQ: How does a player character acquire cronies?

GWA: Cronies are covered on page 49 of the GANGBUSTERS game rulebook. The rules leave the question of how cronies come into play up to the game judge. In my own campaigns, I always tell the players how many cronies they may have as soon as they roll up their characters. I recommend, however, that actual creation of cronies be postponed until they are needed in the course of play. This does two things: it gives low level players a little extra help when they most need it, and it helps me build the NPC's needed for the campaign.

When a player decides to build a cronie for a character, I quickly roll one up and let the player decide (with my guidance)

the background of the cronie. It is important to remember that cronies can never begin the game at a higher level than the player character! Thus, a first level reporter who would like to have a good friend in the police department can roll up a police cronie, but that cronie will be a Rookie beat cop.

Notice that the cronie system takes a lot of work off of the game judge's shoulders. In a campaign with only eight players, with an average Presence score of 6, there will eventually be 48 cronies. That's 48 NPC's that the player will be keeping track of, not the judge!

GBQ: What happens when two criminal syndicates are running a numbers racket in the same block?

GWA: Probably a gang war! If two syndicates are trying to run numbers in the same territory, neither will make any profits at all. The two syndicate bosses will have to decide which of them will control the territory.

STAR FRONTIERS™

Science Fiction Role
Playing Game

SFQ: I read through the rulebook and was surprised to see that there was nothing said about spaceships. Why were they left out? Can characters travel in space? Can they own spaceships? Will you be giving rules for spaceships soon?

SFA: When we started to write the rules for the STAR FRONTIERS game, we knew that there was a limited amount of room in the book. We felt it was better to focus on characters, combat, and adventures that take place on a planet in the rulebook instead of trying to cram everything in.

Characters can travel in space, although they are limited to commercial spacelines in the STAR FRONTIERS rulebook now. Eventually, they will be able to design and have their own spaceships. Work has just been finished on a complete boxed set that will be a game in itself. This set will cover spaceship combat design, and role playing in space. Part of it is a game that can be played without the STAR FRONTIERS game rules and the other part shows how STAR FRONTIERS game characters can use the same rules for role playing adventures. This set will be available in 1983.

SFQ: Can a Dralasite move if it is only a big, round ball with no arms or legs?

SFA: Yes, but it could go no faster than its walking speed. Also, it would be in trouble in combat since it would not be able to hold or fire any weapons.

TOP SECRET®

Espionage Role
Playing Game

TSQ: In the TOP SECRET Rulebook 2nd Edition, are the correct prices for many of the Other Weapon Types on the

WEAPONS CHART or on the pricelist under EQUIPPING THE CHARACTER?

TSA: The correct prices for Other Weapon Types are listed on the WEAPONS CHART. A manual speargun costs \$50. A CO2 speargun costs \$100 and pressurized CO2 capsules cost \$1 each. A sword (\$30) and a swordcane (\$50) act much the same but are concealed differently. Dart guns can cost \$250. A boomerang that returns is only \$5. If it hits anything greater than its weight (½ pound) it will not return. Boxing gloves cost \$25 a pair and karate padding for both hands and feet costs \$50 a set.

TSQ: When a character's Life Level is reduced to 0 by drinking alcohol, is the character dead or unconscious?

TSA: Since alcohol is a depressant poison, the character has literally drank himself or herself to death.

TSQ: How can I run a campaign with multiple groups of investigators, confiscators, and assassins without the players finding out about each other's major objectives?

TSA: Have you considered handing everyone a note telling them their agent's true major objective? They could each also have a cover objective which they tell to the other players. Request that their Bureau section under Classified Information on their Agent's Dossier be left blank and only known by the Administrator. No one will be sure of anyone's true major objective since some will reveal it and others may lie.

TSQ: If four PC's set out on a mission and the Administrator's character was to be secretly blended in with the others by having a player run this character, can this character be a double agent?

TSA: Yes, this is a nice idea. By definition, an agent who is loyal to the opposition while pretending loyalty to those that employ him or her is an enemy agent. For example, agent Z is working for the KGB but is employed by the CIA. The Administrator can be aware of the enemy agent's purposes and can use the enemy agent against the other player characters. The enemy agent looks for any action which would weaken the team, protect his or her agency, and that doesn't jeopardize his or her cover. Discovered enemy agents are usually given the choice of becoming double agents or being prosecuted. An agent who is loyal to those that currently employ him/her while pretending loyalty to the opposition is a double agent. For example, enemy agent Z worked for the KGB, is loyal to the CIA, and pretends loyalty to the KGB.

TSQ: In DRAGON™ Magazine #49, the tracer bullet adds 10 and 5 to second and third following bullets, respectively. Does this bonus apply only to the agent that fired the tracer?

TSA: Yes. Agents not firing tracers do not get this advantage to hit.

DAWN PATROL™

WW I Aerial Combat Game

DPQ: If a pilot lands in enemy territory and is taxiing (say, to pick up a downed wingman), is he subject to the chance of capture each turn he is on the ground?

DPA: No. As long as he is taxiing, he cannot be captured because he can avoid enemy troops. He is, however, subject to rifle fire which could wound or kill him. Players should use their good judgment in these cases — obviously an enemy pilot couldn't be free from capture if he stayed on the ground behind the opposing lines for more than a few minutes.

DPQ: If an engine is on fire and the pilot puts it out, are any engine hits caused by the fire itself?

DPA: No.



Science Fantasy Game

GWQ: When creating mutated animals for the GAMMA WORLD® game, what should you do to make them balanced?

GWA: When I make creatures, I concentrate on what I want them to do for the environment I am putting them in. If I want to make creatures that have overrun a military base, I give them powers that allow them to get past doors without hands, to avoid security robots, and resist the dangers of the technological devices found in those areas. When making new creatures for the wilderness, I design them to be at least as tough or tougher than the monsters already in the rules booklet. This allows them to survive the action of players who have been gearing up to face the mutants they know about from reading the rules. I also try to key in on special abilities, for instance, if a creature has Pyrokinesis, its mutations will reflect things related to heat. It could resist lasers, or have double Pyrokinesis, or be deathly afraid of the cold.

GWQ: I know it says, "does not affect living matter," but if a Negation Bomb hit 2 meters from you, what would happen?

GWA: Since one does not really exist, we have only our imaginations to go on. I think it would be much like a flash bulb going off in front of your eyes. As written, the effect of this bomb causes power cells, batteries, and generators to lose all of their energy. It does not harm life, but it is a projectile. I imagine if one hit you in the chest it would do a 1d12 or so of damage.

GWQ: What happens when you use a laser pistol underwater?

GWA: I am not a laser physicist, but I do know that light, including laser light, refracts in water. I imagine that it would reduce the range of the weapon to about

1 foot (.3 meters to you metric fans). In that range I think the damage would still be as listed.



GBQ: All first level characters start out with just \$50 in cash. It costs a P.I. \$50 to get his license! How can a P.I. get other things at the start of the game?

