

NEXUS NINE NETBOOK 1:

NORTHERN GUN

**BY BRIAN HARDWICK
JOHN STEVENS
ERIC M. STITZMAN**



Nexus Nine Presents...

Netbook: Northern Gun

Written by: **Brian Hardwick**

John Stevens

Eric M. Stitzman

Additional Text & Concepts: **Phillip D. Humphrey**

Mat Krepicz

Jason Marker

Ian Schroen

Mark Temple

Daryl Wojtowicz

Editors: **Ian Schroen**

Eric M. Stitzman

Interior Artists: **Niklas Jansson**

Brian Manning

Eric M. Stitzman

Maps: **Ian Schroen**

Eric M. Stitzman

Based on the RPG rules, text, characters, concepts and Megaverse® created by **Kevin Siembieda**.

Palladium Books On-Line: www.palladiumbooks.com

Art of Niklas Jansson: www.itchstudios.com/psg

Art of Brian Manning: www.brian-manning.com

Special Thanks to **Alzandrion**, **eric.cline**, **Gadrin**, **Hiddenone**, **Navrin**, **PiglickJF**, **Scott Sylvester**, **Wolfe**, and all of the members at Nexus Nine.

Introduction

Welcome to the Northern Gun Netbook!

Before anything else is said, thanks are in order. First of all, let us take this opportunity to thank Kevin Siembieda and Palladium Books, as well as all of its freelance authors, for bringing us the phenomenon that has become Rifts®! As fans, we have read the various World Books and sourcebooks that describe Rifts® Earth with different degrees of interest. Some of us have purchased the books for the new toys or for the new O.C.C.'s and R.C.C.'s, but one factor that has always been a common desire amongst the fans is the need for world information. We want to know more about the powers-that-be: the movers and shakers of the world! We want to know more about what our own backyards look like in the world of Rifts® Earth! We want to know who is behind the corporations that provide us with the means to adventure and survive, to level the playing field against those who can wield the awesome power of magic.

Without a doubt, there are those of us who simply couldn't wait for the information that we needed, and hence, have created our own. This brings us to the Northern Gun Netbook. Northern Gun has been a continental power in the world of Rifts® for decades. Not through their military muscle, although they are certainly capable of fielding an army, nor through their humanitarian beliefs. They haven't invaded other communities, except by the means of their widespread distribution of products, nor have they discriminated against their non-human neighbors. Northern Gun has maintained its position because they have been the single largest producer of both military equipment and essential items that range from creature comforts to weapons to tools.

But who is the driving force behind Northern Gun? What is the city of Ishpeming, home of Northern Gun, like? What about their armed forces?

At Nexus Nine, we have endeavored to answer these questions. This is not canon material. Palladium may very well publish their own Northern Gun book eventually, rendering all of our hard work moot. However, we have created this Netbook to fill the time between now and then. Rather than focus on the expected arsenal of weapons and equipment, we have tried to look behind the facade of the largest post-Rifts corporation in North America. There is an ugly side to Northern Gun that blends in with the smoke belching factories of Ishpeming, just as its more amicable sales side shines in their showrooms.

Rest assured that if you want it, Northern Gun probably has it, but you had better be good for it...or else.

Required Books for a NG Setting

No Northern Gun Setting would be complete without the expansive NG Catalog. That Catalog is spread out amongst a number of quality Rifts® Books. Thus, for all of the various weapons, equipment and canon history, Nexus Nine recommends the following books when running a NG game:

- Rifts® RPG (Main Book)
- Source Book 1
- World Book Ten: Juicer Uprisings
- World Book 11: Coalition War Campaign (for Treaty Info)
- World Book 13: Rifts® Lone Star
- World Book 14: New West
- World Book 20: Rifts® Canada
- Rifts® Mercenaries
- Rifts® MercTown
- Rifts® Merc Ops

The History of Northern Gun

I have on several occasions worked directly for Maxwell Franklin. He is an amazing man with a keen insight. He obviously knows talent when he sees it, and I have had the good fortune to become one of his preferred operatives in all things concerning the duplicitous Black Market. He is aware of my problems in Lazlo and has encouraged my scholarly tendencies by feeding me tidbits of the past whenever we meet.

Damn him. For all of my self described wit and immunity to manipulation, I have fallen into his innocent but clever trap. He feels that giving Ishpeming's history the "Erin Tarn treatment", as he so eloquently puts it, would help to raise Ishpeming from a merc and manufacturing town to a place of history and learning. I doubt it, but he knows that my writing would serve as a means to re-enter Lazlo's upper crust and live the life I was intended to live. That dear old man amazes me every time I think of it. It seems I have no choice but to accept employment with him yet again.

You see, of all the things Maxwell Franklin found in Ishpeming, perhaps the single most significant thing for him to come across was a mid-sized office, on one of the first sub-levels of what was quickly dubbed HQ. During the Golden Age, the building sitting at the very heart of Ishpeming served as the corporate headquarters of a manufacturing giant known as Sentinel Industries. Its central tower stretched towards the sky with an eagerness unmatched by the concentric rings of towers surrounding it. When the apocalypse engulfed the world, a faction of militant civilians calling themselves the Northern Gun Militia made the central building their headquarters.

The office that Franklin discovered had apparently been used by the leader of the militia as an informal resting area where he kept his daily logs. Franklin spent hours poring over the video logs and audio recordings. There were stacks of documents and personal journals that had been handwritten in the same clean script and dated both before coming to the Ishpeming complex, and long after, when the video disks had become an important enough commodity to resume writing the logs by hand.

They spanned years.

I was never able to view them all myself, but I have had several conversations with Mr. Franklin on the subject, often over a bottle of his favorite Mackinac Black Bourbon. He has spent far more hours with the history than I have spent listening to him recount it, and I hope to one day be able to view it at my leisure. He has hinted that I may be of service to him sometime soon, and that if that is what I wish to receive as payment, he would grant it. Certainly, it could prove to be a piece of my complex re-admittance to the casual elite of my home city of Lazlo.

From what I have gathered through our discussions, Upper Michigan was once home to both a large association of manufacturing companies and a branch of military personnel referred to as NEMA. The two groups apparently had a working arrangement in which NEMA provided testing for the goods created by the manufacturers. The primary member of the association was Sentinel Industries, which incidentally, was the source of the name for the Ishpeming Defense Force's exclusive cyborg series. When the cataclysm struck the world, the group known as the Northern Gun Militia aided NEMA in establishing a safe haven for survivors amidst the sprawling industrial complexes at Ishpeming.

As Mr. Franklin explains it, the NEMA forces and the militia forces had a strained relationship, and it was only after several long range reconnaissance and rescue missions depleted the numbers of NEMA personnel that the remainder of them were absorbed by the militia. This took place some time in the first or second year after the apocalypse. Franklin relates that from what he can tell from the logs of the militia commander, he was a competent man who genuinely cared for those in his charge. He tried diligently to make sense of the Chaos around him and made an effort to catalog the strange and unusual new inhabitants of the world as best he could, but given the times, he obviously made several errors that we today would consider elementary.

At some point several years after the cataclysm, a disease of alien origin wreaked havoc on the populace of the region. For several months, the squads of men and women who were assigned the task of salvaging usable wreckage were warned away, fearing that they too would be affected by the mild mutagens racing through the populace. The disease was slowly brought under control, but in its wake came a new threat. The Demon Plagues had begun and had finally struck Ishpeming at its weakest hour. Even if the several squads of salvagers had been present to help fight the battle, it would hardly have been enough. Franklin believes that the inhabitants of the Northern Gun Protectorate, as it came to be called, were extremely close to seeing the end of the first Demon Plague, but were overwhelmed by a powerful demon who led an organized army of hell-spawned creatures in a campaign of destruction that stormed over Ishpeming like a steamroller. Had the beast known what lay under its feet, it would have certainly destroyed it all, taking great satisfaction in knowing what it would have taken from the world. Thankfully it was oblivious to the importance of the complex, leaving only the mindless stragglers of it's horde to nest in the ruins and feed on the returning survivors.

In the end, a few groups escaped the devastation and fled to parts unknown, while Ishpeming fell to the monstrosities and darkness taking over the world. Precious little is known about the time between then and its discovery by Franklin's Fist several decades ago. The only thing that is known for sure is that most humans believed the region to be haunted or infested with demons. With mankind's decline into barbarism and decades of living like rats as they hid from the new denizens of the world, it comes as no surprise to find that there is evidence indicating that some group or another lived in the bowels of the complex at some time during the Dark Ages, but they obviously didn't have any understanding of or need to use the technology around them, for all was left untouched.

Lastly, I will say that there is more in Ishpeming's darkest subterranean halls than the casual visitor knows. There are technological marvels of the Golden Age that are still being studied, as well as vaults unopened and databases not accessible by our current level of understanding. There is also a darkness in Franklin's eyes, when the Mackinac Black has him fully in its grip and his bodyguards are out of earshot, when he looks me in the eye and tells me that he couldn't kill everything below Ishpeming.

- An excerpt from the journal of Alexander Dubeau, former Lazlo dilettante

With the fall of The Northern Gun Protectorate, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan fell into the same state as much of the rest of the world. Gone were the survivors of the Golden Age and their valiant effort at establishing a bastion of humanity in an ever changing world of aliens and the supernatural. Also gone were those other-dimensional beings brought through the rifts to this world, alien to them, that had allied themselves with the fledgling kingdom in hopes of surviving and forming a place for themselves amidst the chaos taking place around them in the aftermath of the cataclysm. What was once a sprawling industrial cityscape crawling with signs of life had become a ghost town, haunted by the dreams that died there. It was in this state, as the Dark Age of the post-apocalypse world drew to a close, that a rugged band of mercenaries found the site of the former kingdom.

To truly appreciate the epic scale of the discovery of Ishpeming, and what the potential held within its dormant halls would eventually mean to the people of North America, one must be aware of the trends that were beginning to emerge during that time. Although there is some truth to the tales which tell of practitioners of magic being hunted by both human and D-Bee alike, out of fear and general mistrust, magic had still become a prevalent means of power. No one knows exactly how long the Demons of the legendary Demon Plague roamed the earth, but those who were capable of using the bountiful PPE that permeated the newly born world stood a head taller than everyone else and often abused their power in the wake of that terrible ordeal. Man had survived what was possibly the most dangerous time to be alive in the history of the world, only to have their demonic tormentors and conquerors be replaced by their own kind. Still, the world was opening up to the masses of people in the absence of the plagues. In this slightly less dangerous environment, men were given to searching and exploring the ruins that covered the land, trying to regain some of their lost knowledge. Technology, while always present, was being rediscovered slowly but surely; and with that, its use was becoming more widespread. At the dawn of the post-Dark Age world, those practitioners of magic who had been grudgingly accepted for their roles as protectors, and sometimes even rulers during those hostile times, were now being chased out of town by their more mundane contemporaries.

Three of the largest and quickly growing communities in what would become known as the Domain of Man were the kingdoms of Tolkeen, Lazlo, and the Federation of Magic. These communities, while not opposed to the use of technology, had embraced the use of magic along with its wide variety of practitioners, both human and non-human alike, as a ready source of power and protection. Technology was still an evolving aspect of society. Where magic offered the means of conjuring something from thin air, or powering a device through arcane means, technology was often hindered by its age and the lack of people proficient enough to build and repair it. The fact that large scale manufacturing was no longer a luxury to any but the largest enclaves, such as the growing city-state of Chi-Town, only served to enforce man's reliance on magic as an alternate means of empowerment.

Nevertheless, there were those groups of people that had no affinity for the arcane. Some of them

embraced the development of technology because technology and those who wielded it were less unilateral than magic. Anyone could use it, which is what made it appealing. A company called Wilk's was the first to manufacture military grade weapons on a large scale, and sell them on the open market. And people would do anything for one of those sleek, reliable weapons! In no time, there were a handful of groups trying to either copy and reproduce the Wilk's laser technology or find some of their own. But the advent of a successful new company wasn't enough to even the playing field between practitioners of magic and wielders of technology. Simply put: magic was a large part of everyone's reality, while truly high technology was so uncommon as to be mythical to some.

As the years yawned by and societies formed in the post-Dark Age, a great demand for mercenary soldiers and protectors had grown, as inevitably, the numbers of raiders and bandits grew. Many folks, human and D-Bee alike, rose to the occasion. Although the Coalition States has been a lightning rod for human supremacy since its inception, humans and D-Bee's often worked side by side after having spent the last few hundred years together in terror of the monstrosities roaming the land. Together they had developed the means to attack and defend against the rift-spawned creatures of the world, and using that knowledge to organize themselves as units of warriors, they spread across the land trying to earn their way.

One such group of mercenaries was a group known as Franklin's Fist. In their infancy, the group had performed small protection jobs and occasionally raided a few bandit camps themselves. The Robin Hood of the modern world, Maxwell Franklin had always tried to help the people he worked for, so they might better protect themselves when he moved on. As often as not, he would pass their way again sometime later to find them gone. Sometimes the signs told of a mass move; other times their demise was more obvious. More often than not, he found himself and his men scavenging materials to get by between jobs. It was on a mission as the mercenary escort to a scavenging expedition that Franklin met the woman he would move the world for.

Franklin had hired on with a small group known as The Society for Recollective Thought. Their most basic and sacred tenet was the notion that only through reclaiming the past could the people of the world could regain order, and the means of advancement necessary to live in a society worthy of peace. To this end, they had hired several small mercenary groups to escort them on their various expeditions. Franklin's Fist had the good fortune of being attached to Anne Gedry. Anne was an odd fusion of scholar and technician, highly charismatic and fiercely independent. Anne had been meticulously refurbishing some ancient bit of technology that she had traded for when Franklin met her. As they talked, she explained to him that the world was once rife with the facilities to mass-produce technology of all kinds. That, she said, would be the most valuable discovery of their age: the means to bring mankind back from the bottom of the food chain. She struck a chord in Franklin, one that would resonate in him throughout the rest of his life.

After two years of working scavenger jobs for The Society, Franklin grew tired of the leadership of The Society. They had begun to hoard whatever technology came to them and were beginning to manifest some disturbing trends among the resident scholars and techs. Their group was becoming less like a society that wanted to see mankind rise from the ashes and more like a religious institution that wanted to be the saviors of the world. Several of their field Operators were slow to see this change as they spent very little time at the home base, but once it became noticeable, many of them left. Franklin struck out for new horizons with Anne in tow.

After two years of scavenging on their own, Franklin and Anne hit pay dirt. They were recovering parts from a half destroyed power plant south of Old Detroit, near the area that was once the border between the old states of Michigan and Ohio. While taking cover from a firefight in the backseat of a pre-Rifts

vehicle hulk, Anne found the remains of a man that had lain undisturbed since the Cataclysm shook the world. The corpse sat behind the wheel of the car, one hand holding a revolver, the other holding a faded picture of a human woman and two small children. The scene was saddening to Anne until she noticed the faded badge on the man's chest. It read: David Samson, Engineering and Development Dept. Looking around the interior of the vehicle, she noticed a silver briefcase on the front passenger seat. Suddenly, the beaten hulk seemed more like a crypt as the sound of the battle outside gave way to her mind racing through the possibilities of what lay in the briefcase. Carefully defeating the lock with her Vibro-Blade, Anne found a series of files regarding some technical process that she was unfamiliar with. Also scattered across the top of the files was a handful of brochures describing the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and the area around Ishpeming. Clipped to a file that read Resume was a map with a set of directions to Sentinel Industries in Ishpeming. Anne was breathless as she crawled out of the sacred hulk to find Franklin and plan for their future.

Since the group was already in Michigan, the decision was made to forge ahead. Legend held that Michigan was one of the deadliest places in America, but the prospect of discovering a manufacturing marvel such as the one described in the brochures was one that the group collectively agreed was worth the risk.

It took the group three months to reach the Upper Peninsula from the day they found the map. Lead by a wild Psi-Stalker, they came by way of Wisconsin, skirting along the southern border of Michigan to the old state of Wisconsin, where they could proceed north in a relatively safer environment. The terrain was more rugged then, with debris and nature covering what remained of the old American roadways that are said to have connected every city on the continent. Ironically, their trip north aboard vehicles that operated on old technology, in search of a place that could potentially bring that same technology back into the world, was frustrating in its own way. The group suffered through periodic breakdowns and long hours of jury-rigging their systems to continue their search. They had endured a number of skirmishes with wild beasts and raiders, as well as their own share of infighting over how to divide whatever spoils they would find. Franklin had done a good job of surrounding himself with like-minded people; the majority of them saw the big picture. They knew that the end result of this mission could potentially provide bigger dividends for both their wallets and their conscience. A handful of dissenters went on patrols and didn't return.

Had the people of the post cataclysm world followed the old calendar, the date would have read: October 4th, 2258. However, not having any accurate recollection of the Golden Age of Man, much less of its calendar, the group moved forward into the pristine wilderness of Upper Michigan unaware: that very day was to be an historic occasion, and one that would warrant remembrance by scholars in the years to come.

Judging by the map, pre-Rifts Ishpeming and the surrounding communities had sprawled across the western Upper Peninsula all the way to Wisconsin. As they made their way across the countryside, the group noticed that there were a remarkable number of old buildings and structures that had remained intact, albeit abandoned, for what appeared to be many years. Signs warning them to turn back were painted on the weathered facades of some of them, and the mournful sound of the wind lent an eerie feel to the area. From a distance they could make out the silhouette of the cityscape. Cautiously, they passed through the battered and broken outer walls of what appeared to be the outermost perimeter community of Ishpeming proper. Shattered by the waves of demons and supernatural horrors that scoured the earth in mankind's most dismal hour, the exhaust stacks jutting from the cavernous factories scratched the sky. A large thoroughfare led them into the city, to a set of steel gates that lay askew beneath a sign that read Northern Gun Protectorate HQ. The group would call this place home while they spent the next few years discreetly gathering their associates and determining the functionality of the labyrinthine

complexes. Ishpeming, and more importantly the legacy of Northern Gun, had been discovered.

The first several hours after discovering the remains of Ishpeming were spent in controlled enthusiasm. Anne desperately wanted to begin hunting for artifacts and cataloging the discovery, but the sounds of scurrying and skulking creatures in the darkness of the buildings and factories that they passed quickly tamed her excitement. Maxwell Franklin had successfully supported his mercs for several years and held each of them in high regard. As a good leader, he valued his men as well as his assets, and made certain to successfully reconnoiter the area and establish a base camp from which to search the city.

As anticipated, the ruined city was more than they had imagined during their many wistful conversations during the long trek north through the hazardous wilderness. Although the city had obviously been the focal point of a tremendous battle, the remains of its defenders had scarcely been moved from the places where they fell, much less picked over by salvager's. The shredded hulks of robots and abandoned vehicles lay sprawled atop the debris, clogging the roadways. At one point, as the group carefully picked their way through the rubble, a techie in Franklin's troop accessed a video feed from one of the fallen robots with a remote power supply. Frozen in place by their glimpse of the past, they stood transfixed in the blue light of a small view screen and watched several minutes of the battle before witnessing the attack that peeled open this pilot's compartment and removed the heroic soldier from it. A twenty foot tall creature that would come to be known as a Horror in the years to come, charged headlong into the robot, knocking it prone before leaping atop it and rending its armor with its wickedly curved claws. It was a grisly scene. The worst part of the feed was the revelation that came with the video: demons had destroyed Ishpeming and the group known as The Northern Gun.

News of big discoveries spreads quickly, and Franklin knew that he would have to secure the area as quickly as possible and be prepared to defend his claim if it became necessary. Quite often, if a novice explorer made use of an experienced guide and made an important discovery, the guide would simply sell the location to a wealthier salvager who would in turn swarm the claim with his own people. Thankfully, Franklin wasn't a novice and his Psi-Stalker scout, Corrin, wasn't as morally corrupt as some of the greedy robber-scholars and their tainted guides. Franklin had once been told that the ambient levels of the energy used to power magic, the same energy which was so alluring to the supernatural, had dropped a great deal since the time of the cataclysm. Although still strong, he suspected it was unlikely that there were any such creatures still remaining in the energy deficient zone of the Upper Peninsula. Prudence, however, has always been one of the hallmarks of a good leader, and so, after the first few days of clearing the area and a handful of encounters with deeply entrenched nests of supernatural monsters, Franklin elected to send Corrin to hire a group of Psi-Stalkers that they had camped for a few days with in Wisconsin. The deal he offered was simple: Aid his men in clearing the city of the supernatural denizens and temporarily patrol the surrounding countryside in exchange for any equipment he could supply to aid in their task, and a long term contract with his group, should they be interested in such a deal. It was a generous offer for the times, but needless to say, the mere thought of such a challenging hunt intoxicated the Psi-Stalkers, who came readily and performed with admirable zeal.

Franklin's Fist, with numbers greatly bolstered by the Psi-Stalkers, systematically cleared and secured the outlying communities, methodically making their way towards Ishpeming proper and their most powerful adversaries. Within a month, Franklin's Fist had killed or routed all of the inhabitants of the ruins. The Psi-Stalkers took to their patrols and hunted the stragglers down while the rest of the group began to take stock of their surroundings. Anne sent word to a few of her more technically inclined friends and former members of The Society for Recollective Thought, asking them to come and assist her in ascertaining the viability of the technology they found. On the surface, much of it was battered and broken during the final hours of the city, the remainder being somewhat weathered by time and the

elements. The real discovery came when the group forced their way into one of the sealed underground complexes!

They knew from reading the brochures found in the briefcase that "historical" Ishpeming had its beginning in the mining industry, so it was no surprise to them that several of the factories had below ground levels. What staggered them was the cavernous size of some of them and the remarkable condition of the equipment therein. They had expected to find much of it in disrepair. Instead, what they found was machinery and equipment that had been faithfully and conscientiously maintained by a group of men and women that were forced to treat it as though each piece was the last of its kind. In the maintenance offices, they found meticulously kept logbooks that detailed the various changes made to the equipment to keep it operational, or to change its functionality. Any removed or altered parts were stored away and labeled in the event that materials could be made to return the piece to its original intent. It was a treasure trove of the most priceless knowledge they had ever heard of, and to find it in such a quantity was enough to make their heads swim with the possibilities. Anne was beside herself with joy to see that someone had so carefully recorded even the most minute details regarding the equipment.

However, Franklin was very practical and not given to count his dragons before they hatched. He detailed teams of men to follow the paper trails to the storehouses and see what was actually left. More often than not, they found that certain warehouses had been destroyed and the parts needed to return some of the machinery to Golden Age standards simply weren't there. Many buildings had been looted by unscrupulous employees during the cataclysm in hopes of riding out the storm and setting themselves up somewhere later, only to be lost in the destruction of the time. Others had simply been ruined by time. In the early days, much of what was found was reluctantly set aside in an effort to concentrate on what they could figure out. Their goal was to bring a factory up to production level as quickly as they realistically could. Anne and her crew of Operators and techies mulled it over and came up with a possible one year timetable for one of the weapon assembly lines to come up to production level. The line had seen service in the latter days of the complexes inhabitants, some of the materials were readily on hand, and it was one that had several design variations already logged into its system.

One year doesn't seem like a lot of time to perform such a task. It was even seen as perhaps too optimistic an estimate by a few of the crew, but Anne assured the group that one year was a realistic timetable for them. Franklin was glad to hear the news as well. It had become increasingly more important to come up with at least some sort of timeline to offer the mercenaries under him, who would be working on faith, room, and board until the place began turning a profit. One year seemed like a long time, but it was acceptable given the work that lay ahead. In fact, he told them, it had to be. The remoteness and inherent solitude of the Upper Peninsula could only harbor a secret of such magnitude for so long. Eventually, when word of the discovery got around, others would come looking for a piece of the action and possibly try to stake a claim to the find. In a preemptive strike, Franklin hired several small mercenary groups that he had become acquainted with over the years to perform the various security details he required. He and Anne also discreetly hired several more Operators to recover and rehabilitate the systems in the various factories. To ensure their loyalty, he promised them a portion of the profits and an opportunity to serve in various important capacities when the complexes were up and running. It was an exciting time. The opportunities offered by Franklin were more than most of his company had ever been given before. It was generous. He needed them and they were grateful to be needed. To play a part in man's technological rise from the ashes and near barbarism of the previous generations was an honor he had given to them when most tech hunters were seeking glory and riches only for themselves. It was a time of hope, and the future of the post-Dark Age world finally shone with a hint of a glimmer on the horizon.

With the tumult of industry came the ever present specter of society. Workers brought their families, who brought their own needs, which brought people that could make a living catering to those needs. Within months Franklin witnessed Ishpeming begin the slow transition from ghost town to bustling frontier town. Although he was slightly annoyed at first by the distraction, he eventually came to see that there was in fact some merit to the process. Although premature, the influx of people proved useful in cleaning up parts of Ishpeming and the outlying areas that he himself had placed low on the priority list. Outside of the industrial parks there were whole neighborhoods beginning to take shape. Small merchants catered to the slowly growing populace, and every week more people arrived to seek employment or opportunity. Within the complexes themselves, Franklin was discovering new needs for manpower as gallery upon gallery was opened to reveal everything from long trapped packs of ravenous ghouls to dangerously flooded corridors and shafts. All of the damaged materials had to be hauled out and inspected by the techs to retrieve what was salvageable. The rest was used to barter for services with those new arrivals that Franklin couldn't take on right away.

Although Maxwell Franklin was openly recognized as the de facto leader of operations in Ishpeming, there were several other people that played an important role in the establishment of what is now the largest independent manufacturer in North America, as well as in the development of the city of Ishpeming. Most notable among them is Anne Gedry, the woman who shared Franklin's dream of empowering the common man through technology. While Franklin and his team used what technology they had to serve as mercenaries, usually in the role of protectors, he had no real way of bringing technology into the mainstream. If he had made the discovery alone, he would have been at the mercy of the more tech savvy of the world. Anne brought to their relationship a genuine desire to see the same dream come to fruition, along with the practical knowledge necessary to see that they had firm control of seeing it done properly. They did, however have to rely on others to help them in their gargantuan task. To that end, they kept notes on the personnel working with them and decided who was best suited to each role to be filled in the forthcoming company; for that was essentially the only way to make their dream actually work. They would have to form a company and produce on a large scale. And to be solvent, they would have to sell themselves as well as their product to the masses. With so much technical work to be done, Anne graciously left the front man's role to Franklin.

Unfortunately, there were those people who sought to steal away a piece of the tech that would allow them to make their own way in the world without relying on the generosity of someone like Franklin. Franklin knew that he couldn't hope to contain the enterprising people working for him. Greed was a powerful motivator to those who had lived without anything to call their own. He was forced to institute ruthlessly efficient measures to deal with would be thieves. Surprisingly, most people didn't want to see a good thing ruined and wholeheartedly supported his efforts. Not surprisingly there were also those people that made every effort to insinuate themselves into his confidences or gain his ear, but Franklin was no fool. He judged every man on his own merit and how useful he could be to the successful realization of his dream. Those whom he deemed unnecessary or of little help to his cause were put in positions to be of service in establishing some form of government for Ishpeming. Naturally, the sycophants among them made sure that Ishpeming and Northern Gun would grow together and that any legislation to be passed would be favorable to the industry that would eventually prove to be their life's blood. In exchange, Northern Gun would maintain a dedicated group tasked with reestablishing civilian commodities as well as military tech. The deal proved to cement the symbiotic relationship of Ishpeming and Northern Gun to such an extent that many people don't really realize that they are two separate entities.

Although, slightly behind his self imposed one year deadline, Maxwell Franklin officially opened Northern Gun one year and five months from the day he laid eyes on the sign of the Northern Gun Protectorate and watched the heroics of that group on centuries old video recordings amidst the ruined

hulks of robots and power armor. Appropriately, he named the new company Northern Gun in honor of the soldiers whose bones his fortune now laid upon. He raised the first Northern Gun energy rifle over his head that day amidst tumultuous applause.

As elated as they were to see a finished product finally come off of the assembly line, the folks at Northern Gun knew that the real work was just beginning. Alliances had been made and promises needed to be kept in order to maintain some semblance of order amidst the excitement that permeated the town of Ishpeming. Even before workers had put the first NG-33 into a crate, work had been running around the clock for almost sixteen months. Many of the assembly lines had been scavenged from to maintain others, and reassembling them in their proper working order was a herculean task in and of itself. Prioritizing the list of items to be put into production fell to Franklin, who had fallen unceremoniously from the position of Mercenary Commander to Administrator. Naturally, he placed weapons and armor at the very top of the list. He intended to allay the worries of the several mercenary groups he held on retainer by providing them with brand spanking new equipment to appease them while he worked out some system by which he could pay them properly. In the meantime, he pointed to the workers that swarmed over the vehicle and power armor lines like busy worker bees as incentive to trust him a little longer.

Franklin knew that the company would prove to be successful by providing the items in demand, which at the time were weapons and equipment to survive life in the dangerous world outside. The problem was that in the dangerous world outside, the vast majority of people still utilized a system of trade and barter. Only those living near one of the established city states or a larger kingdom could really produce any kind of currency, and there was little chance that one currency would be valid in another kingdom. While the city of Ishpeming busied itself with growing slowly into a kingdom of its own, Franklin made overtures to a handful of merchants that had set up shop in Ishpeming, with the intention of hiring them to work as traveling salesmen.

In those days, there were a number of people, human and D-Bee alike, that made a living by traveling the countryside scavenging and selling goods and materials to those folks who couldn't afford to do so themselves. For the most part, they had the lay of the land, and knew where to go to sell the really good finds. By organizing them, Franklin was initially able to get his wares to those places most likely to be able to afford them. His instructions were to make every effort to trade in certain commodities, which he designated, wherever there was no translatable currency. In places with their own established currency, he instructed them to look for a suitable place to set up shop and take an inventory of what the area needed the most. For protection, he sent a small contingent of mercs with them, but naturally some of them ditched their guards and never returned, thinking that they would simply sell what they had and live comfortably in relative obscurity. Most of them were eventually found and dealt with, but those that did return came back with long lists of items desired by the common people, as well as items and equipment desired by the various kingdoms they visited. Many of them also brought with them letters of intent from the rulers of a few of those kingdoms, stating their willingness to trade in the various commodities listed on Franklin's wish list in exchange for finished products. One of the kingdoms even sent an emissary to Ishpeming with the offer of helping Franklin to set up a banking system to better control his developing company. Franklin brought this good news to his newly constructed panel of advisors and councilors as proof of the viability of their endeavor.

In spite of the promising news, several of the people working in the Northern Gun industrial complex were dissatisfied with their lot. As is often the case when you have a burgeoning new group, some folks thought that they could do a better job of managing the operations of the company. When news of another industrial zone to the south of Ishpeming leaked from within one of the mercenary companies, several of them, along with some disgruntled technicians and the explorers that had discovered it, left to

seek their own fortunes there. Franklin had known about the site, but had chosen to concentrate his efforts on one site at a time. Being the larger of the two, and the one better equipped to produce weapons in the most expedient fashion, he chose to focus on Ishpeming and leave the area near Escanaba alone for the time being. There was a fifty-fifty chance that the group would fail. Unbeknownst to those that had left, Anne had sent raiding parties to scavenge many of the items needed for the Ishpeming factories from this other site. It would be a long time before they were in a position to compete with Northern Gun on the same scale.

After a few years, Ishpeming was on the map. Northern Gun had successfully made its name known among many of the kingdoms in the Domain of Man. They had successfully begun selling a few of "their own" weapons, which were obviously Golden Age product designs, or as near as they were able to produce, as well as a few items that they had reverse engineered and knocked off from various sources such as Wilk's and Chi-Town. They had also started production of various sundries and creature comforts that would be a mainstay of their production. There was a steady flow of scholars and other various learned men and women coming to Ishpeming to see what life was like in the place that was bringing civilization back to the lands. The brain trust at Northern Gun grew so that every day was seeing a new idea or proposal that would revolutionize the industry. The designers and idea men were broken down into teams according to what their designs intended: vehicles, power armor, robots, weapons, or equipment. And to top it all off, there was a banking system in its infancy in Ishpeming, using the Northern Gun Credit. Many of the mercenary companies still worked on the company store policy, having seen credit systems come and go, and would remain that way for years to come. But a great deal more of them bought into the system whole heartedly, spreading the idea around as they traveled the countryside. Soon, in nearly every city in the Domain of Man, one could find a vendor accepting the NG Credit.

After five years, the group that had abandoned Northern Gun to start fresh in their own venture finally opened the doors on their own company called Wellington Industries. The company was situated in the town of Wellington, in the Manistique Imperium, the kingdom that had grown as an offshoot of Ishpeming near Lake Michigan. For years, it had toiled away at trying to bring its own factories up to production level, competing for the commodities that Northern Gun was reaping daily. With little to offer in trade, it took them longer to get up and running, and only after brokering deals with Northern Gun to produce equipment for Ishpeming first. As Northern Gun grew, the people of the Manistique Imperium watched with thinly veiled jealousy as NG climbed to the top of the Robotics ladder. During the Golden Age, its factories had also been a part of the Ishpeming Manufacturers Association. Unfortunately, most of their facilities were tooled to produce heavy equipment for construction and agriculture, and weapon systems for vehicles. Any means of producing robotics had been scavenged to fit the facilities of Northern Gun. Even when they had their facilities up and running, production was slow compared to the smoke belching factories to the north. Two truths hit the leaders of the Manistique Imperium hard: First, the bulk of their current products were great for an expanding kingdom, but kingdoms generally only expand when they are secure. And second, many of those kingdoms wouldn't be secure until they spent their money with Northern Gun. Thus, it took some time for the Manistique Imperium to really start churning out merchandise. With Northern Gun now living next door to a competitor, they brokered a deal to share vehicle systems technology with each other. The benefit of this was an exchange of information as well as personnel, which was the perfect scenario for the reintroduction of industrial espionage into the post-cataclysm world. One would keep tabs on the other and vice versa, with Northern Gun trying to retain the upper hand and the Manistique Imperium looking for a way out from under Northern Gun's shadow.

The balancing factor was finally introduced when the Manistique Imperium was invited to attach itself to the NG credit system. Ostensibly, this seemed like the logical thing to do since both parties were well

known manufacturing companies whose combined strength of production could better serve to back the value of the credit. However, there was an underlying motive for the power brokers that had surrounded Franklin. They felt that since Northern Gun was the larger producer of goods in demand and had supported the credit for so long alone, it should be the majority leader in the endeavor. Outwardly, this seemed fair, but the leaders in Manistique knew that it was one more way for Northern Gun to hold the upper hand. Still, the benefit to such an arrangement held more appeal than not having it, and the Manistique Imperium reluctantly agreed.

Over the years, the deal has paid off. Northern Gun and Ishpeming have grown exponentially, and so has the Manistique Imperium. Wellington Industries has even contracted some of their designs to be installed in Northern Gun vehicles and some of their wares are showcased in Northern Gun showrooms. There is a brisk trade between the two neighbors and an unofficial stance of mutual defense and non-military aggression. There is still a fair amount of tension between the two powers over both their history and the very real practice of industrial espionage. New ideas come to the Ishpeming Bazaar every year and potential sellers are mysteriously whisked away by unknown assailants, presumably to a rival manufacturer like Bandito Arms or Wellington.

Through all the years, one person has stood by and watched his dream come to life in stark clarity. Maxwell Franklin has lived two lifetimes worth of adventure, both on the battlefield and in the boardroom. In each capacity, he has been forced to make the hard decisions that have proved to guide his company to its current position. He was wise enough to know that Northern Gun's growth and survivability was safer in the hands of a small group of like minded people. His board of directors has seen him live long past his prime, and no longer plan for what will transpire in the event of his passing. He is as much a part of the day to day operation of Northern Gun as the electricity in the complex, thanks to excellent cybernetic implants and bio-systems, and a seemingly unnatural long lifespan. His only regret is that Anne Gedry is no longer with him to share in the realization of their mutual dream. Where she went, no one but Franklin knows, but if she were here to see what has become of the ruined city of Ishpeming and its hollow heart, she would be proud.

Ishpeming Geography

Ishpeming is situated in the center of the old state of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The coast of Lake Superior is approximately fifteen miles northeast from the center of the city. Its closest neighboring kingdom, The Manistique Imperium, lies some 75 miles to the south, along the northern shores of Lake Michigan. Numerous small factory towns and cities dot the landscape around and between Ishpeming and The Manistique Imperium, many having given up their independent kingdom status to join one or the other of the two industrial giants.

The borders of Ishpeming see a great deal of traffic year round. The western border of the kingdom of Ishpeming, which is the most heavily defended, is formed by "The Iron Wall". Following the old US-2 roadway between the city of Ironwood, approximately 130 miles (260 km) west of Ishpeming, southeast through the city of Iron River, and then further southeast to the city of Iron Mountain (see the [Iron Wall](#) section of this Netbook for more information on these towns). The eastern border of the kingdom is rather indistinct, with patrols ranging between fifty and seventy five miles past the Munising power plant. The independent kingdom of Grand Marais lies east of Munising along the shore of Lake Superior. The dangerous waters of Lake Superior form the natural border of the kingdom on the north side.

West of the Iron Wall lies the Wisconsin Wild Land, also known as the Wisconsin Wilds, and the Free

Lands. Prior to the war in Minnesota, the Coalition established two military bases in the Wisconsin Wild Land, ostensibly to keep an eye on the D-Bee and monster infested countryside, as well as the Xiticix to the west, but in reality the bases serve to keep a wary eye on the comings and goings of travelers making their way to Ishpeming and The Manistique Imperium. Even before the CS/Tolkeen conflict, much of the land was a dangerous wilderness, but it suffered a great deal of devastation during The Sorcerer's Revenge and is heavily watched by the CS now. The two bases are Fort Perrion, which stands approximately 170 miles (274 km) from Ishpeming on the bones of the pre-Rifts city of Ashland, and Fort Barron, which lies 60 miles (97 km) further to the southwest.