GBA: Ah! You have hit the first problem faced by the P.I. Money should be a problem for a P.I. A good campaign judge will keep his P.I.'s "hungry" for those special cases. A beginning P.I. gets money for additional items from the advance he must negotiate for his first case. Remember, always give a beginning P.I. a special case his first night of play. This gives him a chance to get right into the action.

GBQ: Can a grenade cause a car to explode?

GBA: Yes, but the percent chance depends upon other conditions. Is there gasoline splashed around the area? Does the car have any special protection? As a general rule of thumb, use a base 10% chance and modify upward or downward for circumstances.

GBQ: When a character is using the Disguise skill, how often should the judge roll a skill check?

GBA: Roll a check when the character first puts on the disguise. Then roll again whenever the situation suggests that the disguise might be damaged or altered, for example: after a fist fight, chase on foot, gunfight, or other strenuous physical activity.



Science Fiction Role
Playing Game

SFQ: Can a Dralasite divide into two or three characters?

SFA: No. A Dralasite is a single creature and cannot divide itself as it pleases. The only time it can divide is when it is giving birth. This obviously results in a baby Dralasite, not another character.

SFQ: Can a Dralasite slide under a door?

SFA: If the door has a gap that is 10 cm wide at the bottom, yes. It will take the Dralasite about an hour to make its entire body this thin.

SFQ: Can a Vrusk carry another character on its back?

SFA: A Vrusk carrying another character on its back would be the same as if a Human were carrying someone on their back. Vrusk are not horses and cannot easily carry riders!

SFQ: On the equipment lists, what are the masses of unmarked items, such as grenades? Why are they not marked?

SFA: The masses of all unmarked items are less than .5k. They are not given exact masses because it would be too much bother to require every character

to keep track of every gram of equipment carried. The referee should allow the character to carry a reasonable amount of such equipment (20 grenades for example), he should either tell the character he can't carry more, or give the items a mass of a couple of kilograms.

TOP SECRET®

Espionage Role
Playing Game

TSQ: Who is James Pong and what are his Personal Trait Values?

TSA: James Pong is the character name of a good friend of mine that has played TOP SECRET game since it first began being written. His latest Personal Trait Values are: Physical Strength, 93; Charm, 33; Willpower, 95; Courage, 190; Knowledge, 31; Coordination, 195; 11th Level. **TSQ:** I have long wondered if an agent in TOP SECRET game can be a Mercenary, Bounty Hunter, or a combination of both. If so, could you print a Level Table in POLYHEDRON™ Newszine?

TSA: Allowing a Mercenary or a Bounty Hunter into the TOP SECRET game is an Administrator's choice. The Administrator should design his own Level Chart. Zero experience points should equal first level. Twenty thousand points are necessary for tenth level. Ten thousand experience points must be earned for every level above tenth.

TSQ: What countries is TOP SECRET game played in?

TSA: I have received letters concerning TOP SECRET game from all over the United States as well as Canada. I have also heard from gamers in Spain, Austria, Switzerland, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. It has been reported that United States servicemen are playing TOP SECRET game in South Korea. I've also heard that the game is in Australia, Scandinavia, and somewhere in the Middle East. It would not surprise me to hear that the game was behind the Iron Curtain.

TSQ: I have written a TOP SECRET module. What is my first step to see if TSR Hobbies would want it?

TSA: First, do not send any manuscript until asked to. Second, write a letter requesting a Submission Form from:

Mike Price, Acquisitions
TSR Hobbies, Inc., P.O. Box 756,
Lake Geneva, Wisconsin 53147.

Third, follow the instructions given with the Submission Form and be prepared to wait for an answer concerning your manuscript. TSR is currently flooded with submissions and employs ten full-time designers. This information is not meant to discourage outside authors but rather to inform would-be authors that the competition is tough — really tough. TSR will gladly look at well-written, imaginative ideas. 🐾

GBQ: How do I handle the enormous sums of money that the criminals in my game are making? They have so much that they seem able to buy anything or anyone!

GBA: It is certainly possible for criminal players to become millionaires. But even a millionaire has some headaches:

1. Living expenses soar. To maintain himself in style, any self-respecting high level criminal has to give lots of parties at his mansion. The mansion itself requires a full staff of servants, a set of full time guards, cars, etc. Entertaining adds to this tab.

2. If a criminal is making millions, there have to be dozens of other criminals who would like to be making those millions. Bring in the NPC rival gangsters. Have them hit the breweries, wreck the speakeasies, beat up the numbers runners, etc.

3. Remember that 30% of all NPC's are totally honest. If the law enforcers in your campaign can't cope with the criminals, give them some professional NPC assistance, preferably from the Prohibition Bureau and the Internal Revenue Service.

4. Be certain that your criminals are paying off heavily to the local politicians. Carefully watch their payroll — be sure that their hundreds of men are making a good enough living to stay loyal. A few should be disloyal anyway, just to make the game more interesting.



Science Fantasy Game

GWQ: Why does a laser gun need so much to hit Armor Class 1 and 2 and so much less for all of the rest?

GWA: When the Attacker's Weapon Class Matrix was designed, Weapon Class 13 was designed to handle all laser type weapons. I (Jim Ward) decided that the weapon would burn a hole through skin or a shield, but when it hit metal or furs or whatever, it would melt or burn those and have a greater chance of doing damage.

GWQ: The GAMMA WORLD® game system is so deadly, my players com-

plain that their characters get killed off almost before they have rolled them up! What can I do to help them last longer?

GWA: If your characters are constantly dying, they're probably not being very careful. The game was designed to test the intelligence and role-playing skill of everyone who tries their hand.

It is also possible that you are throwing a bit too much at them considering their beginning status. Your radiation areas should not all be 16, 17, and 18's. Your poison attacks should not all be at intensity 18. If your non-player characters are using lasers and grenades, make sure to start your players off with the same type of equipment, or at least make sure that they get it on their first few adventures. Give them subtle warnings of danger, and if they are still jumping in where Orlens fear to tread, they deserve their hard fate.

GWQ: Will a Mark V Blaster put a hole in anything?

GWA: The rules say "provided the target is killed, does not have a force shield, or is inanimate." This means that it will do damage to anything, but will put a hole only if the thing dies with the strike or the force field goes out with the strike. Things like walls and dirt merely take the damage but show no trace.



Science Fiction Role
Playing Game

SFQ: Why can't I make my own races who have made contact with those listed in the rulebooks?

SFA: There is nothing given in the rules that says you cannot create new races. By all means, if you want to create something for your campaign that is not in the rules, do. Take a little time and do it right — look at the races already in the rules and create an equally balanced new race.

SFQ: Can I mount a machine gun on a vehicle like an explorer? The rules say that vehicle-mounted weapons are not covered in the rulebook.

SFA: The note about vehicle-mounted weapons actually refers to fixed and heavy weapons mounted on vehicles, such as turrets, ball-mounted machine guns and lasers, and missile launchers. If the referee allows it, the characters

may mount a machine gun or similar weapon on a simple ring or post mount. The cost of the mount and the modifications to the vehicle will be 150 Cr. A hovercycle and a glijet cannot be mounted with weapons.

Mounting a weapon does not change any of the modifiers given in the Vehicle Combat section. The advantage of the mounting is that it allows characters to use the heavier weapons on the equipment list while in a moving vehicle. However, there is one major drawback the referee should always remember — anyone driving through a civilized area with a machine gun sitting on their roof is almost certainly going to be arrested!

TOP SECRET®

Espionage Role
Playing Game

TSQ: What is the difference between Fortune and Fame Points?

TSA: The definitions of Fortune and Fame Points are as follows:

Fortune Point - A factor of how lucky an agent is. When an agent is generated the Administrator secretly rolls a 10-sided die. The result is the number of Fortune Points the agent will have in his/her career. Fortune Points, once spent, can never be regained or replaced. The agent doesn't know how many Fortune Points he/she has. The agent only knows how many have been spent. An agent can spend one Fortune Point to reduce a fatal wound he/she has received to the point where the agent still has one Life Level point remaining. In hand-to-hand combat, an agent can spend one Fortune Point to remain one point above unconsciousness.

Fame Point - A factor of how successful an agent is. One Fame Point is received for each level the agent has obtained. Each agent knows how many Fame Points are available to him/her. An agent can spend one Fame Point to reduce a fatal wound he/she has received to the point where the agent still has one Life Level point remaining. In hand-to-hand Combat, an agent can spend one Fortune Point to remain one point above unconsciousness. ☞



Science Fantasy Game

GWQ: Where did you get all of those weird names for the GAMMA WORLD game monsters and mutants?

GWA: The nature of the GAMMA WORLD game setting necessitated the development of many new, modified creatures, all of which had to be called *something*. Physically or mentally altered badgers couldn't be called badgers (because they were no longer badgers), thus, new names had to be created to describe the new creatures. Further, it was decided that easily identifiable names would not have survived down through the centuries of the Dark Years. Off-the-wall, strange names were given to the creatures in keeping with the strange world in which they exist. The revision takes steps to make sense of the names of the creatures by adding another name to the old one.

GWQ: Some of the Cryptic Alliances are pretty strange. What is the best way to use them in the game?

GWA: The Cryptic Alliances were designed to be the perfect all-around tool for the GAMMA WORLD game referee. The Alliances are useful to start player characters because they give the referee a logical reason for giving new player characters various materials.

The Cryptic Alliances can also act as a catalyst for adventures; they may create conflict between alliances; assignments can be given by the leader of a character's particular alliance; or characters may desire to rise in their alliance, requiring them to do something of benefit to the collective whole.

One of the first things that a good referee should do is create several hidden bases for Cryptic Alliances. These bases are good starting points for new characters; it will give them a place of origin *and* a home base for exploration of the surrounding countryside.



1920's Adventure Game

GBQ: How can player characters obtain a camera, and how much does one cost?

GWA: That is an omission from the price lists which should be filled in. Newspaper reporters can be issued cameras by their newspapers. These would be very expensive, large, bulky cameras and use the old-fashioned type

heavy photographic plates. Characters can purchase smaller lower quality cameras for prices ranging from \$50 to \$300, depending upon the circumstances of the purchase. Criminals, of course, can steal cameras.

GBQ: Some of my law enforcement characters have begun dragging in every seedy character they can find and using "persuasion" to obtain information. How can I limit the information they get?

GWA: Judges, consider that most average smalltime punks won't know anything very useful about the operations of bigtime gangsters. They may know, for example, where a warehouse or gambling joint is located, but won't know who runs it, and who gets the profits. Excessive use of violence by the police will result in political pressure to stop such practices as the mob uses its power at City Hall. Have the Police Commissioner or the Mayor call in some of these fellows and give them a stern warning. In extreme cases, the mob will hit back. A law officer's life is always on the line.



Science Fiction Game

SFQ: The rules say that a gas mask fits over the wearer's face. How does this work for a Vrusk who breathes through many small nostrils in its underside? And how does it work for a Dralasite who breathes through his skin?

SFA: This description was written from a Human point of view. A Vrusk gas mask is a harness arrangement that straps to the underside of the body. The filter is a thin sheet of plastic material that covers the nostril area.

The Dralasite gas mask is better called a gas suit; it completely covers the Dralasite. Again, the thin sheet of plastic material filters the harmful gases. Because this limits the amount of oxygen reaching the Dralasite, they may only wear these suits for a short period of time before they become too hot. The Dralasite gas mask may be worn with other defensive suits.

SFQ: The Expanded Rulebook gives two different costs for the Standard Equipment Pack. Which is correct?

SFA: The 150 Cr cost given on the Equipment List is correct. The 250 Cr cost given under Expanded Game Characters is incorrect.

SFQ: Would it be balanced to create a new PSA Jack-of-All-Trades? If so, how would this PSA work?

SFA: Yes, you could create such a PSA, although the skills system currently lets a character learn many different skills. If you created such a PSA, It would best use the doubled Technological PSA Skill Costs for all skills the character wanted to learn. Remember, that this PSA is not playtested, and it might be necessary to make changes in it once a campaign is underway.

TOP SECRET®

Espionage Game

TSQ: One of my players recently tried to attack an enemy agent with an object on the Additional HTH Weapons Table on page 33 of the 2nd edition rules. However, this is not projectile combat, nor is it to be found on any of the HTH tables. So where in the name of Bond am I to find the outcome of this action?

TSA: When the offensive fighter is using a weapon found on the chart on page 33, combat is resolved in much the same way as usual. Which HTH table is consulted will depend upon how the weapon is being used. Blows with a long, roughly cylindrical object such as a flashlight or an oar will be resolved on the Knife Fighting table if the object is 0-30 cm in length, and on the Swordplay table if it is over 30 cm in length, since they can be blocked in the same way that one would block a knife or sword thrust. Combat with billy club is resolved on the Untrained table, as are blows with square objects such as suitcases, gas masks, and telephones. (Very few agents are trained in HTH telephone combat.) Long, flexible items such as piano wire or chains can be used for strangling or whipping. When they are used to strangle, combat is resolved on the Untrained table by applying one of the "holds" (Hands on Throat). If the victim is surprised, consult Appendix One, under Assassination (Garrotes). When they are used to whip, treat as swordplay.

When a hit is scored, damage is determined as follows. The HWV of the object is added to the Offensive Fighter's HTH Weapon Value modifier on the Injury Modifiers table. This total is then added to the combat result. **TSQ:** Do the die rolls for the Poison table mean the number of points lost from the abilities, or the percent of points lost?

TSA: The die rolls made when a character is poisoned give the percentage of points lost from the indicated abilities.



DPQ: When a balloon is rolled as part of a low altitude scenario, is it possible to have more than one?