While buffered by the two Coalition bases in the Wisconsin Wilds, the Xiticix Duluth Hive remains one of Ishpeming's greatest threats. While the CS bases are certainly capable of defending themselves, the commanders have chosen to let the forces of Lazlo do most of the work for them (see **World Book 23: Xiticix Invasion** for more information). Unfortunately, this means that a number of Xiticix still reach the border of Northern Gun before being stopped at The Iron Wall. In the past, the Xiticix seemed to treat the Upper Peninsula and its two large industrial kingdoms as a rival hive, leaving them alone with only token efforts at probing the territory. That may change as the Duluth Hive grows in number. Their past treatment of the region hasn't stopped them from making several attempts at establishing hives along the northern coast of Lake Superior, all of which have been smashed by Northern Gun and allied tribes of Wild Psi-Stalkers.

Near the eastern edge of the Upper Peninsula, 178 miles (278 km) from Ishpeming, the locks at Sault Ste. Marie have always been under the control of a contingent from the Coalition State of Iron Heart (370 miles/595 km). Since the trade agreement with the Coalition States, Northern Gun has enjoyed greater ease of use in shipping and receiving materials through the locks. This has enabled Northern Gun to maintain a slightly easier delivery to the rogue traders that deal with Lazlo on their behalf. The city of Lazlo is 650 miles (approximately 1000 km) from Ishpeming.

Other notable kingdoms with whom Northern Gun has business dealings and or retail locations are MercTown, which is 740 miles (1191 km) away between Chi-Town and the Magic Zone, Kingsdale and Whykin, which are 800 (1287 km) and 850 miles (1368 km) away respectively in the territory of Missouri, and Fort El Dorado, the hub of the newly christened Coalition State of Arkansas, which is approximately 1165 miles (1875 km) away from Ishpeming.

To the north, Ishpeming has established the town of Eagle Harbor to monitor conditions on Lake Superior and serve as a stopover for vessels. A large mercenary company has also established an airfield and fortified the facility to serve as a staging point for patrols over Lake Superior's northern coast. The base, called Portage Point, is stationed at the mouth of the Portage Canal, and it sees frequent action fending off stray Xiticix and destroying their hives on the lake's northern coast before they can become established enough to pose a threat. Portage Point is serviced by the independent kingdom of Hancock, which straddles the canal and sits atop the pre-rifts cities of Hancock and Houghton. The only Ley Lines in the Upper Peninsula flow from Hancock to the ruins of Tolkeen, making Hancock the lone domain of the arcane in Ishpeming's area of influence.

Much of the land between Ishpeming city proper and the Iron Wall is forested wilderness with several small towns and homesteads spread out along the old snowmobile trails and roads. Several small logging companies using the new Forester Power Armor (See [New Product Line](#) section of this Netbook for more information) make their living culling the myriad forms of harmful alien vegetation from the forest, as well as cutting down timber for use in one of Ishpeming's many factories making household sundries. Ishpeming maintains a strict policy by which companies removing lumber must also plant an equal number of saplings, but some of the more unscrupulous loggers ignore this rule. Large tracts of

land have been set aside to the east of Ishpeming for the purpose of farming and agricultural experimentation. Ishpeming manages large automated harvesting systems on most of the farms, with the remainder contracted to grow specialty items not needed in bulk. In the latter part of the Golden Age, a company used the Upper Peninsula Experimental Forest to breed hybrid plant forms. The post-Rifts world has taken this evolution one step further by seeing the introduction of a few beneficial forms of alien plant life into the expansive reserve. A pharmaceutical subsidiary of Northern Gun currently resides there, experimenting on the habitat and attempting to create new medicines.



The City of Ishpeming

February 26th, 101 P.A.

The convoy rolled down the Escanaba River service road for a solid hour more before the familiar sky over Ishpeming came into view in the distance. The color of industry clung to the heavens like a stain that was never rinsed away. Smoke and flame belched forth into the sky like dragons breath from the many spires poking from the sprawling industrial parks that dominated the city. Lights shone from the chimneys through the haze to warn away the intrepid fliers of the city that inevitably came too close for their own good. To travelers from afar, however, the lights served as beacons of civilization in a violent

world.

Civilization, of course, is a purely subjective term; given to the whim of the individual to determine as he sees fit. To most, civilization is simply the company of other sentients living in some modicum of technologically aided society. To some, it is the whole of that coupled with refined culture.

As the convoy rolls into the city limits, I see a handful of workers taking their lunch on the curb outside of a cavernous factory. They are blackened, as though they have walked through fire to get here. To look at them, one would not see the cultural refinement of Lazlo's elite, yet refined they are. To them, civilization benefits and advances through the work they perform and by that rationale they are pure.

In Ishpeming, civilization exists through the grace of technology and those who use it. In the often violent and turbulent world of today, the advancement of technology is of the highest priority to the city of Ishpeming. Technology is Ishpeming's lifeblood, and those daring enough to carry it into the dangerous lands beyond are the ones who ensure that refined culture can exist elsewhere.

And Northern Gun is the heart of it all.

Northern Gun is the reason for Ishpeming's existence. They are inseparable. Symbiotic. The fate of one is entwined with the fate of the other. Through their diligent work Northern Gun has enabled entire communities and kingdoms to exist in liberty; free of the yokes of fealty and control that so many others are made to swear to some tyrant or other. Northern Gun has offered freedom to those brave enough to take it through force of arms. They have made the comforts of society possible in the harshest climes and brought that modicum of civilization back to the hands of men.

I see a large group of men entering a low rise structure on one of the side streets of Ishpeming. Lights and signs indicate to all passersby that the place is a haven for mercenary men and women. I chuckle at the thought of refinement in that bar. But who am I to judge them? Indeed, it is possible that some of them are coarse, and boorish, yet for their lack of social refinement they exhibit their own set of social traits that are unadulterated by the pompousness common to those who consider themselves socially refined. They garb themselves in their truth and make no qualms about it. And for that, I would call them the purer of the two.

These people are indicative of the lifestyle in Ishpeming. It is coarse and dangerous. There is a whole new set of social skills to learn in order to successfully navigate the streets of Ishpeming; a whole new culture to immerse yourself in. Like an oil bath.

Thank Northern Gun for the likes of them.

- An excerpt from the journal of Alexander Dubeau, former Lazlo dilettante

Population Breakdown:

678,000 Total Citizens

75% Humans

8% Dwarf

5% Ogre

5% Mutant Animals

5% Psi-Stalker

2% Other D-Bees

The City of Ishpeming serves two seemingly opposite purposes. First, it is a benefit package for Northern Gun employees and those who opt to buy in. Employees, as well as non-employees who purchase the plan, are granted citizenship to Ishpeming and access to health care, education, housing, power and water - things 95% of Rifts Earth does without. Second, it is a free-market for NG customers to come and conduct their business with freedom and privacy. Anyone coming to Ishpeming is welcome to stay, they can purchase whatever they want without permit, and they can be generally left alone by security forces. The only rule customers and visitors need to respect is that you don't harm the citizens. And most people don't want to, as it is the citizens who provide this wonderful free-market haven. These two unique facets are intertwined on the streets of Ishpeming, making the city a reflection of Northern Gun corporate policy: we won't ask questions, as long as you pay up.

Culture of the Gun: Unlike many major cities in North America, the people of Ishpeming and Northern Gun believe in a person's right to bear arms - in fact they make a business out of it. Visitors to Northern Gun are allowed to carry an energy sidearm while inside the city limits. While this can lead to some very violent encounters, it also makes most people leery of starting trouble, as they are likely to get shot full of holes.

Ishpeming City Government

The City of Ishpeming exists to service the employees and customers of Northern Gun. Most of the citizens are employees of Northern Gun. Although anyone can register to be a citizen, they must pay a hefty application fee (150,000 credits). For non-employees, citizenship must be renewed every three years, and along with renewal comes another fee. Being a citizen allows access to all municipal services from education and health care to membership at public libraries and community programs. Additionally, only registered citizens are allowed to vote in the city council elections. And in order to buy a house or obtain a building permit, you must also be a citizen. Anyone who works for NG, or anyone who has enough money, can become a citizen regardless of race, although magic users and most super-natural beings applications are almost always denied.

Access to public services is restricted to citizens due to the high transient population in the City of Ishpeming. Merchants, mercenaries, and vagrants all pass through the city in alarming numbers, and Ishpeming could not afford to offer them services, even on a pay-per-use basis, without overwhelming the infrastructure. The only city services accessible to non-citizens on a pay-per-use basis are public transit and the City Information Service (CIS), a local network of information about the city. That being said, visitors can access health care, augmentation, and a variety of other services for a fee through Northern Gun companies. However, these for-profit centers are owned and operated by Northern Gun and not the City of Ishpeming.

The Ishpeming City Administration

The city is governed by The Ishpeming City Administration, which consists of a twenty-three member Administrative Council and the Chief Administrative Office. The Council is made up of one Councilor elected from each of Ishpeming's districts, and it is headed by the Speaker of The Council. The Council is also advised by a Northern Gun representative who holds a seat on the Council. Council members are elected every five years. A Speaker is chosen by a consensus vote from the elected Council members, and the NG Representative is appointed by the company. The Administrative Council meets once a week at City Hall to discuss the budget, debate local laws and by-laws, and discuss citizen services. In addition to the Council meetings, elected representatives also chair committees and boards, such as local school boards, hospital boards, planning committees, and project & construction committees. The

Council and its members set policy and directives while day to day operations are handled by the Chief Administrative Office.

The vast majority of citizens are also Northern Gun employees. Therefore, the NG representative carries a lot of weight in Council deliberations. This person is often there to make sure the company and its interests are protected, but also to create a clear line of communications between the two entities. Large scale building projects, budget increases, or changes in taxation often come down to what the NG Representative recommends. For the most part, the NG Representative is interested in things that make employees more productive such as education, health and leisure.

Chief Administrative Office

The Administrative Council sets budgets, plans and policies, while the Chief Administrative Office oversees their implementation. This body, headed by the City Administrator (appointed by the Council), makes certain that Council directives are carried out by the respective departments, ensures projects are being completed on time, and provides administrative support to the Speaker and Council Members. Since the City Administrator has a hand in all of the Council directives and Speaker Affairs, he often becomes quite powerful and influential, and can often bend the Speaker's ear. Thus, Council Members, Northern Gun, and many other factions often compete for the City Administrator's attention. The Chief Administrative Office is also responsible for coordinating the day to day operations of the city's nine major departments. Each of the departments is headed by a Department Superintendent that reports to the City Administrator.

Department of Communications

Ishpeming City internal communications and public relations are handled by this department, often with support and advice from the NG Marketing Division. New city initiatives, changes in programming and services, and major announcements are all part of the everyday for this group. The Department of Communications is also responsible for the content provided through the Citizen Information Service (CIS) and works very closely with the Department of Information Technology to ensure the service is displaying the most recent news with the most positive spin.

Department of Finance

Revenue collection is generally very simple, as most citizens are NG Employees. As a result, Northern Gun simply taxes the income of its employees at a rate set upon by the city and transfers the money to the City of Ishpeming. All NG employees pay a flat rate of tax that ensures their citizenship. Employees who work for twenty-five consecutive years become permanent citizens and can keep all benefits of citizenship after they retire from Northern Gun. Employees who leave Northern Gun before twenty-five years can retain their citizenship by becoming non-employee citizens and paying a renewal fee every three years.

The Finance Department also oversees billing and collection of non-employee citizenship fees and the pay-per-use services. Non-employee citizens could be independent mercenaries who want to call Ishpeming their home, traveling merchants, employees of non-NG businesses, or adventurers who want a safe, modern place to live. The current fee for non-employee three year citizenship is 150,000 NGMI Credits. For most people this is very expensive, and the City knows that. Citizenship offers many

benefits, but is mainly designed for the benefit of Northern Gun and its employees; therefore non-employee citizenship must produce profit for the city. Employees of Northern Gun who leave before twenty-five years of service see a reduction of this fee based on years served. Every year, pay-per-use services and citizenship fees are reviewed for profitability, and recommendations are made to the Administrative Council on changes to these fees.

Department of Citizen Services

Citizen Services is the largest department in terms of employees and budget, and it also has the most committees and boards overseen by members of the Administrative Council. Citizen Services include schools, recreation, and a whole host of smaller projects that serve the populace, such as birth certificates and child day care. Each district has a school that services the citizens in the area; school size and funding are based on the number of registered citizens in the area and the influence of their local Councilor. The schools in Ishpeming are some of the best on Rifts Earth, and they focus primarily on reading, mathematics and sciences. The purpose of the school system is to train citizen's children to be future Northern Gun employees. Those that show promise in people skills are recommended to Northern Gun University (NGU) for the Business and Management Training Program, while those with high technical aptitude are funneled to Northern Gun Technical College (NGTC) to study as Operators, engineers, and other technical vocations. The university and college are run by Northern Gun and are separate entities from the City Schools.

Recreation is a large priority for the City of Ishpeming because Northern Gun believes healthy employees are productive employees. Therefore, the city offers extensive recreational programs, the largest of which is the Ishpeming Recreational Hockey Association (IRHA). Each district has a local hockey program with teams for kids, teens and adults. Teams from each district play against each other twice a year (44 games a year) with the top-eight teams playing in the Top Gun Tournament. The play-offs are held in February to help beat the blues brought on by the harsh Northern Michigan winters, and they are the talk of the city. Each age bracket has a Top Gun Tournament, but the Adult tournament gets the most press. Participation in the league is voluntary, and the city has no professional hockey teams. However, the lack of a professional league doesn't stop the richer districts from trying to attract superstars by offering to pay the non-employee citizen fee, among other perks. As a result, the city places a limit of two non-employee citizens per team.

In addition to the Top Gun Tournament, the city also has a Juicer Football team. However, the team is owned, operated and administered by Northern Gun and not the city. Citizens and non-citizens must pay to attend the games.

The other main function of the Department of Citizen Services is the maintenance of citizen identification cards. These identification cards allow citizens to access the CIS and public transit. ID cards are required to participate in elections, register for school or sports, and receive hospital services. Children are registered on their parents' card until they turn eighteen. At this time they must find work at NG, go to NGU or NGTC, or be denied services.

Department of Public Transit

The main method of personal transport in Ishpeming is the NG-300 Speedster Hover Cycle. However, when traveling to work, NG employees often prefer the public transit system as it runs from every district to every NG plant and facility through a series of stations. The main public transport system is

the mono-rail system that connects each district to the other and to Northern Gun. Citizens can use the mono-rail free of charge, while non-citizens can purchase daily, weekly, or monthly passes. Fees generated from non-citizens cover very little of the cost and the bulk of the system is maintained through citizen taxation.

Department of Information Technology

The primary function of the IT Department is to service and maintain the Citizen Information System (CIS, often pronounced "Sis"). The CIS is a local computer network, allowing users to have a messaging account, search local websites, and access information about the city. The Communications Department offers important bulletins through the CIS, and most citizens use it as their primary form of receiving and sending information. The CIS also allows Northern Gun employees to check their corporate messaging accounts and work from remote locations. Non-citizen accounts are anonymous for the most part and easy to set up. An initial activation fee is paid, and then users can access the network on a credit-per-minute basis. Accounts cannot be opened with anything except an NGMI Credit Card, and service is discontinued when a card runs out of credits. These non-citizen accounts are very popular with mercenaries as a way to find jobs. Other more undesirable non-citizens like the anonymous nature of the accounts, and use them to conduct and administer their illicit dealings.

Non-citizen CIS accounts are extremely popular and profitable. As a result, it is one of the few entirely self-funding departments in Ishpeming, very little citizen tax dollars are spent on the system, and those are only for capital improvements and upgrades.

When Northern Gun signed its treaty with the Coalition States, both parties were hoping to link their information systems to allow Ishpeming Citizens to access CS content and vice versa. However, the large number of anonymous users on the system made the CS leery. Instead, the CS pays a fee every year to Ishpeming to run a Coalition States information site on the system. This site provides propagandized news items, information on CS citizenship, and other information. It also allows CS digital agents access to the system to help uncover Black Marketeers and other criminals who may be using the Northern Gun network.

Department of Public Works

As most construction projects are managed by Northern Gun, the Public Works Department is actually quite small. Its two primary functions are city planning and snow removal. All other services such as road maintenance, building maintenance, and beautification are contracted out to Northern Gun companies.

Department of Utilities

Like Public Works, Utilities is a small department. All power and water generation are done at Northern Gun facilities. The Utilities Department manages the municipal power grid and water flow. If they detect a problem, Northern Gun technicians step in to remedy the situation.

Department of Emergency & Health Services

In Ishpeming, each district has a small health clinic that can handle mundane needs. For more serious injuries, each district clinic has an ambulance service that can quickly move patients to the two main hospitals: Ishpeming General and Negaunee Memorial. Citizens who desire cybernetics, bionics or other augmentation must pay for those services at a Northern Gun Augmentation facility, although citizens do receive a discount on the universal head jack augmentation. For health services, a citizen card is required; otherwise no patients will be refused treatment.

Fire fighting services are provided by the city as well. Although fires are rare except in the poorest sections of the city, Ishpeming does maintain ten regional fire stations. Each regional station provides service to two or three separate districts. Each station has four trucks, with a crew of 35. Police services are handled by the Ishpeming City Garrison, a wing of the Ishpeming Defense Force (See Ishpeming Defense Force section of this Netbook for more information).

Ishpeming Citizens

As a result of their superior access to health care and education, citizens of Ishpeming have the following skills regardless of O.C.C. chosen (GMs should reduce the number of secondary skills as appropriate):

Language: American 98%

Literacy: American (+10%)

Computer Operation (+20%)

Basic Math (+10%)

Pilot: Choose one of Hover Cycle, Automobile or Motorcycle (+10%)

Cybernetics: 01-90% of citizens will have the universal headjack with ear implant, plus 1D4 other minor cybernetic enhancements (excluding black market items and Cyber Armor).

Non-Citizens

Obviously, not everyone who resides in Ishpeming is an employee of Northern Gun or registered citizen. In Ishpeming city, close to 80% of the population are citizens, but the rate of citizenship drops under 50% in the outlying cities and towns. The City of Ishpeming welcomes non-citizens, and the main commercial districts all have a variety of hotels, apartments and rental properties to cater to their short and long term housing needs. Not having citizenship means no access to city schools and medical facilities, no property ownership, and having to pay for public transit and a CIS account. Yet, some actually prefer to be non-citizens as it offers a great deal of freedom; one can have an anonymous CIS account and stay off-the-grid, making it easier to conduct illicit transactions. Many members of organized crime, foreign intelligence agents, mercenaries, assassins and thieves choose to live this way. The no-questions-asked lifestyle makes Ishpeming a popular place to live. Northern Gun and City officials are well aware of this situation, but don't particularly care. They see it as a customer service, and as protecting their customers' privacy.

Overall, non-citizens are seen as customers, either to Northern Gun or to citizen run businesses, and are treated hospitably. They will generally get a fair shake from local law enforcement, security forces and merchants. There's a saying amongst citizens and local businesses: "A satisfied customer is a repeat customer."

Ishpeming City Highlights

1. Northern Gun University

Located downtown near the Northern Gun Center, Northern Gun University (NGU) is where NG managerial and scientific personnel are trained. It is also where many Rogue Scientists, Rogue Scholars, Body Fixers and Cyber Docs have received their training before setting out on a life of adventuring. Almost all the students are residents of Ishpeming, and therefore live in the city and commute to the university via monorail or hover cycle. Those from the outlying areas often stay in a large, simple dormitory at one end of the campus.

There are only a few fields of study at NGU. Students train to work in various parts of the company either as researchers, engineers, doctors, or managers. Graduates of NGU will have the skills of a Body Fixer, Cyber Doc, Rogue Scientist or Rogue Scholar. Eighty percent of students are citizens of Ishpeming who will move on to work with Northern Gun; the other twenty-percent are the privileged who can afford the outlandish tuition to learn skills lost after the apocalypse.

In addition to the learning facilities, NGU boasts some top of the line research labs where students and instructors innovate and experiment with new technologies and concepts. Northern Gun keeps the facilities as up-to-date as possible in order to provide the best R&D edge over its competitors. Some of these facilities are guarded by the Military Asset Protecting & Security arm of the Ishpeming Defense Force.

2. Northern Gun Technical College

Adjacent to the university is the technical college; this is where Northern Gun's legendary mechanics and repairmen are trained. Anyone who wishes to become an independent Operator will most likely have to learn their trade here. Skills in automotive, robot, weapon, mechanical, electrical and computer repair and engineering are all taught at the technical college. Roughly three-quarters of graduates go on to work in Northern Gun's repair facilities or in one of their manufacturing plants. The remaining quarter who don't work for Northern Gun usually go on to become traveling Operators.

3. Ishpeming Staff College

The Ishpeming Staff College (ISC) was established in 52 P.A. in a joint effort by the city-state of Ishpeming and the manufacturing giant, Northern Gun. Northern Gun took on the role of a corporate sponsor, providing weapons and equipment and often instructors as well. It was a chance to show off their gear and know how, as well as an opportunity to get better quality recruits.

The ISC will typically provide a year or two of basic education to a candidate. This helps to weed out those not disciplined enough for military service and making sure those who are dedicated will have the basic skills needed to be a good soldier. Once completed with the initial phase of training, the students begin their training in earnest. The ISC provides training for the following O.C.C.s: Merc Soldier, Robot Pilot, Paratrooper, HazMat Specialist, Special Forces and IDF Soldier (New). Recruits who sign up for

some form of augmentation, such as Borg or Juicer, will receive a basic military training course prior to augmentation, followed by specialized training on how to use their new abilities.

After completing training, the soldier will be assigned to a unit within the Ishpeming Defense Force or otherwise released to whoever paid for the training. Those rare individuals who paid for the training themselves are given assistance in securing employment, which is usually not too hard given the reputation of the ISC. Enrollment at ISC costs 30,000 credits, but this fee is waived for soldiers who sign a commitment to work at least three years for the IDF after graduation.

Students from the ISC receive the following bonuses in addition to O.C.C. bonuses:

- 1 additional language skill at +10%. Other languages selected with O.C.C. Related skill selections are given a +5% bonus to the normal O.C.C. bonus (if any) up to 10% total.
- Basic Mathematics plus +15% or adds +5% to skill.
- 1 additional skill from the Technical category at +10%, or receive a +5% bonus to a technical skill selected with O.C.C. related skill selection.
- Alumni of the ISC may return and receive additional training for 3000 credits per class (Ishpeming citizens receive a 50% discount) whenever they are eligible for selecting a new O.C.C. Related skill. Skills selected with ISC training gain a one-time bonus of 5% in addition to normal O.C.C. Related and I.Q. bonuses the character may have available.

Trainee's who show promise during training may be selected for Officer Training. While this greatly adds to the length of the training course, and doubles the cost, the benefits are well worth it. In addition to the standard skills and bonuses listed above, the character gains the following:

- +10% bonus to Basic Radio.
- +10% bonus to Military Etiquette.
- +10% bonus to any language or lore skills taken.
- +1D4 to M.E.
- +1D4 to M.A.

4. Ishpeming School of the Augmentation Sciences

Throughout the Dark Age of man, bionic augmentation survived. It thrived as the one science that mankind would simply not allow to fade from the earth. Most people who underwent bionic conversion were heroes protecting the weak from the depredations of the monstrous and powerful, but for every hero, there was someone who would walk the razors edge of temptation, never sure if he should protect or conquer. The same could be said for the Juicer conversion, for while the ability to manufacture the drugs necessary to become a juicer disappeared a few decades after the apocalypse, the science to do so was never truly lost, simply on hold until man was once again able to bring that formidable science to life.

In the Dark Age, there were no stringent psychological evaluations to determine who was a suitable candidate for human augmentation. It was a necessity of the times to have superhumans on hand as guardians. Therefore, any willing participant who was not obviously deranged could conceivably become a full conversion Borg, a Juicer, or a Crazy. In some places, such as Kingsdale, the art of human augmentation brought them notoriety and helped to establish the kingdom as a force to be recognized. In the case of Northern Gun, the ability to produce augmented humans was always there, but the focus was on manufacturing. Clean, reputable cyber-clinics would make their way to Ishpeming right alongside the

more disreputable body chop-shops to perform conversions in the shadow of Northern Gun. The Black Market was making money hand over fist through their chop-shops and Northern Gun wanted some of the market share.

No one else on the continent produces more bionics and cybernetics than Northern Gun, so it stands to reason that Northern Gun would be the best place to be to study the applied sciences of human augmentation. To that end, the minds at Northern Gun, along with Northern Gun University, decided to invest in developing an advanced school to teach qualified Cyber Docs how to better perform the operations involved in the various sciences. The general course at Northern Gun University is followed up at the Ishpeming School of the Augmentation Sciences (ISAS) with a curriculum tailored towards specializing in one of the various augmentations. Graduates are given official certification from the school for each Augmentation Program they successfully complete, as well as an official license to install and maintain any Northern Gun bionics, cybernetics, and augmentation items that they hold the certification for. Maintenance courses are available for those who wish to have a slightly better than passing familiarity with the systems, so in any given class there may be a handful of Body Fixers looking to get an official maintenance license (eligible for the Cybernetics: Basic skill with a 10% bonus).

Programs

Bionics Skill Upgrade: The Cyber Doc obtaining this upgrade through ISAS not only gains the usual 10% to his surgical skill, but also a one time bonus of 10% to both the Cybernetic Medicine skill and the Electrical Engineering skill.

Juicer Augmentation Process Upgrade: The Cyber Doc completing this course gains 10% bonus to his surgical skill, and a one time bonus of 10% to both the Medical Doctor skill and the Chemistry: Pharmaceutical skill.

Mind Over Matter Augmentation Upgrade: The Cyber Doc gaining this upgrade gets the 10% bonus to his surgical skill as well as a one time bonus to both the Medical Doctor skill and the Psychology skill (ostensibly to ensure a Cyber Doc performing this conversion is capable of evaluating a candidate in a discriminatory fashion, but more as a polite formality).

For all practical purposes, any Cyber Doc currently in practice, especially one who graduated from NGU, is functionally proficient and may stand to gain little from such courses, however, Northern Gun has placed an incentive for all practicing physicians to take the courses by offering a 10% discount on all Northern Gun augmentation components purchased through authorized channels. Orders placed in bulk may receive a slightly larger discount. So far, Northern Gun has seen a good turnout at the school. Business with their rogue traders is bustling and STING operatives are busily taking notes on suspected Black Market operations, starting with those around Ishpeming. The Manistique Imperium is reeling from the sudden loss of some of their more prominent and reputable Cyber Docs as they rush off to breeze through the certification courses and build an inventory.

The Dean of Sciences at The School of Augmentation Sciences is Dr. Phillip Brusk (12th level Cyber Doc), a long time resident and leading Cyber Doc in Kingsdale who was lured away by a lucrative contract with Northern Gun and the chance to pioneer some major medical advancements.

5. Ishpeming's Hospitals

As one would expect from a city such as Ishpeming, there is a great need for medical facilities to support the populace. From industrial injuries to violent outbursts amongst the populace, Ishpeming's two hospitals see more than their fair share of body repair. The emergency rooms are each staffed by a full

compliment of qualified trauma surgeons capable of handling virtually any kind of medical emergency. The rest of the hospital is equally well staffed and accustomed to handling all sorts of common medical needs from childbirth to the common cold.

Ishpeming General Hospital

Being the closer of the two to the Corporate Sector, Ishpeming General receives the majority of the more important business people and noteworthy citizens. They make a special case for treating the affluent as a slightly higher class of citizen despite the fact that they all receive the same typical insurance through the citizenship package, which infuriates the working class of the city. Ironically, given the large transient population, Ishpeming General maintains a standing order to treat all citizens first, which does not irritate the rank and file working folks. They do, however, offer a medical package to mercenary companies that will allow covered personnel already in the system to access treatment on the same level as a citizen. The price is exorbitantly high and often beyond the reach of most companies, who find it easier to buy their officers a citizenship deal and let the rest of the troops fend for themselves.

Negaunee Memorial Hospital

While both Ishpeming General and Negaunee Memorial serve the general populace, Negaunee Memorial is further from the more influential sections of Ishpeming and closer to the Refugee Sector, thus seeing a bit more of the ugly side of the Ishpeming medical practice. Their emergency room is always packed with real trauma injuries from the factories and violent crime victims. They even man a 24 hour security team equipped to handle any out of control augmented humans that are brought in to the ER. Fortunately such incidents are rare, as everyone who has ever been to Negaunee Memorial knows that such ruffians are left at the curb until they shape up or expire. Negaunee Memorial sees a significant amount of working class medical problems and has a superb rehabilitation center, which they use to trumpet the ergonomics agenda to Northern Gun, because a healthy employee is a productive employee. Lastly, Negaunee Memorial treats nearly all of the D-Bee population. Although tensions run high since the recent dealings with the Coalition States, most of the physicians at Ishpeming General refuse to turn away D-Bees or treat them as second class citizens.

6. Northern Gun Center

This huge circular building is the main commercial hub of Ishpeming. The main mono-rail station passes directly through the bottom floor, letting consumers off in the modern looking rounded terminal with high ceilings. The bright and airy terminal is filled with elevators, escalators and stairwells taking patrons up to the main floor, or beyond to the building's many offices, shops and services.

The first floor centers on an open, round foyer with a giant sculpture of the NG logo in the middle of the lobby. People are always bustling through this busy corridor either moving down toward the mono-rail or using it as a pass-through to other sections of the commercial district. The higher floors lead one to the Northern Gun Corporate offices, where many of the administrative and logistical divisions have their offices, including the Marketing, Executive, and Support and Service divisions. The very top floor is a glassed observation dome. From here, one can see the entire cityscape from the plants, to the ports, to the polluted skyline. The Dome, as it's called, contains the executives' offices and the board room, where the NG Board of Directors meets.

7. Franklin Memorial Business Plaza

Most often referred to as The Plaza, this is the place to do business in the city of Ishpeming. The Plaza

sprawls almost endlessly outward, encompassing many of the city's shops and services, especially those that cater to out of town guests. The entire area is like a modern day business park, with long, wide avenues and sidewalks connecting numerous strip-mall style buildings which house hundreds of shops and services.

Northern Gun Sales Centers

The plaza has built up around the large Northern Gun sales centers in the area. Northern Gun features four sales centers located in the center of the plaza, each one featuring a different line of Northern Gun products for sale or on display for special orders.

Hovercycle Sales Center. This corporately owned dealership features hundreds of new and used hover cycles from the vaunted NG-300 Speedster to the hard to find NG-230 Prowler, all at the "best prices in North America" While it is true that the sticker prices are 10-20% below those listed in the various world books, the skilled sales people try not to let their customers leave without a weapons or armor upgrade. All customizations are done on site and can be ready to drive off the lot the next day. The dealer's service center is also one of the best places to get repairs on Northern Gun hovercycles. Because of their access to proper parts, and certified Northern Gun technicians, repairs can generally be done 15% cheaper than anywhere else in North America.

Used and refurbished hover vehicles can also be purchased for a fraction of the cost of a newer model. Generally speaking, these hover cycles are in good repair having been serviced by Northern Gun technicians before resale, although there can be the occasional lemon. The dealership also resells trade-ins, so there are likely to be some non-NG models available at deep discounts, although these are generally resold as is and where is.

In addition to hovercycles, the dealership also carries conventional motorcycles, combat bikes, all-terrain vehicles and mundane dune buggies.

Personal Arms & Armor Sales Center. This sales center is basically a large warehouse converted into a showroom with bright lights, video monitors showing NG product commercials, and shiny racks of weapons and armor. The sales people are knowledgeable and very attentive, and they are usually willing to bargain. Like the hovercycles prices, off the shelf weapons are 10-20% below list prices. Most weapon purchases come with one free e-clip charge, good at any Northern Gun facility.

Of course, the sales people are quick to remind customers that after having saved so much on such a high quality weapon, don't let it go to waste without adding a high priced scope, energy canister, or a few long e-clips. Weapon and armor accessories usually eat up any savings on the weapon itself. Just about any weapon related item is available here such as black ball paint, sensor jammers, and scopes.

Armor can be repaired, but it is expensive, as the sales people would often prefer customers buy a new suit instead. Armor repairs are generally 25% more expensive than in other shops and places. If customers want their armor looking like a rehashed mess and have their environmental seals potentially compromised, then they can risk taking it to one of the local shops. At least that's what the salespeople will say.

Heavy Equipment Sales Center. In this huge warehouse, potential customers can look at floor models of the latest power armor, robot vehicles, tanks and other military vehicles, as well as heavy industrial equipment and labor robots. If a person wants to test drive vehicles then they have to make a deposit-just in case-and book an appointment on the proving grounds outside of city limits. Repairs for giant robots and military vehicles are done at the proving grounds. This is simply a sales and showroom.

General Merchandise Sales Center. A multi-floor building with elevators, escalators, and aisles upon aisles of Northern Gun equipment. Set-up like a modern day department store, this is where one can purchase everything from a portable language translator to an SE-Sonic Pulsar Unit. Some of the more frequented departments are Wilderness (NG-S2 Survival Packs, NG Freeze dried rations, sleeping bags, tents, hunting knives, rope, etc.), Electronics (Language translators, PDD recorders/players, ID binoculars, pocket laser distancers, PC-3000 computers, sensors, etc.), and Household (Soap, combs, candies and other mundane items).

There is no negotiating here, all sales are final and all prices are advertised as "rock bottom". On any given day, select items may be marked down as much as 50% or more for immediate liquidation. This building is constantly full of bargain hunters, mercenaries, and even locals all looking for a particular item to round out their equipment list. Industrious merchants will often buy sales items in bulk and then transport them to smaller, outlying and wilderness communities where they can sell them with a significant mark-up. As far as Northern Gun is concerned, this is a good thing, as it gets their products into wider circulation.

8. NGMI Bank Building

One of the newest buildings to adorn the Ishpeming skyline, the high-tech headquarters of the joint NGMI Bank is located in Franklin Plaza, purposely located away from Northern Gun's Corporate Headquarters. The NGMI Bank only really needs a few floors of this construct to operate, so the Bank's executive offices are on the top two floors, which boast panoramic views of the city. These top floors are where high level business is transacted between the Bank and its largest customers.

The first floor, known as the "banking hall," features the everyday service point for bank customers in the city. Here, individuals can open accounts, make deposits, rent safe-deposit boxes, apply for loans and other mundane, but necessary, services. The banking hall is the picture of decadence: it is a wide open area with offices along the north and eastern walls and service points-terminals similar to modern day automated banking machines-along the western wall. The floors are tiled in an elaborate design made from polished stone and much of the decorative motif is polished chrome, including a highly polished chrome bank logo etched into the floor.

Due to the high level of foot traffic coming and going from the Bank, NGMI rents space on the first floor to other businesses as well. One can exit the main banking hall by a variety of exits that open up to the NGMI Mall, which features a few small cafes but also other shops and services. Deep in the sub-levels of the building are the main vaults which house the safe deposit boxes. In addition to anonymity, the NGMI Bank is also known for its security. Private security guards monitor all entrances to the sublevel and operate the plethora of modern security devices. All elevators to the sub-level require key-card access and even customers who wish to view their safe deposit box must be accompanied by one of the armed guards and a bank employee.

Below the vault level is the real treasure of the bank: its computer and credit systems. These central computers monitor account balances and are the only place where names and account numbers are linked together. Many a hacker has tried to enter these systems and transfer a few extra credits to their accounts, but so far all have failed. In addition to technology, it is rumored that NGMI even possesses some techno-wizardry security systems to keep out mages and psychics, although no one knows for sure.

9. Spyware

Gregory Merrick came to Ishpeming five years ago after retiring from a long and very lucrative career as a freelance spy. He began his career as most men of meager beginnings do: working for peanuts for the plethora of petty, squabbling, and self-proclaimed Presidents and Kings of misbegotten kingdoms across the country. Eventually he secured for himself a spot amongst the inner circle of a Chi-Town Black Marketeer named Jonas "Average Joe" Friedman. Jonas sent Gregory on missions throughout the Domain of Man, and often beyond its tenuous boundaries, to investigate rumors of new opportunities.

Six years ago, Gregory told Jonas that he intended to retire. After 20 years of loyal service, Jonas felt obliged to accept his retirement without any of the ugliness typical among other Black Market factions. In fact, Jonas went so far as to offer to set Gregory up with his own crew to help him get started in Ishpeming. Flattered, but not a fool, Gregory declined the generous offer. He did, however, acquire his initial stock from Jonas and went on his way a year later.

When Gregory arrived in Ishpeming, he set up Spyware to fill a niche in the market. Many mercenaries could name a dozen merchants to visit if you were in the market for guns, but most couldn't name a single merchant that specialized in espionage equipment. Everything from cybernetic camera eyes to small radio-controlled drones to light M.D.C. Dark-suits could be found in the showcases at Spyware. To top it all off, Gregory and his staff were experts willing to instruct the buyer in the operation of the devices they purchased. Before long, Gregory had several customers inquire about whether or not he would be willing to spy on their competitors or comrades.

Not wanting to get back into the active spy business, but wanting to meet his customers' needs, Gregory started the first Spy School in Ishpeming. Far from being a sanctioned business, Spy School operates clandestinely. Currently, no one gets into the program without knowing someone who is already participating in the program, and Gregory does not advertise. Gregory even manages to find work for some of his more promising students. His presence in Ishpeming has not gone unnoticed by the local Black Market faction, who is keeping a wary eye on the comings and goings of some of his students. Gregory is aware of their scrutiny and has instructed his students to decide for themselves whether or not they wish to accept any work from the Black Market. Many do, but just as many go into business for smaller kingdoms. Gregory uses the money from his school to bolster Spyware. He stays on the cutting edge of espionage technology and far outweighs his less specialized competition in the areas of supply and customer support.

10. Specialty Hardware Inc.

Need a left handed trigger? Want the company logo on your vehicle and armor? How about some custom grips? Or a stylish scope? Then you need to visit Specialty Hardware Inc., often referred to simply as "Specialty". In a town full of mercenaries and gun-bunnies, sometimes style is all that separates one NG-45LP from another. As a result, many of Northern Gun's generic products pass through Specialty's workshops.

At Specialty Hardware, one can have a custom paint job done on their armor or vehicle and have many additions and enhancements done to their weapons and equipment. Some make weapons more deadly, others make armor a little more padded in sensitive areas, maybe a little tweak to get an extra burst of speed from your engines. The skilled Operators at Specialty can make it happen. If you don't mind your work done by D-Bees.

The store is family business owned and operated by a large extended family of Trimadore aliens. These

natural mechanics make a living out of tweaking and customizing much of the military hardware that comes through the city of Ishpeming. Two areas where their work is most sought after is modifying Northern Gun systems for alien and D-Bee physiologies (e.g. taller, shorter, accounting for tails, horns, etc.) and working on non-Northern Gun and alien weapons systems. Although Northern Gun's Operators are skilled, they often are more interested in reverse-engineering a Wilk's Laser Rifle or alien Phase Pistol than repairing it. At Specialty, the skilled Trimadore mechanics simply thrive on the challenge.

In addition to ten Trimadore mechanics, the company also employs a variety of D-Bee Operators, painters and designers, including more than a few dwarves. It is said that Specialty is the largest employer of D-Bees in all of Ishpeming; certainly it is the best paying D-Bee employer. The company's owner and Trimadore clan leader, Mal Dakkar (9th level Trimadore Mechanic RCC), is a registered citizen of Ishpeming, and so are his mate, Uma Dakkar, and two children Jusca and Prisca Dakkar. All four work in the family business along with Mal's two brothers, Get and Mo, their mates and children who have been unable to obtain citizenship to date. Rumor has it that many of the humans on the citizenship board are jealous of the D-Bee family's wealth.

11. Armor Bizarre

"Not the spell, although our technicians can work magic" is a famous line of the owners of this spin-off industry. Because Northern Gun offers little service in the way of armor repair, numerous small time operations have cropped up to fill this void. None are more interesting than Armor Bizarre.

The store itself features an eclectic mix of armors, all of them custom made from scraps collected from their repair business. Every armored system is unique, often made with one of a kind stylized designs or paint jobs. These "designer" armors sell for less than the market price of a new Northern Gun model and usually offer suitable protection, although many of them are not environmental. Gangs and mercenary companies with money to burn will often contract Armor Bizarre to create custom armors for their members.

The main business of Armor Bizarre is armor repair, especially working with custom or rare materials. Their technicians can professionally repair Northern Gun, Coalition, Manistique, Chipwell, and even Naruni armor and force fields. For standard mass market armors, the repairs are very cheap (50 credits per M.D. point, plus labor of 50 credits per hour), especially when compared to Northern Gun rates. For rare or alien armors the price is much higher (150 credits per M.D. point, plus labor), but the job is usually of high quality.

In addition to custom creation and repair, Armor Bizarre also purchases used and scrap armor with which to make its custom designs and to use as inventory for repairs. Intact armored arms, legs, helmets, and chest plates fetch the best rates (100 to 150 credits per 1 M.D. point; up to double or triple for alien or rare pieces) while damaged parts see the price fall dramatically (25 to 50 credits per 1 M.D. point). Unbeknownst to the management and clientele of Armor Bizarre, an undercover IDF operative works in the scrap shop. He tracks the trends of customers returning used armor, and reports this information back to Northern Gun. Those who turn in excessive amounts of armor are investigated by STING operatives. When abusers of this system are found to be turning in large amounts of CS armor, Northern Gun turns this information over the CSID contacts, provided that the offending parties aren't good NG customers.

12. Radio Hill Communications Center

By Mat Krepicz

Used by survivors, robbers and smugglers as a good short-wave reception area after the cataclysm, the area of the former AM radio tower has been converted into a signal processing station and high-speed network node for the entire Ishpeming area. The center and its 120 employees provide wireless coverage, radio broadcasts, television signals, Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) monitoring and analysis, microwave transmission and deep ground radar control. The facility also experiments in extremely-low frequency (ELF) and millimeter-wave radar.

Radio Hill is also connected to several other network nodes in the surrounding country-side via underground cables and controls most of the non-military network traffic in the surrounding mines and outposts. Although mostly a civilian affair, the strategic position of the center means it is constantly patrolled and decently defended. Half the facility is buried in Radio Hill and reinforced against medium bombardment. Unbeknown to the station's managers, several enterprising employees have managed to create a secret piggyback carrier system on top of the regular network protocols and are selling it in 36-hour blocks to the highest bidder, usually black market operatives wanting to communicate incognito.

13. Ishpeming Iron

Ishpeming Iron is one of the local gymnasiums frequented by the many transient Mercs that visit the city everyday. Standing within a block of the East Gate, Ishpeming Iron is usually the first gym seen by passersby, and it is usually crowded throughout the day and most of the afternoon. The majority of the patrons during these hours are out-of-towners, with locals sometimes coming in after dark when things quiet down.

The owner, Rutger Baumann, is a human D-Bee from an alternate earth (8th level Physical Training superhero from Heroes Unlimited) where he spend his life honing his body to physical perfection to battle the evils of the day. His harrowing experiences on Rifts® earth have made him question the nobility of his quest to eradicate evil when the world itself is so much more dangerous in every respect. With all of the strange aliens and things that defy the imagination on this earth, things no longer appear as black and white as they once did. Rutger decided to help others to focus their energies on developing their physical forms, something he enjoys doing, as a means of helping those less perfect than himself.

Large, muscled patrons with egos to match are often led to the back half of the gym to settle their spirits with a few rounds in The Octagon. Rutger or one of his powerful bouncers is always ready for a little sparring match too. The Octagon is the highlight of the gym on rowdy weekend nights when mercs from all over the city come to watch Fight Night in The Octagon. For many, this is a good way to settle their differences without killing each other, but for others a Deathmatch is the only way to go. The betting is heavy on fight night, with the Black Market bookkeepers handling the bets. Rutger isn't held liable for damages resulting from battles in The Octagon, but his old hero spirit often bubbles to the surface causing him to either give a large portion of the door money to the family or mercenary company of the dead fighter, or pay for the funeral of those without next of kin.

14. The Flipside

The Flipside is Ishpeming's hottest night club. In early 96 P.A., Northern Gun bought out the last independent manufacturing company in Ishpeming, a company that made M.D.C. tires for all-terrain vehicles. All that remains of the former tire maker is their gigantic factory building in the city's industrial center. In 100 P.A., the abandoned factory was bought by a retired NG Executive, Nathan

Brash (9th Level Smuggler). Brash converted the giant facility to an industrial themed nightclub. Much of the factory's machinery has been converted into bars and dance floors, giving the club it structured industrial clockwork feel. Many visitors to Ishpeming say the club, its look, and its music, epitomize the city of Ishpeming.

Brash can often be seen on the dance floor or at one of the many bars surrounded by a gaggle of scantily clad women and well-armed thugs. Many rumors circulate about Nathan Brash and his underworld connections, but no one has been able to prove anything so far. The boring truth is that Brash has little connection with the criminal underground, although his club often plays host to their members, and he is simply a schmooze who plays up the part in order to promote his club and his reputation.

15. The Catacomb Motel

Ishpeming is a big place with a large transient population. Many of the people passing through are down on their luck and looking for the next big job. Some of them manage to hire on with a merc company, some don't, but one thing they all have in common is the need to sleep at night. Several motels and hotels in varying states of comfort have made a small fortune catering to them. The Catacomb Motel is the brainchild of Al Jesko, a former farmer turned mercenary that should never have left the farm. While Al was definitely not a very good farmer, he proved to be an even worse mercenary. He was far from fearless, a bit on the lazy side, and not very dependable. When his last mercenary company abandoned him on a street corner in Ishpeming, Al could only thank them for not leaving him out in the Wisconsin Wilds. Near penniless, Al was relegated to sleeping in the alleys for a fortnight until a brush with evil changed his life forever.

On a particularly wet and dreary night, as Al curled up under his tattered all-weather poncho, he had the distinct displeasure of encountering a wounded vampire as it fell atop him trying to hide from members of the IDF. Desperate, and seeing Al's plight, the vampire made him an offer: in exchange for protection, he would make Al rich. The vulnerability in its voice and the dollar signs in his mind (as well as some vampiric influence, perhaps) shook Al from his terror. He dragged the vampire down into a drainage pipe and over the next several hours aided it in escaping the authorities and making it back to an abandoned mine shaft where it made its lair.

In keeping with its bargain, the vampire, who called himself Lucas, agreed to pay Al a fair sum of money, but Al had a better idea. Together the two opened a low cost motel using the mine shaft and its branching tunnels as the gimmick for the tiny sarcophagus-like units that would be installed and serve as a cheap night's stay. The majority of the clientele would be those too poor or those too cheap to pay for full accommodations elsewhere. It was unlikely they would be missed, which would enable Lucas to pick off occupants at his leisure. Al would serve as the face of the operation and share in the profits.

The Catacomb Motel was born and became an immediate hit. People of all stripes come and go. As predicted, the poor that manage to scrape up enough credits for a night's stay usually save them for a rainy or cold night. Mercenary companies passing through often book whole levels to sleep in and store their gear for the night. Teenagers of Ishpeming see the place as dark, morbid, and trendy, and they often crash there when they are in too much trouble to go home for the night. Cheating spouses, couch bound spouses and angry spouses even rent units for a night's stay. All are appraised by the watchful eyes of the resident vampire and all are equally likely to go missing on any given night. In spite of his morbid playfulness, Lucas is careful to frequent other areas of the city as well, not wanting to draw too much scrutiny to the Motel.

Each unit is a rectangular structure resembling a sarcophagus, only slightly larger. Most units are large enough for one person to sleep in, being roughly the size of a full sized bed. For a slight increase in cost, a few larger rooms are available. Each unit is well padded, with adjustable temperature controls and full air circulation. The lid of each sarcophagus has a view screen and radio built in, along with an alarm clock and dimmer switch for the lights. The base of each unit consists of three small, lockable drawers and one larger one to hold anything the occupant doesn't wish to bring inside. Interestingly, The Catacomb Motel has become a clandestine exchange spot for underworld dealers of all kinds who use the sarcophagi to store their merchandise while awaiting the transaction. For the right amount of money, Al simply looks the other way.

Much to Al's dismay, Lucas has a tendency to cut the power to certain units in order to save a particular human for a later meal. Although their screams are extremely difficult to hear outside of the sarcophagus, Al worries that a psychic may notice them and blow the whole lid off of the operation.

16. Gripper Jack's

By Mat Krepicz

Owned and operated for the last 24 years by Jack "Gripper" Garcon and his indomitable wife Judy, this working stiff's bar is the favorite destination of local miners, lumberjacks, truckers, machinists and other blue-collar workers, located outside of Ishpeming City, near the former National Mine. Folks wearing heavy armor or traveling in Robots or PA are decidedly not welcome at Jack's, where the locals consider themselves "just normal folks" and don't take too well to pretentious and arrogant adventurers waltzing in and spending credits like they owned Ishpeming. That's not to say they dislike strangers; and if an outsider comes out of the cold with the appropriate respect for a hard-working, hard-drinking guy, the regulars will mind their own business.

The patrons of Gripper Jack's are the backbone of the local economy: the factory workers and laborers who don't have fancy gadgets or ultra-lethal weapons to their name, but who nonetheless make Northern Gun work. They like their bourbon straight and their cards clean. That's not to say they're pushovers in a fight. The two bouncers that Jack employs to keep out troublemakers wear full M.D.C. armor and weapons, but they usually sit out of sight until they hear a commotion.

Gripper Jack's has a fine selection of beer, including Jack's Black Stout and Judy's Brown Ale, both home brews. Judy cooks some of the best Bug Burgers (Xiticix meat) and Giant Dimensional Carp in the whole town. Occasionally, the IDF troopers will come down for a frat night, but the out-of-the-way location of Jack's ensures that mostly blue-collar locals patron the bar. As far as rumors go, the locals might not know the latest secret research at the research labs, but they may know how to traverse the backcountry to get to the Gunpowder Lake test range unnoticed, or how to avoid radar detection and border patrols on Ishpeming roads. Even trivial local knowledge can be useful.

17. Big Game Expeditions

Bill Tall Bear is the owner of Big Game Expeditions, located on the outskirts of Ishpeming City. He is widely known as one of the best hunters and survivalists around. Claiming to be able to track his ancestry back through the Dark Age to the pre-Rifts tribe of Chippewa Indians, Bill attributes his abilities to his ancestors' spirits whispering to him in the wild. While many of his customers are skeptical, none deny the old man's prowess. In fact, many merc companies hire Bill or one of his sons to train some of their Wilderness Scouts. Bill's father spent many years among the Psi-Stalker tribes of Michigan, learning how to hunt supernatural predators. But after many years of hunting, he settled down

and began a family near Ishpeming. As his sons came of age, he taught them how to hunt as well. Bill followed in his father's footsteps, serving as a scout with the Iron River Rangers for several years before opening his own business.

Big Game Expeditions offers hunting trips into the dangerous Canadian north and Wisconsin Wild Land, as well as the often more dangerous Lower Peninsula of Michigan. While the group will spend time during every trip hunting mundane animals like deer for food, the hunters of Big Game Expeditions specialize in hunting the supernatural. Trips will vary in cost, depending on the length and distance as well as on the intended prey. If the hunt is unsuccessful in finding the desired prey, the customer will get a full refund; but if they do nab some other kind of supernatural creature, the price is adjusted rather than refunded.

Adventure Idea: Bill's son is gearing up for a big trip into the ruins of Old Detroit to hunt down demons with a gang of vengeful mercs. Bill is hiring some extra muscle to accompany them in case his over-zealous son needs assistance.

18. Blackwater Deep Salvage Inc.

By Mat Krepicz

Blackwater Deep Salvage was founded by Jebediah Olson to take advantage of the huge amounts of industrial equipment that had been washed away into the lakes, streams and mines of Ishpeming during the flooding of the Cataclysm. Many of these Golden Age construction, earth-mover, demolition, exploration and survey machines were built to last in severe conditions, as winters in Upper Michigan can be quite harsh. The impressive alloys and synthetics allowed many of them to survive the cataclysm at least partially functional. In the last twenty years, Olson gathered together a group of old-fashioned tinkerers and machinists who preferred not to work directly for Northern Gun. Various types of civilian construction robots were found washed into Teal Lake, and this allowed Blackwater to prosper and grow from a small outfit into a bona-fide corporation. With 170 employees stationed, Blackwater has its headquarters on the shores of Teal Lake. Although Blackwater must report and leave all the military hardware for the Northern Gun teams, they have an exclusive contract to salvage any civilian machinery and vehicles in a ten mile radius of Ishpeming City; much of their operations take place at Teal Lake and Deer Lake.

The mechanical experts at Blackwater have developed a reputation for reverse-engineering Golden Age construction robots, although they don't have the facilities to build them from scratch as of yet. Blackwater employs 4 Telemechanics and 1 Stone Master for advanced work, and the company is especially good at retrieving materials from submerged caverns and deep, muddy lake beds using remotely-operated drones. Players looking to repair civilian vehicles and robots could do no better than to hire Blackwater Deep Salvage.

19. Northern Gun Proving Grounds

Every company has to test out their wares, and Northern Gun is no exception. In fact, some would say that Northern Gun takes it to a new level. Scattered about the countryside, both above and below ground, are a handful of designated testing areas ranging from indoor weapon ranges to full terrain battlefield proving grounds, where the R&D Division of Northern Gun test fires, test drives, shoots at, blows up, and otherwise hammers everything that will someday stand the chance of rolling off of one of their assembly lines.

The ranges are all separated by functionality. For safety, as well as for expediency, each range is equipped to produce the same test time and again to better obtain repeat results during each phase of adjustments to the item. Most ranges are tiered so that each item will undergo a series of tests appropriate to its type. The only range that isn't tiered in this fashion is the Ragnarok Range, where the soldiers fight an all-out simulated war to use the equipment in as close to real life conditions as can be simulated.

Attached to the R&D Division are a number of highly specialized soldiers under the employ of Northern Gun, as well as a few mercenaries that are hired on an as needed basis. The soldiers range in specialization from Power Armor Pilots and Robot Pilots to Hovercycle and Motorcycle riders to Marksman and Demolitions Experts . Each soldier has been chosen for his or her focused dedication to one narrow area of expertise, and placed in a squad of similarly trained individuals. When R&D comes up with a new toy, the appropriate squad runs it through the dizzying gamut of tests with technicians on hand to monitor the results of each member and compare them for repeatability.

Sentinel Proving Ground and Test Fire Range

Safe and secure beneath tons of rock, the Sentinel facility is home to the most advanced testing facility in Ishpeming. Every item produced by Northern Gun has been developed through the rigorous testing at this facility. Suits of armor, vehicles, weapons, even canteens, go through the various labs to be tested. Within the facility are labs to simulate extreme temperatures, severe weather conditions, high pressure environments and countless other conditions. There are tests for endurance, output, efficiency, and more. At every stage of testing there is a requisite number that a particular item must score to get a green light for the next level of testing. Obviously, different items have different acceptable levels of quality. For example: a knockoff laser pistol might be passed along a bit easier than a new NG brand laser pistol.

The Test Fire Range is where weapons are examined for their extreme limits of operation. Weapons are tested for tightness of shot pattern, efficiency of power use, and performance level during extreme conditions, such as prolonged fire without rest. Weapon systems are bore-sighted and calibrated for pilot/user coordination and response time. You name it, and NG has probably done it to one of their items, if not all of them.

Lake Superior Proving Ground

Following a strip of the Lake Superior coastline between Marquette and Munising, the Lake Superior Proving Ground serves the dual purpose of testing items from Northern Gun's marine vehicle line and personal equipment from its Aquatek line. The current focus is on a new suit of deep water power armor to rival the Sea SAMAS.

Gunpowder Lake Test Range

Far from the tender ears of Ishpeming's civilian population, Gunpowder Lake Test Range is home to the Demolition Men. This squad is responsible for the gleeful testing of all things explosive in Northern Gun's arsenal. From new fusion blocks and smart mines to vehicle launched and crew served missile systems, they test it all. Each weapon's effect is measured by R&D scientists and assigned a destruction rating for the purpose of tweaking the weapon's potential. The Demolition Men strive to outdo one another in the destruction rating category using a system of points to name the Destroyer of the Month.

Sawyer Proving Grounds

The companion to and pre-test range for Blazing Rails Proving Track, this range is where wheeled and tracked vehicles are tested for operation under ideal conditions to gain a benchmark for measuring them on the Blazing Rails Proving Track. Speed, maneuverability, and live-run efficiency are tested to ensure the very highest quality. Using information from Sentinel Proving Ground tests, simulated weather

conditions are also applied to the testing track to check the vehicle for real life maneuvering capability in a non-lab environment.

Blazing Rails Proving Track

One of the more dangerous test tracks, nearly every vehicle produced by Northern Gun must run it successfully to advance to the final stages of development. The Blazing Rails is a long track following several miles of the old Union Pacific and Wisconsin Central railways. Along the course are several terrain obstacles meant to hinder the vehicles. The obstacles vary from large trees and barricades to pits and bogs. Certain obstacles are more easily traversed by certain vehicles, but all must run the course regardless. NG has found that putting Juicers and Crazies behind the controls virtually guarantees a more rigorous test.

Ragnarok Range

The reality of life in the post-rifts world is that most of Northern Gun's items will potentially see the battlefield some day. Appropriately, the final test takes place on the Ragnarok Range. The vehicle's frame has been stress tested, endured the heat and cold, had its weapons tested, their systems tested and destructive level measured, maneuverability has been tested, modifications and adjustments have been made, and all of it done leading up to this final test, which will see the driver/pilot/crew run a course designed to test the vehicle's efficiency at operating all of these systems at the same time, while under duress and taking simulated fire. Hard targets must be eliminated, obstacles traversed, and at the end of the run, if expectations have been met, the final assault by Maxwell Franklin must be endured as he shatters a bottle of Mackinac Black Bourbon on the successful vehicle and christens it. Similar severe combat testing is performed for nearly all Northern Gun products at this Range.

The Towns of Ishpeming

Big Bay

Population Breakdown:

14,000 Total Citizens

75% Human

21% D-Bee races (mostly humanoid)

3% Psi-Stalker

1% Mutant Animals

Note: This does not include the 5D6x10 mercenaries employed by Northern Gun or the 1D4x100 visitors, adventures, or unemployed mercenaries present at any given time.

About 40 miles (64 km) north of Ishpeming is the coastal community of Big Bay. Before the cataclysm, Big Bay was a recreation haven in the process of being spoiled as man's thirst for resources expanded into areas that were once considered preserves. Sulphide mining along the rivers near Big Bay caused acidic mining drainage and heavy metals to leech into the water system, turning the pristine area of unspoiled wilderness into an expensive environmental waste.

However, the mining operations employed hundreds of people and the town of Big Bay saw unprecedented expansion. The town sat on the shores of Lake Independence, an 1860 acre (753 hectare) body of water that was some 30 feet (9 m) at its deepest point. All that separated Lake Independence from Lake Superior was a 1500 foot (457 m) natural dam. All of this was before the coming of the Rifts. Giant waves and storms in the early days of the cataclysm battered this town, causing flooding and

destruction, leveling it to the ground. Survivors fled south to Ishpeming and Marquette, leaving the area abandoned. In the early years, no one ventured toward the area for fear of the toxic waters from the abandoned and unsafe sulphide mines.

The years of abandonment allowed Mother Nature to reset the clock and clean up the rivers and tributaries. The rising water levels also saw the small natural dam reduced significantly making Lake Independence an extension of Lake Superior. When Northern Gun needed a new naval production facility for patrol boats and other shallow water craft, it turned its eyes north to Big Bay. Carving a canal into the natural dam, they built their production facilities for the redesigned Black Eel patrol boat and other small water craft. The canal allowed them to offer maximum protection to their production facilities and ship yards. In addition to small patrol boats, the Big Bay facility produces Northern Gun knock-offs of the CS Death's Head Underwater Sled and the CS Jet Ski (see **Sourcebook 4: Coalition Navy** for both) and other recreational watercraft. Both items are sold under the Northern Gun brand and have liquid fuel as well as nuclear options.

Today, the town is centered on the shipbuilding industry and water trade. A medium sized commercial port has been built along Big Bay itself, with the canal still being the only way to access the patrol boat production facilities. Northern Transport sometimes uses the port as an alternate to Marquette, and some mercenaries and merchants prefer it due to lower docking fees, although it is a longer overland trek to Ishpeming.

The Ishpeming Naval Defense Force keeps a small outpost at the port for patrolling the north shore of Lake Superior. Port Security is provided by a small-time mercenary company, Port Shield Inc., which employs 160 full-time mercs who conduct patrols of the ports and shoreline. Of course, the Naval Defense Force provides their own security at their facilities. Additionally, the ship yards are protected by a platoon (40 personnel) from the IDF Military Asset Protection and Security Division. To keep raiders under control, the canal leading to Lake Independence is defended at the mouth with four large naval guns and a battery of long range and medium missile launchers. A series of smaller gun batteries are built into the arms of the Bay and manned by Port Shield Inc.

Cedar River

Population Breakdown:

13,000 Total Citizens

81% Human

10% D-Bee races (mostly humanoid)

7% Psi-Stalker

2% Mutant Animals

Note: This does not include the 300 mercenaries employed by Northern Gun or the 2D6x100 visitors, adventures, or unemployed mercenaries present at any given time. About one third of the transient population in Cedar River is from the Manistique Imperium.

Well south of the traditional border of Ishpeming, Cedar River is of strategic and economic importance as Ishpeming's only port on Lake Michigan. Before the treaty with the Coalition States, all ships from the north shore of Ishpeming were confined to Lake Superior as the Coalition held control of the locks and canals at Sault Ste. Marie. Non-access to Great Lakes shipping was unacceptable for a nation which relies so heavily on trade.

Cedar River was disputed territory between Ishpeming and MI, but Ishpeming settled the matter for good, annexing the town in the late 60's P.A. Northern Transport has built a major transportation hub at

the mouth of Big Cedar River that can service some of the largest Great Lakes cargo vessels and warships. The town also features a major dry dock and repair center. In 100 P.A., as problems with pirates were heating up and with the prospect of war between the CS and Free Quebec looming, the Ishpeming Naval Defense Force commissioned a second fleet headquartered at Cedar River: the flag ship being the NGS Muskegon, a Sea King missile cruiser. Cedar River is also home to a large number of mercenary ships, hired to protect merchant convoys and to sub-contract shipping. Recently, the Coalition has invested in a small port facility at Cedar River for their ships coming from Old Chicago Naval Station.

The large military presence at Cedar River, along with its proximity to their borders, does not sit well with the Manistique Imperium, who felt the annexing of the territory was an act of hostility. Whenever the two sides are at odds, Cedar River is on high alert. As a result, no town is more nationalistic and loyal to the company than Cedar River.

Some 120 miles (193 km) south of Ishpeming, but only 50 miles (80 km) east of Iron Mountain, Cedar River relies on air supply from the main city. Therefore, in addition to its major port facilities, the town also boasts a large commercial and military airport with a squadron of IDF Air Corps fighters on station for repelling attacks and engaging pirate vessels on Lake Michigan. As a transportation hub, Cedar River sees a lot of transient population, as merchants and visitors come to town with deliveries of all sorts.

Supporting the IDF and Naval Defense Force personnel at Cedar River is a mercenary company of 300 personnel known as McGelpin's Marines. The "Marines" specialize in sea-to-land combat, port protection, shallow water patrols, and boarding vessels. They maintain a small fleet of patrol craft that move around the harbor and surrounding inlets, keeping their eyes open for pirates and other intruders, as well as making up the city garrison and doubling as police. Most of McGelpin's Marines are Headhunters with swimming, SCUBA, and pilot watercraft skills, although there is also a mix of ex-CS Naval Infantry and good aligned River Pirate O.C.C.s.

Covington

Population Breakdown:

12,000 Total Citizens

89% Human

6% Psi-Stalker

5% D-Bee races (mostly humanoid)

Note: This does not include the 200 mercenaries employed by Northern Gun or the 3D6x10 visitors, adventures, or unemployed mercenaries present at any given time.

Known as Ishpeming's breadbasket, Covington is 45 miles (72 km) from Ishpeming and is nothing but acre after acre of farmland where basic crops are grown and cattle are ranged. The large lakes and rivers in the area, along with the smooth landscape, make it ideal farmland. Advanced farming techniques and the use of automated labor bots means the population of the town itself is relatively small, especially considering its yearly production.

Northern Gun Agriculture, makers of fine farm equipment, keeps a few acres of test plot here to experiment with machinery and technologies for export. The farm machines are actually produced in Ishpeming along with most other heavy manufacturing, but tested in Covington. In addition to the farms themselves, there are numerous food processing plants in the area converting livestock and produce into processed and packaged food for sale in Ishpeming and other towns and cities.

Most farms are owned and operated by Northern Gun, although a few independent farmers and ranchers try to stay afloat, refusing to sell out on their way of life. The Independent Ranchers is a community group organized by those who own their own farms and ranches in the area. The Independent Ranchers lobby the government and Northern Gun, handle the sale of produce to the nearby food processing plants, and even organize the local farm hands into a militia in times of need.

Covington is like the New West of Ishpeming. Many of the best selling brands in the New West are used by the residents of the Covington area. Everything from Hobby Horse hovercycles to Maverick Riding Amour and vintage pistols all make an appearance in Covington. Unlike the New West, however, the area is well developed and the farms and ranches benefit from some of the very best agricultural technologies and methodologies. Although boring, Covington keeps the people of Ishpeming fed. This fact makes the area strategically important. The IDF Air Corps makes continual air sorties over the area to keep an eye open for any threats.

Law and order, as well as protection, comes from a small mercenary company of about two hundred troops known as Silver Star Security. These folks patrol the ranging farmlands, rivers and forests and act as the town's garrison and law enforcement. The company is made up mainly of Wilderness Scouts, Cowboys, Fur Trappers, Sheriff, and Deputy O.C.C.s. Most patrol on hovercycles or horses (real and robotic), and they move from farm to farm on a regular rotation to make sure there's no trouble.

There are some attractions that make Covington more than just a boring farm town:

Harvest Fair

Every year after produce is collected, there is a giant fair in Covington where produce is displayed (especially the record breaking kind), live animals are on display, and a few animals are even available for rides. The two main features of the fair are the Shooting Jamboree and the Rodeo.

Some of the best shooters in the North come to the Jamboree to compete for the coveted Covington Cup - which by itself is unimpressive, but the 500,000 credit prize for first place in each category makes it worth the trip. The competition tests a variety of categories from long-range shooting, quick draw competitions, and trick shooting. Spectators flock to the trick-shooting venue to watch ricochet shots, upside down, over the back, and a whole host of other creative and original shots. A panel of judges grades the trick shots on degree of difficulty, creativity and accuracy.

The reigning champ of the trick-shooting competition is a Gunfighter from Colorado known as Missy Perkins. She specializes in handguns but is also a fantastic acrobat and gymnast allowing her to do trick shots from tight-ropes or in combination with flips and other fancy moves. The long-range shooting champ is, Lieutenant Hank Trainem, a Coalition Officer who makes the trip every year (assignments permitting) and blows the doors off the competition. Lieutenant Trainem is one of the best snipers in the CS and a member of the vaunted Target Acquisition Group (TAG). His presence can sometimes rub some of the other participants the wrong way, especially those from the Pecos badlands, where Lt. Trainem is suspected to be responsible for the long range assassination of some major gang leaders.

The Rodeo features a variety of riding shows, from the bull-riding, untamed horses, cattle roping, and even riding a few alien animals and small dinosaurs. Simvan are unwelcome at the competition and any who show their faces are usually escorted out of the area; the people of Ishpeming have a long rivalry with an evil Simvan tribe in Wisconsin. The current champion is Dustin "Duke" Wilson a local Cowboy from Covington.

Worm Lake Resort

Southeast of the town proper is Worm Lake Resort, a ‘world-class’ resort that offers luxurious cabins in a wilderness lakeshore setting. The resort attracts people from all over North America not only for its plush accommodations, but also for its unique fishing opportunities. The lake itself is home to a peculiar, and seemingly unique, alien fish that is not only entertaining to catch but tasty to eat. The restaurant at the resort features an entire menu of the fish and is frequented by a who’s-who of Ishpeming business types.

Eagle Harbor

"Why anyone would want to go way the hell up there is beyond me."

- Captain William Rogers, NG Merchant Marine

Population Breakdown:

5,000 Total Citizens

86% Human

9% D-Bee races (mostly humanoid)

5% Psi-Stalker

Note: This does not include the 36 mercenaries employed by Northern Gun or the 4D6 visitors present at any given time.

Eagle Harbor is part of Ishpeming and falls under the protection of its army and navy. The landscape in the area is breathtaking, and the natural harbor is one of the best along the northern shore of Lake Superior. The main features of the town are the Navigational Center and the Naval Defense Force Northern Station.

Most civilians in the area work as fishermen, trappers, fur traders, and lumberjacks. The only heavy industry of note is a Northern Gun copper mine and electrical wire production plant just south of Eagle Harbor. This is a main strategic asset as thousands of tons of copper wire are shipped from the facility every year, usually by merchant naval vessel to New Marquette where it is used to wire the electrical systems on Northern Gun heavy equipment produced in Ishpeming.

To keep the wire facility safe, Northern Gun keeps a small mercenary company named Wardens of the North (36 personnel) at the facility. When not on duty, most of them spend their free time in Eagle Harbor, adding some excitement to the otherwise out-of-the-way village. The Wardens of the North also double as the town’s peacekeepers, although there is little work to be done, save the occasional supernatural menace making its way into town.

In addition to mercenaries, the town houses a small detachment of Naval Defense Force personnel at a refueling and rearming station in the harbor. This is basically a stopover point for NG vessels on patrol in the northern shore of Lake Superior. The station does maintain a small squadron of light vessels for convoy escort and defense, as well as a squadron of air interceptors from the IDF Air Corps. The facility also doubles as the commercial port where Northern Gun merchant vessels pick up wire spools for transport to Marquette.

The largest strategic asset at Eagle Harbor is the Navigational Center. Eagle Harbor has a long tradition of lighthouses to warn ships away from the dangerous portions of the rocky shoreline. However, the Navigational Center is much more than that. This high-tech, state-of-the-art facility features advanced weather monitoring instruments for predicting storms and weather patterns and a super high-powered radar station that can monitor aircraft over the entire north-western portion of Lake Superior, both linked

to a gigantic vertical launch long range missile system.

Data collected from the Eagle Harbor facility helps to direct traffic for the Naval Defense Force, the IDF Air Corps, Merchant Marines, and Northern Transport vessels and aircraft moving through the region. Without Eagle Harbor, they would be effectively blind of the north-western front, something no nation can afford.

New Marquette

Population Breakdown:

23,000 Total Citizens

70% Human

29% D-Bee races (mostly humanoid)

1% Psi-Stalker

Note: This does not include the 4D4x100 visitors, adventures, or unemployed mercenaries, or the 5D6 Coalition visitors present at any given time.

A scant 15 miles (24 km) from Ishpeming, New Marquette has always been a major seaport for the industrial giant. Nestled in a natural harbor along the shores of Lake Superior, Northern Transport maintains a major shipping center in New Marquette. Commercial boat traffic from all over Lake Superior docks at the port facilities in New Marquette. If one is traveling to Ishpeming by ship, Marquette is the best place to stop.

Although it is a shipping port for Lake Superior, New Marquette never achieved explosive growth due to the fact that the Coalition controlled the locks at Sault Ste. Marie. This made it a laborious task for NG merchant ships to pass into Lake Michigan and beyond for foreign deliveries. CS troops and bureaucrats would conduct timely inspections, especially of weapon cargoes, making it an inconvenient option.

Not only has the trade agreement with the CS opened up the locks and canals to NG shipping, but the entire Coalition has opened up as a new market as well. Commercial ships from both nations make extensive use of the port facilities at New Marquette. Northern Gun has even built a brand new dockyard facility to begin producing ship designs taken from the now defunct Iron Heart Armaments. This has led to a real boom in the population and economic growth for the city.

The naval production facilities are situated within the headquarters of the first fleet of the Ishpeming Naval Defense Force, the main berth for the NGS Marquette, a Sea King Missile Cruiser. All naval personnel not assigned to Cedar River or Eagle Harbor are housed at New Marquette. In addition, the port is a haven for honest privateers who wish to be hired to protect merchant ships and convoys heading out to trade. Both CS and NG shipping companies pay top dollar to groups willing to offer protective services against pirates. This flow of money has increased substantially with the reduction in power of the CS Navy.

One mercenary company in town is taking advantage of this vacuum of power. Superior Shipping Inc. is a naval mercenary company that has a variety of patrol boats and ships at its disposal. They specialize in convoy protection and are quite creative. Rather than sink money into larger vessels, they have a knack for arming merchant vessels, wooden boats, and other non-military craft. Generally speaking, they can keep all but the most vicious and largest pirates at bay.

Anyone traveling to New Marquette will immediately notice the wild port city feel, combined with the

exuberance that accompanies growth. New businesses, new constructions, and new visitors are constantly appearing, making it an exciting place. However, the IDF and local mercenary companies are having trouble keeping up with the growth, and the port city is beginning to develop a seedy underside of crime, press ganging, shanghais, and smuggling. The problem is becoming so pronounced that some on the city council have cynically suggested New Marquette's motto be changed to 'Caveat Emptor.'

Coalition Presence

Since the trade agreement, Coalition merchant ships and their escorts have been docking in Marquette; even small CSN warships will dock here occasionally. As a result, Marquette isn't a safe place for D-Bees anymore. When Coalition ships tie up at the docks, their crews pour into the town, looking for action. The usual gathering place is the Red Eye Bar, and after a night of drinking, those who couldn't find dates often go looking for trouble. They target D-Bee homes and businesses, and these mobs can often get out of hand. The local police try to prevent these attacks, but they never arrest any of the foreign crew members, worried that such action might jeopardize the trade deal.

A D-Bee gang formed in response to the Coalition presence calling themselves the Skull Crackers, who patrol at night looking to put an end to the pro-human violence. The group was formed by Sir Sheppard, a fallen Cyber-Knight and veteran of the Tolkeen War. Sir Sheppard intended to form a Retribution Squad based out of Marquette, attacking the CS ships that entered the area. His goal was to disrupt shipping as well as fracture the alliance between NG and CS. So far, he has been unable to rally the support he needs for a true Retribution Squad, but the Coalition is changing that. With each attack against non-humans in the city his argument gets stronger. The gang is currently willing to roll CS crew members in port. Soon, Sir Sheppard hopes, they will be willing to do more.