DPA: Yes. When a low level game occurs during the Random Combat determination, a roll of 1 or 2 will mean a balloon is present. An additional roll can then be made: if a 1 is rolled, there is a second balloon also in the area. After the second balloon has been noted, a further roll can be made, and if another 1 is rolled, there is a third balloon in the area. Each balloon will have its own independent altitude and defenses.

DPQ: What happens if a wounded pilot is trying to land a plane with numerous critical hits and the landing chance computes to less than 0%?

DPA: Assuming the aircraft is still flyable and is not out of control, the pilot will always have at least a 5% chance of making a successful landing (even if the subtractions make it less than 5%). This accounts for the instances of extraordinary bravery, unusual good fortune, and the like that occasionally helped pilots survive in World War I.

DPQ: If a critical hit results in adding one or two hit factors to the damage taken in one area of the plane, must another roll be taken that turn to check for the chance of another critical hit?

DPA: No. Critical hits that cause additional hit factor damage do not require an additional critical hit check.

DPQ: If a pilot who is lightly wounded has his plane's wing shot off, how many rolls must be made to determine his survival?

DPA: Except for pilots coming down in the front lines (where a special additional chance exists for being killed or captured), only one survival roll is necessary.

In the example above, the pilot's plane will fall out of control after its wing is destroyed, giving him a 5% chance of surviving the resulting crash (or 10% if it occurred at less than 2000'). This 5% or 10% chance always takes precedence as the single roll needed to determine survival, and wounds (or lack of them) have no bearing.

If this pilot had a parachute, he would make one roll at 60% to determine survival (as given under the German Parachutes rule) — he would *not* roll separately for the jump and then for the wound. All pilots who survive on 5% or 10% rolls and all pilots who survive critical wounds must roll for possible incapacitation.



Science Fantasy Game

GWQ: I have some questions on the mutations in the GAMMA WORLD® game revision.

1. In *Absorption*, is a laser a heat weapon or a light weapon?
2. In *Aromatic Powers*, can the characters resist the desire for their favorite food if they are not hungry?
3. In *Chameleon Powers*, what is a "jutation?"

4. In *Directional Sense*, can a mutant really locate any object he/she wants?

5. In *Displacement*, can the mutant actively face danger and not let himself/herself be displaced?

6. Does *Energy Metamorphosis* make a mutant immune to the harmful effects of radiation?

7. In *Electrical Generation*, can the mutant turn off this power so that allies and friends may safely touch the object?

8. Is there any way to tell if a *Force Field Generation* power is in use?

9. How hot is the heat from the *Heat Generation* mutation?

10. In *Kinetic Absorption*, is it 25 points per weapon or a total of all weapons used in that attack round?

GWA: The following should take care of these problems:

1. All laser attacks are considered light weapons.
2. The desire to acquire the food transcends being hungry or in danger, etc. The mutant should be told right away that it is being drawn in the direction of the smell and allowed to react with all weapons or mutations at his/her command.
3. The word "jutation" is a typo. It should read mutation.
4. There was some copy dropped here. It should read "or locate any owned object held in the last eight hours."
5. The movement action happens even if the mutant tries to avoid being displaced.
6. *Energy Metamorphosis* does make a mutant immune to radiation.
7. Since the power is a conscious one in humanoids and mutated animals, they may turn off the effect if they desire.
8. The use of the *Force Field Generation* mutation usually causes the user to glow slightly. This is not the case in areas of continual darkness where mutants have been raised. Here, the mutation is not noticeable.
9. The heat from the *Heat Generation* mutation is approximately 480 degrees F. Although the mutant is immune to the blasts from its hands, it is not immune to the damage of fire caused by the heat.
10. The 25 points per attack is from all weapons. If the mutant took a total of 27 points of damage from maces and clubs it would take 2 points that round in actual hit point damage.

GWQ: Can people outside of TSR submit GAMMA WORLD game modules to TSR?

GWA: It is difficult to get a submission into TSR, but if your idea is original but not outlandish, you *can* see it accomplished. Write to the Acquisitions Department for a New Product Submissions Packet which includes guidelines and forms TSR requires for outside writers to submit game material.

GWQ: Considering the hit points of all of the player characters in the game, weapons like swords and arrows do minor damage. This isn't very logical, is it?

GWA: Sometimes it is necessary to sacrifice what appears to be logic in the interest of

game balance; this has been done in the combat system of the GAMMA WORLD game. Remember, however, that right along side those ineffectual weapons are things like Death Rays that kill on contact with flesh or Stun Whips that render the victim unconscious at a touch with no hope of resistance (unless the referee has designed a new mutation, or the like). Logic can often render a referee defenseless, but it doesn't stop a game designer long. Swords do what they have to do in the game so that every mutant Conan that walks into the land is not instantly killing those poor, sweating men in Power Armor.



1920's Adventure Game

GBQ: Can you give any guidelines for game judges on how to assign a percent chance for miscellaneous circumstances? For example, a criminal is running down the street from a robbery site. The police are chasing him. The criminal has a gun. What is the chance that he can stop a car on the street, order the driver out, and steal the car to get away? What are the chances for finding a taxi cab?

GBA: In situations like this, there are two guidelines to use: common sense, and the character's Luck score. If the above incident were happening in broad daylight in a downtown area, there is no question that a car would be coming by; the only question would be the NPC's reaction to the character, which could be determined normally. For the chances of finding a taxi, use the character's Luck score unless the setting is one where taxis are constantly coming and going, such as a major hotel, the train station, etc. Above all else, make your decisions on what is going to provide the most fun for your player characters without harming the balance of the game.

GBQ: Are there any types of shotguns available other than double barreled breech loaders?

GBA: As an experiment, you might want to let your players use 5-shot pump action shotguns; a few types of these were available in the 1920's. The cost for these should be about \$75 normal retail. Such a shotgun can fire one round per turn. If you are using the Expert rules, any arm or hand hits should reduce the rate of fire to one round every two turns because it takes both hands to fire and then pump up the next round in a single turn.

GBQ: How many times may a character with only one hit point left make a Luck check?

GBA: The Luck check is in the game to help keep characters alive. A character always gets a Luck check against any death situation except one which the game judge rules is automatic. This means that a character with only one hit point left can roll a Luck check each and every time he or she is hit, and can stay alive as long as the Luck checks are successful.

GWQ: I have a mutated bear character and my referee maintains that since it hasn't any armor its armor class is 10. I say it should be 5, just like a Dabber or a Jeget.

GWA: The armor class of a species is not just based on the thickness of their fur or hide. It is also a function of the species' speed and size. The 10 for no armor applies to human types that are walking around in their skin and little else. I agree with you that a bear type rates better than a 10. It is still up to your referee to determine the actual number. I would say it rates anywhere from 7 to 4 depending on how fast the creatures of your referee's world are. I would place it at a 4 in mine.



1920s Adventure Game

GBQ: I like the fistfight system in the game, but I don't get to use it very often. Everyone is always carrying guns. This often leads to losing a lot of player characters. What can I do?