The Mariner's Net

Situated on the banks of Lake Superior, The Mariner's Net is the biggest bar & grill in the city. Known for its rough and tumble atmosphere, not to mention the best Fried Walleye in the Great Lakes region, the place is usually packed every night with dockworkers, merchant marines, and members of Marquette's Mariners. Bedo Marquette, a thoughtful and well spoken D-Bee who took his name from the small pre-Rifts city whose bones now lie beneath the docks, is co-owner and head of Marquette's Mariners.

Bedo's partner in the business is a loud and very boisterous human woman named Jane Wiles (5th level Merchant Marine). Scurvy Jane, as she is commonly called, used to be a member of the Mariners before she lost her left arm to a Lorica Wraith on the coast of Lake Michigan while escorting a barge of material from Manistique to a coastal town in the lower peninsula. Bedo saved her life and managed to finish off the Wraith, whose skull is mounted behind the bar, cementing himself into the legends of the Great Lakes region. His exploits grow with each passing tale, much to the amusement of Scurvy Jane, who only laughs at her humble friend and encourages the tellers. By last count, he had single handedly defeated 3 Lorica Wraiths (see **Worldbook 7: Underseas** for details) and a school of Dragonfish (see **Sourcebook 4: Coalition Navy** for details)!

Bedo spends nearly all of his time, when not patrolling for Northern Gun, at The Mariner's Net. He keeps the place running smoothly, preps the food for the evening rush, and tries to teach the two street urchins in his care (orphaned dock children) the value of an honest day's work. Scurvy Jane is the life of the party though, and she keeps the clientele coming back. By closing time, she has usually had to break up a few fights, as well as started a few of her own, but the beer flows freely and everyone makes up afterwards, else they meet the business end of Jane's custom-made Vibro Hook (a gift, and a joke, from Bedo).

The menu at The Mariner's Net is heavy on the seafood, but the typical bar fare can be had as well. Scurvy Jane is an awful cook. Bedo likes to say that Jane has burnt more fish than there are in the lake, which prompted them to hire someone to help out. Sally Burns (2nd level Saloon Girl) handles the galley duties for the bar. When the kitchen closes, she can be found singing and dancing with the drunken patrons on the bar's deck.

Northern Gun

The unusual circumstances which brought about the repopulation of Ishpeming has created the Corporate nation, a company whose rule trumps the regional governments in the nearby towns. In this way, Northern Gun is not unlike a dictatorship, where one leader commands the people with the guidance of his advisors. Maxwell Franklin, President of Northern Gun, is the leader of the nation; his trusted advisors are the members of NG's Board of Directors. The board is comprised of the Vice President from each Division, plus a liaison from the Ishpeming City Government. While not a government in the traditional sense, the Corporation owns most of the city assets and all of the official military assets, making Northern Gun in control of the Ishpeming nation.

There are no clear procedures for succession of the Presidency, as Franklin has been President since Northern Gun opened for business. However, Franklin has named Executive Vice President Willard Jacobs Director of the Board and consistently handed off responsibilities to him, making Jacobs the heir-apparent, but due only to Franklin's favor. Were power to change hands because of Franklin's untimely death, rather than willingly passing on the Presidency while he is still alive, there would likely be a power struggle within the company.

NG Divisions

Like many pre-Rifts corporate entities Northern Gun is split into divisions. Each of these divisions is headed by a Vice-President (VP) or Executive Vice-President (EVP), who in turn reports to the President. Many of the Divisions are very large and have vast resources at their disposal, making each of the Vice-Presidents powerful NPCs in their own right and providing them with much latitude for their own agendas as well as the corporate strategy for Northern Gun. Currently Northern Gun operates with nine divisions, each carrying one or more departments. The divisions are Executive, Distribution, Manufacturing, Marketing, NGMI Bank, RAID, Research & Development, Security, and Support & Service.

Executive Division

The Executive Division houses the corporate offices and many of the staff and administrative functions. The sole purpose of this division is to collect information from the rest of the company and transport it to the President. As a result, the office is full of consultants, middle managers and others who were owed a favor or have "earned their entitlements" and needed a cushy job to fill out the rest of their time with Northern Gun.

Maxwell "Max" Franklin

President of Northern Gun

Alignment: Unprincipled

Age: 142

Brief History: Maxwell Franklin is an ex-soldier and mercenary with a varied and spotted history. It was Maxwell who was the original mind that transformed Northern Gun products from major in the marketplace to dominant. Now, the 'Old Man' stands as the Top Dog in the company, his body replaced with bionics and cybernetics, many of which are prototypes or one-of-a-kind designs. One design in particular, the electronic enclosure around Franklin's brain, was created by a D-Bee scientist; the prototype was installed in Franklin just before the inventor's death. While it works incredibly well, far outlasting its expected life, the design schematics were lost. Now, the only version resides in Franklin's head, and his meddling son can't wait to get it out to reverse engineer its secrets. Maxwell still drives the major direction of the company, but delegates more and more to Willard Jacobs, his trusted advisor.

Behavior: Despite the now corporate nature of Northern Gun, Maxwell Franklin still behaves like a soldier. He has a 'get it done' attitude and has no need for political correctness. This straight forward attitude has served the company well in negotiates with mercenary commanders, but it has caused more than a few blunders with official governments. While he has slowed down a little due to age, he still has a sharp mind.

Appearance: He is old, with most of his body replaced with cybernetics and bionics. Outwardly looks like an old soldier with a weather beaten face and a few scars from combat and bar fights in his youth. Physically Maxwell is in great condition for a man of his age. Oddly, he dresses in very functional apparel and often still comes to work in combat boots.

Willard Jacobs

Chairman of the Board; Executive Vice President

Alignment: Scrupulous

Age: 39

Brief History: Jacobs has been with the company for many years-even he's lost count-starting off as a delivery driver at age 22. A company man from the get-go, he managed to work his way up the ranks through hard work and friendships to the position he holds today. As a result of his long life with Northern Gun, Jacobs has worked in many different departments over the years, giving him a true knowledge and understanding of the company, its processes, and its goals.

Behavior: He goes by "Jacobs" or "Jake" to pretty much anyone who knows him - only Terrance Franklin (Maxwell's son; see below) calls him Willard, and just to piss him off. He has a genuine care for the workers of NG with and a true passion for the company.

Appearance: He looks pretty much like your average Joe: dark hair, gray eyes, average height. His only distinguishing feature is that he smiles almost all the time, and has the good mood to match. Jacobs wears humble but nice business suits when meeting with clients. While at work, he wears business casual clothing to appear approachable at all time, not to mention the fact he had the door removed from his office.

Distribution Division

Part of gaining eighty percent of market share in consumer goods and weapons sales is being able to effectively deliver on your promises. Northern Gun seems to have the ability to get its products anywhere in North America. They have authorized dealers in many major cities outside of the CS, and now for consumer goods, inside the CS. They also have an unknown network of semi-legal and somewhat seedy partnerships to get weapons into jurisdictions where it would be imprudent to have a dealership, such as the 'Burbs, the former kingdom of Tolkeen, Lazlo, New Lazlo, Old Bones and other politically sensitive areas. To make this work, Northern Gun has a tangled web of corporate assets, affiliates, and private contractors all aimed at making sure products get to dealers and markets where they are needed.

Terrance Franklin

Vice President, Distribution

Alignment: Miscreant

Age: 45

Brief History: Terrance is the bastard son of Maxwell Franklin. He got his start in business from privatizing fresh water, with the use of armed guards and razor-wire fences, in the small wilderness town where his mother had hidden after her pregnancy. After robbing the community of their wealth by making them pay for water, Terrance the Tyrant, as he became known, started taking over small businesses in the town, driving out the original owners and creating a monopoly for himself. His mother, desperate to get rid of him, told Maxwell Franklin of his son's existence when Terrance turned thirty. Maxwell, finally learning of his only son, brought him into the company with open arms. Ever since then, Maxwell has regretted it. Terrance has manipulated and killed to gain a controlling interest in NG, and he has his sights set on taking over the company. Jacobs and Terrance have become bitter enemies, as Terrance is jealous of Jacobs in every way.

Behavior: A cutthroat businessman, literally, that is willing to do anything to get ahead. He lives solely to gain power and wealth. Terrance Franklin epitomizes the golden rule: those who have the gold make the rules. While he is a bully and a brute in almost every sense of the word, Terrance relies on cunning and not physical ability. After all, you can always hire muscle.

Appearance: Terrance looks to be in his mid-thirties, and he can always be seen dressed in expensive custom made suits. Physically he is thin and not by any means muscular. He must have the best of everything, and makes sure it is visible to everyone around him. To add to his arrogant air, Terrance always seems to have a smirk on his face.

Manufacturing Division

The Manufacturing Division is the heart and soul of Northern Gun. Without the people and processes from this division, there would be no weapons, no armor, no commercial vehicles, no NG-300 Speedster Hovercycle. Nothing.

The military-industrial complex from the original Sentinel Industries forms the basis of this division. In the underground complex, centuries old automated factories churn out the parts and components of some of North America's most rugged and sophisticated hardware. The former mine complex that Sentinel used prior to the Golden Age was in serious disrepair by the time the survivors of the Upper Peninsula figured out its true economic value. Much of the work of the manufacturing division is to keep the current machinery running at capacity while attempting to uncover and reactivate other lost parts of the complex. The quantum leap in some Northern Gun equipment over the last forty years has been the two-fold result of strong research and development and the uncovering of more advanced manufacturing techniques within the bowels of the "Sentinel Complex".

The importance of constant advancement is not lost on the Division Executive Vice-President, Rita Fitzgerald. Without a doubt she is the most driven of all the NG upper management and has an almost cult like obsession with the pre-Rifts history of the manufacturing systems at Northern Gun. She is constantly digging through old computer records, archives, research records, industry journals and anything else she can find that might provide a clue as to how to improve or better use their current capacity. As a result, Fitzgerald has one of the largest collections of pre-Rifts technical manuals, scientific journals, and engineering texts in the known world. She has been known to pay an adventurer two or three times the going rate for a new book that may help her unlock the mysteries of the Golden Age.

Fitzgerald's obsession with innovation is contagious and has become a hallmark of the Manufacturing Division. Engineers, Operators, and even mechanically apt D-Bees are forever reinventing and reengineering, finding newer, faster, cheaper ways of doing things. It is this innovation that has allowed Northern Gun to out-produce many of the more advanced factories of the Coalition States or Free Quebec. It is the constant innovation that explains the wide variation in Northern Gun products from lasers, to particle beams, to ion weapons, and the wildly different designs and components featured from one vehicle to the next.

While players may never see the giant automated factories of Northern Gun, they certainly see the end result wherever they go. From the sonic flea and tick unit to the vaunted NG-45LP, all of it is produced and quality controlled by the engineers of the Manufacturing Division.

Rita Fitzgerald

Vice President, Manufacturing

Alignment: Scrupulous

Age: 47

Brief History: Fitzgerald started out as a scientist in Research & Development where she gained fame for a number of process improvements. She was moved to manufacturing to oversee the upgrading of the particle beam facility after her team completed the designs for the NG-45 "Long Pistol" - a best seller even today. Her performance on the Long Pistol Project saw her promoted to improve the manufacturing processes and turn out more units more efficiently. Finally, she replaced the previous Executive Vice-President after he suffered a major heart attack.

Behavior: An innovator and efficiency fiend rolled into one, Fitzgerald loves to look at a situation and try to make it better. The adage "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" means nothing to her. Her motto is more along the lines of "there's got to be a better way to do this". Her constant analysis of a situation can prove to be very annoying, as many people take her nit-picky thought processes personally. Her phrases often start with "Wouldn't it be better if" or "That's good, but what about." Her brain storming often puts more insecure people on the defensive.

Appearance: An attractive middle aged woman who is taller than average. She keeps her blond, but slightly graying hair, cut short and functional. She has a very business like demeanor and wears practical, down-to-earth clothing. Fitzgerald walks with long strides and great purpose, and she often appears to have a far away look on her face as she ponders a given situation. Once she is engaged with a project, her whole demeanor changes to a frantic excited cheerleader type who tries to find the very best solution.

Marketing Division (NG-MKT)

Being the number one arms and consumer goods manufacturer in North America, and carrying as much as an eighty percent market-share, takes a lot of effort to stay on top. The creative geniuses in NG-MKT determine the strategies for getting Northern Gun products into more communities and into the hands of more mercenaries and adventurers. They also serve as a pseudo-diplomatic corps for NG, with Ishpeming usually playing a key role in negotiations with other nations. The other function of NG-MKT is to smooth over any bad relations or bad reputations caused by one of their employees, dealers, or even just a rampaging Crazy who was wielding an NG Rifle when he was finally gunned down.

To achieve these goals the Marketing Division is divided into two departments Advertising, who push products, set sales and specials, and recruit new dealers, and Public Relations, who are responsible for relations with government entities and for spinning the Northern Gun brand in a good light in all situations.

In the business of sales and keeping up appearances, it takes a smooth Operator and smooth talker to get the job done, and no one is better than NG-MKT Vice-President Wendy O'Grady (Human, 10th Level Con Artist O.C.C.). O'Grady earned her way through the Northern Gun ranks over a twenty-five year service history. Beginning her career in hover cycle sales, she eventually and ruthlessly took over operations of the Northern Gun Dealership in Whykin. Turning the fledgling operation into one of Northern Gun's most profitable stores in a few short years, O'Grady was moved to head office as Director of NG Advertising department and eventually promoted to VP of NG-MKT.

Wendy O'Grady

Vice President, Marketing

Alignment: Anarchist

Age: 52

Brief History: Originally from Whykin, O'Grady began her life as a swindler, negotiating deals between Kingsdale and Whykin business people who preferred not to be known to each other due to the hostilities between the two nations. When business dried up due to increasing tensions, O'Grady used her contacts to get on the sales floor at the Whykin NG Vehicle Dealership. Here her skills really shined, breaking sales records moving hovercycles to mercenaries and adventurers, and then finally brokering a huge government contract to Whykin. Her success gave her enough clout to force out the owner and operate the dealership herself, selling a great deal of hardware to local mercenaries and governments - especially both sides of the Whykin/Kingsdale cold war. She took a job at Northern Gun Head Office as the Director of Advertising ten years ago, and she was promoted to the Vice Presidency of Marketing five years ago.

Behavior: A smooth talker, and rumored seductress, O'Grady can usually get what she wants from any person she is speaking to. She is not crass or threatening, but has the uncanny ability to take your money and make you glad you gave it: A consummate salesperson.

Appearance: O'Grady is an attractive older woman who knows how to dress for success. She is in remarkable shape and seemingly ageless, much to the chagrin of some of the other female VPs. Her hair is always professionally styled and her appearance never disheveled.

Diana Giannini

Advertising Director

Alignment: Unprincipled

Age: 30

Brief History: Previous job was working with Specialty Hardware, Inc., working with new designs and modifications for vehicles and power armor. Willard Jacobs discovered her when he was out on one of his many quests for raw talent. Both father and son Franklin voted to have Diana aboard because of her good looks. Maxwell has since learned to respect the woman for her creative talents, while Terrance still treats her like his personal secretary. Since joining the NG family, she has "breathed new life in the company," according to Max Franklin.

Behavior: Vivacious and full of life, this woman is looking at the world from a different perspective. She is very quirky in her ways, often walking around the offices barefoot or eating lunches with the grunt workers, but respected by most. She can be aloof at times, but focused when she needs to be.

Appearance: Good looking, in a non-typical way. Most people can't put their finger on it, they are just attracted. Her style of dress is odd to say the least. She may show up in a color business suit one day, paint stained coveralls the next, and then end the week with a slinky Asian style dress.

Player characters will rarely have any direct contact with members of NG-MKT unless they plan to open a new Northern Gun franchise. However, many of the decisions made everyday at NG-MKT may affect the players directly and indirectly. A new sale price on certain NG products may influence what is

available to buy in a given town, discontinued product lines will be difficult to replace, a player's favorite weapon or vehicle may be phased out and difficult to acquire the next time they try to replace it.

Ultimately, this division will most often be used by GMs as a 'plot device' to help guide the players along a certain path or to explain why they player's aren't getting top dollar when reselling certain items: "Sorry buddy, I can only give your 10% of value on this one, Northern Gun is selling brand new ones at fifty percent off."

Northern Gun-Manistique Imperium (NGMI) Bank

The NGMI is not technically a division of Northern Gun, but a separate entity owned fifty-one percent by Northern Gun and forty-nine percent by the Manistique Imperium. This joint venture between two manufacturing powerhouses provides both entities with the means to offer banking services to their citizens and customers.

The end result is the NGMI credit. A stable currency used in most of Michigan and accepted at most places of business in North America at various rates of exchange - now including the Coalition States. The Bank is managed by a President and overseen by a Board of Directors appointed by Northern Gun and the Manistique Imperium. The current President, Dale Wadsworth (Human, 7th Level Rogue Scholar O.C.C.) has been at the helm for almost three years, hired after the previous President was fired for vocally opposing the CS treaty.

The biggest and most stable avenue for the Bank is the extensive dealer networks used by Northern Gun, and to a lesser extent the Imperium. All NG Authorized Dealers keep their business accounts at NGMI as part of their dealer agreement. This ensures that the Bank has a large stable group of customers, helps NG prevent its dealers from cooking the books, and makes seizing the accounts and assets of failed dealers very simple. In reality, the NGMI Bank is the de facto finance department of both Northern Gun and Wellington Industries.

In addition the Bank also provides deposit services for private customers. Individuals can open an account in Ishpeming, Manistique, MercTown, Whykin, Kingsdale, El Paso and Fort El Dorado. Credits are readily accepted in those cities as well as at any Northern Gun or Wellington Industries outlet. Outside of these major Northern Gun market places, the credits are still widely accepted, although usually at a lesser value. Before the CS Trade Treaty, NGMI was attempting to expand its influence into more cities and towns in North America in an attempt to do what Northern Gun had already achieved in the consumer goods and weapons sales markets: become the dominant player. While the treaty has seen an even wider acceptance of NGMI credits, because of their being accepted in CS states, albeit at a lower rate, the halt of expansion left a sour taste in the mouth of some Bank employees.

Much like the Swiss and Cayman Island Banks of pre-Rifts Earth, the NGMI credit is still very popular with mercenaries, adventurers, and bandits who buy their weapons and equipment primarily from Northern Gun. The option of using credits not monitored by the CS but more stable than those offered by the Black Market is attractive to a number of parties for a variety of reasons. The Bank is a major bone of contention between Northern Gun, Manistique and the Coalition States. The CS knows that undesirable groups are making use of the credit to avoid detection, and the Coalition vocally criticizes the NGMI for its loose customer background checks and due diligence. The President of the NGMI has to be very careful when dealing with this criticism and balance it against Northern Gun's hallmark identity of protecting and preserving client privacy.

Dale Wadsworth

President, NGMI Bank

Alignment: Aberrant

Age: 46

Brief History: Wadsworth is originally a citizen of the Manistique Imperium and an employee of Wellington Industries, but he received his financial training from the Northern Gun University. Having worked in finance with Wellington, Wadsworth has vast experience in the financial mechanisms of the Upper Peninsula as well as a good working knowledge of the customers of the NGMI Bank. His status as a citizen of the Manistique Imperium also offers an illusion of separation between Northern Gun and its financial arm. When the two Michigan super-powers decided to work together on their own credit system, Wadsworth was a part of the committee formed to spearhead the project. When the former president of the bank was fired for criticizing the treaty with the CS, Wadsworth opportunistically seized the moment to offer his "vast knowledge and experience" to the position. As a result Wadsworth has ascended to the controlling force behind the second largest currency in North America.

Behavior: Wadsworth honestly believes in the bank's impartiality and commitment to customer privacy. He would not give up a customer's confidence to Northern Gun, the Manistique Imperium, the Coalition or any other element who may wish to know. At the same time he recognizes who his employer is and will not actively work against Northern Gun or Wellington Industries. However, his personal integrity in matters of financial records has made Wadsworth popular amongst some of the bank's biggest customers including mercenaries and large criminal organizations.

Appearance: He is an extremely tall and thin man with short cropped brown hair. He often looks as if a large gust of wind would blow him away. His lanky and spindly features have caused some to question whether he is actually a D-Bee. His height makes business dress difficult and as such he always wears custom clothing, sometimes made from M.D.C. cloth material just to be safe.

Recovery, Advancement & Innovation Division (RAID)

Northern Gun offers a seemingly endless variety of weapons, equipment, and cutting-edge technologies. Their catalog is deep and varied, but not all of these items are available to consumers as a result of the traditional R&D. Much of their overwhelming market share can be attributed to the work of the RAID Division, the dark side of the NG manufacturing process.

RAID is an outgrowth of R&D, an aggressive approach to bringing new items to the marketplace before your competitors. While much of the organization still consists of traditional engineers working as a think tank for the R&D Division, it's the specialized workers in RAID that define the group. RAID manages and maintains an extensive network of industrial espionage agents. The division also employs recovery teams to find and acquire pre-Rifts artifacts. This division is also responsible for identifying and hiring away top engineering talent from their competitors. It is through these less scrupulous means that NG maintains its competitive advantage.

For more details, see the [RAID](#) section of the Netbook.

Edith Saint-Jean

Vice-President, RAID

Alignment: Unprincipled

Age: 38

Brief History: Saint-Jean has her roots in the Black Market, smuggling drugs and weapons. NG had contracted her services several times to move weapons into Chi-Town, into the hands of under the table dealers. Excited about her skills and successes, the company hired her on full-time to head the entire CS

smuggling operation. She excelled in this role up through the signing of the CS-NG trade pact. After the pact, she briefly led the industrial espionage department before being promoted to Executive VP.

Behavior: Saint-Jean is a complicated individual. Many believe she was promoted so management could keep an eye on her, because she still has many connections with the underworld, and her knowledge of NG operations is extensive. She still exercises her extensive contact list to pick up new leads for the department. She leads in an authoritative manner, and she has a tendency to speak to employees with a sharp, foul tongue.

Appearance: A petite woman, whose appearance does not at all match her personality. She keeps her hair short, but styled, and her dress modest. She would easily pass for a shy, helpless woman; this could not be further from the truth, and it is perhaps the main reason for her success.

Research & Development Division

When an experienced weapons enthusiast flips through a Northern Gun catalogue they cannot help but be struck by the vast variety of North Gun's product lines. When it comes to commercially available equipment, Northern Gun produces an extremely wide range of weapons, armor, vehicles and bots. Almost none of them seem to share components and parts, save for their power supply - the standard e-clip or nuclear power plant.

Compare this catalogue to the weapons inventory of some major pre-Rifts weapons manufactures, or Wilk's Laser Technologies, Triax Industries, Free Quebec, even the CS and you will see all of their products have similar form and style, shared components and are built from common technologies. Northern Gun looks like a veritable hodge-podge of product offers, designed by and produced by vastly different minds and thinking. Sometimes these differences are by design, for cosmetic purposes, or to appeal to a certain market; but mostly, NG has an unparalleled variety in their equipment.

This vast variety is a function of their Research & Development process. Northern Gun does not innovate as much as they reverse engineer. Through their RAID Division, the industrial giant is constantly scouring the planet for new, or previously lost, technologies. Once those are found, R&D attempts to duplicate them. Outgrowths happen from these technologies, such as the NG-P7 leading to the ultimate North American particle pistol the NG-45LP or the NG-57 eventually making way for the NG-IP7. What also happens is new lines evolve around new technologies. The end result is the large stable of product types and styles that is Northern Gun. Oddly enough, this large stable of products is what helps ensure such a large market share. There is a product that suits just about every need.

Managing this eclectic research and development process is A. William Starks (7th Level Rouge Scientist O.C.C.) a man whose family has a rich pedigree of reverse engineering for Northern Gun. Starks runs R&D fast and loose, and he encourages competition from his employees. Teams are constantly challenged to bring the product to market. Whenever a new technology is discovered or an alien or pre-Rifts item uncovered, Starks forms multi-discipline teams who work over the project and attempt to reverse engineer and commercialize the technology. The end result of this fast-tracked process is the infamous Northern Gun knock-off.

Knock-offs are the stripped down versions of weapons and vehicles that are commonly available on the open market. In fact, when a product is "knocked-off" Northern Gun sees this as a phase in the R&D process. From knock-offs come further developments or outgrowths, as R&D tries to mine a new product or technology for all profitable variations possible.

A. William Starks

Vice-President, Research & Development

Alignment: Unprincipled

Age: 34

Brief History: Like in most businesses, who you know is often as important as what you know. As the son of two of Northern Gun's most famous employees, William Starks had a leg-up on the competition. He also lives in the shadow of his two famous parents and constantly struggles to prove that he deserves his position out of merit as much as pedigree. He started out as a research assistant in the later years of his mother's tenure as head of R&D, and he slowly climbed his way up to team leader and finally to vice-president. While he is a capable and competent scientist, Starks often rushes projects to completion as part of an effort to prove himself. This sometimes means that the advancement isn't the best it could be - hence Northern Gun's slightly lagging technological edge, despite its manufacturing ability.

Behavior: What motivates him is drive. William wants nothing more than to prove himself. He thinks that by churning out a large volume of commercially viable technologies he can show that he deserves to be part of the company leadership.

Appearance: Williams is a fairly good looking young man who can most often be seen in the testing labs of Northern Gun or in the research labs at NGU sporting coveralls or a lab coat.

Security Division

Just as Northern Gun attempts to acquire technologies and secrets from its competitors, those same competitors try to return the favor. While Northern Gun employs a large Armed Forces Division to protect its convoys, territories and physical assets, the Security Division is more concerned with counter-industrial espionage, executive safety, data protection and fraud prevention.

Counter-industrial espionage is one of the largest departments within the Security Division. These individuals attempt to track down and root out competitors' spies and informants as well as maintain the physical security of the most sensitive parts of the company, including the old Sentinel Facility, the Research and Development labs, and the computer mainframes. The main work of counter-industrial espionage is investigation through physical searches and electronic monitoring, as well as developing and maintaining electronic protection systems.

Employees of counter-espionage can be security professionals such as soldiers and Special Forces but are more likely to be former law enforcement professionals such as sheriffs, police personnel and even ex-Internal Security Service (ISS) Peacekeepers and Specters. In fact, the counter-espionage unit is overseen by a former ISS Intel Specter that Northern Gun lured away from Chi-Town with the promise of more money and less dogma.

A sub-division of counter-espionage is fraud prevention and investigation. Northern Gun takes employee theft very seriously and investigates missing materials, especially missing money, very seriously. Fraud investigators are synonymous with bounty hunters in the Northern Gun lore. If someone perpetrates a fraud, Northern Gun pays their employees a 5% "finders fee" for recovering stolen goods and money. These fraud investigators are perhaps some of the most motivated and mercenary employees of Northern Gun. Employees who steal from Northern Gun are seen as the worst kind of scum and their dead or alive status is usually not the issue, only recovery of the stolen materials and goods is important. As a result many employees of the fraud unit are bounty-hunters and other mercenary occupations.

An organization's leaders are valuable assets, and therefore the Executive Safety department takes their role very seriously. They take it so seriously that this dignitary protection unit of Northern Gun has spun-off into the premiere provider of protective services on the continent - Comitatus Security Inc. This

spin-off business allows Northern Gun to recoup some money invested in its protective employees as well as provide real life on the job training for new recruits. Most people who protect a Northern Gun executive serve with Comitas before being eligible to protect the VIPs of Northern Gun. Selection to move from Comitas to NG Protection is wildly competitive because of the vast increase in pay and the fact that so few are selected for this detail.

In the high-stakes business of industrial manufacturing, protection of one's information and data systems is paramount. At Northern Gun, the Data Protection unit works tirelessly to ensure all computer and financial information systems are locked down tight. Many of these computer programming geniuses are also skilled hackers who have worked from the outside in, trying to break the systems and then using that knowledge to plug the holes (City Rat O.C.C. with Hacker skill set). In addition to technological means, the anti-hackers in data protection also have a special unit of powerful psychics, with powers such as machine ghost, telemechanics and other electronics based powers. Adventures in data protection may benefit from the electronic hacking rules found in Rifter #2.

Overseeing all this internal cloak and dagger is Lukas Koch, an ex-Leo (Law Enforcement Officer) for the New German Republic. Koch is a humorless and hardened man who is absolutely merciless and relentless in his pursuit of security. While some people think he is obsessed or crazy, they all agree he is effective and has kind of secret police air about him that keeps most people on edge.

Lukas Koch

Vice-President, Security

Alignment: Aberrant

Age: 38

Brief History: Born in the NGR, Lukas spent most of his early career in the NGR Law Enforcement Division as a counter-espionage investigator. Some of his biggest cases involved industrial espionage and fraud against Triax Industries by members of the Military and Triax Industries employees. After he broke open the widespread smuggling ring that made unauthorized sales to Russia, mercenaries, and North American powers, he was almost broken by the backlash. The people he had exposed were powerful and had powerful friends; as a result, it is suggested that Lukas Koch is hunted by some of those who wish revenge. However, the NGR's loss is Northern Gun's gain, as the professional law enforcement officer has proven very effective in managing the Security Division of the company.

Behavior: He is cold and closed. Koch has a very difficult past and holds many secrets against many high ranking German officials. He purposely keeps tight about these things. In fact, he keeps tight about everything and nobody really knows what Koch knows about them. The end result is a very nerve-racking experience every time someone speaks to him. He constantly looks, but says nothing, as if he knows something about you he shouldn't. He is an excellent, patient interrogator who rarely uses torture or physical violence.

Appearance: Koch is tall with Slavic features, dark hair and brown eyes. He always wears his Security Division uniform, even to Board Meetings.

Support & Service Division

By far the largest division in terms of number of employees, the Support & Service Division takes care of all those back-office and administrative functions needed to make the wheels turn at Northern Gun. Some of the most important functions of the division from an employee perspective are human resources and payroll. While to others, the most important part might be accounts payable and receivable. Of course, the executives maintain that it is their customer care department which is most valuable. All of these and a myriad of other corporate functions fall under the scope of Support & Service.

That being said, Support & Service is not simply a boring and invisible division. Over the years the Northern Gun ethos has even permeated the way support functions are done. The best example of this is how Support & Service handles collections "the Northern Gun way." For more details on the NG Collections Department, see the section on [STING](#).

Alexandra Cline

Vice-President, Support & Service

Alignment: Scrupulous

Age: 41

Brief History: Cline has spent her life working for Northern Gun. She started with the company at 17, working part-time in accounting. Her work ethic was strong, and she had a real talent for dealing with people. What drew the attention of upper management was her leadership. She was moved around from department to department in order to shape up the employees and increase production. Cline served as director of accounts payable and accounts receivable, as well as briefly serving as Associate Director of STING, before being promoted to VP.

Behavior: Cline has a no-nonsense personality. She will take time to talk to her employees and develop a relationship, but she clearly states the results she expects. And if she doesn't receive those results, employees are held responsible. Yet Cline has been letting down her hair lately, so to speak, as she is looking for a husband. She has spent so long focusing on a career; now she's making up for lost time.

Appearance: Cline is average in her dress and physical appearance. Her hair is thin and brown, usually pulled back in a pony tail. She's slightly overweight, and while she dresses professionally, her clothes have a tendency to be baggy and unflattering.

Recovery, Advancement & Innovation Division (RAID)

Mr. Bender walked briskly through the stainless steel corridors of the underground testing facility, the sound of his steps reverberating down the well lit corridor. He stopped before the security checkpoint. Above him, two swivel mounted medium lasers took a bead on him as he punched in his clearance code and placed his hand inside the scanner. They no longer used retinal scanners in the complex as R&D was so close to a breakthrough on a cybernetic eye capable of retinal forgery.

Northern Gun: Always trying to stay ahead of the tech world's status quo.

With the scan complete, the pair of fortified doors slid open to reveal a long bridge crossing the derelict mineshaft to a secure laboratory on the other side. This was the part he hated. The bridge had originally been a breezeway, open on the sides, but some know-it-all corporate infiltration specialist had assessed it and determined that security would be better served by an open air bridge with several wall mounted weapons along the shaft's walls. Either that or an enclosed tunnel, but a tunnel was too damned expensive when there was so much money tied up in research. Although he would never admit it, Bender was afraid of heights. Nodding to the two armed guards approaching from the other side he took a deep breath and started walking across.

When he got to the other side, he exhaled and began the clearance procedure again, once again sized up by automated weaponry. Strangely, he was more unnerved by the height of the bridge than the idea of potential ventilation by laser fire if he punched the wrong number. Thankfully, he watched the doors

open on an actual corridor-one without a large drop on each side-and eagerly stepped in, glad to leave the bridge behind.

Taking a moment to compose himself, he reviewed the facts about his new recruit: 'Doctor' Gorlothah was a D-Bee from an undisclosed dimension. He had been working on a holographic disguise suit for a rival company which he was unwilling to leave. He had refused several offers including a share of the device's profits in royalties, a long term and very cushy contract, and having a Shifter send him home when his work was done.

It seems the good Doctor had entirely altruistic reasons for creating the device, which had something to do with allowing D-Bee's to move about without persecution in areas that were rife with such ways. To be honest, Mr. Bender's superiors, although sympathetic to the plight of D-Bee's, cared less about that than they did about being the first to market such a device.

There were, of course, other reasons for his attachment to the rival company; namely his life mate. Sadly, she had suffered a devastating injury just the day before his services were acquired by Northern Gun. Fortunately for Doctor Gorlothah, Northern Gun was 'pioneering a bionic procedure that might be able to save her', and 'surely he could continue his research in our facility!' Obviously, he realized that he was destined to finish his work here.

Mr. Bender had arrived at the lab to discuss the new contract his superiors drew up for their new alien scientist. Who knew, in a few years, they might have a new piece of high tech gear, and Doctor Gorlothah might see the other side of that bridge. It would probably take that long to pioneer the new procedure they had told him about.

In the early years, Northern Gun was famous for its low-end knock-offs of high end equipment. While the manufacturing equipment and automated factories recovered at Ishpeming were of good quality, the company had few high-tech weapon designs and components ready for production. As a result, Northern Gun turned quickly to its neighbors, buying up weapons from the Coalition, Free Quebec, Triax, Wilk's, The Manistique Imperium, the Black Market and many others. NG Engineers worked tirelessly to duplicate, improve and expand upon anything they were able to find.

This duplication and reverse engineering of technology reached a fevered pitch as NG and MI were in a heated battle for manufacturing supremacy outside of the Coalition States. A conflict arose as Northern Gun stole away not only weapon designs, but an entire team of research scientists with the offer of more money and more opportunity. This incident and many others like it keep the two nations at arms length to this day.

As this industrial giant extended its reach across North America, and as the major arms and technology leaders have settled, the culture of innovating upon existing designs still prevails. The head office at Northern Gun often distributes a list to its many dealers of items they are on the look-out for. Dealers who can trade or acquire items in the 'little blue book' are eligible to receive discounts, products, or cash bonuses from Northern Gun.

While dealer acquisitions are the easiest way to obtain mass market items and the occasional foreign or alien device, more work is required to obtain and reverse engineer the highest quality technologies from other nations and factions, as well as to unearth the secrets of the Golden Age of Man. This saw the early development of RAID. This Division within the Northern Gun corporate structure is responsible for acquiring new technologies from foreign powers and recovering lost technological relics from the Golden Age.

RAID Teams are engaged in active technology acquisition in one form or another. Active technology acquisition takes on three primary forms: industrial espionage, ruins recovery, and headhunting.

Industrial Espionage: This department is the smallest, consisting of two main groups: handlers and infiltrators. The handlers group doesn't have many actual employees; it does have a large network of informants, contacts, and contractors who provide information about rivals, managed by the handlers. These handlers garner influence over highly placed individuals through relationships, blackmail, payoffs, and promises. The information gathered is passed on and used by RAID Infiltration Teams, responsible for industrial espionage missions. A typically mission requires them to infiltrate a rival corporate research facility and steal research data, plans, schematics, and prototypes. Often times these infiltration missions will be conducted by the handler's informants, rather than by RAID personnel. This is preferred, as you can only enter a facility so many times before security improves. Compromised human assets controlled by RAID handlers can produce results and are less costly if discovered.

Ruins Recovery: In recent years, the ruins recovery department has seen a large increase in its available resources as Golden Age Weapons has shown the high return on investment in recovering technology from ruins. Using pre-Rifts maps, rumors, and information acquired from Industrial Espionage, the Ruins Recovery department sends teams to high-potential sites to excavate and recover any pre-Rifts or advanced technology. Many of these operations are in unclaimed wilderness areas; as a result, a large part of any RAID Team in this area is the security force. Often times, RAID will employ independent contractors, mercenaries and salvage experts to take on these missions with a RAID advisor on-site to monitor findings.

Headhunting: While headhunting is a common term for bounty hunting on Rifts Earth, the people at Northern Gun use the word in its more corporate sense: the recruiting of high value employees from other companies/nations to Northern Gun. Often times, if Industrial Espionage uncovers a particularly valuable human asset or project, a RAID Team will attempt to recruit the key personnel. This recruitment process sometimes involves outright payouts, but just as often through extortion, and sometimes even overt threats, although payments and promises are considered the most efficient method.

Given its wide range of responsibilities, virtually any O.C.C. could be found in a RAID Team from Spies and Super Spies to City Rats, Rouge Scholars and Scientists to Soldiers, Assassins, Professional Thieves, and Operators. RAID Team members are often highly experienced and highly skilled individuals in their respective fields. In RAID, the stakes are high, but so is the pay.

RAID Assessments

As Northern Gun enters new markets and makes contact with new kingdoms, one of their first priorities is to conduct a RAID assessment. This assessment is a wide reaching social, political and technological analysis of the group in question. Once the assessment is complete, usually done with passive probing from Industrial Espionage agents, a priorities list is assembled and RAID undertakes operations to achieve the priorities. Some priorities developed for existing nations include:

Free Quebec: In addition to stealing many of their SAMAS variant designs, a long standing RAID Objective in FREE QUEBEC has been to obtain the secrets to manufacturing Glitter Boy technology. This secret is closely guarded and attempting to acquire it has cost Northern Gun dearly over the years. The new alliance with the Coalition States has given new vigor to this objective, as the CSID provides

additional resources to RAID. This degree of separation allows the CS to spy on Free Quebec with some degree of anonymity.

Coalition States: Once the alliance was called, all RAID agents were recalled to Northern Gun - officially. RAID still makes use of some paid contractors to keep tabs on Coalition Research and Development, especially in small arms and cybernetics.

Black Market: This is Northern Gun's biggest competitor for arms sales in North America. Although the Black Market has little in the way of competitive technology, the advent of Bandito Arms is beginning to change this. Northern Gun feels it necessary to discreetly reduce the Black Market's share of the pie. Raids, snitches, turns and bribes are often carried out by RAID teams to keep the Black Market from expanding its grip and stealing market share from Northern Gun.

Wilk's Laser Technologies: Despite having reverse engineered much Wilk's technology over the years, RAID's primary goal remains uncovering the location of the Wilk's headquarters. Either through a business proposition, or through other means, Northern Gun hopes to benefit from Wilk's unprecedented mastery of laser technology.

RAID Origins & History

Before RAID became a full-fledged division of Northern Gun, its precursor was a large, cash rich, R&D Division, supported by a loose collection of mercenary companies with specialties in information gathering and recruitment. At first, the division mainly operated by reverse-engineering mass market weapons. The NG-33 Laser Pistol was an admirable knock-off of the Wilk's 320, and the NG-L5 surprisingly similar to the sturdy Wilk's 447.

Around 63 P.A. the R&D Division's lead scientist, Dr. Allison Boyd, was the first to hire mercenaries to acquire foreign equipment. While Northern Gun had managed to become proficient at laser weapons, they had little luck with experiments in other energy weapons such as ion and particle beams. Through colleagues, Dr. Boyd discovered a promising ion and particle beam project in the Manistique Imperium. After a failed attempt to buy the technology from their nearby neighbor, and another failed try at luring away the lead scientists on the project, Dr. Boyd contracted a mercenary company based out of Ishpeming.

The Interlopers specialized in infiltration and were often employed by Northern Gun as security consultants who would attempt to break into NG facilities in order to test security systems and procedures. It was a logical step for NG to use this group to 'test' the security systems of their neighboring nation. The operation to acquire the ion and particle technology went off flawlessly, more or less. While the Manistique Imperium could not prove that their neighbors had pirated the technology, Dr. Boyd's earlier attempts to acquire the technology by underhanded means pointed at Northern Gun's involvement. This incident is still a sore point between the two nations.

However, despite some of the political fallout, the resultant NG-57 Heavy Ion Blaster and ever popular NG-P7 Particle Beam Rifle became Northern Gun bestsellers. The bottom line impact of aggressively acquiring technology could not be ignored. This sparked a long and fruitful relationship between the Interlopers and Research & Development. The professional relationship quickly became personal as Dr. Boyd and the mercenary leader of the Interlopers, Allan Starks, became romantically involved. To this day, both of their children hold leadership roles in Northern Gun.

Current RAID Leadership

Today, RAID is its own Division, separate from Research & Development. No longer is it headed by a scientist; Smuggler Edith Saint-Jean (12th Level Smuggler O.C.C.) is the Executive Vice President in charge of RAID, with all scientific research performed in R&D. Saint-Jean formerly smuggled product for RAID, specializing in getting NG equipment into the Coalition States, before the trade pact was signed between the two nations. As a result Saint-Jean has a number of contacts in the Black Market within the Coalition States, as well as many of their allies such as Fort El Dorado, Newton, Whykin and New Kenora.

Through an extensive network, including many contacts in the Black Market, Edith successfully ran her operation for sixteen years. To this day, CSID has no idea of Northern Gun's covert distribution and seedy dealings, a secret they jealously guard. After the alliance was formed and the Coalition States were opened up as free markets, Saint-Jean's track record in Chi-Town made her a shoe-in for vice-president and RAID seemed like a perfect fit.

While many of Saint-Jean's contacts became legitimate and authorized Northern Gun dealers in the Coalition States, it is suspected that she still deals with the more underhanded elements of the Black Market as well. Both of the Starks' children believe that Saint-Jean is connected to the Black Market, one of Northern Gun's biggest competitors, and keep a watchful eye on their boss.

Amy Starks (6th Level Special Forces O.C.C.), daughter of Allison Boyd and Allan Starks, is the Director of Operations and manages the military and intelligence side of the division. Her older brother, A. William Starks (7th Level Rouge Scientist O.C.C.), is Vice President of Research & Development, where he oversees scientific research and production. Other managers of note are Rachael Walsh (8th Level Mind Melter R.C.C.) who oversees the Recruiting and Headhunting Department and John Stephenson (8th Level Rouge Scholar O.C.C.) who leads Ruins Recovery. Both managers spend the majority of their time in the field and directly supervising employees from Operations and Research & Development.

Stephenson has made quite an impression in the field of Archaeology and Golden Age discovery in the academic circles of Lazlo and the CS - although this impression is not always endearing. While intelligent and charming, Stephenson is the epitome of Northern Gun's mentality. His brains and quick thinking are used in the pursuit of profit, not knowledge. His abilities in Lore, Archaeology and History are merely skills for the acquisition of prizes for his employer, who reward him handsomely for his discoveries. Over the years, the mischievous scholar has stolen away important Golden Age finds from every major explorer and scientist in the Domain of Man. His important finds have helped push Northern Gun's technological know-how forward and earned him the enmity of the academic elite.

If player characters are exploring a ruin, especially a former military base, they must surely factor an encounter with a Ruins Recovery Team, lead by the infamous John Stephenson, into their plans.

John Stephenson

Name: John Stephenson

Family Note: Youngest of four siblings, all Northern Gun employees

Alignment: Unprincipled

Attributes: I.Q.: 17, M.E.: 11, M.A.: 17, P.S.: 13, P.P.: 12, P.E.: 14, P.B.: 15, Spd.: 21

Hit Points: 38; S.D.C.: 34

M.D.C.: Usually wears NG "Maverick" Body Armor (36 M.D.C.) complete with cowboy hat (10 M.D.).

P.P.E.: 9

Level of Experience: 8th Level Rogue Scholar.

Natural Abilities: Highly intelligent and charismatic; 45% ability to evoke trust or intimidation.

Psionic Powers: None

Magical Knowledge: None, although he respects the power of magic

Combat Abilities: Expert (8th Level Proficiency)

Attacks Per Melee: 4

Bonuses: +1 strike, +2 Damage, +1 Disarm, +3 parry, +3 dodge, +3 to roll with impact, +2 pull punch, Kick Attack (1D8 S.D.C.), Judo-Style Flip (1D6 S.D.C. and victim loses one attack and initiative), Critical Strike on unmodified 19 or 20. +3 to strike and parry with blunt weapons, +4 to strike with Energy Rifles, Energy Pistols and Handguns.

Skills of Note: Literate in American, Techo-Can, Spanish and Euro all at 98%, Speaks American, Spanish and Euro 98%, Appraise Goods 88%, Basic Mathematics 98%, Computer Operation 98%, Computer Programming 83%, Creative Writing 78%, Find Contraband 72%, History: Pre-Rifts 88%/77%, History: Post-Apocalypse 88%/83%, Public Speaking 88%, Research 98%, Salvage 88%, Excavation 93%, Lore: Demon and Monsters 78%, Lore: D-Bee's 78%, Anthropology 78%, Archaeology 78%/68%, Advance Mathematics 93%, General Horsemanship 68%/48%, Wilderness Survival 63%, Land Navigation 64%, Navigation 63%, Sensory Equipment 53%, Pilot Hovercraft 80%, Pilot Automobile 87%, Automotive Mechanics 40%, General Athletics, W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Handguns, W.P. Blunt

Appearance: A rugged unshaven human, with a weathered, tanned complexion. Lean, but not overly muscular he appears to be about thirty-five years of age. Brown hair, brown eyes, and stands about five feet, ten inches (1.78m) tall.

Special Vehicles: Prefers his Northern Gun issue robotic horse

Equipment of Note: Small wooden cross worn around neck, articles of clothing, backpack, utility belt, saddle bags, good quality cowboy boots, tinted visor, pocket flashlight, lighter, box of matches, RMK & IRMSS, tube of protein healing salve, sewing kit, laser scalpel, laser torch, infrared distancing binoculars, multi-optics band, bedroll, and NG-S2 Survival Skit.

Weapons of Note: A Pair of NG-45LP "Long Pistols", NG-H5 Holdout Ion Pistol, Steel Rod Encased Night Stick (1D6 S.D.C.).

Special Weapons:

Pre-Rifts Super Redhawk .454 Casull. The revolver was discovered while on a dig in Northern Missouri. Stephenson was impressed by the revolver's weight, look, and age - as far as he can tell it was produced in 1999 on the Pre-Rifts Calendar. With only slight maintenance and repairs, the engineers at Northern Gun were able to get the gun working. As a history enthusiast, Stephenson loves the gun and feels it gives him some character. Practically, the gun is a favorite for scaring off animals with its loud retort and makes a great defense against vampires.

Cartridge: .454 Casull

Feed: 6 round cylinder

Weight: 3.34 lbs (1.52 kg)

Barrel Length: 7.5 inches (19 cm)

Damage: 5D6+2 S.D.C.

Effective Range: 180 ft (55m)

Body Armor: NG "Maverick" Riding Armor (36 M.D.C.)

Cybernetics: Universal headjack, ear implant, radio receiver & transmitter, sound filtration system, sensor hand (RMB pg. 230), multi-optic eye (+1 strike), toxic filter, oxygen storage cell, knuckle spikes, explosive finger segments (3)

Money: Rarely carries more than 4D6x1000 credits has access to millions in Northern Gun expense

accounts and a small personal fortune of cash and valuable artifacts.

Allies & Alliances: As a well liked member of Northern Gun's RAID Division, Stephenson can usually count on their support. Additionally, he has made more than one mercenary and adventurer rich from leading them into ruins to recover lost technology and can readily cash in 1D4 favors in just about any mercenary town. To supplement his charm and skill, John also travels with Togo, a full-conversion Cyborg Soldier from Northern Gun who is extremely loyal to the cavalier scholar.

Enemies: For every rich merc and adventurer there is a double-crossed or foiled one, this includes some pretty high-end smugglers from the Black Market and academics from Lazlo. Despite the protection from his employer, John will occasionally run across bounty hunters, former partners, and the occasional scorned woman looking to exact some measure of revenge.

Settlement for Those Indebted to Northern Gun (STING)

Morton Armstrong, or Mortie, as was his street name, raced through the slums of Firetown. He weaved through the congested streets, pushing aside old man and child alike. He shouted under his breath as he did, constantly looking over his shoulder. As Morton rounded a corner to dart into an alleyway, he collided with a street vendor hawking fake jewelry. Mortie had attempted to hurdle the wooden cart, but his back foot didn't quite clear, and both cart and man hit the dirt road, hard.

"Watch it!" Morton barked as he kicked his way free. Stumbling back to his feet, he turned to give the vendor another piece of his mind, when Mortie's eyes met with his pursuer: a tall man dressed entirely in black. Armstrong darted down the alley, never looking back.

An athlete in his younger years, Morton now considered himself a merchant of some great esteem; but he was a drug dealer, and the occasional gun runner, pure and simple. Much to his dismay, his past had finally caught up with him, and he feared the worst.

Morton skidded to a stop in front of an electronic door. In his panic, he mashed the buttons of the keypad and was greeted with the robotic decline, "Access Denied." He slammed his hand against the door in frustration then entered the PIN again. As the lock clicked open, he did not dare to look back. Morton pushed the door open with his shoulder, and shut it just as quickly. He breathed a momentary sigh of relief, watching the lock indicator return to red.

Mortie, unarmed, moved toward his basement, toward his stashed NG-X3 Power Armor. As he turned, he froze, spying another agent standing at the other end of the room. Two more approached from either side, seizing his shoulders. As the lead agent stepped forward into the light, the badge on his lapel came into focus: Agent Carrick, Northern Gun STING Division.

"Mr. Armstrong, I understand that you are indebted to Northern Gun. I hereby inform you that we intend to collect on her behalf," Carrick said, smiling as he finished, "by whatever means necessary."

The STING department is the police force for the Northern Gun Corporation, not to be confused with the local law enforcement of Ishpeming City. STING troopers go anywhere, anytime in order to recapture a debt owed to the corporation of Northern Gun. They regularly frequent the 'burbs and have been known to travel as far as Germany, Japan, and even the Splynn Dimensional Market - all for purposes of obtaining, detaining, and negotiating with individuals who owe credits or goods to Northern

Gun.

Their members use methods of interrogation and negotiation above and beyond traditional law enforcement. They have no rules, per se. Their officers are trained to use whatever means necessary to recapture a debt. That could include the removal of cybernetic implants, the seizure of vehicles (while in operation, if necessary), the negotiation of new payment terms, or in few cases, friendly repayment of credits of equal or greater value.

Truth be told, Northern Gun is essentially breaking even by employing the STING department. They provide little in the way of income for the company. By the time all of the soldiers are outfitted, paid, and provided with housing and medical care, little if any is left over at the end of the quarter. The real purpose of the department is sheer intimidation factor. Bandits and merchants all know that the squad exists. They also know about their brutal tactics and relentlessness. Northern Gun makes this abundantly clear to any new merchant, and bandits often spread the word quickly as well. Northern Gun employs the department as a necessary evil: a deterrent for would be thieves and crooked shop owners.

STING was founded just after the establishment of the NGMI Bank. Weapons, vehicles, armor and gear can all be financed through the Northern Gun directly, using an NGMI Bank account. Anyone interested in obtaining NG equipment can do so with a 50% down payment on new or used equipment, with payment terms to be decided individually depending on their reputation, proximity, and ability to be easily located. The Northern Gun typically charges 10% interest for first time customers, and interest is often reduced for repeat customers. This payment plan has prompted many first time merchants, mercenaries, militias, and countless other organizations to switch over to NG equipment simply because of this financing option.

Unfortunately, not all risk evaluations are accurate, and some debtors try to avoid repayment. Upon default on an NG loan, STING will seek out repayment in any way possible, including the capture of all collateral. As NG expands their production and technology level, the STING department has kept the defaulting debtors level at a record low, and has recently begun to turn a profit with enormous improvements in their search and recapture techniques.

Overseeing the recovery operations is Chase Stanton (6th Level ISS Intel Specter O.C.C.), a former ISS Intelligence Officer in Chi-Town. Stanton is a stern man, his career with the CS full of successful busts but marred by charges of excessive force. The blemishes of his record were overlooked, perhaps even welcomed, by STING.

Chase Stanton

Captain, STING

Alignment: Aberrant

Age: 34

Brief History: Stanton had a 10 year career with the ISS, one of the best Intelligence Officers in Chi-Town. But as good as he was bringing in the crooks, he had a temper which could not be controlled. He assaulted several innocent citizens, which could be overlooked; he also attacked several guilty, and powerful, politicians, which could not. Stanton was fired over such an assault, but NG seized the opportunity, hiring the young stud for their STING program a few days later. At STING, his skills and his brutality were both welcomed, and he has been highly successful. Not only has Stanton excelled at recovery from high credit debtors, the former ISS Specter also spearheaded a low cost scare program, aimed at individuals only recently falling behind on their payments. So far, over 80% of those 'enrolled' in the scare program have returned to regular payments without the need of further, costly STING intervention. As a result of the successful program, Stanton was promoted to lead the department.

Behavior: He is cold and calculating, and he effectively communicates his vision for the department. He is a good leader, often seen mentoring the other officers, but his temper still gets the better of him. Since becoming Captain, he has gotten in fist fights with two members, and has since had both transferred to Security. His methods of motivation apply not only to those indebted, but also his own staff.

Appearance: Stanton has dark hair and dark eyes. He's of average height and build, and his facial features are utterly forgettable. This generic look is what made him so successful as an undercover agent. But once he starts talking to you, he has a personality you can never forget.

Dealer Distribution

Distribution through the dealer network is relatively straightforward. Any city that has an authorized NG Dealership of weapons or consumer goods is tied to the corporate delivery service: Northern Transport. A dealer purchases the inventory from Northern Gun at dealer cost, then resells it to a client at market rates. Each dealer keeps an inventory of commonly sold products from the NG-S2 survival kit to NG compatible e-clips, a handful of rifles, pistols, and body armor, as well as a few commonly available vehicles such as the NG-300 Speedster Hovercycle. Dealers are responsible for anticipating demand and order on an as needed basis.

On a specified day each month, Northern Transport loads all regular time insensitive dealer orders into transport aircraft, often sub-contracted from mercenary companies such as Air Michigan, and delivers them to their dealers. The delivery charge is built into the cost a dealer pays. These transport aircraft fly directly from Northern Gun to the local airfield, where the cargo is transferred to another local subcontractor who delivers the items directly to the dealership. The major exception to this procedure is dealers who have ports accessible via the Great Lakes. Northern Transport also hires out merchant marine cargo vessels that can deliver to markets with port facilities. Dealers who do not have accessible and secure airfields or ports see their goods delivered to the nearest airfield or port and then delivery to the end destination is contracted out to mercenaries and adventurers to deliver to the dealer. The delay between landing at the major airfield and delivery to the dealer varies depending on distance to the dealer, as well as possible problems encountered en route.

For this reason, items are likely to be more expensive in more remote areas, as payments to delivery agents are generally higher. In game, this may mean that NG equipment may be available in remote areas but at a cost of 25%-100% higher than listed price. The delivery system also could cause delays, if a specific dealer was out of NG-P7 Particle Beam Rifles players may have to wait until the next inventory shipment arrives before being able to purchase the weapon. This delay could be anywhere from a few days, to a month or more. For large orders, such as bots, aircraft, power armor and bulk weapons and armor orders, Northern Transport is much more accommodating.

While major dealers such as MercTown or Kingsdale may carry a few power armor or robot vehicles in stock, most dealers won't have these items on their premises unless a buyer is readily available. In this case, the dealer can make a special order to Northern Transport. To make a special order, the customer must pay up-front non-refundable cash or exchange deposit of 30% of the item's final price. With the cash or exchange deposit in hand, the dealer can then place the order. From there Northern Transport has a transport aircraft loaded and in the air within twelve hours. Deliveries to major cities are made within twenty-four hours, outlying dealers can receive delivery within forty-eight hours. Expedited delivery is available, with a markup of 50%. Customers who change their mind will not have their deposit returned and will likely be blackballed by the dealer, meaning they may have to pay a significant markup for any

future purchases. In these cases, with 30% already paid on it, dealers will usually try to liquidate the item rather than carry it. Under these circumstances, players could see a discount of 5%-25% of the list price. Of course the dealer may also try to hold out for full-price in order to make 130% on the deal, but often they are willing to negotiate.

Northern Transport keeps an updated list of mercenaries and companies that specialize in transporting items between cities and makes regular use of these short-listed entities. To get on the short-list requires an excellent reputation for delivering on time and intact. Often local NG Dealers will make recommendations to Northern Transport based on their knowledge of the local area. Another easy way to get delivery contracts is a bribe to the Vice-President, Terrance Franklin. Depending on the route and value of the delivery contracts, Franklin has been known to demand anywhere from a few hundred thousand to a few million for a spot on the prestigious and lucrative list.

Non-Dealer Distribution

In some places, NG will not authorize a dealership, especially for weapons. These areas are generally places where the Coalition States has asked, or threatened, Northern Gun to back off its sales. Some particular sore spots have been New Lazlo and the 'Burbs. To this end, Northern Gun politely acquiesces and activates a non-dealer network.

Non-dealer networks are tangled, shadowy systems that make sure NG product is being sold wherever there is a demand and at a much higher price. This system requires Northern Gun to have a connection with a local arms dealer, such as a former NG employee, known Black Market type, covert government agency, or other entrepreneur. From there, Northern Gun requires a legitimate business address in a major delivery city, usually a mercenary or private security company. Orders are placed with Northern Gun through the business and delivered to the major city as usual. Once offloaded, this cargo becomes the responsibility of the buyer. The buyer is then responsible for getting the cargo into the hands of the customer. These orders are generally 20% more expensive and by the time they get to the customer, say someone buying from the Black Market in Chi-Town, weapons and equipment may cost as much as 50%-100% more than usual. Foreign governments who are on the CS "do not sell list" use the same method, and may also face a mark-up of 50% or more.

Foreign Relations

Northern Gun is the company foreign governments love to hate. After all, Northern Gun supplies most North American kingdoms, city states, and communities with not only weapons, but agricultural and industrial equipment too. The only problem is they provide the same things to the competition. Often armies equipped with Northern Gun weapons will be squaring off against mercenaries, rebels or bandits sporting the very same weapon, all sold to both sides by the same company. It is an infuriating situation at times and one that no one, with the recent exception of the Coalition States, has found a way to barter around. A running joke in the diplomatic world is that Northern Gun is even more non-discriminatory than Lazlo - because they'll sell to anyone.

The Coalition States. By recognizing the stranglehold that Northern Gun has on the non-Coalition territories, the CS knew not to wake this sleeping giant. Instead they brokered a deal that allowed Northern Gun products to be sold within the CS and opened the lines of trade between the States and the Upper Peninsula. While the Coalition doesn't need Northern Gun farm and industrial equipment, the trade agreement creates a situation where Northern Gun depends on the Coalition States for a large

percentage of its sales, freeing up CS industrial capacity for war production rather than civilian needs. This puts the two nations on cordial, if not friendly, terms. Both want something from the other and for now they are getting what they need. The CS is still concerned about weapons sales, but knows it will not be able to curtail this activity. In the end, they simply hope that good trade relations will move Ishpeming closer to statehood, and they use the relationship to keep tabs on this industrial giant.

Free Quebec. While Great Lakes trade between Northern Gun and Free Quebec happened informally for many years, the CS Civil war and trade deal with Northern Gun ended shipments between the two northern nations. Free Quebec can manufacture all of its needs internally from weapons and armor to consumer equipment. The deal with the Coalition precludes Northern Gun from selling to Free Quebec, and Quebec's attitude makes abiding by this clause easy enough. There have been a few tense moments along the Great Lakes where Northern Gun vessels have been boarded or shadowed by Free Quebec Naval ships, but to date no shots have been fired. It is rumored that Free Quebec hires Privateers to attack NG shipping heading toward the CS, but such claims have never been substantiated.

Manistique Imperium. As Northern Gun's closet neighbor the Manistique Imperium is both an ally and a competitor. The two nations cooperate together on many levels including the joint NGMI Bank and mutual defense pacts. Their armed forces often train together on joint operations and most of the Manistique Officer's Corps is educated at the Ishpeming Staff College. However, Wellington Industries and Northern Gun also compete in the same industry, especially the coveted hover cycle market, and those competitions can get rough. Industrial espionage and cut throat tactics are the name of the game between these two corporations and, by association, these two nations. Although they compete fiercely for market share in hover cycles, Northern Gun sees Wellington as a blip on the radar in its other markets and views the competitor as an annoying kid brother.

Lazlo / New Lazlo. While the philosophers of Lazlo disagree with Northern Gun's mercenary business practices and object to their trade pact with the Coalition, they as usual do very little about it. Like most kingdoms, Lazlo and New Lazlo depend on Northern Gun for their mundane needs, especially for their non-magical weapons technologies. As the CS has not insisted on a trade embargo against any other nation except Free Quebec, Northern Gun continues to sell to these two magical havens and they continue to buy. Occasionally they offer moral objections, but more often than not they cough up the credits.

New German Republic. Normally these two nations would have very little concern for each other. However, when Triax Industries started selling weapons in North America, Northern Gun took offense. Although they could do very little at first, they were eventually able to begin industrial espionage and reverse engineering operations against Triax Industries; in fact, there still remains a large team of scientists trying to unlock the mysteries of the Ulti-Max unit. Some early successes, especially in knocking off the artificially intelligent Dynabot, cooled relations between the two nations. To further get an edge on these foreign competitors, Northern Gun has used its new influence with the Coalition to ban the sale of Triax weapons to the mass market in North America. If it were not for the ongoing war with the gargoyles in Europe, these two industry heavyweights would most likely be in very heavy competition.

Ishpeming Defense Force (IDF)

Ishpeming has a standing army of about 36,000 personnel. Of these, 12,000 are Ishpeming citizens and employees of Northern Gun. These loyal employees serve as the city garrison and police force, as well as making up the naval forces and air corps. Like all good company men, these soldiers exclusively use

Northern Gun products.

The remaining 24,000 troops are mercenaries of various backgrounds, many of whom have been under contract with Northern Gun for years. These mercenaries are used to defend the many smaller communities that surround the city of Ishpeming and to escort outbound cargo. Mercenaries are responsible for their own weapons and armor, but they do receive a discount on Northern Gun products. As a result NG gear is widespread but not in exclusive use.

Ishpeming City Garrison

4,620 Infantry (IDF Soldier O.C.C.)
620 Headhunters (All types except Mamano)
620 Full Conversion Cyborgs
140 Special Forces

Made up of 6,000 citizen soldiers, this garrison acts in the dual function of military defense and law enforcement. Stationed at fortified positions throughout the city, these troops conduct regular patrols in vehicles and on foot. Since they are also citizens of the city, and not contracted mercenaries, the garrison troops have a fondness for their fellow citizens and most have a genuine concern for their well-being. Since Ishpeming is almost always full of strangers and non-citizens, the garrison keeps a closer eye on them than on the regular working stiffs.

Garrison troops are equipped with the NG-A15 Peacekeeper Environmental Body Armor (emblazoned with IDF logo, the Northern Gun logo, and personal ID number on the chest plate), NG-T6 Taser and a NG-33 Laser Pistol. S.W.A.T. units also use the NG-LP25 Laser Pulse Sub-machine Gun and NG-SSL20 Super Sniper Rifle or NG-SR3 Marksmen Sniper. Additional heavy infantry weapons are also available. Patrol vehicles include Highway Man motorcycles, various Northern Gun hovercycles, and Black Bear ATVs. The IDF also uses modified civilian hover cars for patrols, particularly souped-up versions of the Dove and Stork vehicles. In special circumstances, power armor and robot vehicles may be issued.

The garrison has a high percentage (20%) of augmented soldiers who provide heavy back-up to the regular patrollers. The average visitor to Ishpeming is usually a well armed mercenary, and as a result the law enforcement officials feel the need to be able to respond in force if they are to be taken seriously. The heavy units are used in riot control or during extremely violent outbreaks. Additionally they are an integral part of the city's defenses. The dual-role of policing and defense means these soldiers are drilled in street-fighting, urban combat and close quarters combat.

In addition to standard peacekeeping troops the City Garrison has ten S.W.A.T. teams consisting of twelve special Operators, a commanding officer, and a senior NCO (14 personnel total). These loyal soldiers have been trained in Special Operations at the Ishpeming Staff College and can compete with some of the best units in the business. Their primary role is counter-terrorism, hostage rescue, and high-risk arrests within city-limits.

The Garrison is commanded by General Leo Abraham, a long-time member of the Ishpeming Defense Force who started out as a mercenary before joining the city garrison ten years ago. Since then he has ascended the ranks quickly, proving to be a fair and intelligent commander. He is a firm believer in training, and he has increased the level of training given to each garrison member by twenty five percent since his promotion to General, which has earned him a great deal of respect from the troops under his command. The General also petitioned for, and received, a specialty S.W.A.T. Training Center that is

used not only by his men, but to train law-enforcement types from all over North America, for a fee. Funds received from the SWAT Training Center are used to purchase more vehicles and equipment, something everyone likes.

General Leo Abraham

Commanding Officer of the City Garrison

Alignment: Unprincipled

Age: 52

Brief History: The General started out as a mercenary in the city of Marquette; he distinguished himself against a vicious gang of robbers who were ripping off NG warehouses and selling the products to the Black Market. His heroics and superb urban combat tactics earned his mercenary outfit a long-term contract to protect the city. After years of quality protection of Marquette, the City of Ishpeming offered Abraham a hefty pay raise and a chance to work as commander of the City Garrison at Ishpeming. Leo quickly accepted the money and title and has proven to be a capable commander ever since. He is due to retire soon, and Northern Gun is looking for candidates to replace him from within and outside the ranks.

Behavior: A bit of a politician and mercenary. Leo did not come from the ranks of the IDF and has a knack for doing things differently. Although his savvy negotiating skills have seen an increase in training funding for the City Garrison, the Ishpeming City Council finds him somewhat abrasive and pushy.

Appearance: Your typical grizzled Headhunter, General Abraham has bionic systems equal to partial conversion including a multi-optic eye and two bionic arms. His face is not scarred or marred from battle, but he does have heavy lines from worry and combat stress.

Military Asset Protection & Security (MAPS)

2,000 Infantry (IDF Soldier O.C.C.)

250 Headhunters (all types except Mamano)

250 Full Conversion Cyborgs

125 Super-Spies (All specialties, including magic)

125 Master and major psychics (Mostly Mind Melter, Psi-Ghosts, Psi-Stalkers and Zappers)

Another 3,000 of the non-mercenary citizen soldiers employed by Northern Gun specialize in the physical protection of Northern Gun factories and research facilities. These military types are not the same as the Northern Gun's Security Division, who mainly provide for internal security, although the two groups work very closely together. Instead, they are the armed guards one encounters when attempting to enter Northern Gun's most sensitive facilities and restricted areas.

MAPS troops conduct vehicle searches, security patrols, intrusion detection operations, stand guard, check identification, and otherwise put themselves in harms way to prevent access to restricted areas. Because industrial espionage and theft of weapons material are so common, these troopers are no-nonsense Operators who are authorized and ready to use deadly force. Anyone caught in a restricted area by one of these men or women is most likely going to exit the facility in a body bag.

Standard equipment is a little beefed up compared to a city-garrison trooper: NG-A15 Peacekeeper Environmental Body Armor (emblazoned with IDF logo, the Northern Gun logo, and personal ID number on the chest plate), NG-T6 Taser, NG-45LP Particle Beam Pistol and NG-IP7 Ion Pulse Rifle. Depending on the nature of the facility, security patrols may also be conducted using hovercycles, combat hover cars (particularly the Boll Weevil, Longhorn, and Stag models) armored personnel carriers, and even power armor and robot vehicles.

Ishpeming Naval Defense Force

300 Sailors (IDF Soldier O.C.C.)
200 Merchant Marine (See **Sourcebook 4 : Coalition Navy**)
200 Engineers (Operator O.C.C.)
150 Pilots (IDF Soldier O.C.C.)
50 River Pirate O.C.C. (See **Sourcebook 4 : Coalition Navy**)
50 Special Forces O.C.C.

Despite their use of the Great Lakes for trade, Northern Gun was a little late in getting into the construction of a navy. To catch-up quickly, the leadership purchased several ships from the now-defunct Iron Heart Armaments, and now produce those ships themselves (see [IHA Treaty](#) section of this Netbook for more information). The resultant Navy is relatively small (950 personnel), especially when compared to the other Great Lakes powers such as Free Quebec and the Coalition. The trouble caused by Free Quebec has really forced Northern Gun and CS Naval Commanders to work in unison to protect cargo headed for the Coalition States. To beef up their naval capacity, Northern Gun relies heavily on mercenaries and even issues the occasional privateers license to help keep Free Quebec off their backs.

Naval Vessels

2 Sea King Missile Cruisers (With an even mix of the new Beach-Stormer and RedHawk PA suits)
8 Triton Patrol Boats
14 Black Eel Torpedo Boats (3 are produced under the redesigned Bullhead Torpedo Boat line)
10 UB-300 Submersible

Naval Aircraft

24 Dragonfly Combat Hover-Chopper
12 NG Wildcat (Black Lightning Knock-off)
12 NG Viper (Demon Locust Knock-off)
6 Iron Trident Attack Helicopter (All 6 are produced under the redesigned Seabird line)

Northern Gun Air Corps

1,230 Pilots (IDF Soldier O.C.C.)
500 Maintenance Engineers (Operator O.C.C.)
320 Paratrooper O.C.C.

Ishpeming keeps a very impressive air force relative to its size. At 2,050 personnel, this is the third largest concentration of citizen soldiers. The powers that be have determined that airpower is a serious force, allowing the small Ishpeming Defense Force to project more firepower than it really has.

Northern Gun Air Corps Aircraft

24 GAW F-16C Improved Fighting Falcons
24 GAW A-10 Improved Thunderbolt II's
24 IHA Grey Falcon Attack Jet's (8 are produced under the redesigned Northern Harrier line)
8 IHA Air Castle Bomber's (4 are prototypes of the new NG line modified to serve as missile planes)
48 NG Wildcat (Black Lightning Knock-off)
48 NG Viper (Demon Locust Knock-off)
96 Dragon Fly's

192 Sky King's
36 GAW Improved C-130's
48 NG Sky Bunker's

1st Michigan Airborne Regiment: The Sky Hawks

Ishpeming is one of the few nations to have a dedicated Paratrooper unit. These brave men and women are one of the very few offensive minded units in the IDF (most are concerned with protection and defense). When Ishpeming is having trouble with a neighbor, squatters, or even just a debt collection too big for the STING unit, these highly-trained paratroopers are often called to the task. Although Northern Gun has no plans for a war, if they did, these paratroopers would no doubt be on the leading edge of any conflict.

The regiment is made up of two companies of 160 paratroopers, supported by a 40-man power armored platoon using Red Hawk Power Armor and a 16-man Squadron of Sky King and Dragon Fly aircraft that support airborne operations. The regiment is constantly in training and is often rented-out to neighboring kingdoms for special operations. Because Ishpeming and Northern Gun have few enemies with whom they engage in open warfare, they use the Sky Hawks as a mercenary force in order to gain valuable combat experience. Of course, it also allows Ishpeming to pay its paratroopers some of the best rates in the business.

While acting as the personal mercenary force of Northern Gun and Ishpeming, the Sky Hawks are also an excellent advertisement for Northern Gun equipment. These soldiers make exclusive use of Northern Gun products from their jumpsuits to their energy rifles. The Sky Hawks will often use mercenary operations as an out of sight way to field test new Northern Gun weapon designs. For example, the power armor company was the first to use the Red Hawk design in actual combat before it rolled onto the open market.

Standard equipment for the Sky Hawks is NG-A12 Anti-Ballistic Armor, which helps reduce impact injuries from airborne landings, and the NG-56 Light Ion Blaster as a side arm. Each ten person squad has six troopers armed with the NG-IP7 Ion Pulse Rifle, two with the heavier NG-L6 Laser Rifle, one heavy weapon (with either the NG-ML6 Mini-Missile Cannon or NG-303 Infantry Mini-Rail Gun) and one sharpshooter (with either the NG-SSL20 Super Sniper Rifle or NG-SR3 Marksmen Sniper). Any other Northern Gun weapons may be used depending on the assignment.

Commanding this professional unit is Colonel Jason Quigley, an experienced Paratrooper in his own right. The Colonel is known as a front-line commander and often accompanies the troops on their missions. Although he is getting up there in age, a few bionics and bio-systems keep the Colonel healthy and up to the rigors of combat.

Colonel Jason Quigley

Commanding Officer of the Sky Hawks

Alignment: Scrupulous

Age: 45

Brief History: An Ishpeming-man through and through. Jason Quigley comes from one of the oldest families in Ishpeming. He is a loyal company man and has been entrusted with command of Ishpeming's premiere fighting unit, not only because of his heritage and loyalty, but also his ability.

Behavior: More than a bit eccentric, the Colonel believes in drilling hard, and he is also a bit of a showman. He makes big statements with lots of bravado and colorful language. While his men find it motivating, some people find it annoying. Nonetheless, the Colonel has become a celebrity and is useful

for endorsing NG products.

Appearance: He wears his paratrooper jump boots where ever he goes, smokes cheap cigars (with little ill effect thanks to his bionic lung), and sports a wide-brimmed American Cavalry-style hat.

IDF Soldier O.C.C.

The loyal citizen soldiers of the IDF are trained in Ishpeming by the professionals at the Ishpeming Staff College (ISC). As a result, their training is some of the best in North America. Each recruit, and Ishpeming has no shortage of recruits, completes a twelve week basic military training program designed to build up all new soldiers to the same standard. Basic training is currently taught by a number of combat veterans from the Ishpeming Defense Force and talented mercenaries. Since the IDF is so small, the basic training classes are filled out by mercenary types who wish to train as a man-at-arms; many headhunters and other professional men-at-arms get their start at the ISC. The classes also include recruits from the Manistique Imperium. All non-IDF members pay a fee for basic training, making this training a lucrative business.