GBA: There are several ways to decrease the lethality of your game:

1. Remind your law enforcers that a live criminal full of information is more valuable than a dead one. Of course, you have to have done your homework as judge and worked out what the captured criminal will know!
2. There are many situations where characters begin hostilities 10' or less away from one another. Have NPCs you are running attempt to disarm and fistfight in such situations. Your player characters will quickly see the advantages of this type of procedure.
3. You can always have your law enforcement agencies issue warnings to officers about the use of firearms in crowded public places or the public streets. As judge, you could assign a percent chance that missed shots hit innocent bystanders, resulting in legal actions against the officers who fired.

GBQ: I have been playing in the **GANGBUSTERS™** game module *Murder in Harmony* for weeks now and finally believe I know who the killer was. Tell me if it was Frankie Sansotta? It must be him.

GBA: That module has received a great many good comments. I won't tell you if you are right or wrong, but that module is one of the best reasons why playing **GANGBUSTERS** game can be so much fun. There are few modules out right now that will make you work harder to solve your adventure.

STAR FRONTIERS™

Science-Fiction Game

SFQ: Can I have a planet with green sky?

SFA: Yes, but it will be a very rare thing. The color of the sky around most planets that have atmosphere will be either blue like Earth or reddish. The color has less to do with the color of the planet's sun than with what is in the atmosphere. The light from the sun is defracted by things that hang in the atmosphere. On Earth, water and dust diffract the "white" light of the Sun and create a blue sky. This will be the case on most planets. If there is a lot of dust in the air, the sky will have reddish color, much like the sunset on Earth.

A green sky could happen if there were photosynthetic algae or microplants floating in the atmosphere. The plants would absorb some of the sunlight to grow, creating clouds of green haze.

This in turn could lead to other problems. The heat coming from the surface of the planet would be bounced back by the cloud layer. This would raise the temperature of the planet. This is called a "greenhouse effect." Venus is an example of this. Also, with the increase in heat, more water would evaporate into the air, so it would rain more often. Also, the algae or micro-plants might make breathing the air dangerous since these plants would be drawn into the lungs. On such a planet, a gas mask or filter would be necessary. Such a planet would not be a very pleasant place to live.

SFQ: Is it possible to have a world entirely covered with water or a planet that has no water?

SFA: Yes, it is; either extreme wouldn't be places very suitable for human life. An all water planet would probably be nothing but a misty globe with the atmosphere almost as full of water as the surface itself. A totally dry planet has no water necessary for human life or to help protect the planet from harmful radiation emitted by its sun. Under current theories, neither planet would be considered suitable for human life.

SFQ: I played in **STAR FRONTIERS™** game Referee's Screen Mini-Module and had the misfortune to have my character release the spores in the Medical Lab during a combat with Sathar. I say that opening that section of the ship to the vacuum of space should have cleared out the spores. My referee insists that that wouldn't be enough.

SFA: If your referee maintains that outer space will not kill the spores, that is the final answer. Remember that the ship was found floating in space with its systems shut down. This would support the resistance to the effects of outer space vacuum on the spores. There was a cure in the lab area for the disease but when the ships areas are hit with vacuum this could easily destroy the more delicate equipment on board.

TOP SECRET®

Espionage Game

TSQ: A sniper fires at his target and misses. The target runs, but another character shoots and kills the target. Would the assassination be clean or ultraclean?

TSA: Because the assassination took more than one shot, it is considered a clean assassination, not an ultraclean. If both agents missions were to assassinate the target they would share the 300 experience points equally. If either agent were an assassin, that agent would gain an additional 100 point bonus. If either character were an NPC, the experience points would still have to be shared.

TSQ: Some of those Areas of Knowledge are pretty useless. Why would anyone want to have knowledge in things like Religion or Home Economics and play the game?

TSA: One of the most interesting concepts in the **TOP SECRET** game is the fact that all bureaus must have a large knowledge pool to draw from in working out assignments. All of the areas listed can play an important part in working out a mission. A mission could take an agent to the Vatican where knowledge of Religion is essential for the agent to get around. A good administrator will make sure that their game uses the skills of all the player characters.

TSQ: My player character likes to use a crossbow in his assassinations. I question the 6 phases to reload one. The newer models break and are ready to go in 3 phases or less. If I can prove to my administrator that this is true can the reload time be lessened?

TSA: The time given for that weapon didn't take into consideration any unusual designs. If you present proof there is no reason why the reload time can't be changed. Give some thought to the environment at the time of reloading. If there is a need to stay hidden or the agent is trying to do something else, these factors will be important in the reloading time. 🎯

ered an "atrocious" and looked down upon by all respectable airmen. It can logically be argued that any pilot would want to try to land his plane no matter how slim the chances were.

DPA: I have a hard time believing some of the luck rolls other players claim they make. Sometimes I could swear that my character has hit a plane several times, but the other players still claim that their characters' plane is fine. Is there anything I can do to prove them wrong?

DPA: Not playing with them is the best idea, but if that's not a viable alternative for you, simply keep track of their hits and location. If they see you doing this it won't be long before you can be sure they are being honest in their record keeping.



Science Fantasy Game

GWQ: Why are pure strain humans given so many benefits over other player characters?

GWA: After the game had been out for awhile, we noticed a trend; players were playing mostly humanoid mutants. Players were creating characters which took all of the advantages of a human body and added the powers of mutation. Further, we felt that the concept of pure strain humans surviving after the war years was a vital one. To encourage the playing of pure strain humans, they were given benefits which would add to the chances of their survival — and in the GAMMA WORLD game, characters can use all of the help they can get!

GWQ: Why can't characters increase in hit points like they do in every other role-playing game?

GWA: The GAMMA WORLD game concept deals with a savage environment which requires that all beings start out as tough as possible. This forces the player character to start out strong. The emphasis is on material and intellectual development, as opposed to physical development.

GWQ: How many spines can the Horl Choos throw in a given melee turn?

GWA: The plant can throw 1d8 at any single target and 1d4 at up to five targets in its thirty meter range. When the plant is faced with over five targets it will refuse to fire, not wanting to get destroyed in some type of stampede.

GWQ: Are the creatures and plants listed in the booklet edible?

GWA: If you can catch them and can kill

them first, I think that you deserve to eat them. Just watch out for the many poison glands that most of them have in unusual parts of their bodies.

GWQ: I have a player character who died and was placed in a functional life chamber. She was brought back alive, but my referee tells me she has total amnesia and can't even speak the language. Is this the way a life chamber is supposed to work?

GWA: A function of the chamber is to strip away all of the technological knowledge of the character. The referee may determine that all knowledge has been taken away, but this seems a little extreme. On the other hand, your character has been granted life again. If the character was worth anything to begin with, you got a luck break.

GWQ: My mutated wolf character encountered and was killed by a general household robot. I don't believe these things are programmed to attack creatures. Am I wrong?

GWA: A general household robot could have a pest control program. It may have considered you a pest, and controlled you the best way it knew how.



1920s Adventure Game

GBQ: The price list does not give the price of a shotgun. How much is it?