Once recruits complete basic training, they begin another twelve week advanced infantry course intended to produce a highly trained and motivated combat soldiers, able to meet any challenge. Completion of this course allows recruits to go on and become the various men-at-arms O.C.C.s, such as Headhunters, Paratroopers, Special Forces, Bounty Hunters, Juicers, Military Cyborgs, Crazies, etc. IDF recruits can choose any men-at-arms O.C.C. or one of the exclusive IDF Military Occupational Specialties (MOS).

IDF Soldier O.C.C. Abilities and Bonuses:

- 1. Culture of the Gun:** Northern Gun/Ishpeming has its roots in the militia movements of the American Empire. One of the fundamental positions of these movements was a citizens right to bear arms, something Northern Gun promotes wherever it does business (a policy that is also good for business). As a result, all Ishpeming citizens are comfortable with all types of Northern Gun personal firearms. IDF Soldiers are volunteers from the citizenry and possess uncanny familiarity with Northern Gun weapons.
 - +10% to Recognize Weapon Quality when dealing with Northern Gun Weapons and technology.
 - +10% to Field Armorer when dealing with Northern Gun Weapons and technology.
 - +1 to strike on aimed shots and bursts when using NG products (and having the appropriate weapon proficiency)
- 2. Initiative bonus:** Superior training from the Ishpeming Staff College helps instill quick thinking and situational awareness, adding +1 on Initiative at levels 1, 4, 7, 10 and 13

IDF Soldier O.C.C. and NPC

Alignment: Any

O.C.C. Requirements: P.S. and P.E. of 10 or higher.

O.C.C. Skills:

Basic Radio (+10%)

First Aid (+10%)

Pilot: Hovercycle (+10%)

Climbing (+10%)

Land Navigation (+10%)

Swimming (+10%)

Wilderness Survival (+10%)

Weapon Systems (+10%)

Running

General Athletics

Recognize Weapon Quality (+10% when dealing with NG Products only)

Field Armorer (+10% when dealing with NG Products only)

W.P.: Heavy Energy

W.P.: Energy Rifle

W.P.: Energy Pistol

Hand to Hand: Expert

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select one M.O.S. Package from the list of special training areas below. Two other skills can be selected from any of the available categories at levels two, five, nine and twelve.

Communications: Any

Domestic: Any

Electrical: Basic only (+5%)

Espionage: Wilderness Survival only (+5%)

Mechanical: Automotive only

Medical: First Aid only

Military: Any (+10%)

Physical: Any except Acrobatics & Gymnastics

Pilot: Any (+5%)

Pilot Related: Any

Rogue: Any

Science: None unless M.O.S.

Technical: Any (+5%, +10% to Literacy)

Weapon Proficiencies: Any

Wilderness: Any

MOS: Power Armor Pilot

Pilot: Robots and Power Armor (+20%)

Power Armor Elite Combat: NG Power Armor of choice

Power Armor Elite Combat: NG Power Armor of choice

MOS: Robot & Armor Pilot

Pilot: Robots and Power Armor (+15%)

Pilot: Tanks and APC's (+14%)

Robot Combat Elite: NG Robot of choice

Robot Combat Elite: NG Robot of choice

MOS: Air Corps Pilot

Pilot: Helicopter (+15%)

Pilot: Jetfighter (+20%)

Read Sensory Equipment (+10%)

Pilot: one of choice (+10%)

MOS: Naval Sailor

Read Sensory Equipment (+10%)

Pilot: Warships/Patrol Boats (+20%)

Navigation (+10%)

Pilot: Watercraft of choice (+10%)

MOS: Pilot (General)

Pilot: Automobile (+10%)

Pilot: Truck (+10%)
Pilot: Helicopter or Combat Driving (+10%)
Read Sensor Equipment (+10%)
Robot or PA combat skill of choice (+10%)

MOS: Medic

Paramedic (+10%)
Holistic Medicine or Basic Cybernetics (+10%)
Biology (+10%)
Pathology (+10%)
Field Surgery (+10%)

MOS: Weapons

W.P.: Heavy
W.P.: Automatic Rifles
W.P.: Automatic Pistols
W.P.: ancient weapon of choice
Sniper

MOS: Demolitions

Demolitions (+10%)
Demolitions Disposal (+10%)
Underwater Demolitions (+10%)
Military Fortifications (+10%)

MOS: Wilderness

Tracking (+10%)
Trap Construction (+10%)
Trap/Mine Detection (+10%)
Hunting

MOS: Technician

Mechanical Engineer (+10%)
Weapons Engineer (+10%)
Electrical Engineer (+10%)
Computer Repair (+10%)

MOS: Communications

Cryptography (+10%)
Electronic Countermeasures (+10%)
Laser Communications (+10%)
Electrical Engineer (+10%)
Computer Operation (+10%)

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select six secondary skills from the previous list. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in parentheses. All secondary skills start at the base skill level. Also, skills are limited (any, only, none) as previously indicated in the list.

Standard Equipment: A suit of personalized, light or heavy (usually heavy), mega-damage body armor, including Coalition armor. A set of dress clothing, and a set of camouflage clothing for covert

operations. Also a gas mask and air filter, tinted goggles, hatchet for cutting wood, knives (1D4), a NG energy handgun and rifle and six extra ammo-clips for each, three additional weapons of choice, 1D6 grenades, NG-S2 survival pack, tent, knapsack, back pack, saddle bags, two canteens, freeze-dried food rations (five week supply), and some personal items. At the GM's options, the character may have a vehicle, power armor, extra weapons, or other equipment as fits with the selected MOS.

Money: The character starts off with 3D6x100 in credit, and has a black market item that will garner another 1D6x1000 credits.

Cybernetics: Can have 1D4 cybernetic implants of player's choice, including black market items.

Mercenaries

In addition to the 12,000 loyal citizen soldiers, Northern Gun employs 24,000 mercenaries on a long term basis. These mercenaries provide the bulk of Northern Gun's defenses outside the city of Ishpeming and some have served so long for the company that they considered themselves part of the nation. In times of war or when threatened, Northern Gun could likely double or triple the number of mercenaries it employs within a few weeks.

Getting a mercenary gig with Northern Gun, especially in their defense program, is considered one of the best contracts in the business. Not only do mercenaries get paid good money, but they also get deep discounts on Northern Gun hardware. Plus, since no one has ever attacked Ishpeming, combat is limited to fighting off the occasional bandit group, demon, Xiticix, or other menace.

Northern Gun employed mercenary companies come in all shapes and sizes, from veritable mercenary armies responsible for defending entire cities to single squads hired to protect convoys and guard warehouses. Mercenaries are also Northern Gun's first choice for offensive operations. The Upper Peninsula is often faced with high-tech bandits looking to capture some Northern Gun equipment, as well as monsters preying on citizens and outlying towns. Existing and new mercenary companies are often employed on seek and destroy missions to hunt down these bandits and monsters. When monster attacks really increase, Northern Gun will often put out a bounty on a particular type of creature and pay any mercenary or adventurer per head.

The easiest way for a new small-time company to find work with Northern Gun is through convoy escort. Northern Transport employs mercenaries from all over North America to escort their products through hostile territory. A history of credible performance at these and other sundry tasks will usually garner an invitation to join the standing mercenary army. Contracts are handled by Northern Gun's Support & Service Division, who regularly post jobs through Merc Ops. They also employ a few of their own independent fixers who set up jobs which require more delicacy and discretion, such as RAID operations or actions against competitors.

Militias

As mentioned earlier, Northern Gun and Ishpeming have their roots in the militia movements of the American Empire, especially focusing on the right to bear arms. This means not only do most citizens own and know how to operate military grade firearms, but that they maintain a volunteer army for times of emergency. The Citizen's Militia is a voluntary group of Ishpeming citizens who are available to help defend the cities during heavy attacks or lend a hand during disasters. Most cities and towns surrounding Ishpeming have a small chapter of the Citizen's Militia. However, some are more active than others. In the more remote and wilderness communities of Ishpeming, these militias conduct seek and destroy patrols hunting monsters and bandits on their own (sometimes using a bounty or mercenary contract to fund their chapter); others are more like social clubs who like to romp around in the wilderness and fire

off their guns.

Regardless of their activity level, all of these volunteer militias are very loyal and feel strongly about Ishpeming and Northern Gun maintaining their independence. Often these members will become vocal against decisions that might jeopardize the nation's independence, including the trade deal with the Coalition States. A few groups even sponsor candidates in local politics, or have politicians as a part of their membership.

Overall the militias form an additional layer of defense for Ishpeming and Northern Gun and epitomize the perfect customer: someone who feels the need to own the latest model of Northern Gun assault rifle. In an attempt to keep some control over the militias and to organize them when needed, each chapter registers with Northern Gun's Support and Service Division. In exchange for registering as a militia, Northern Gun offers discounts to members for personal body armor and firearms and will ask local militias if they wish to take up any mercenary contracts that are coming up. If all militias were activated they would make up approximately three volunteer battalions (3,000 troops) and fall under the command of the General of the City Garrison.

The Iron Wall

The borders of Ishpeming are protected by The Iron Wall. Not actually a physical wall, but rather three major military strongholds along the western and southern borders of Ishpeming. The towns of Iron Mountain, Iron River and Ironwood keep the entire southern and western portion of Ishpeming safe from interlopers - the most common being Xiticix encroachment and bandits who wish to prey on cargo and merchants leaving the area.

Iron Mountain

The Town of Iron Mountain

Population Breakdown:

20,000 Total Citizens

85% Human

10% D-Bee races (mostly humanoid)

3% Mutant Animals

2% Psi-Stalker

Note: This does not include the 5,000 to 6,000 mercenaries employed by Northern Gun or the 4D4x100 visitors, adventures, or unemployed mercenaries present at any given time.

Wherever there is a major military presence, there is a need for a variety of spin-off industries. The Town of Iron Mountain exists almost solely for the support, entertainment, and other needs of the various mercenary forces in the area. Northern Gun service centers, rental apartments, restaurants, and other services required by the active mercenaries are all available in Iron Mountain. Remember, not all companies in the area have their own base and facilities, and thus need to rent or borrow living space, training facilities and other necessities. All of these are supported by private industry.

Adventurers visiting Iron Mountain will find most of their needs can be handled including e-clip recharging, armor and vehicle repair, accommodations, basic supplies and even a good selection of Northern Gun Weapons. Wellington Industries also has a small service and sales depot in the town due

to its close proximity to the Manistique Imperium.

Like most military towns, Iron Mountain depends on supporting a large build-up of troops; the more mercenaries in the area the better. This has made the city a haven and base of operations for private mercenary companies as well as those directly employed by Northern Gun. While small compared to MercTown in Kentucky, or even the Northern Gun fortress in Ironwood, many mercenary companies who wish to maintain ties with Ishpeming and Manistique make Iron Mountain their home.

Mercenary Population

In addition to the 3,000 support personnel for the Iron Mountain Free Company, there are usually two battalions (640 troops each) of line soldiers that are assigned to Iron Mountain at any given time. Twenty-five percent of those are manning border stations or on patrol at any given time. Other mercenary companies employed by Northern Gun usually max out at about 2,000 personnel and they assist with border security, add to the city garrison, escort convoys through the area and conduct seek and destroy missions into the Wisconsin Wilds. This level of activity places the standing mercenary forces between 5,000 and 6,000 line and support personnel at any given time.

Civilian Population

This heavy mercenary presence is supported by 20,000 townspeople who typically work in either Northern Gun owned facilities that cater to mercenaries or private industry. Some citizens provide other types of support, such as acting as scouts and guides for some of the smaller mercenary companies. This is especially true of the Psi-Stalker and mutant animal populations; they will hire themselves out to mercenary companies who need some extra anti-supernatural capabilities. Eighty-percent of the townsfolk live within the town itself, and the remainder operate farming, logging, and trapping operations outside the city limits.

The Wisconsin Wilds

Just south of Iron Mountain are the wilds of Wisconsin. The southern portion of Wisconsin is dominated by ley lines and nexus points which create a constant influx of supernatural creatures. While the Coalition maintains two bases in Northern Wisconsin to try and stem this activity, many of the creatures flee north toward the Ishpeming border region. The area is also a haven for bandits, Tolkeen refugees, and other undesirable types.

Wild Fox Psi-Stalker Tribe

The very things that make the area unattractive for travel make the wilds a perfect hunting ground for a tribe of Wild Psi-Stalkers. The Wild Fox tribe ranges a territory from the Ishpeming border into southern Wisconsin, hunting the supernatural and magic creatures attracted to the heavy ley line activity in the State, as well as preying on nearby Xiticix swarms. Estimates put the tribal membership at about three hundred.

The Wild Foxes have a good working relationship with the people of Iron Mountain, and especially the mercenary forces stationed there. Young warriors from the Wild Foxes often sign on with the various mercenary companies as a way to earn income or gain new skills and weapons. Additionally, Ishpeming sees these natural predators as a good buffer against supernatural creatures from the south, and thus members of the tribe are often afforded discounts on Northern Gun weapons and armor. The Manistique Imperium offers similar terms to the tribe.

As a result, the Wild Fox Tribe is one of the most heavily armed and civilized Psi-Stalker tribes in the area. Their members will frequent human towns and villages; act as guides, scouts and extra muscle to

adventurers and mercenaries; and are a good source of rumors and intelligence on supernatural activity in the region.

Bandits & Raiders

Despite the dearth of supernatural activity, the Wisconsin corridor is the fastest overland route to CS Iowa and Illinois. While Ishpeming and Northern Gun have the capacity to airlift over this dangerous wild, many independent merchants and potential customers are not so lucky. Therefore, independent convoys heading to and from Ishpeming, Manistique and the Coalition States will pass through the Wisconsin Wilds to attempt to make their fortune. This merchant activity has attracted some unsavory types looking to make a profit.

Small bands of bandits and raiders use the Wisconsin wilderness as a hideout and staging area for attacks against merchant convoys and raids against Ishpeming and Manistique towns and villages. These highwaymen, robbers, and raiders are usually very well armed with excellent gear, and they use fast attack vehicles such as ATVs and Hovercycles. Some of the largest groups will even have a few suits of power armor or a robot vehicle.

Tolkeen Refugees

Fleeing from Minnesota, most refugees headed west away from the Coalition, but some have used the wild and magic rich environment of Wisconsin as a place to hide out from Coalition seek and destroy squads. Many of these refugees are not the peace-seeking types, but are actively involved in organizing Retribution Squads that can roam southward into the Coalition States. Some of these squads have been known to attack smaller Northern Gun outposts for supplies and malice.

Common Mercenary Missions in the Wilds

Independent mercenaries will often be contracted by Northern Gun and independent groups for missions into and around the wilds. The area offers a variety of tasks and attracts mercenaries with a multitude of skill specialties from anti-supernatural to wilderness tracking.

Seek & Destroy. Mercs may be asked to locate and eliminate a specific threat such as a bandit group, D-Bee raiders, or a supernatural menace that has been plaguing the area.

Escort. Independent merchants or even Northern Gun convoys may require a few extra guns to get them through the wilds.

Headhunting. At various times, Northern Gun will put a per-head price on virulent creatures and D-Bees. This could be a marauding Simvan tribe, demon horde, Xiticix, or other threat. Basically, any mercenary who brings back proof of the death of the target creatures will be paid a per-head fee for their efforts.

Bounty Hunting. Known bandits and Tolkeen war criminals make their hideouts in the thick wilderness of Wisconsin. Tracking them through the area and bringing them back for justice, or administering that justice personally, brings many mercenaries into the area.

Iron Mountain Free Company

Named for the former city and iron mine, this mercenary army is one of the largest independent military forces employed by Ishpeming. The Iron Mountain Free Company is so strongly tied to the nation's defensive networks that it is a de facto part of the Ishpeming Defense Force. Nonetheless, members of Iron Mountain are not citizens of Ishpeming, and they are mercenaries in the classical sense. The

company even hires out some of its smaller units when they aren't needed to other nearby kingdoms - mainly the Manistique Imperium (they even hired out some of the recon companies to the Coalition during the Siege on Tolkeen).

Headquartered in Iron Mountain, Ishpeming's third largest city, the Iron Mountain Free Company provides the standing garrison for that city. Troops not used in garrison duty conduct patrols along the south border near the former state of Wisconsin. These patrols most commonly encounter Xiticix, demons from the Wisconsin Wild Lands, and bandits. They work to keep the roads and paths to Ishpeming open for trade. Iron Mountain also sits on the border with the Manistique Imperium, making it of great strategic importance.

The Iron Mountain Free Company also maintains the southeastern border. Anyone traveling in southeast Ishpeming is likely to encounter a heavily armed patrol belonging to Iron Mountain, as well as their heavily fortified road blocks along the major access ways. The rough, mountainous terrain is covered with heavy forests and vegetation, and it is largely untouched by man since the cataclysm. Thus, Iron Mountain Company soldiers are excellent woodmen and trackers.

The company is commanded by 'General' Amos Plutard (9th level Wilderness Scout), a grizzled veteran with panache for wilderness operations. While he is referred to by the members of Iron Mountain as General, his official rank within the Ishpeming structure is Mercenary Captain, something the local militia types like to point out whenever the 'general' rubs them the wrong way. For his part, Plutard knows where his bread is buttered and doesn't make a big deal about it, as long as those NGMI credits keep flowing, they can call him whatever the hell they want to.

Iron Mountain Free Company

A. Sponsorship: Government (Northern Gun/Ishpeming)

B. Outfits: Gimmick Clothing, 40 points

C. Equipment: Unlimited Equipment, 50 points

D. Vehicles: Specialty Vehicles, 30 points

E. Weapons: Extensive Weapons, 40 points

F. Communications: Deluxe Communications, 25 points

G. Security: Paranoid, 40 points

H. Permanent Base: Fortified Headquarters, 20 points

I. Intelligence Resources: Scout Detachments (1), 5 points; Special Military Operatives (1), 10 points; Psionic Operatives, 20 points, D-Bee Specialists, 20 points

J. Special Budget: Large Loans, 25 points

K. General Alignment of Personnel: Unprincipled and Scrupulous, 7 points

L. Criminal Activity: None, 0 points

M. Reputation: Excellent, 25 points

N. Salary: Excellent salary, 20 points

Total Points: 377

Size & Orientation: Mercenary Army

Unit Breakdown

The 2,000 active combat members of the Iron Mountain Free Company are split into three combat battalions (640 troops) one of which is assigned to garrison duty in the City of Iron Mountain. The second provides border security and combat patrols, and the third is actively hired out to other kingdoms. All three battalions rotate in and out of each role on a four month rotation (four months garrison, four months patrol, and four months assignment) in order to keep the general level of combat experience high and the general level of boredom low. This means all three battalions have an equal mix

of troops. The company also keeps one platoon (40 personnel) of Special Operatives (usually Special Forces, Juicer, Crazy, and other man-at-arms O.C.C.s) and one air squadron (40 personnel) to support the battalions.

Each battalion is made up of one Reconnaissance Company, two Mechanized Infantry Companies, and one Armored Company.

Reconnaissance Companies (3)

Perhaps the most renowned part of the Iron Mountain Free Company are the infamous Reconnaissance Companies. These companies are comprised of experienced woodsmen and soldiers who specialize in long range reconnaissance, force reconnaissance, tracking, guerilla warfare, forward observation, artillery spotting, wilderness survival and search and rescue. During the Siege on Tolkeen, the CS hired two of the three companies for use in scouting enemy fortifications, a very lucrative deal for Iron Mountain. The most notorious Reconnaissance Company is the 1st Iron Mountain Recon Company, known as "the Trapper Jacks", or oftentimes simply "the Jacks". The rigorous wilderness of the Upper Peninsula has hardened these veterans to outdoor life, making them ideal scouts in high demand.

Recon companies often travel on foot, but will also make use of hovercycles, ATVs, and other light and fast vehicles.

Each company is made up of four platoons (40 soldiers) with a mix of:

40% Merc Soldiers

25% Wilderness Scouts

10% Psi-Stalkers

10% Juicer Scouts

5% ex-CS Rangers

5% Fur Trappers

5% Other wilderness and small-unit tactics savvy occupations.

Mechanized Infantry Companies (6)

These heavy infantry companies are the backbone of the Iron Mountain Free Company. Each of these heavily armed and armored units is capable of a variety of assault and defense missions. They are also competent patrolling units, and they make up the bulk of any border guard unit one encounters heading into Ishpeming. The contract with Northern Gun has benefited these companies more than any other, as 40% of them are equipped with heavy weapons and 30% with some sort of power armor. Company vehicles are usually Rolling Thunder and Black Bear ATVs for lighter units, and heavy armored personnel carriers for others. The most common power armor units are the NG Samson, Redhawk, and Boulder.

Each company is made up of four platoons (40 personnel); three infantry platoons and one power armor platoon and is broken down as follows:

40% Headhunters

30% Full and Partial Conversion Cyborgs

10% Juicers (Mostly Standard Types)

10% Other man-at-arms O.C.C.s

5% Wilderness Scouts

5% Psi-Stalkers

Armored Companies (3)

Armored Companies are the heavy support units of the Iron Mountain Company and make heavy use of

Northern Gun robots, especially the vaunted NG Hunter. However, they also have Titan series robots, Northern Gun reproductions of IHA Tanks, and a smattering of other robotics and armored vehicles. The armored companies usually operate the road blocks at the Ishpeming border, the presence of heavy firepower and equipment often makes bandits and other trouble makers think twice about entering the territory of Northern Gun. Ultimately, however, the best use of the armored companies is assault, and when a mission can be found and a price can be agreed upon, these soldiers enjoy being deployed in combat, usually supported by an infantry company.

Each company is made up of eight platoons consisting of 6-12 armored vehicles. Most common O.C.C.s are Headhunter, RPA Elite and Equivalents with robot combat skills. Some common armor mixes are:

Artillery Platoon

Four TX-500 Forager Battlebots
Three NG-V7 Hunter Mobile Guns
Three NG-M56 Multi-Bots

Armored Reconnaissance Platoon

Five Titan Reconnaissance Robots
Three Titan Exploration & Light Combat Robots
One Iron Maiden Armored Personnel Carrier, with infantry

Armored Assault Platoon

Three Titan Combat Robots
Three NG-N7 Hunter Mobile Guns
Four NG Rolling Storm Medium Tanks
Two NG Rolling Fury Battle Tanks

Standard Equipment

All members of the Iron Mountain Free Company are issued: 6 Grenades (2 fragmentation, 2 plasma, 2 smoke), 2 Signal Flares, 1 NG-S2 Survival Kit, NG-L6 Laser Rifle, NG-33 Laser Pistol, Bushman Composite Armor, utility belt, canteen, bed roll, and company uniform. Reconnaissance units often replace their assault rifle with the smaller NG-IP7 Ion Pulse Rifle, or a Sniper Rifle (including the JA-11, Wilk's, and Triax Models) and replace their armor with light designs. Forty percent (40%) of the mechanized infantry troops will carry heavy weapons including the NG-ML6 Mini-Missile Cannon, NG-303 Infantry Mini-Rail Gun, Old Style CS Plasma Cannons, NG-P7 Particle Beam Rifles, and others. Officers may be issued exoskeleton armors, where available.

Iron Mountain Complex

Heavily fortified does not even begin to describe the company's headquarters. One of the very first missions performed by the early genesis of the Iron Mountain Free Company was clearing the iron mine of some demons that had made it their lair. Since they took it from the demons, it has acted in one way or another as a permanent base for the company.

Over the years the company has cleared out and remodeled the former Iron Mountain Iron Mine, a tourist attraction that was eventually boarded up sometime in the Golden Age. The facility extends to almost 400 feet (122 m) below the surface and at one time had more than 2,600 feet (792 m) of tunnels. Disrepair and the violence of the cataclysm has collapsed many of the tunnels, but the company has converted and upgraded what remains into a heavy underground bunker that houses troops, supplies and company headquarters. Thanks to the lend-lease of some Northern Gun mining bots, there are now multiple exits from the mine all over the mountain to support the easy deployment of forces.

Iron River

The Town of Iron River

Population Breakdown

6,000 Total Citizens

73% Human

15% D-Bee races (mostly humanoid)

5% Mutant Animals

5% Psi-Stalkers

2% Master Psychics (Mind Melters, Bursters, Zappers, etc.)

Note: These population figures do not include the 1,600 to 2,500 mercenaries or the 1D6x100 visitors, adventurers, or unemployed mercenaries present at any given time.

Situated 30 miles (48 km) Northwest of Iron Mountain is the town of Iron River, a small border town about 18 miles (29 km) from the Wisconsin border that's only real purpose is to service the nearby Iron River Outpost. The outpost is only about four miles away and holds a large force of mercenary soldiers who provide the second link in the "Iron Wall."

Despite its small size, the town features modern facilities and usually is home to a number of transient mercenaries and adventurers, wilderness travelers, hunters, trappers, and others who make the rugged country that surrounds the town their home. The town has a rustic, rough and tumble feel, mainly due to the transient population. Gruff trappers, stoic wilderness scouts, wild Psi-Stalkers and grizzled mercenaries are always huddled in the town's only saloon, carousing and drinking.

Its border town status and isolated feeling make Iron River somewhat more accepting of non-humans and other D-Bees (although they still shun magic users) and more than a few have made a permanent residence in the town, opening ancillary businesses that support the mercenaries stationed in the area.

Mercenary Population

The main mercenary company in the area is the Iron River Rangers, who make their headquarters just south of the city on what used to be the Stambaugh Airport. The base also serves as the city garrison and usually has about 240 combat personnel present at all times to act as the city garrison, plus another 720 support personnel. The remaining 660 personnel conduct patrols along the former Wisconsin border and make the city their home. In addition to the Iron River Rangers, there are about 300-700 mercenaries hired by Northern Gun in the area at any given time. These mercenaries are usually sent on anti-supernatural patrols outside the city and return to the city to rest and rearm at regular intervals.

Civilian Population

The 4,000 townspeople mostly exist to support the mercenary trade, two-thirds of them (66%) are Northern Gun employees who operate NG weapon, vehicle and armor sales, as well as repair shops. The remaining civilians provide other secondary services such as lodging, food, and basic supplies. Another 400 people live in the surrounding area and work as trappers, hunters, fishermen, and farmers who support and trade with the townspeople.

Iron River Reserve

Many of the people who live and work in and around Iron River are experienced outdoorsmen, former mercenaries, and powerful psychics. These courageous and industrious citizens of Ishpeming have organized a volunteer militia that can come to the aid of the city defenders or the IDF employed

mercenaries in times of serious trouble. The volunteers number about 320 personnel (2 companies) and can usually be mobilized within three days.

The average Iron River Reservist is an experienced (Level 1D4+2) Wilderness Scout or Fur Trapper, while five-percent (about 16 people) are major or master psychics with powers geared towards detecting and fighting the supernatural. About fifteen-percent are a mixture of retired and semi-retired (Level 1D6+1) man-at-arms professions (Headhunter, Mercenary, Bounty Hunter, etc.).

Harvey's Pulp & Lumber Plant

Located twenty miles north of Iron River is one of the largest producers of wood products in Ishpeming. The Harvey family has owned and operated their logging and pulp business since the early days of Ishpeming's history. The wood products produced at the company's plant north of Iron River are used in the construction of many new homes built in the City of Ishpeming and the surrounding communities. Harvey's is also the leading supplier of wooden weapons crates to Northern Gun.

The pulp plant produces a wide variety of paper products, from household staples, to more complex products using the paper making by-products of cellulose, oils, and resins. In fact, although the sanitary paper, air filters and cardboard products are sold for common purposes throughout Ishpeming, it is the stuff made from the nearby by-products processing facility that nets big profits.

Nearby, cellulose made from wood fiber is used to produce rayon, rayon which is then sold as a raw material to Northern Gun for making a wide variety of products, including tires for ATVs, dune buggies, and other mass market vehicles. Although of little value to a raiding party, the plants have been attacked on three separate occasions, twice by the marauding Taraxic Simvan. Although there are very few human employees, thanks to Northern Gun produced labor bots, the tools, supplies and disruption to operations were enough to send the Harvey's into a frenzy.

The company now employs a standing garrison of mercenaries of about platoon strength (40 personnel) and regularly hires mercenaries and adventures to protect its labor bots during wood harvesting. The Harvey's also have a 500,000 credit bounty on the Chief of the Taraxic Simvan, dead or alive - preferably dead.

The Harvey facility is an example of the numerous small businesses, outposts, etc. scattered through Ishpeming. Other lumber facilities, iron mines, cooper mines, and other raw materials producers are a key part in the Northern Gun manufacturing machine and are the primary focus of protection for Ishpeming Defense Forces and their hired mercenaries.

The Border Region

Iron River exists to protect the south-western border of Ishpeming. No trade passes through Iron River from the west, making the bandit threat much lower than in the more hostile area surrounding Iron Mountain. Major threats in Iron River are Xiticix scouting parties and supernatural creatures released from Tolkeen during the war. The heavily forested area south and west of Iron River is constantly prowled by all manner of supernatural predators, demons, and Tolkeen Refugees. Mercenaries in the region maintain constant patrols over an area of some 500 square miles (1,294 km²), with their main focus on hunting supernatural creatures, D-Bee raiders, and other menaces left over from the war in Minnesota.

Ironically, war in the region, the sparse population and the close proximity of the Xiticix keep the area free of most human threats such as bandits and warmongers. However, the wilderness area in and around

Iron River is some of the most rugged and wild in North America; there are almost no human settlements in the area. Due to this same lack of human presence, there are rumors of totally untouched pre-Rifts ruins in this region that often attract groups of treasure hunters and adventurers. For many of them, Iron River is the last stop (literally and figuratively) in their search.

The Taraxic Simvan Tribe

The perennial antagonists in this region are the tenacious and cruel Taraxic tribe of Simvan Monster Riders. These monster riders prefer to ride Spiny Ravagers and like to strike at Ishpeming patrols in order to capture their valuable weapons and equipment. On more than a few occasions, the tribe has conducted daring raids against the Town of Iron River itself, attempting to grab livestock, food, medical supplies and weapons from the city stores. On one such occasion the Iron River Reserve was activated to help put down the raiding party.

Since the infamous raid, Ishpeming has been in an unofficial state of war against the tribe and has a standing price per head policy for any Simvan from the Taraxic tribe. Air sorties have even been flown into the area to try and carpet bomb the tribe out of existence, but to date they have always managed to regroup, restock, and eventually reappear. Incidents died down during the war with Tolkeen, as the evil kingdom employed the monster riders as scouts and cavalry.

Now that the war is over, the Taraxic are reorganizing against their old foes in Ishpeming and are armed with techno-wizardry weapons gained during the war. They are often joined by Tolkeen refugees, including sub-demons like the Brodkil and others. The resultant force is a powerful and savage band of raiders who have recently begun to strike anew against the farms and communities of southwestern Ishpeming.

Iron River Rangers

While not the largest mercenary force employed by Ishpeming, the Iron River Rangers are one of the most unique. They have the largest number of psychic personnel per capita than any other major company employed by Northern Gun. While not as large or varied as the Coalition's Psi-Bat, this group specializes in hunting and neutralizing the supernatural. As a result, their powerful psychics are supported by high levels of augmented troops - especially heavy cyborgs.

From their headquarters in Iron River, the Rangers patrol along a fifty-mile stretch of the Ishpeming Border, and often extend their patrols into the old State of Wisconsin. The Rangers' "Monster Masher" squads are legendary through the Upper Peninsula and beyond. When a small kingdom has trouble with a nasty group of demons or a particularly persistent predator, they will often look for a squad of Rangers to assist with the extermination.

Since their inception in 104 P.A., the Iron River Rangers have been commanded by Ray Carter, an 8th Level former CS Ranger and Major Psionic. Carter hates the supernatural and is practically obsessed with wiping them out. But working on the fringes of CS territory as a Ranger and now as a mercenary leader, he has changed his opinion on D-Bees, and his company even employs a handful of them. The only reason Carter left the Coalition after he served his tour was the IC registration; he opposed it and felt it questioned his loyalty. Insulted, he left the CS and has since had the coding surgically removed. Carter is a masterful recruiter of psychics, especially former CS ones, and has also managed to draw in some feral and freeborn dog boys to be a part of his team.

Iron River Rangers Mercenary Company

A. Sponsorship: Government (Northern Gun/Ishpeming)

B. Outfits: Specialty Clothing, 20 points
C. Equipment: High-Tech Augmentation, 40 points; Electronic Supplies & Good Gear, 5 points; Medical Equipment, 10 points
D. Vehicles: Combat Cars, 20 points
E. Weapons: Advanced Weaponry, 20 points
F. Communications: Full Range System, 25 points
G. Security: Tight, 10 points
H. Permanent Base: Headquarters, 10 points
I. Intelligence Resources: Scout Detachment, 5 points; Special Military Operatives, 10 points; Psionic Operatives, 20 points; D-Bee Specialists, 20 points
J. Special Budget: Large Loans, 25 points
K. General Alignment of Personnel: Anarchist and Unprincipled, 4 points
L. Criminal Activity: Psychic Enforcer, 15 points
M. Reputation: Known, 10 points
N. Salary: Excellent Salary, 20 points
Total Points: 259
Size & Orientation: Large Company

Unit Breakdown

The Iron River Rangers have 660 combat personnel, organized as a battalion of four companies (160 personnel each) with two attached special operations squads (10 personnel each). Most unit actions happen at the squad level (sometimes at platoon level), as the company is mainly engaged in border and wilderness patrols. Small units are sent out to make sure no supernatural threats are crossing from Minnesota and Wisconsin into Ishpeming. Each squad carries considerable firepower in the form of heavy cyborgs that support the sensitive psychics who assist with tracking the supernatural.

All four companies have similar make-ups:

30% Full Conversion Cyborgs
20% Headhunters (with partial cybernetic conversion)
15% Psi-stalkers (Wild & Mercenary)
10% Juicers (Mainly Standard and Juicer Scouts, although there are a few Delphi Juicers)
6% Tirrvol Sword Fist D-Bees
5% Wilderness Scouts
5% Mutant Animals
5% Other D-Bees
3% Minor & Major Psychics (mainly Man-at-Arms O.C.C.s with Sensitive Psionic Powers)
2% Master Psychics (Mainly Mind Melters, Nega-Psychics & Psi-Nullifiers)

A typical Rangers squad of ten will consist of:

3 Headhunters
2 Full Conversion Cyborgs (With Heavy Weapons)
1or 2 Psi-Stalkers
1 Juicer
1or 2 Wilderness Scouts or Mutant Animal
1 Major or Master Psychic

Standard Equipment

Standard equipment is Bushman Composite Armor for foot soldiers and partial conversion borgs. Psychics will wear lighter Huntsman Armor and full conversion Borgs will wear Standard Cyborg Infantry Armor. Standard issue weapons are the NG-33 Laser Pistol and NG-L5 Laser Rifle. One in five

personnel (usually Cyborgs) will carry a heavy energy weapon such as an NG-E6 Plasma Ejector, NG-P7 Particle Beam Rifle, or NG-202 Rail Gun.

Special Operations Squads

The Stalkers. The Stalkers are a psychic specialist squad lead by Leo Atkinson, a 7th Level Mind Melter (Psychic Enforcer). The squad consists of 3 Psi-Stalkers 2 Psi-Slayers, 1 Psi-Ghost, 1 Psi-Nullifier, 1 Burster and an evil Mind Bleeder. These psychics specialize in stealth, stalking, and espionage. Although their main target is the hated Simvan, they are also used for interrogations, kidnappings and intelligence gathering missions. Ishpeming regularly employs this powerful band of mentalists for a variety of industrial espionage and bounty hunting missions.

The Osprey. The second special operations squad specializes in aerial tactics and power armor combat; the Osprey act as air support for the company. The squad is led by Owen Harding, a 6th Level former RPA Elite who served with Ray Carter in the CS Army. The unit also has 3 Phaeton juicers and 6 RPA Elite equivalent O.C.C.s, all of whom are known for their trick flying and piloting skill.

Tirrvol Sword Fist Platoon

One of the first victims of the marauding Taraxic Simvan tribe was a small clan of Tirrvol Sword First D-Bees who had made their home in northwestern Wisconsin. The survivors were being pursued by the mounted monster riders when they were saved by Ray Carter and his Iron River Rangers. Despite his Coalition upbringing Carter was impressed by the courage of the Sword Fists and helped to resettle them in Iron River; the Tirrvol now make up a large percentage of the D-Bee population. As a result of this kindness, the Tirrvol serve under Ray Carter's command against supernatural threats, especially the Simvan.

Thanks to the good folks at Northern Gun, and some major credits from Ray Carter, most of these D-Bees have been augmented with cyber-armor and given modified hover cycles that can be operated with their prehensile toes. They ride through the borderlands defending Ishpeming towns, outposts, and citizens from supernatural creatures. So far, their noble actions have caused more than a few citizens to change their minds about D-Bees.

Ironwood

The City of Ironwood

Population Breakdown

17,000 Total Citizens

67% Human

22% D-Bee races

6% Psi-Stalkers

4% Mutant Humans & Animals

Note: These figures do not include the 7,500 to 12,000 mercenaries employed by Northern Gun or the 1D6x100 visitors, adventures, or unemployed mercenaries present at any given time.

Eighty miles (129 km) northwest of Iron River, sitting directly on what was once the border of Michigan and Wisconsin is the mercenary stronghold of Ironwood. This is the largest military complex and build-up of forces in Ishpeming. The reason for this base is simple: it is a scant 110 miles (177 km) from the Duluth hive - the largest known Xiticix hive in North America. The entire area west of Ironwood is known simply as "bug land" to the locals, and designated more formally as Xiticix territory by Northern

Gun.

The ever encroaching Xiticix expansion has Ishpeming worried. If the bugs ever decide to flood the area in force, it won't take them long to swarm over the entire Upper Peninsula - one of the few wars that would be bad business for Northern Gun. To help curb this expansion, Ishpeming employs thousands of mercenary soldiers at its Ironwood stronghold and employs hundreds more to make raids and assaults into Xiticix territory to help cull the swarms.

To support this massive build-up of troops, Northern Gun has literally built a city right on top of the ruins of the pre-Rifts city of Ironwood. Using pre-fabricated buildings and structures made at factories in Ishpeming, the industrious Northern Gun erected the city in record time. Engineers used the city rubble to build a giant wall around the city - not that walls do much good against flying bugs, but it looks imposing.

When construction was completed, Ironwood had lots of housing and mercenaries, but not a lot of people. To solve this problem the Northern Gun way, the company transferred numerous employees to workshops and small time production facilities in the city and offered incentive pay to anyone who was willing to accept the move. Northern Gun also opened Ironwood as a free-trade zone, meaning any companies or independent businesses could set up shop in the city; of course, they all rent their premises from Northern Gun.

The end result is a city on the very edge of the Domain of Man, fighting to save Earth from alien occupation. The town has a war-torn feeling, as rough mercenaries and desperate citizens attempt to hold back the flood of Xiticix. The people of Ironwood fight hard and live for the moment. Mercenaries spend their money as fast as they can make it, and they will buy any sort of distraction or vice they can find to keep their minds off their work. Thus, despite the dangers of being so close to bug land, all manner of traders, business people, and adventurers make the trek to Ironwood - for where there is great risk, there is also great reward.

Mercenary Population The main mercenary company in the city is The Iron Hand, who occupy the Northern Gun built military base inside the city. The Iron Hand is the agent of the Ishpeming government in the area. They subcontract out to many other companies in order to fill the need for a garrison of 4,000 troops, plus nearly 6,000 combat operatives. Most of the townspeople work in direct support of the mercenary armies. Additionally, the mercenaries employ support staff of about 5,000 personnel. The employed mercenary population in the city is usually around 10,000, sometimes swelling as high as 12,000. At pique times, the City of Ironwood employs almost half of the mercenaries used by Ishpeming on a regular basis.

Civilian Population Almost all of the 17,000 city dwellers work to support, feed, and entertain the standing mercenary army in some way. Approximately 1,900 citizens work for Northern Gun in their repair centers, weapons sales center, and small production facility (Ironwood is home to the manufacturing plant for the NG-IP7 Rifle). Fishing, farming and logging happen to the North and East of the city in order to provide food and supplies for the citizens. However, Northern Gun still imports food from Ishpeming and other areas to keep the stores stocked in case of a siege.

The Wall As mentioned, the city is surrounded by a wall. The wall is not a shiny, smooth structure but rather a twenty foot high pile of pre-Rifts rubble that rings the city. Much like old fashioned gabions used in sea walls, the rubble is dumped into metal cages that form blocks. These blocks are stacked and supported to make the wall. Pre-fabricated towers sit at intervals along the wall to keep watch for swarms and to help man the rail guns and medium range anti-aircraft missile turrets. As the rubble is

made from the remnants of a Golden Age city, they provide some mega damage protection.

Free-Trade Zone Although Northern Gun likes having a monopoly on business within its own territories, keeping an outpost like Ironwood stocked with expensive mercenaries costs money. Therefore, Northern Gun has made Ironwood a free-trade zone, allowing many of their traditional competitors to set up shop in the commercial district of the city. Although all these competitors pay rent to Northern Gun, this still means Ironwood is one of the best places to rest, rearm, and reload in the Xiticix territories. All the major weapons manufacturers (Wellington Industries, Wilk's, Cyberworks and even Bandito Arms) have retail outlets in the city. Of course, the high demand for weaponry and the high cost of doing business in Ironwood means most products are 10-25% more expensive than list prices. The exception, of course, is Northern Gun products, which can be purchased for list price.

The Xiticix Invasion Although the town could probably be defended by a garrison of one quarter the size of the mercenary army it houses now, Ishpeming is in a state of war against the Xiticix. The threat is so serious that their competitors in the Manistique Imperium lend cash and equipment to help keep the Army supplied. The number of mercenaries employed by Northern Gun at Ironwood varies significantly. At any given time, 6D6 x 100 mercenaries are conducting operations in the hive lands on "seek and destroy" or "per head" contracts. When Xiticix activity is high, Northern Gun's mercenary employment is high; when the bugs are busy with someone else, the contracts aren't so plentiful.

Once in a great while, Ishpeming will have the opportunity and circumstances to attack a hive. They have only attempted this twice since the base at Ironwood was established with mixed results. No one knows for sure if the Xiticix are actually being held back by all this activity or not, and many are beginning to wonder if a full fledged extermination is needed. Northern Gun is the continent's second largest producer of nuclear power plants (second only to the Coalition States) and possesses the arsenal to vaporize much of the hive territories. For the moment, this is not a viable option. However, they might be persuaded to do so if the Xiticix force their hand, or if a wealthy nation, such as the Coalition, makes them an offer they cannot refuse.

For more information on the Xiticix, please see **World Book #23: Xiticix Invasion**.

Coalition Bases in Wisconsin The Coalition States recognizes Ishpeming's commitment to keeping the Xiticix threat contained, and the two Coalition bases in southern Wisconsin will work in conjunction with the mercenary forces at Ironwood when it suits their needs. Sometimes CS troops will even come to Ironwood for weekend leave, and generally speaking they behave themselves.

Operation Northwind Ten miles north of the city of Ironwood, along the south shores of Lake Superior is Saxon Harbor, home of a secret Ishpeming operation. Operation Northwind is a project designed to stem the Xiticix invasion. From this secret facility, built under the 90 foot (27 m) waterfall where the Montreal River empties into Lake Superior, mercenaries attempt to keep the Xiticix from expanding eastward and push it north toward CS Iron Heart instead.

Using a converted Poseidon Missile Cruiser and CS SAMAS units purchased on the Black Market, the company launches waterborne raids against the Duluth hive. These raids are always staged from the north and attempt to lure the Xiticix back toward Iron Heart, designed to make the bugs recognize CS forces as the real threat in the area.

It is too early to tell if this tactic is effective, and those few who know about its existence wonder if it is worth the risk of being discovered by the CS. However, Ishpeming wishes no ill-will toward the CS; the Ishpeming government simply feels that they have been taking the Xiticix invasion on the chin, and they

wish for the CS to enter the fray against these hostile aliens before they spread too far.

The operation is conducted by Northwind Naval Company, a mercenary company made up of savvy pirates and raiders. To date, Ishpeming has done a good job of convincing the people of Northwind that they are employed by Free Quebec, and not Ishpeming. If the CS does find out about the operation, Ishpeming hopes they have created enough plausible deniability through framing Free Quebec and using non-aligned mercenaries for the work.

The Iron Hand Mercenary Company

The Iron Hand is the largest single company employed by Ishpeming, and its officers and commanders execute the orders of the Ishpeming government as if they were the nation's official defense force. The Iron Hand also assigns all the mercenary sub-contracts in the area and takes part in the administration of the city, along with the Northern Gun executives located there. This symbiotic relationship has blurred the line between mercenary army and national army, something that doesn't bother either side very much at all.

Commanding the Iron Hand, and with an iron fist at that, is Mercenary Captain Elijah Garnett. Garnett was a long time member of the Ishpeming Defense Force, serving as a Colonel in the city garrison as well as instructor at Ishpeming Staff College. During his time at ISC, he made a lot of noise about the Xiticix threat. When the Ironwood base was being constructed, Northern Gun gave Garnett the opportunity to form a company to protect the western front, putting their money where his mouth was. Garnett resigned his commission in the IDF and began recruiting mercenary soldiers from the Ishpeming area. His army assembled quickly, and many of the original members were former IDF soldiers looking to make some money as private contractors. Since then, the Iron Hand has been a steady employer of mercenaries from all over the world and, rumor has it, off world.

Elijah Garnett is a strategic thinker, and he is becoming frustrated with his inability to actually make a difference in beating back the Xicitix. He knows it is only a matter of time before they encroach on the Domain of Man, and by that time it may be too late to stop their spread. He advocates more drastic action, and has been known to hire mercenaries on the sly to test out more radical methods, such as chemical and biological weapons, against Xicitix hives.

Iron Hand Mercenary Company

- A. Sponsorship: Government (Northern Gun/Ishpeming)
- B. Outfits: Speciality Clothing, 20 points
- C. Equipment: Electronic Supplies & Good Gear, 5 points; Medical Equipment, 10 points
- D. Vehicles: Specialty Vehicles, 30 points
- E. Weapons: Extensive Weaponry, 40 points
- F. Communications: Superior Communications, 40 points
- G. Security: Tight, 10 points
- H. Permanent Base: Company City, 60 points
- I. Intelligence Resources: Scout Detachment, 5 points; Special Military Operatives 10 points
- J. Special Budget: Large Loans, 25 points
- K. General Alignment of Personnel: Anarchist & Unprincipled, 4 points
- L. Criminal Activity: None.
- M. Reputation: Excellent Reputation, 25 points
- N. Salary: Excellent Salary, 20 points
- Total Points: 289
- Size & Orientation: Mercenary Army

Unit Breakdown

The Iron Hand has a strong proportion of heavily armed and armored ground forces, using the cost effective Northern Gun reproductions of IHA designs. Instead of robot vehicles, the Iron Hand employs large amounts of tanks and armored personnel carriers. It is broken down into armored cavalry units consisting of tank companies, supported by power armor, mechanized infantry, and heavy air support.

The Armored Cavalry Regiment (1,300 personnel, including a 12-person HQ unit) consists of two squadrons. A typical armored cavalry squadron has 644 personnel, organized into three Cavalry Troops, one Tank Company, and one Artillery Battery. Another 700 active combat personnel make up the air support personnel, special operations and garrison infantry who man the city defenses.

Cavalry Troops (6)

4 NG Rolling Fury Battle Tanks

6 NG Rolling Storm Medium Tanks

13 NG Rolling Explorer APCs

20 NG-X3 Bouncer Power Armor Units (carried inside APC)

Total Crew: 60

Total Infantry (including "Bouncers"): 130

Note: Infantry, equipped with medium body armor, NG-IP7 Ion Pulse Rifles and IG-57 Heavy Ion Blasters. Twenty percent will be full-conversion cyborgs with NG-P7 Particle Beam Rifles, NG202 Rail Guns, or other heavy weapons.

Tank Company (2)

10 NG Rolling Fury Battle Tanks

4 NG Rolling Storm Medium Tanks

Total Crew: 56

Artillery Battery (2)

6 NG Rolling Lightning Missile Vehicles

Total Crew: 18

Bug Busters

The most famous section of the Iron Hand is the air support unit. Known as the Bug Busters, these airmen fly constant sorties over hive territory to eliminate the growing threat, and their fighter pilots are known to be the best air-to-air dogfighters in the world: A title they sometimes attempt to prove against the RPA "Fly Boys" stationed in southern Wisconsin.

Recruiting pilots isn't much of a problem, as the company pays an outrageous salary and provides top-of-the-line Northern Gun aircraft. A famous line for recruiters is: "You provide the skills, we'll provide the thrills". Therefore, the bug busters fly NG Golden Eagle Fighter Jets, NG Northern Harrier Attack Fighters, and NG Northern Eagle Helicopters in support of ground troops and in general air-to-air or air-to-ground assaults against Xiticix swarms and hives.

New Product Line

March 24th, 101 P.A.

For some reason I was in an excellent mood today. The snow had melted and the streets were in the process of drying under what little sun could reach them through the haze that hung like a shroud over

the city. Today was the day of the Ishpeming Bazaar and I had been looking forward to it for quite some time. In fact, when I had been told that we might not arrive in Ishpeming in time for the Bazaar, I felt a momentary pang of regret that I haven't felt since my favorite library in Lazlo closed for renovation when I was a child. Thankfully, my fears were unfounded, as we did in fact make it back to Ishpeming several days ahead of the event.

The Ishpeming Bazaar is a gala event! It is that time of year when the various vendors and store proprietors gather in the open spaces around the city to hawk their wares at discounted prices. Large parking lots, blocked off streets, parks, and just about any other place large enough is a suitable spot. Throngs of sentients from every race and walk of life make the pilgrimage to Ishpeming for a chance at purchasing that singular item that has been a gleam in their eye all year.

But the pilgrims are not all buyers. Traveling shows, exotic circuses, troubadours, bloodsports, and anything else you can imagine also find it worthwhile to set up camp in Ishpeming during the Bazaar. At the Bazaar I have sampled exotic cuisine from seemingly foreign parts of this very continent; I have danced with beautiful alien females from other dimensions; and I have heard stories enough to fill volumes in the libraries of my beloved Lazlo, from both mercenaries and scholars alike. I wish that I could regale you with all of them in the pages of this journal!

Northern Gun is the real heart of the Bazaar. If history tells the tale true, Northern Gun started the Bazaar years ago, when man was beginning to retake his ancestral home. The intent was to encourage people to open relations with Northern Gun, who had themselves just risen to new prominence after a long fall into darkness. Northern Gun offered incentives to those communities who held account contracts with the company, giving them favored status at the bargaining table.

In time, the Bazaar grew into more than just a display of Northern Gun's weapons and equipment as small inventors and companies used the Bazaar to advertise their creations. Northern Gun would then endeavor to obtain the most successful of those creations and market them, with large profits going to the creators.

This system worked well for Northern Gun and made many people wealthy. Small industry brought itself back to Ishpeming, under watchful eye of Northern Gun.

- An excerpt from the journal of Alexander Dubeau, former Lazlo dilettante

Thanks to the CS trade deal, as well as the continued work of the RAID and R&D Divisions, Northern Gun continues to bring new products to the market place. Efforts persist to improve upon, or pilfer from, existing designs in order to bring small-time buyers fresh, new weapons and equipment. But the real strides have been made in the high-end market, where technological breakthroughs and acquisitions have significantly increased the PA and Vehicle catalog.

Weapons

NG-45LPP "Long Pulse Pistol"

By Ian Schroen

The LPP is a pulse version of Northern Gun's popular long-barreled pistol. Still a favorite among Juicers and Bounty Hunters, although some of the range of the original was sacrificed to add the extra power.

Weight: 6 lbs (2.7 kg).

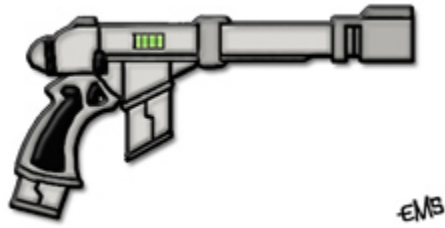
Mega-Damage: Single shot 5D6 M.D. or double-pulse shot 6D6+2 M.D.

Rate of Fire: Single shots of double-pulse only.

Range: 1000 feet (300 m).

Payload: 8 shots per standard E-Clip, 13 with a Long E-Clip, 42 with power pack.

Cost: 26,000 credits.



NG-M286 Multi-Weapon System

A popular trend among mercenary forces is to mate two different weapon systems together to give each soldier enhanced capabilities on the battlefield. Northern Gun engineers have noted this trend as well and have released the NG-M286 Multi-Weapon System. The second in a possible new series of multi-weapon systems (the first being the NG-M100), Northern Gun designers have taken their NG-303 Infantry Mini-Rail Gun and added the grenade launcher from their NG-Super to the underside of the weapon; in an improvement to the basic design, the engineers have made the grenade launcher a semi-automatic weapon. Further, the designers added a modified version of their NG-IP7 on top. An ambidextrous selector switch enables the user to switch from one weapon to another and still use the same trigger. The weight and bulk of weapon require the user to have a P.S. of 22, otherwise they are -3 to strike.

Weight: 57 lbs (25.9 kg).

Mega-Damage: Rail Gun: 1D4 M.D. for a single round or 5D6 M.D. for a 10 round burst.

Ion: 3D6 M.D. per single shot or 1D4x10 M.D. for a three-pulse shot.

Grenade: 4D6 M.D. to a 6 foot (1.8 m) blast radius

Rate of Fire: Rail Gun: Single shot or 10 round burst, both count as one melee attack.

Ion: Single shot or three round pulse, both count as one melee attack.

Grenade: Single shot only, counts as one melee attack.

Range: Rail Gun: 2,000 feet (610 m). Ion: 1,600 feet (488 m). Grenade: 1,000 feet (305 m).

Payload: Rail Gun: Uses the same drum from the NG-303; 200 rounds or 20 bursts in a lightweight plastic drum. Like the 303, the M286 model uses a long e-clip for power, good for 40 bursts. The e-clip is inserted into the stock.

Ion: 30 single shots or 10 Pulse from a standard, long e-clip. This e-clip is inserted from the weapon's left side.

Grenade: Six grenades, hand loaded one at a time.

Cost: 85,000 credits



NG-AABS2 Anti-Armor Beam System

By Mark Temple

The AABS2 is a heavy energy weapon, designed for anti-armor work. It has a large focusing barrel, and no E-Clip Slot. This weapon must be connected to a NG Powerpack to function, due to the high energy output. It has 3 settings for varying levels of damage. The Beam System is heavy and requires a minimum P.S. of 22 to use handheld; a minimum P.S. of 14 is required to use the weapon when mounted on a tripod or hard point.

Weight: 47 lbs (21 kg).

Mega-Damage: Light blast deals 5D6 M.D., medium blast deals 1D4x10 M.D., and a heavy blast deals 2D4x10 M.D.

Range: 5000 feet (1524 m).

Rate of Fire: Each shot counts as one melee action, but the weapon may only be fired a limited number of times per melee, due to the time it takes to cool the capacitors; light blasts can be fired 4 times a melee, medium blast 3 times, heavy blast 2 times.

Payload: A NG Powerpack provides 8 shots on the light setting, 4 shots on the medium setting, and 2 shots on high setting.

Cost: 92,000 credits.



NG-LAW1 Light Anti-Armor Weapon

By Mark Temple

To make an affordable anti-armor weapon, NG introduced a detachable trigger and sight assembly, which attaches to a single shot SRM tube. After firing, the used launcher tube is detached and can be replaced. Detaching the trigger assembly is very easy, and can be done without using up any actions. However, replacing a launcher tube takes 4 melee actions. The missile exhaust ruins the firing circuits, meaning that the tube may not be reloaded or reused. The sight assembly features x20 telescopic magnification with a 2 mile (3.2 km) range, infrared vision with a 2000 foot (610 m) range, passive nightvision with a 2000 foot (610 m) range, and laser targeting. In addition to being affordable, the weapon is more practical for infantry than a standard missile launcher.

Weight: The full NG-LAW1 assembly, missile, and launching tube weighs 16 lbs (7.3 kg). The detachable trigger and sight assembly only weighs 3 lbs (1.4 kg) and is designed to fit into a standard weapon holster.

Mega-Damage: Armor Piercing (heavy) SRM deals 2D4x10 M.D. to a five foot blast radius.

Range: 5 miles (8 km).

Rate Of Fire: single shot, single use only.

Payload: one SRM.

Cost: A full, complete assembly costs 11,000 credits. Replacement tubes are 3200 credits each.

Equipment & Body Armor

NG-BRS01 Weapon Biometric Recognition System

By Ian Schroen

The BRS01 is a biometric security system for your gun. It utilizes a customized grip with thousands of tiny sensors; these sensors track the complex motion of the hand as it squeezes the trigger, checking it against the stored profile of registered users. The sensors are sensitive enough to identify individual users. Calibration is performed by firing the weapon several times, allowing the sensors and computer system to build the authorized user profile. This must be done at Northern Gun dealerships. The system can also be calibrated far more loosely, authenticating users based on human status. For this reason, the Coalition States is a major purchaser of the technology, utilizing it so that non-humans cannot fire their weapons if stolen. The CS is currently evaluating the technology through a pilot deployment in the Chi-Town 'burbs.

Cost: 7,000 per weapon.

NG-BRS02 Vehicle Biometric Recognition System

By Ian Schroen

The BRS02 is a biometric security system for your ride, and far more popular than the weapon technology. The premise is virtually identical: A gear shift or throttle is replaced. The new one contains thousands of tiny sensors; these sensors track the complex motion of the hand as it squeezes and moves the stick, checking it against the stored profile of registered users. The sensors are sensitive enough to identify individual users. When an unauthorized user tries to operate the vehicle, the power supply is disabled and can only be reset by inserting a smartcard. For an additional fee, owners in Ishpeming can subscribe to a security service that monitors the status of the system. Whenever the identification fails and the user does not insert the smart card, the vehicle is flagged as stolen, and NG STING operatives react to the location of the vehicle.

Cost: 11,000 per vehicle. Security service: 500 credits per month.

NG-CES7 Combat Enhancement System

By Mark Temple

The NG-CES7 is a system of Bio-sensors and auto-injection equipment designed to keep a soldier at peak performance. Somewhat like juice, these designer compounds are designed to provide temporary benefits with limited side effects. The CES is available in three methods of delivery: as an armband mounted version for standard infantry, built into power armor or body armor, or built into a robot cockpit. Each compound takes 1 melee round to metabolize and affect the user. The CES can be set to automatically inject appropriate compounds based on the user's vital signs. If the user gets fatigued, it injects the stimulant compound. If the user suffers significant damage (S.D.C. or H.P. below 50%), it injects the painkiller and IRMSS compounds. The auto-dose system keeps track of proper dosage and will not overdose unless overridden by the user.

Weight: 4 lbs (1.8 kg).

Payload: Varies by delivery type. The armband stores up to 12 doses, usually 4 of each type; the built-in types store 18 doses, usually 6 of each type.

Cost: CES7 armband system costs 13,000 credits. Integrated injection systems cost 22,000 credits. The cost of individual doses varies by compound.

CES Stimulant: A cocktail of synthetic adrenalin and other chemicals designed to increase reflexes and reduce fatigue.

Duration: 1D6 Minutes.

Bonuses: After injection, the user will be +2 to dodge, +2 to strike, and will fatigue at 1/4th the normal rate.

Level of Addictiveness: Medium. While the chemicals used are not addictive, the user can become addicted to the rush he/she receives when under its effects. Using the drug more than 7 times in a week will make the character an addict, craving the drug 1D4 times daily. Note: taking more than one dose in an hour constitutes an overdose, which is dangerous to the body and could result in a coma. For overdoses, roll save vs. coma at 10, a failed role deals 1D6 S.D.C. straight to hit points.

Cost: 300 credits per dose.

CES Painkiller: The user is able to ignore pain, although the compound also dulls the senses.

Duration: 3D6 minutes.

Bonuses: After injection, the user will be +4 to save vs. pain.

Penalties: After injection, the user will be -1 to dodge, -1 to strike, and -5% on all skills.

Level of Addictiveness: Low. The user will become addicted to the compound if used more than 2 hours straight. The painkiller is medium strength, designed to reduce the possibilities of addiction.

Cost: 150 credits per dose.

CES IRMSS Robots: This dose releases 12 nano-bots designed to help repair internal injuries.

Duration: 1 hour.

Bonuses: Use rules for IRMSS Robots as normal.

Level of Addictiveness: None.

Cost: 10,000

NG-EX18 Spartacus Exoskeleton

By Brian Hardwick & Mark Temple

The Spartacus is Northern Gun's second generation exoskeleton battle suit. Designed to do much more than to simply augment a soldier's physical abilities, the Spartacus offers its wearer a number of features to aid in combat.

Class: NG-EX18 Heavy Infantry Armor and Exoskeleton.

Weight: 85 lbs (38.5 kg).

Bonuses: +8 to PS, Speed score is doubled to a maximum of 44, +10 feet to jumps/leaps and fatigue rate is reduced by 75%. Additionally the wearer is +1 on initiative and gains 1 additional attack per melee.

Mobility Penalties: Fair. -30% to prowl, -15% to swim and perform acrobatics. No penalty to climb.

M.D.C. by location:

Head - 60

Arms - 50 each

Legs - 75 each

Main Body— 180

Notes: Exoskeleton is powered by an E-clip, located in a concealed slot on the back. A short E-clip will power the suit for 12 hours, while a Standard E-clip will power it for 24 hours.

Cost: 255,000 credits.

Features:

1. Soldier's Sight Optics Helmet: A standard Multi-Optics Helmet with increased capabilities and an integrated short range radio and scrambler (10 mile/16km range). The helmet offers a laser targeting sight/rangefinder (4000ft/1220m range), passive night vision (3000ft/914m range), 10x telescopic magnification (2 mile/3.2km range) and thermal imaging (2000ft/610m range).

2. Forearm Powerlinks: Using a modified version of the bionic Concealed Internal Power Supply, the Spartacus' forearms are designed to accommodate a single e-clip each. Using a properly modified weapon allows the wearer to increase his weapon's payload.

3. Integrated Combat Enhancement System: The NG-CES7 system is built in to the Spartacus suit.

4. Thigh Storage Unit: On each thigh of the Spartacus is a storage unit capable of holding up to four long or standard e-clips each.



Power Armor

NG-X3 Bounder Power Armor

By Jason Marker

Borrowing a page from Triax, Northern Gun has released a small, light suit of Powered Armor ideal for scouting and forward observing. This sleek suit is extremely fast, and it is capable of leaping long distances, and even limited flight, through the new vectored thrust system that has been applied throughout the entire X series of powered armor suits.

Bounder PA

Model Type: NG-X3

Class: Vectored Thrust Light Infantry Powered Armor

Crew: One

M.D.C. By Location

*Chest Spotlight (1) - 4

Arms (2) - 50 each

*Forearm Mounted Ion Cannon (1) - 35

*Hands (2) - 25 each

*Retractable Forearm Vibro Blades (2) - 35 each

Legs (2) - 110 each

Main Thrusters (2) - 45 each

*Maneuvering Jets (12) - 15 each

*Head - 40

**Main Body - 200

* A single asterisk indicates extremely small targets. These targets are hard to hit, requiring a called shot at -3 to strike.

** Destruction of the main body will shut down the power armor, effectively destroying it.

Speed

Running: 100 mph (160 km) maximum. The act of running does tire out its Operator, but at 20% of the usual fatigue rate.

Leaping: Unassisted, the Bounder can leap 20 feet (6 m) up and 30 feet (9 m) across. Jet assisted, the Bounder can leap 100 feet (30.5 m) high and 300 feet (91 m) across.

Power Leaping: With a running start, the Bounder can jump 120 feet (36.5 m) high and 350 feet (106 m) across. By combining leaping and running, the pilot can achieve and maintain a speed of about 175 mph (282 km). The pilot can control the thrusters with amazing accuracy and can stop in mid-leap, change direction, hover, etc. This leaping or bouncing travel can be maintained through light forest or brush, but traveling through anything denser and the pilot incurs a -1 to strike, parry and dodge due to limited vision and speed.

Limited Flight: The Bounder can actually take flight for short periods of time, but is ungainly in the air and the pilot runs the risk of burning out the thruster systems. Max flying speed is 100 mph (160 km) with an average cruising speed of 55 mph (89 km). The maximum altitude is 250 feet (76 m) and flight can only be sustained for two hours before the jets overheat and burn out. Underwater Capabilities: The Bounder is remarkably agile under water and can maintain an underwater or surface speed of 50 mph (80 km). The max depth is 1200 feet (365 m).

Statistical Data

Height: 6 feet, 6 inches (2 m).

Width: 3 feet (1 m).

Length: 3 feet (1 m).

Weight: 450 lbs (204 kg) fully loaded.

Physical Strength: Equal to a Cyborg/Augmented Human PS of 20.

Cargo: A small locker between the main thrusters for some personal items and a pistol. The unit comes

standard with a NG-45LP pistol and a NG-S2 Survival Pack.

Power System: Nuclear; average life is 15 years.

Cost: 2.9 Million Credits.

Weapons Systems

1. Forearm Mounted Ion Cannon: A more compact version of the NG-IP7 Ion Pulse rifle is mounted on the Forearm. This weapon is small but packs a surprising punch.

Primary Purpose: Assault.

Secondary Purpose: Defense.

Mega Damage: 3D6 M.D. for a single shot or 1D4x10 M.D. for a three-pulse burst.

Rate of Fire: Standard.

Effective Range: 1,600 feet (488 m).

Payload: Effectively Unlimited; linked to the power supply.

2. Retractable Forearm Vibro-Blades (2): The two foot long blades are mostly concealed in the elongated forearms. When fully extended, they work well for sabotage, hacking through foliage, making a quiet entryway, and of course, melee combat.

Primary Purpose: Melee Combat.

Secondary Purpose: Defense.

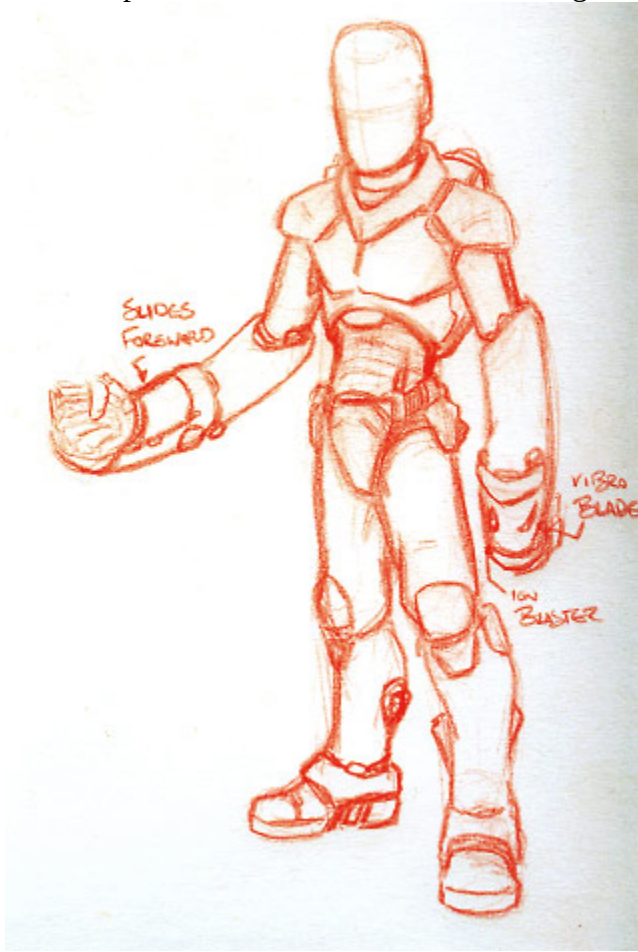
Mega Damage: 3D6 for standard attacks. 5D6 per leaping strike (counts as two melee actions).

3. Optional Hand Held Weapon: The bouncer can use any man-sized weapon and many of the smaller weapons suitable for Powered Armor. The Bouncer can also use the NG-202 or the NG-R440, but the addition of either weapon will reduce the speed and length of the bouncer's jumps by 20% and reduce its bonuses by 1.

4. Hand to Hand Combat: The Bouncer may also engage in Hand to Hand combat. Bonuses are dictated by Robot Combat Elite from Rifts: p. 45. Due to its small size and high speed the Bouncer enjoys the following bonuses on top of those gained by Robot Combat Elite: +2 parry/dodge, +2 to auto-dodge only while leaping/bounding.

5. Systems of Note: The bouncer has a full compliment of sensory equipment, including thermal imaging, telescopic 10x magnification, infrared & ultraviolet imaging, infrared searchlight, passive night vision, tactical video camera, and high output radio with scrambler. Due to the sensory systems, the

Bounder pilot receives a +1 bonus on all ranged attacks



Kodiak Power Armor

By Phillip D. Humphrey

"I remember them like it was yesterday. The three of them, they were all perched atop us in the mountains, where we couldn't get any sight of 'em-smart bastards. They all stood up at once and fired down a huge load o' missiles. They destroyed the APC, killing everyone inside. Scared the piss outta me so much I couldn't move a muscle. I could only sit there and watch as they jumped straight off the cliffs land perfectly with ease, they killed everyone... Jackson. Orison. Julia. All of them gone now. I wish that they would have gone me too now. The horror, the screams, I can't get them out o' my head; they were brutal killing machines."

- An excerpt taken from a lone survivor from CS platoon Alpha-Pi on routine patrol.

The Kodiak is designed with head hunters in mind. With the dual shoulder mounted short-ranged missiles and the 386 "Line Backer" heavy weapons system, this suit earns its name as one of the best heavy powered armors in the field. It uses the state of the art Hydro-Jump system. This system allows the Kodiak to jump higher and further than with traditional hydraulics. It's best suited in the mountains as to achieve the Kodiak's best abilities, and as long range mobile armor support.

Kodiak PA

Model Type: NG-WSPA-458

Class: Heavy Tactical Assault Power Armor

Crew: One

M.D.C. by Location:

Shoulder Mounted SR-M Launchers (2) - 85 each

*Chest Spotlight - 13

**Chest Sensor Cluster - 25

386 "Line Backer" Heavy Weapon System - 95

**Head - 110

*Hands (2) - 45 each

Arms (2) - 170 each

Legs (2) - 265 each

***Main Body - 415

* This is a small and difficult target to strike, requiring a "called shot," even then at -3 to strike.

** Destroying the sensor cluster will activate the secondary sensory system located in the head.

Destroying the head will destroy the secondary sensory systems. If both sensor systems are destroyed, the pilot must rely on his own vision.

*** If the main body is destroyed, the Kodiak is rendered useless, but may be salvageable for parts.

Speed

Running: 55 mph (88 km) maximum; the act of running does not tire the pilot.

Leaping: The new Hydro-Jump system allows the Kodiak to jump 40 feet (12 m) high, 50 feet (15 m) across from a standing still position; the Hydro-Jump system can only be engaged from a standing position. Without use of the Hydro-Jump system, the Kodiak can jump 10 feet (3 m) high and 15 feet (4.6 m) across from a standing position, and 12 feet (3.6 m) high and 20 feet (6 m) across with a running start.

Underwater Capabilities: The Kodiak power armor is too heavy to swim, but can walk across the ocean/sea floor at 8 mph (13 km) maximum. Maximum ocean depth is 2250 feet (685 m).

Statistical Data

Height: 11 feet, 8 inches (3.6 m) from head to toe. With the missile packs attached, the Kodiak measures 15 feet, 11 inches (4.7 m) tall.

Width: 4 feet, 6 inches (1.3 m).

Weight: 1.1 tons fully loaded, 1600 lbs. (726 kg) with no gear.

Physical Strength: Equal to a Robot P.S. of 35.

Cargo: A small 2 x 1 x 1/2 foot (60 x 30 x 15 cm) compartment, room enough for some clothes, a sidearm or rifle, and a survival kit.

Power System: Nuclear, the average expected energy life is, 15 years.

Cost: 5.2 million for a fully loaded suit, 3.9 million for a Kodiak with no missiles.

Weapon Systems

1. 386 "Line Backer" Heavy Weapons System: The Line Backer is a heavy rail gun, with a grenade launcher attached under and a high powered laser attached over the barrel of the rail gun.

This is a well balanced weapon good for almost all situations of combat. The 386 houses an advanced targeting scope, and it has a cable tied to the internal power supply to power the laser.

Primary Purpose: Assault

Secondary Purpose: Defense

Mega-Damage: The rail gun does 1D4x10+8 M.D. for a forty shot burst. The grenade launcher can fire a fragmentation grenade doing 3D6 M.D. to a 35 foot (10.7 m) blast radius or a HE round doing 6D6 M.D. to a 5 foot (1.5 m) area. The high power laser does 4D6 M.D.

Rate of Fire: The rail gun fires forty shot bursts only. The grenade launcher is pump action. The high powered laser fires single shots only.

Range: Rail gun, 4000 feet (1220 m). Grenade Launcher, 1600 feet (488 m).

High Powered Laser, 3500 feet (1066 m).

Payload: Rail gun, 600 rounds in each clip, enough for 15 bursts. Grenade Launcher, 6 explosive rounds

hand loaded. High Powered Laser, effectively unlimited, as the laser runs off of the Kodiak's power supply.

2. Shoulder Mounted SR-M Launcher (2): The Kodiak's long range weapon. With these, the Kodiak attack from long range, bombarding a camp of enemy troops or monsters from a safe distance, softening the defenses before moving in.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Armor

Secondary Purpose: Anti-Supernatural

Mega-Damage: Varies with missile type, usually equipped with Armor-Piercing, or HE-Medium warheads.

Rate of Fire: One missile at a time, or in volleys of 2 or 4.

Range: Varies with missile type, usually 5 miles (8 km).

Payload: 12 total. 6 per launcher.

3. Hand to Hand Combat: Rather than use a weapon the Kodiak can engage in mega-damage hand to hand combat. See Basic and Elite Power Armor Combat Training on page 45 of Rifts® RPG for combat bonuses. The basic bonuses and abilities of "elite" Power Armor Combat Training is the same with the following extra bonuses and increased damage capabilities.

+2 to roll

+1 to parry.

Restrained Punch - 1D4 M.D.

Full Strength Punch - 1D6 M.D.

Power Punch - 3D4, but counts as two melee attacks

Tear or Pry with Hands - 1D6 M.D.

Kick Attack - 2D4 M.D.

Leaping Kick Attack - 3D6 M.D.

Hydro Leap Kick - 5D6 M.D. This attack must be used at the beginning of the melee round, and uses all but two melee attack.

Body Block/Tackle - 1D8 M.D.

Hydro Stomp - 3D4 M.D. This is when a pilot engages the Hydro-Jump system and then lands with its full weight on its target. There is a 01-45% Chance of the target getting knocked back under the weight of the Kodiak if the target weighs less than 1 ton. This attack uses three melee attacks.