GBA: A standard shotgun costs \$75. As always, the GM may adjust this value to fit special circumstances if desired.

GBQ: The diagram for shotgun fire at the bottom of page 11 in the rulebook says that all targets take 10 points damage for ranges of 26' - 75', but the rules and charts state that targets only receive 5 hit points. Which is correct?

GBA: The diagram is correct. Targets should receive 10 points of damage.

GBQ: My grandfather was a military policeman during the 1920s and it sounds like a fun thing to try, but my referee won't let me play a character like that because it isn't standard to the game. Am I out of line for asking to play this type of character?

GBA: There are problems with setting up a character like this one. This character isn't just a glorified cop. There is rank to consider, as well as the fact that such a character would mainly be concerned with military and not civilian situations in Lakefront City. Although you could probably talk your referee into letting you play one of these types, it probably wouldn't

be as much fun as you might think, because you would be constantly forced away from the action that everyone else is experiencing.

GBQ: My character fired a burst from a Thompson, and my referee said it hit a nearby friendly policeman. I say that my character could aim the burst towards the area I designated, but he says I couldn't.

GBA: The rules say "... If the dice roll indicates a hit, then all characters in the firing character's Field of Vision are hit." This means that the cop took one no matter how hard your character tried to direct it away.

STAR FRONTIERS™

Science-Fiction Game

SFQ: In the second paragraph of the section on "Administering Drugs" (page 16 of the Expanded Rules), it mentions 24 hours as the time limit after which a character whose stamina is at 0 or below cannot be revived. Shouldn't this be 20 hours as stated elsewhere in the section?

SFA: Yes. The time limit should be the standard 20 hours.

SFQ: On page 20 (Expanded Rules), it states: "For every tenth of a gravity (.1 G) less than 1.0 . . . the distance a character can leap and vault is increased 5 m." That seems rather large. Is this value correct?

SFA: No, the decimal point has been left out. The distance a character can leap and vault is increased .5 m for every .1 G less than 1.0.

SFQ: On page 34 of the Expanded Rules, it states that "MEDIUM movement is 16 to 75 meters/turn." Is this correct?

SFA: It should be 46 to 75 meters/turn.

SFQ: The Ranged Weapons Modifier Table on page 22 of the Expanded Rules and the text on page 32 disagree with what is printed on the centerfold and the Referee's Screen in reference to attackers and targets in vehicles.

SFA: All the correct information is in the book, but it isn't all in the same place.

The correct modifiers are as follows:

Attacker in fast vehicle: -20

Attacker in slow vehicle: -10

Target in fast vehicle: -20

Target in slow vehicle: -10

SFQ: In the defense table on page 40 of the Expanded Rules, the power used up by the albedo screen is stated to be 1

DPA: If an aircraft armed only with a wing-mounted gun takes a forward fuselage critical hit which knocks out a deck gun, is the result a "no effect," or must another critical hit result be rolled for?

DPA: The result is "no effect," and no additional roll is needed.



Science Fantasy Game

GWQ: There are lots of differences in the revised version of the GAMMA WORLD® game rules. Is it necessary to use the second version or can the game master mix and match?

GWA: The rules should serve as guidelines and that is all. For instance, I like the old method for figuring out Ancient items, so that is what I use. I suggest that you pick up whatever pleases you the most.

GWQ: Several of the players in my game constantly role up characters and throw them away after getting a defect on the chart. I want them to at least try and play the characters. Can you tell me exactly what constitutes a hopeless character?

GWA: The problem of hopeless characters is common. Never force your players to role play a character that they do not like, but there are alternatives. Let them discard the characters they dislike — use them as NPCs yourself. When one or two of these NPCs do well it will encourage the regular players to give them a try before throwing them away. Also offer the chance to let players take two characters out on an adventure. One of these characters could be that supposedly hopeless character. Try to talk your players into trying them at least once. They might find they like the challenge of working around the defect.

GWQ: Concerning the mutation *Shorter*, how tall is the mutant to start?

GWA: When using any normal animal stock, take the average height of the beast to begin the process. With humanoids, begin at one meter and work down.

GWQ: My players want to constantly invent new weapons and have their characters take them into battle. Is there some sort of game balancing method that I can use to curtail the creation of hundreds of different weapons in my campaign?

GWA: Begin by determining if the characters are spending a great deal of time researching and experimenting with weapons or if they are adventuring. If they are adventuring then their chance of developing a new weapon is slim to none. Then determine how difficult it would be to make the weapons they want using their technological level. It could be possible to develop throwing stars that are just like little daggers if swords and armor are common in the area. It would not be possible in that same area to boost the power of a laser rifle. Developing a crossbow in a land that has never seen arrows is out of the question unless some old book from the Ancients is found or a crossbow is brought into the game environment. Unusual weapons can be fun in the game but they should be countered by unusual obstacles.



1920s Adventure Game

GBQ: Is there any way to adjust a character's hit point score after the character is rolled up?
GWA: No, hit point scores are always determined

with the following formula: $(\text{Mu} + \text{Ag}) / 10 \cdot 5$ (round all fractions up). Mu = Muscle score and Ag = Agility score. Of course, you must recalculate the hit point score each time the character's Muscle or Agility score changes (i.e. when those scores are improved by spending experience points.)

GBQ: What is Robert Jackson's legal skill score in module GB4?

GWA: Robert Jackson is the lawyer for the bad guys. His legal skill score is 85, so use that as his percentage chance of getting his client acquitted.

STAR FRONTIERS™

Science-Fiction Game

SFQ: Can robots have skills?

SFA: Robots have programs — characters have skills. But there is no reason that a technician with the proper skills could not develop a program to duplicate the effects of a character skill if desired. Program level, price, and time required for development are subject to referee's discretion since they depend on the skill to be duplicated and the facilities available.

SFQ: Can a character be trained in skills by another person without using experience points?

SFA: No. Experience points are used up in training regardless of its source. Terms and cash price are sometimes negotiable since the referee may allow characters to barter goods or services for the training instead of cash, but the spending of experience points is not.

SFQ: On page 41, there is a program called Security Lock on the Robotic Design Cost Table. There is no such program described on page 47. Please explain.

SFA: The program wasn't defined in the text. For all practical purposes it functions precisely as the Computer Security program on page 46, except that it is specifically for robots. The intention is to prevent unauthorized persons from tampering with the robot's programming or circuitry, so a technician must defeat the Security lock program before a robot's mission or function can be altered.

SFQ: Can a damaged robot be repaired to bring its STA back to maximum? If so, how?

SFA: Yes. A successful repair job brings a robot back to normal functioning capacity in all respects, including full STA. Robots do not have to "heal" like characters do — they either work or they don't. A robot which has taken damage equal to or greater than its STA rating simply stops functioning until repaired, at which point it functions normally in all respects unless of course the referee rules otherwise for a specific case.

Now if a robot is repaired under less than perfect circumstances (such as "in the field" instead of a regular repair shop), there is a chance it will break down again of its own accord with further use regardless of whether it takes any more damage. There is a 10% chance of breakdown per 20 hour period (cumulative) for field repairs made with a personal tool kit. A major, minor, or total repair (GM's option) may be required. Times required for repairs are listed on page 11 of the Expanded Rules.

SFQ: Can a parabattery or power generator recharge a power pack?

SFA: No. Powerpacks must be recharged at a weapons shop, hardware store, or fuel station — not in the field.

SFQ: Can infrared goggles see infrared beams or heat-sensitive security devices?

SFA: Infrared goggles are keyed for the infrared

portion of the electromagnetic spectrum, so they can detect infrared beams. But heat-sensitive devices are made to detect heat, not radiate it — so infrared goggles will not pick those up.

SFQ: Can level 1 maintenance robots carry backpacks and equipment overland? If so, about how many kg?

SFA: A level 1 maintenance robot salvaged from a ship or installation could probably follow a group or individual carrying some equipment, but it would have to be reprogrammed for those by a technician with the proper skills first. A standard body robot can carry 150 kg at normal movement rate, or double that at half normal movement.

SFQ: If a level 1 maintenance robot is attacked and doesn't have restrain, self-defense, or attack/defense programs, can it still use a melee weapon to defend itself?

SFA: No. Without those programs, the robot is incapable of defending itself at all. It would be like taking a hammer to your toaster — the machine would allow you to destroy it without making any effort to fight back.

SFQ: How far can the maintenance robot travel on 10 SEUs on rocky or average ground?

SFA: It could cover approximately 10 km.

SFQ: Do VitaSalt pills work exactly the same as salt pills?

SFA: No. Salt pills contain only salt for maintaining a character's electrolyte balance, thus reducing the need for water. VitaSalt pills contain necessary vitamins and minerals in addition to salt, so they help supplement nutrition.

SFQ: Is there any limit to the number of new languages a polyvox can learn?

SFA: There is no limit, but a new tape must be used for every language to learn.

TOP SECRET®

Espionage Game

TSQ: Can characters "hot wire" cars, planes, helicopters, submarines, and other vehicles? What is the chance of success?

TSA: Characters with an AOK score of 75 or more in either electrical engineering or the appropriate engineering specialty (i.e. aeronautical engineering for planes and helicopter or transportation engineering for ground or water vehicles) may attempt to start a vehicle by "hot wiring." The chance of success is equal to the character's AOK score in the appropriate engineering field. Only one attempt may be made per minute.

TSQ: What is the minimum AOK needed to operate a vehicle?

TSA: Common vehicles such as cars, bicycles, etc., may be operated normally by a character. (Note that pivots, skids, high-speed driving and special maneuvers are not considered normal operation. See upcoming publications for more details.) For operating more unusual or complex vehicles such as planes, submarines, helicopters, snowmobiles, etc., use the character's AOK in the appropriate engineering field (as above) as the chance of success. The Admin may apply bonuses or penalties if desired. Failure means that the vehicle will crash.

TSQ: What is the chance that an agent could catch an object thrown at him by an opponent (such as a hunting knife)?

TSA: If the agent knows the object is coming, roll against coordination to catch it. No attempt may be made if the agent is unaware of the opportunity. Note that a character trying to catch a thrown weapon may not use the "running and dodging" bonus.



DISPEL CONFUSION



Fantasy Adventure Game
D&D® Companion questions

DQ: It says in the rules that a magical net cannot be damaged except by fire or acid. Does this mean that it cannot be ripped by giant strength?

DA: The magic of the net prevents it from being ripped. If the DM feels that the captured creature is especially strong, he may allow the net a saving throw against being ripped.

DQ: I was reading the information about Clan Relics and the Keeper of a Relic, and the Clan-master. How does one develop a player character like these?

DA: These positions are always held by nonplayer characters. The positions are so vital to the clan that these characters do not adventure, and seldom leave their area.

DQ: In the section covering jousts, the rules state that all entrants must wear full plate mail and carry shields (AC 2). Is it possible to use magical armor or shield to have a better armor class?

DA: The presence of knights with magical armor would instantly be noticed. Those fighters would be forced to joust with knights of equal armor or magic.

DQ: Does an earth elemental have to have dirt to form, or can it appear and take the shape of rocks or sand?

DA: A large amount of loose earth must be present for the elemental to form.

DQ: With the elemental form potion, is it necessary to have the fire or water, etc., in the area to change into the form?

DA: Yes.



Fantasy Adventure Game

The following are AD&D® questions that were asked of E. Gary Gyax at the GEN CON® RPGA® Network members' meeting as remembered by a charter member present at the meeting.

ADQ: Is T2 ever going to come out?

ADA: The manuscript for the T2 module is finished and in the appropriate hands. No definitive date has been set for release, however.

ADQ: Some of the monsters in the AD&D

books are pretty useless, and many are never seen in the modules. Is anything going to be done about this soon?

ADA: Work is being done to update and improve the FIEND FOLIO™ Tome. It is possible that all the monsters could be put in two big volumes: A-L and M-Z; but those plans are still at the discussion stage.

ADQ: At what level do dragons cast spells?

ADA: That is a function of the spell level that they can cast. If a dragon can use fourth-level spells, that is also the level of its ability. On the other hand, if the DM has a particularly old dragon, it is conceivable that the dragon could have attained a higher level of mastery, but the decision would be up to the DM.



Science Fantasy Game

GWQ: Can the Illusion Generation mutation create images that the mutant isn't familiar with or hasn't seen?

GWA: Because the illusions work with sight, sound, and smell, it is impossible for the mutant to dream up things to throw at its enemies. The mutant would have to have seen or experienced the thing it was sending.

GWQ: My players are trying to tell me that with the Thought Imitation mutation their characters can attack with their own powers and, in that same melee turn, use "mimicked mental powers." Is this correct?

GWA: No, characters can either use their natural powers or the Thought Imitation ability, not both.

GWQ: How can the oil of the barl neps be used without hurting the character trying to use it?

GWA: The character has to be resistant to radiation in some way. This is possible through mutation, by wearing special radiation-resistant suits or by using a mutation that allows for working with things at a distance.

GWQ: I can understand the creation of groups like the cryptic alliances, but I can't understand the reason for making groups like the Friends of Entropy. They don't seem to serve any useful purpose.

GWA: There is an old Chinese saying, "May you live in interesting times." The destructive groups among the alliances are

there to present interesting times to the characters. They are the enemies that must be beaten at all costs.

GWQ: I had a Stage V I.D. and was attacked by a security robot. I argued that the I.D. should have protected me, and my referee said the I.D. didn't matter.

GWA: Although the Stage V I.D. is good against most robots, if the security robot that you faced was crazed or programmed to respond to unusual types of identification, then you are out of luck. The I.D.s can't get you everywhere, but they will help in 90% of the areas that require them.

GWQ: Is the poison of the herkel strong enough to hurt the herkel?

GWA: The poison dealt out by any creature will hurt that creature.



1920s Adventure Game

GBQ: Can you have a character with more than one class? My character started out as a criminal and successfully committed a robbery or two without being caught. Then he was offered a chance to join the police force as a rookie and decided to become a cop. Since then, he has started a "protection racket" amongst the store owners on his beat. They pay him a certain amount of money per month, or else he sends some small-time thugs to beat them up and trash their stores. (The thugs are criminals he has caught. He agrees not to arrest them for their crimes if they do these assignments for him.)

On the other hand, the character has successfully stopped many crimes during his career with the police force and brought a number of criminals to justice. Should he get experience only as a cop for his law enforcement activities, only as a criminal for his illegal activities, or both (making him effectively a dual-class)?

GBA: Your character is effectively a corrupt policeman. The judge can award experience for both "careers" independently for as long as the character is able to maintain both. Experience for police functions (arresting criminals, closing down stills, etc.) is awarded normally, but the character is not entitled to the 10% experience bonus for being an honest cop. Criminal experience points are awarded for whatever profit

the character makes from illegal activities (as per racketeering). The character's income from his policeman's salary may *not* be counted toward criminal experience points.

Be aware, however, that your character is attempting something very dangerous by trying to walk on both sides of the law at once, and could find himself in some rather uncomfortable situations. In a well-run campaign, the game judge will use the character's unique position to create encounters. For example, the city where the character is operating doubtlessly already has an organized crime syndicate operating within its bounds. The syndicate also runs protection rackets and will hear of the character's activities when it sends representatives to threaten the same store owners who are paying off your character. The syndicate will not appreciate the competition from an independent, so your character will be confronted and forced either to stop his protection racket or join the organized crime syndicate. If he opts for the latter, the syndicate will then have a member on the police force and will expect to gain advantages from this. They will force the character to cover up their criminal activities, arrange for the escape of syndicate members from police custody, inform the organization of impending raids on their operations, misdirect investigations, and so forth.

As time goes on, it will become increasingly more difficult to keep the law enforcement agencies from finding out about your character's involvement with organized crime, especially if the F.B.I. is called in to investigate the incidents. If your character is caught by the police or F.B.I., your character will almost certainly go to prison for a very long time and will lose all law enforcement rank previously gained (the police will not protect a fellow officer involved with racketeering or organized crime). If your character fails to protect the syndicate's activities, they will take appropriate vengeance on your character for his failure. You will have to play extremely well to avoid being caught.

STAR FRONTIERS™

Science-Fiction Game

SFQ: What is a "deranged maintenance robot"? Does it have damage to its interior, exterior, or neither?

SFA: The robot might have become "deranged" from a malfunction caused by improper removal of a security lock or an unsuccessful attempt to alter its function or mission, which caused it to go "haywire." (See Malfunction Table on page 15.)

Alternatively, the robot could have become deranged because of damage to its programming, circuits, or memory at the referee's option.

SFQ: Can you attach a laser rifle, laser pistol, or any beam weapon to a parabat-

tery or power generator to fire?

SFA: A technician could conceivably juryrig a connection to drain power for a weapon from a parabattery or other power source temporarily, but weapons are not made to handle that kind of power input. After a turn or two, the "feedback" from the power source would certainly overload the circuits and damage the weapon beyond repair.

Such a desperate measure should be attempted only in a case of dire emergency.

SFQ: If an animal has 150 STA points (reduced to 90 through combat), can a tangler grenade hold it still? If so, could it still fight back?

Ability to break loose from tangler treads depends on the creature's current stamina rating. A creature of which its STA has been reduced from 150 to 90 through wounds will be held if it fails its avoidance roll just as a creature of which its STA was originally 90 would. As for fighting back, a creature held in a tangler grenade cannot use a ranged weapon at all. However, if you are foolish enough to close with it before knocking it out, there is no reason it could not try to hit you back in melee combat — which would probably entangle you in the treads as well.

SFQ: Can you fire a pistol with shock gloves on?

SFA: Yes, provided you turn the gloves off first.

SFQ: My character captured a maintenance robot, and I would like to know what it can or can't do.

SFA: It can't do anything except perform the functions for which it was programmed until a technician successfully alters its mission and functions. At that point, you have a device with all the intelligence of a large toaster-oven, but it can move and carry things. You will have to negotiate what it can be programmed to do with your referee, but do try not to give it functions which require making decisions or responding to changing circumstances.

TOP SECRET®

Espionage Game

TSQ: If you suffer a permanent loss, can it be made up by using experience points to restore the trait to normal?

TSA: Permanent blindness or deafness cannot be cured with experience points, but character traits that are permanently reduced by damage can be raised by spending experience just as any other trait can. Such losses are called "permanent" because they will not repair themselves with time or healing the way other damage will; but they can be rebuilt, just like the strength in a damaged limb can be rebuilt with physical therapy.

TSQ: Does the Charm score reflect the character's looks?

TSA: Looks are part of it, but the Charm score is a measure of how favorably other

people will react to the character, so it covers much more than just appearance. A given individual could be rather homely but still have more charm than an attractive person due to a good sense of humor, elegant manner, good taste, and so forth. Looks aren't everything — your actions are part of your overall charm, too.

TSQ: Why does a 5th-level agent get less experience than a 1st-level agent for the same job?

TSA: Experience values for jobs decrease as agent level increases. A 1st-level agent is very "green." When he accomplishes a mission successfully, he is awarded a large amount of experience because he is considered to have "learned" a great deal. But by the time the agent is 5th-level, he has carried out that same type of mission many times. Theoretically, he does not learn as much from doing it anymore, so it is worth less experience. The 5th level agent gets paid more for the mission than does the 1st-level agent, though, because the employers know that he is experienced and can do it right.

A character can go from first level to second level after only a few missions, but it takes longer to make the next level jump, and longer still to make the next. With each new level the agent's personal trait scores will improve, so the character fights more effectively. In short, it becomes easier to accomplish missions, so you have to accomplish more of them to get the same reward.

TSQ: If a character had martial arts skill and used a knife to attack someone, which table should be used?

TSA: Knife fighting. The player must choose whether to attack with the knife or to throw it away and use martial arts — you can't do both at once. A character wishing to use a weapon in HTH combat is limited to attacking on the table corresponding to that weapon. For example, a character attacking with a knife *must* use the Knife Fighting Table, regardless of whether or not he is capable of using other types of combat.

TSQ: In Untrained Combat, could an agent make a blow and hold in the same phase?

TSA: Yes, but that takes both allowable actions for the phase, so the agent could not use any defenses.

TSQ: Why weren't heavy weapons (such as rocket launchers) included in the rules?

TSA: Those are military weapons. Most secret agents don't carry rocket launchers around in their pockets — at least not if they care about being subtle. Even rifles are hard to explain to the local authorities, let alone rockets! Remember: this is not a military role-playing game, but rather one of spies and espionage that emphasizes action on a personal level. A few heavy weapons may be included in future products as the need arises, but their usefulness for espionage is limited.