Forester Power Armor

By Phillip D. Humphrey

The Forester is a good, reliable piece of hardware in the wilderness of North America, especially in the northern rain forests. The forester uses simple weaponry, it's fairly well armored, and it's relatively cheap. This particular suit is often bought by the larger logging companies, as it's inexpensive and reliable.

Forester Power Armor

Model Type: NG-WSPA-289

Class: Light Labor, and Exploration Power Armor

Crew: One

M.D.C. by Location:

*Right Arm Vibro-Chainsaw - 65

*Left Forearm Laser - 55

Right Shoulder Mounted Dual Mini Missile Launcher - 35
Arms (2) - 70 each

Legs (2) - 95 each

*Head - 55

**Main Body - 195

* A single asterisk indicates a small and difficult target to hit, requiring a called shot at -2 to strike. If the head is destroyed, the pilot loses all bonuses, and must rely on his own vision and senses.

** If the main body is destroyed the Forester is rendered useless, but may be salvageable.

Speed

Running: 40 mph (64 km) maximum. The act of running tires the Operator, but at 10% the usual fatigue rate.

Underwater Capabilities: The Forester PA can swim or walk along the bottom at speeds of 2 mph (3 km).

Maximum Ocean Depth: 1500 feet (454 m).

Statistical Data

Height: 7 inches (2.1 m).

Width: 3 feet (1 m).

Weight: 158 lbs (72 kg).

Physical Strength: Equal to a Cyborg/Augmented Human P.S. of 23

Cargo: None.

Power System: Nuclear with a 10 year life.

Cost: 725,000 credits.

Weapon Systems

1. Right Arm Chainsaw: A two foot long chainsaw is mounted on the right forearm, designed for logging and suitable for melee combat.

Primary Purpose: Logging.

Secondary Purpose: Defense.

Mega-Damage: 5D6 M.D.

Bonuses: The gains +2 to strike, +1 to parry when using the chainsaw.

2. Left Arm Laser: A light laser weapon mounted on the left arm.

Primary Purpose: Defense.

Secondary Purpose: Offense.

Mega-Damage: 2D6 M.D.

Rate of Fire: Equal to the combined total of hand to hand attacks per melee.

Range: 1200 feet (366 m).

Payload: Effectively Unlimited for the nuclear powered suit.

3. Shoulder Mounted Mini-Missile Launcher: The shoulder mounted launcher provides defense against enemy armor and the supernatural.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Supernatural

Secondary Purpose: Anti-Armor

Mega-Damage: Varies with Missile type.

Rate of Fire: One, or a volley of two.

Range: Varies by missile type; usually 1 mile (1.6 km).

Payload: 2 Mini-Missiles.

4. Energy Rifles, and Hand Held Weapons: The hands of the Forester are small enough to utilize human sized weapons.

5. Hand to Hand Combat: The Forrester can engage in mega-damage hand to hand combat. See Basic and Elite Power Armor Combat Training on page 45 of Rifts® RPG for combat bonuses.

Bionics

New Bionic Features

Concealed Internal Power Supply (CIPS): Only Applicable to Full Conversion Borgs. Like the Weapon Link to Power Supply, the CIPS is a system of conduits to tie external weapons to the Cyborg's power supply. The link provides enough energy to give most weapons an unlimited payload; however unlike the weapon link, the CIPS does not use external cables to link the weapon. Instead, the CIPS is wired through an arm of the Borg, much like a concealed forearm laser. The weapon interfaces to the CIPS through a port in the palm. Modification is required on each weapon to be used; the modifications are very difficult if the e-clip port is not located in the weapon's trigger grip. Note: Extended use of the CIPS can drain the power supply, reducing the speed and leaping distance by 20%-50%. Cost: 75,000 credits for CIPS. Weapon modifications range from 20,000 to 100,000 credits.

CIPS Integrated Weapons

With enough time, money and know-how, any energy weapon can be modified to work with the CIPS system. However, NG has produced a limited run of popular weapons modified for use with the CIPS, each costing about 25,000 more than the standard model:

NG-LP45

NG-LPP45 (new)

NG-L5

NG-IP7

NG-E4

NG Sentinel Class Cyborgs

By Ian Schroen

The Sentinel class cyborg series are among the oldest designs recovered from the Sentinel facility, and the plans have been worked on the longest, due largely to the fact that the designs were incomplete. It is unclear whether the plans date back to the Golden Age or if they were developed in the Dark Age, but the intention of the original designers is clear: at a distance, these 'borgs were supposed to look like normal soldiers, luring in the enemy. Early drawings and mockups resembled the old human body armor found in the Sentinel Facility. The first engineers hired by Northern Gun decided to keep this idea intact, and spend years trying to complete the designs.

The distinguishing feature of the Sentinel Class Cyborgs is the concealed weapons, especially the integration of Northern Gun's new bionic device, the Concealed Internal Power Supply (CIPS). Using the CIPS, these 'borgs can wield Heavy Energy weapons with effectively unlimited payloads, with the power supply link both concealed and armored.

Sentinel Mark I Cyborg

Model Type: NGCBRG Mark I

Class: Full Conversion Cyborg

M.D.C. by Location

**Head (1) - 85
*Hands (2) - 30 each
Arms (2) - 100 each
Vibro-Blade (retractable; inflict 2D6 M.D.) - 50
*Mini-Missile Launcher Chest Tube (concealed) - 40
Legs (2) - 170 each
***Main Body - 230

Damage Notes:

* A single asterisk indicates a small and/or difficult target to hit. The attacker must make a "Called Shot" and even then he is -3 to strike.

** The head is reinforced in order to provide the 85 M.D.C. Targeting the head and hands requires a "called shot" and even then the shooter is -4 to strike.

*** Reducing the main body to zero M.D.C. means it is shattered, riddled with holes, leaking vital fluids and incapable of movement or speech. However, the internal life support systems will keep the 'Borg's brain alive for 4D6 hours before it fails and the brain dies.

Note: Most Human-sized body armor cannot be worn, but cyborg armor can be (typically light armor, 135 M.D.C.).

Speed

Running: 120 mph (193 km) Maximum.

Leaping: 15 feet (4.5 m) high and 20 feet (6 m) across, plus the distance gained from acrobatic or gymnastic skills. Double with a running start.

Flying: Not possible unless a Cyborg Jet Pack is used.

Statistical Data

Height: Usually about 7-8 feet (2.1 to 2.4 m).

Weight: 1000 lbs. (450kg)

Tactile sensitivity: 70%

Robotic P.S.: 22

Bionic P.P.: 24

Power System: Nuclear, average life of 25 years.

Cost: 6.1 million to 6.7 million credits.

Standard Bionic Features: Loudspeaker; Built-in Language Translator; Voice Modulator; Amplified hearing: +1 to parry, +2 to dodge, +3 to initiative; Sound filtration system; Built-in Radio Transmitter and Receiver (5 miles/8 km); Multi-optic eyes: +1 to strike; Clock calendar; Gyro-compass; Bionic lung and toxic filter; Headjack; Concealed Internal Power Supply (CIPS) Port; Combat Computer: +1 on initiative, +1 to dodge, +1 to disarm, +2 to pull punch, and +2 to roll with punch, fall or impact.

Special Bonuses: +2 to initiative, +1 to parry with Vibro-Blade, +4 to pull punch, and +2 to roll with punch, fall or impact.

Weapon Systems

1. Concealed Forearm Laser: A laser is concealed in a compartment of the forearm (typically the left arm).

Primary Purpose: Precision cutting tool.

Secondary Purpose: Defense.

Mega-Damage: Adjustable damage. 1D6 or 2D6 M.D. per blast.

Rate of Fire: Each blast counts as one melee attack.

Range: 1,200 ft (365m).

Payload: Effectively unlimited.

2. Retractable Vibro-Blade: A short Vibro-Sword is concealed in the opposite forearm as the laser (typically the right). The blade has 50 M.D.C.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Personnel Hand to Hand Combat.

Secondary Purpose: Defense.

Mega-Damage: 2D6 M.D.

3. Mini-Missile Chest Launch Tube:

Primary Purpose: Anti-Aircraft and Anti-Armor.

Secondary Purpose: Anti-Personnel.

Missile Type: Any mini-missile can be used, but usually armor piercing (1D4x10 M.D.) or plasma (1D6x10 M.D.). Fragmentation (1D4x10 M.D.) may be used against ground troops.

Mega-Damage: Varies with missile type.

Range: About a mile (1.6 km).

Rate of Fire: One at a time or volleys of two or three.

Payload: 3 missiles.

4. CIPS Integrated Energy Weapon: The Sentinel class chassis comes standard with a NG energy weapon modified for Concealed Internal Power Supply (CIPS) Integration. CIPS port usually installed on the same arm as the retractable Vibro-Blade.

Primary Purpose: Varies by weapon.

Mega-Damage: Varies by weapon.

Range: Varies by weapon.

Payload: Effectively unlimited, as it draws on the cyborg's power supply via CIPS.

5. Robot P.S. and Punch Damage:

Restrained Punch - 6D6 S.D.C.

Full Strength Punch - 1D4 M.D.

Power Punch - 2D4 M.D.

Kick - 1D4 M.D.

Leaping Kick - 2D4 M.D.

6. Optional Use of Hand-Held Weapons: Any standard hand-held weapon can be used, from rail guns to laser rifles.



Sentinel Mark II Cyborg

Model Type: NGCBRG Mark II

Class: Heavy Full Conversion Cyborg

M.D.C. by Location

**Head (1) - 120

*Hands (2) - 40 each

Arms (2) - 120 each

Vibro-Blade (retractable; inflict 2D6 M.D.) - 50

Back Mini-Missile Launch Tubes (2) - 60 each

Legs (2) - 170 each

***Main Body - 300

Damage Notes:

* A single asterisk indicates a small and/or difficult target to hit. The attacker must make a "Called Shot" and even then he is -3 to strike.

** The head is reinforced in order to provide the 120 M.D.C. Targeting the head and hands requires a "called shot" and even then the shooter is -4 to strike.

*** Reducing the main body to zero M.D.C. means it is shattered, riddled with holes, leaking vital fluids and incapable of movement or speech. However, the internal life support systems will keep the 'Borg's brain alive for 4D6 hours before it fails and the brain dies.

Note: Human-sized body armor cannot be worn, but cyborg armor can be (typically 200 M.D.C.)

Speed

Running: 90 mph (148 km) Maximum.

Leaping: Without jet propulsion, it can leap 12 feet (3.6 m) high and 20 feet (6 m) across; increase by 30% with a running start. Jet thruster assisted leaps can hurl the Mark II 100 feet (30.5 m) high and 200 feet (61 m) across.

Flying: Not possible unless a Cyborg Jet Pack is used.

Statistical Data

Height: 10 feet (3 m).

Weight: 1600 lbs. (720kg)

Tactile Sensitivity: 50%

Robotic P.S.: 34

Bionic P.P.: 22

Power System: Nuclear, average life of 25 years.

Cost: 7.9 million to 8.5 million credits.

Standard Bionic Features: Loudspeaker; Built-in Language Translator; Voice Modulator; Amplified hearing: +1 to parry, +2 to dodge, +3 to initiative; Sound filtration system; Built-in Radio Transmitter and Receiver (5 miles/8 km); Multi-optic eyes: +1 to strike; Clock calendar; Gyro-compass; Bionic lung and toxic filter; Headjack; Cyberjet Nodes; Concealed Internal Power Supply (CIPS) Port; Combat Computer: +1 on initiative, +1 to dodge, +1 to disarm, +2 to pull punch, and +2 to roll with punch, fall or impact.

Special Bonuses: +1 to strike, +2 to parry, +4 to pull punch, and +2 to roll with punch, fall or impact.

Weapon Systems

1. Mini-Missile Back Launch Tubes (2; rear): Two Mini-Missile tubes are attached to the back of the Cyborg.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Aircraft and Anti-Armor.

Secondary Purpose: Anti-Personnel.

Missile Type: Any mini-missile can be used, but usually armor piercing (1D4x10 M.D.) or plasma (1D6x10 M.D.). Fragmentation (1D4x10 M.D.) may be used against ground troops.

Mega-Damage: Varies with missile type.

Range: About a mile (1.6 km).

Rate of Fire: One at a time or volleys of two or four.

Payload: 18 total, nine per launcher.

2. Concealed Forearm Ion Blaster: An Ion Blaster is concealed in a compartment of the forearm (typically the left arm).

Primary Purpose: Anti-Personnel.

Mega-Damage: Adjustable damage. 2D4 or 3D6 M.D. per blast.

Rate of Fire: Each blast counts as one melee attack.

Range: 500 ft (150m).

Payload: Effectively unlimited.

3. Retractable Vibro-Blade: A short Vibro-Sword is concealed in the opposite forearm as the laser (typically the right). The blade has 50 M.D.C.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Personnel Hand to Hand Combat.

Secondary Purpose: Defense.

Mega Damage: 2D6 M.D.

4. CIPS Integrated Energy Weapon: The Sentinel class chassis comes standard with a NG energy weapon modified for Concealed Internal Power Supply (CIPS) Integration. CIPS port usually installed on the same arm as the retractable Vibro-Blade.

Primary Purpose: Varies by weapon.

Mega-Damage: Varies by weapon.

Range: Varies by weapon.

Payload: Effectively unlimited, as it draws on the cyborg's power supply via CIPS.

5. Robot P.S. and Punch Damage:

Restrained Punch - 1D4 M.D.

Full Strength Punch - 1D6 M.D.

Power Punch - 3D4 M.D.

Kick - 1D6 M.D.

Leaping Kick - 2D6 M.D.

6. Optional Use of Hand-Held Weapons: Any standard hand-held weapon can be used, from rail guns

to laser rifles.



Robots & Vehicles

NG Super Hunter Upgrade Package

The Super Hunter package provides marked improvement for the NG robot in all areas. NG Engineers start the process by replacing the arms. The new arms have improved motors and artificial muscle, making the Hunter capable of a power punch. The trademark missile launchers have been removed and replaced with a double barreled laser version of the NG-330 mounted on each arm. New mini-missile launchers are mounted on each of the Hunters upper legs, and each launcher has a six missile payload. The lower legs feature a six shot grenade launcher, capable of utilizing either tear gas or fragmentation grenades.

The biggest change comes in the form of an improved coolant system. The large coolant tubes mounted on the back have been replaced with a smaller and more efficient model. This frees enough space to allow a back mounted short range missile launcher with a twelve shot payload. Finally, the NG Engineers upgrade the Hunter's armor.

Super Hunter Upgrade Package

Additional M.D.C. by Location:

Legs - +30 to each

Upper Arms - +20 to each
Main Access Hatch - +15
Additional Weight: +5 tons.
Cost: 10 million credits.

New Weapon Systems

1. Double-Barrel Forearm Laser (2): Each forearm has a double barreled version of the NG-330 laser.

Primary Purpose: Assault.

Mega-Damage: 5D6 M.D. on a single barrel blast or 1D6x10 M.D. on a dual blast.

Rate of Fire: Single or double barrel shots only.

Range: 2000 feet (610 m).

Payload: Effectively unlimited.

2. Thigh Mini-Missile Launchers (2): A pair of launchers mounted on the upper leg.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Armor.

Secondary Purpose: Assault.

Mega-Damage: Varies with missile type; typically loaded with armor piercing (1D4x10 M.D.) missiles.

Rate of Fire: One at a time or volleys of two, or three.

Range: About one mile (1.6 km).

Payload: 12 total; 6 per each launcher.

3. Shin Grenade Launchers (2): A pair of grenade launchers are mounted on each lower leg.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Personnel.

Mega-Damage: Varies with grenade type; typically loaded with tear gas or fragmentation grenades.

Rate of Fire: One at a time or volleys of two.

Range: 1000 feet (305m).

Payload: 12 total; 6 per each launcher.

4. Back Mini-Missile Launcher: A back mounted mini-missile launcher.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Armor.

Secondary Purpose: Assault.

Mega-Damage: Varies with missile type; typically loaded with armor piercing (1D4x10 M.D.) missiles.

Rate of Fire: One at a time or volleys of two, or three.

Range: About one mile (1.6 km).

Payload: 12 total.

NG-V12 Warrior

For several years, Northern Gun has been watching their old reliable warhorse robot vehicle, the Hunter, decline in terms of performance when compared to the latest designs coming out of the Coalition States, Titan Robotics, Triax Industries, and Naruni Enterprises. More importantly, sales were declining. To remedy this problem, NG embarked on a two fold plan. First they offered an upgrade package for the Hunter, enhancing its combat effectiveness. Second, they designed a new combat robot vehicle, the Warrior. Based on the NG-V10 "Super" robot vehicle frame, the Warrior is designed for intense combat operations.

The Warrior is a much faster design versus the Hunter or Super it is based on, capable of speeds up to 90 mph. The legs are also built for jumps and heavily reinforced to withstand impact. In terms of firepower, each of the Warrior's arms are dual over-under weapon systems, combining a powerful rail gun based on the NG-1001 Rail Rifle with a dependable laser mounted over it. For longer range and anti-aircraft duties the Warrior has twin short range missile launchers in each shoulder. The arms are heavily shielded, in case the pilot is forced to engage in melee combat. The Warrior is also well-equipped to handle enemy light infantry, with grenade launchers mounted on each leg and a ball turret with a machine-gun in the center torso. It utilizes cutting edge sensor and computer systems.

Rumors are rampant that CS Engineers assisted in the design and are using the Warrior as a test platform.

Warrior Robot Vehicle

Model Type: NG-V12

Class: Assault Robot Vehicle

Crew: One pilot, one gunner and one communications tech.

M.D.C. by Location:

Arms (2) - 175 each

Shoulder Missile Launchers (2) - 75 each

Belly Turret - 50

Lower Leg Grenade Launcher (2) - 20 each

Legs (2) - 300 each

Head - 100

*Main Body - 550

Reinforced Pilots Compartment - 150

*Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body will shut the robot down completely, rendering it useless.

Speed

Running: 90 mph (145 km) maximum; it can reach maximum speed in 9 seconds.

Leaping: The powerful robot legs can leap 20 feet (6 m) from a standing start, add 10 feet (3 m) with a short run.

Underwater Capabilities: The Warrior can walk along the bottom at a top speed of 20 mph (32.2 km).

Maximum Depth Underwater: 1200 feet (366 m).

Statistical Data

Height: 24 feet (7.3 m).

Width: 13 feet (4 m).

Length: 10 feet (3 m).

Weight: 35 tons.

Physical Strength: Equal to a Robotic PS of 50.

Cargo: Minimal storage areas; enough for a survival kit and pistol.

Power System: Nuclear, average life is 20 years.

Cost: 68 million credits.

Weapon Systems

1. Dual Weapon Arms (2): Each arm has an over-under laser cannon/rail gun combo. The top barrel is the laser, used for longer range precision hits. The rail guns are used to provide the knockdown power once the range has closed.

Primary Purpose: Assault

Secondary Purpose: Defense

Mega-Damage: Laser Cannon: 1D6x10 M.D. or 2D6x10 M.D. when fired together. Rail Gun: 2D4x10 M.D. or 4D4x10 M.D. when fired together.

Rate of Fire: Single shot only for the laser. The rail guns are only capable of twenty-round bursts. The Warrior can use either the lasers or the rail guns of both arms together simultaneously; however, it cannot fire the laser and rail gun together.

Range: Laser: 6000 feet (1830 m). Rail Gun: 4000 feet (1220 m).

Payload: Laser: Effectively unlimited, hooked to the nuclear power supply. Rail Gun: 2000 round canister in each arm, enough for 100 bursts. Reloading the rail guns is a quick and simple task if using pre-loaded canisters. The pilot or gunner can simply eject the empty canister and a reload team can

replace with a loaded canister in under five minutes.

2. Short Range Missile Launchers (2): Shoulder mounted short-range mini-missile launchers provide for long range firepower.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Aircraft

Secondary Purpose: Anti-Armor

Mega-Damage: Varies with missile type.

Range: About one mile (1.6 km).

Rate of Fire: Single shot or volleys of two.

Payload: 12 total; 6 in each launcher.

3. Grenade Launcher (2): Upper leg mounted grenade launchers provide anti-infantry support.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Infantry

Secondary Purpose: Defense

Mega-Damage: Varies with grenade type. The Warrior can use any type listed under the GL-10 Grenade Launcher in Merc Ops.

Rate of Fire: Single shot or volleys of two, three, four or six grenades.

Range: Can launch grenades up to 800 feet (244 m).

Payload: 24 total, 12 in each launcher.

4. 14.5mm Machine Gun: Ball turret machinegun mounted on the torso.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Infantry

Secondary Purpose: Riot Control

Mega-Damage: A burst of 40 rounds does 5D6 M.D. or 2D6x10 S.D.C. using rubber bullets.

Range: 2000 feet (610 m).

Payload: An internal drum magazine holds 800 rounds, enough for 20 bursts.

5. Enhanced Defenses: The Warrior is specially hardened and equipped with many redundant features. The net result is that if using the Optional Robot Combat Damage Table located in Rifts: Ultimate Edition, the Warrior only needs to roll when it has suffered 75% damage to a location rather than the normal 60%.

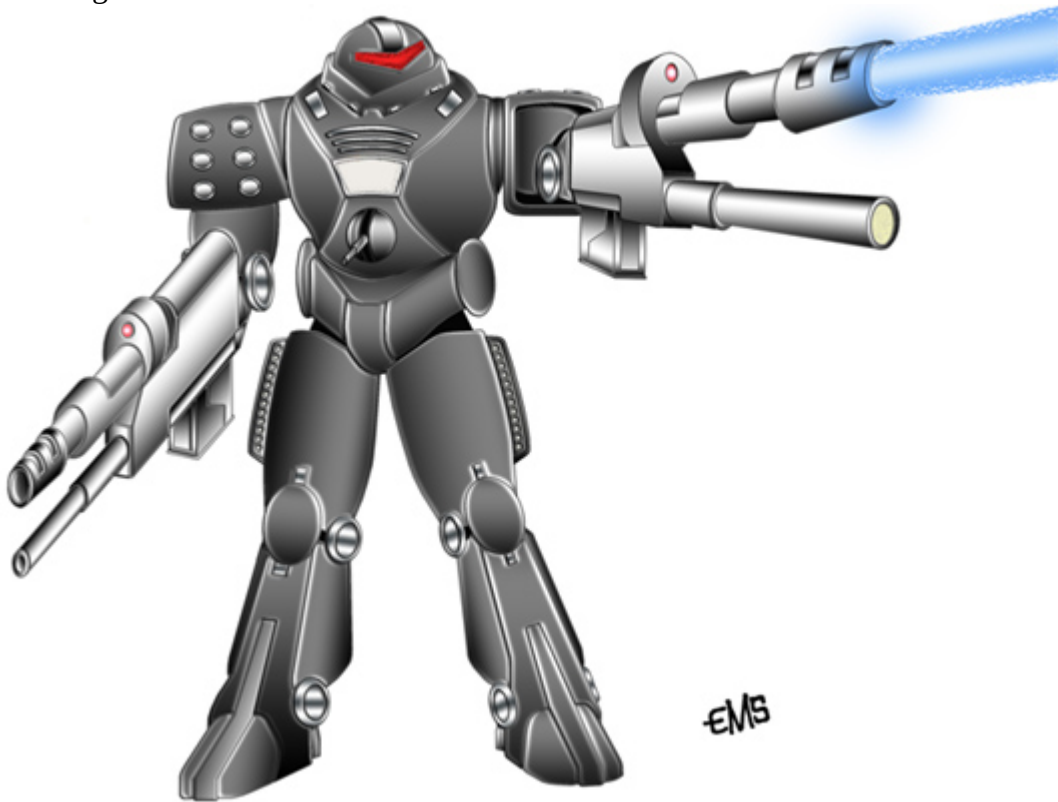
6. Sensors of Note: The Warrior is equipped with the best sensors Northern Gun can produce. It has all the standard features common to all robot vehicles as listed on page 273 of Rifts Ultimate Edition. The Warrior also has a more advanced laser targeting and more powerful combat computer than previous models. For the pilot, a complete optical system is included that has thermal imaging, telescopic, ultraviolet and infrared optics.

7. Hand to Hand Combat: The pilot of the Warrior can engage in Mega-Damage Hand to Hand Combat. Use the bonuses listed under "Heavy Ground Robots" on page 352 of Rifts Ultimate Edition for elite pilots. Basic Robot Combat bonuses are listed on page 351. In addition, pilots with the "Elite Robot Combat" gain additional bonuses from the design of the Warrior:

+2 Strike on ranged attacks using the arm mounted weapons

+1 Initiative

+1 Dodge



NG Switchblade UCAV

By Ian Schroen

A prime example of RAID cunning and NG R&D know-how is the Switchblade unmanned combat aerial vehicle (UCAV). The design schematics for the Switchblade were provided by engineer Arthur Chapman, formerly of Iron Heart Armaments (IHA). Handlers from the Industrial Espionage unit had been working Chapman for months to undermine production and steal plans, yet Chapman had been asking too high a price for the secrets he was trying to sell. That all changed when New Kenora was conquered by the Coalition. The CS assumed control of IHA and imprisoned all employees, branding them as traitors. As part of the IHA Treaty Deal, NG brokered the release of Chapman into their custody. In exchange for his freedom, Northern Gun demanded that Chapman work on all IHA conversion projects, as well as providing the stolen schematics they had been negotiating for. Among the acquired designs was the Switchblade.

Based on a Golden Age design, the Switchblade is an unmanned combat aerial vehicle capable of both extended reconnaissance and supersonic attack. In order to obtain efficiencies at both subsonic and supersonic flight, the Switchblade utilizes a long wing capable of in-flight reconfigurations. For takeoff and subsonic flights, the wing remains in a standard position, perpendicular to the body of the plane. But prior to breaking the sound barrier, the wing shifts 60 degrees into an oblique position, ideal for reducing the effect drag-causing shockwaves. IHA engineers had managed to prototype the drone, but were still trying to program the artificial intelligence when the CS invaded. NG Scientists were able to complete the work and bring the product to market.

Switchblade Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle

Class: Unmanned Robot Aircraft

Crew: None; artificial intelligence.

M.D.C. by Location:

Wing - 70

*Main Body - 55

*The robot aircraft is small and difficult to hit. A called shot must be announced and even then the attacker is - 2 to strike the body.

Note: Destroying the wing or depleting the M.D.C. of the main body will knock the UCAV out of the sky.

Speed

Flying: 1320 mph (2100 km)! Maximum altitude 60,000 feet (18288 m).

Range: 600 miles (960 km).

Statistical Data

Height: 5 feet (1.5 m) from belly to the top of the wings.

Width: 7 foot (2.1 m) wide body. 200 foot (61 m) wingspan.

Length: 11 feet (3.6m).

Weight: 1000 pounds (450 kg).

Cargo: None

Power System: Fuel engine; high cost models are available with nuclear power, but the low damage capacity of the UCAV usually deters the use of high cost models.

Robot Skills: Piloting 98%, basic math 98%, radio: basic 98%, Electronic Countermeasures 80%, navigation 85%, weapons systems 85%, intelligence 75%, detect concealment 60%, detect ambush 40%.

Sensors & Equipment of Note: High resolution camera with passive nightvision (2000 feet / 610 m), infrared (one mile / 1.6 km), and thermo-imager (4000 feet / 1220 m) lenses; long-range radio (500 miles / 800 km), internal FDD recorder that stores up to 12 hours of video footage; and radar, which can detect and track 16 separate targets at a range of 100 miles (160 km).

Stealth Capabilities: Covered with a radar absorbent coating to disturb radar detection (-10% to read sensory equipment skill rolls).

Cost: 1.3 million credits.

Weapon Systems

1. Bomb Bay: The Switchblade contains a small bomb bay, holding five laser-guided bombs. The bombs can be dropped through the bay doors in rapid succession, with the effect of a volley.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Vehicle and Bunker.

Secondary Purpose: Assault.

Mega-Damage: Varies with missile type. Same type and damage as long-range missiles, but triple the blast radius.

Rate of Fire: One at a time or in rapid-succession volley.

Range: About two miles (3.2 km) above the ground.

Payload: 5 bombs are stored in a rotating cylinder magazine.

2. Mini-Missile Launchers (2): A pair of side mounted launchers serve as air defense.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Aircraft.

Secondary Purpose: Assault.

Mega-Damage: Varies with missile type; typically loaded with armor piercing (1D4x10 M.D.) missiles.

Rate of Fire: One at a time or volleys of two, four or six.

Range: About one mile (1.6 km).

Payload: 24 total; 12 per each launcher.

NG "Eye in the Sky" Drones

By Mark Temple

This unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) is a critical element in modern warfare. A network of circling UAVs provide not only visual and radar coverage of the battlefield, but they can also can drop seismic

sensors to help detect the approach of enemy forces. With multiple drones, the sensor data can be combined and compared to create a 3-dimensional image of the battlefield and the forces on it, in real time. Controlled remotely by users, these drones will operate on limited AI in the absence of specific instructions.

NG "Eye in the Sky" Drones

Class: Unmanned Aerial Vehicle

Crew: None; artificial intelligence and remote operation.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Wings (2) - 10 each

*Tail - 15

*Main Body - 55

*The robot aircraft is small and difficult to hit. A called shot must be announced and even then the attacker is -4 to strike.

Note: Destroying the wing or tail, or depleting the M.D.C. of the main body will knock theUCAV out of the sky.

Speed

Flying: 70 mph (113 km).

Maximum Range: The drone can remain aloft for 24 hours in a scouting pattern before battery power runs low and it returns to its launch area. The drone has a maximum range of 300 miles (483 km) when traveling at full speed.

Statistical data

Height: 1 foot (30.5 cm).

Width: 6 feet (1.8 m) wingtip to wingtip, 2 feet (0.6 m) with wings folded in.

Length: 7 feet (2.1 m).

Weight: 20 lbs (9 kg).

Power system: High capacity batteries powering a ducted fan engine.

Robot Skills: Piloting 98%, basic math 98%, radio: basic 98%, navigation 85%, intelligence 75%, Electronic Countermeasures 70%, detect concealment 60%, detect ambush 40%.

Sensors & Equipment of Note: High resolution camera (1 mile / 1.6 km) with thermo-imaging (1 mile / 1.6 km), Infrared (1 mile / 1.6 km), and passive nightvision (2000 feet / 610 m) lenses; long-range radio (300 miles / 483 km); internal FDD recorder, storing up to 8 hours of video footage, radar, which can detect and track up to 24 separate targets at a range of 100 miles (160 km); and Deployable Seismic Sensors. Each drone carries 6 simple seismic sensors it deploys in a pre-programmed pattern. These sensors can detect the footsteps of humans within 1000 feet (305 m), ground-based power armor within 2000 feet (610 m), and robots and ground vehicles at 1.5 miles (2.4 km). Strength of the seismic signal is used to help determine the approximate distance from the sensor. Properly networked, this data can be used to pinpoint the rough location of the enemy units.

Stealth Capabilities: Covered with a radar absorbent coating to disturb radar detection (-10% to read sensory equipment skill rolls).

Cost: 100,000 credits each; currently in use with the Ishpeming Defense Force and only available to customers in good standing who place bulk orders.

NG Military Hovercraft

Don't need an Armored Personnel Carrier, but still want to move around the battlefield without becoming a target drone? These heavy-duty vehicles range from combat cars to borderline military aircraft. Most military hovercrafts are knock-offs of the CS AFC series of vehicle. Nuclear engines are standard, along with extra armor, speed and enhanced VTOL abilities. However, Northern Gun has also

combined their usual tenacity for duplication with creativity to bring some formidable original products to the market as well.

NG-750 Nightstalker

Without a doubt, the Nightstalker is a truly original design and a best seller for Northern Gun. The Nightstalker takes advances in hover craft technology taken from CS models and combines it with Northern Gun's longstanding tradition of hover cycle excellence, utilizing new high-tech materials to make an outstanding scout and light assault vehicle. Since its arrival on the market in early 109 P.A., Northern Gun's production facilities have barely been able to keep up with demand. The vehicle is frequently out of stock at NG Dealerships, and it usually sells at a thirty to forty percent premium.

What makes the vehicle so revolutionary is its use of stealth technologies. Using an improved version of the "Whisper" hover system found on the NG-230 Prowler hovercycle, the Nightstalker moves with a barely audible hiss when traveling at speeds below 30 mph (48 km). This enables those with the prowling skill to move the vehicle silently with only a -10% modifier to prowling.

In addition to the "Whisper" system, the vehicle is designed with sharp angles making it look more like a fighter jet than a low flying vehicle. The angles are designed to deflect radar emissions away from the source, giving the Nightstalker a low profile on most radar screens. Combined with radar absorbing paint and construction materials, the vehicle is almost impossible to spot. When hovering low to the ground or flying at treetop level, the Nightstalker can evade all but the most sophisticated radar systems.

Even the weapons systems are designed with stealth in mind. Each one is concealed inside the body of the hover craft and designed to pop open when used. These concealed weapons not only keep the radar profile low and give the vehicle excellent aerodynamics for top speed, they also make it hard for the opponent to judge the caliber of the vehicle before it is too late to respond.

The Nightstalker is already a big hit with IDF Special Forces and reconnaissance groups, and it's gaining notoriety with some of the major militaries. The Coalition has purchased a few hundred for use in border strikes and stealth raids, often painting the CS skull motif onto the nose of the vehicle. Despite the treaty, Northern Gun has even unwittingly supplied a large order of Nightstalkers to Free Quebec. Through a front company, Liberty Arms, the independent nation-state sees the vehicles as a tactical advantage in any 'first-strike' scenario against the CS.

Class: Light Assault Vehicle

Crew: One pilot and one gunner.

M.D.C. by location:

Concealed Mini-Missile Launchers (2) - 80 each

Front Windshield - 30

Side Windows (2) - 15 each

Doors (2) - 40 each

*Bottom Hover Jets (5) - 50 each

*Rear Jets (3) - 50 each

**Side Jets (4) - 50 each

***Main Body - 210

*Destroying one of the bottom jets will reduce speed by 10%, destroying one of the rear jets will reduce speed by 30%. These targets are small difficult to hit, requiring a called shot at -2 to hit.

**Destroying one of the side jets will render the prowling functions ineffective. These targets are small difficult to hit, requiring a called shot at -2 to hit.

***Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body complete destroys the vehicle.

Speed

Maximum Speed: 180 mph (290 km), cruising speed is considered to be 60 to 100 mph (96 to 160 km). VTOL capable, can hover stationary, and has retractable landing gear.

Maximum Altitude: 1000 feet (305 m)

Maximum Range: Nuclear power supply provides decades of life. The Nightstalker can be flown continuously for 36 hours without fear of overheating.

Statistical Data

Length: 20 feet (5.4 m)

Weight: 2.4 tons

Special Bonuses: The NG-750 provides a +5% to all piloting rolls. The driver can apply his or her prowl ability (if they have one) to piloting the NG-750 when trying to avoid detection (close to the ground, along cover, in shadows, etc.) If the pilot doesn't have a prowl skill, the base ability of the vehicle is 15%. In order to prowl, the vehicle must be moving below 30 mph (48 km). Due to stealth construction, the Nightstalker creates a -15% Read Sensory Instruments penalty to those trying to detect the vehicle with radar. Other forms of sensory detection are more effective and only face a penalty of -5%.

Sensors & Equipment of Note: Long and short range radio, infrared optics, radar, and combat computer.

Power Supply: Nuclear.

Cost: 2.2 million credits.

Weapons Systems

1. Concealed Double Barrel Laser: Beneath the nose of the vehicle is a laser-guided, retractable, double barreled laser cannon. The nose gun can rotate along a 180 degree arc in front of the vehicle. +1 to strike from laser targeting.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Vehicle.

Secondary Purpose: Assault.

Mega-Damage: 4D6 M.D. per simultaneous blast.

Rate of Fire: Standard.

Range: 2000 feet (610 m).

Payload: Effectively Unlimited.

2. Concealed Mini-Missile Launchers: (2) A pair of mini-missile launchers are mounted on each side of the vehicle.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Vehicle.

Secondary Purpose: Anti-Personnel.

Mega-Damage: Varies with missile type; typically loaded with armor piercing (1D4x10 M.D.) missiles.

Rate of Fire: One at a time or in volleys of two, three, four or five.

Range: About one mile (1.6 km).

Payload: 20 total; 10 per each launcher.

CS Military Hovercraft Knock-Offs

In addition to their own military and civilian hover cars, Northern Gun also sells knock-offs of CS Military Hovercraft. Details on the originals can be found in World Book 11: Coalition War Campaign.

NG-700 Boll Weevil

CS Designation: AFC-101 Command Car

Modifications: The "knock-off" version has 33% less armor in the main body (120 M.D.C.) but maintains the high-speeds and mobility the Command Car is famous for. The C-30R Light Rail Gun is replaced with an NG-101 Rail Gun.

Cost & Availability: 850,000 credits with NG-101 Rail Gun, 450,000 for a used vehicle with no rail gun. Good availability.

NG-701 Longhorn Beetle

CS Designation: AFC-103 Scarab Officer's Car

Modifications: The "knock-off" version has 33% less armor in the main body (180 M.D.C.) and is slightly less aerodynamic reducing top speed by about 20% (about 175 mph/280 km). The C-40BT Laser Turrets are replaced with a Heavy Laser Ball Turrets from the NG-230 Prowler Hovercycle (2D6 M.D.). The CR-10 Mini-Missile launcher is basically unchanged.

Cost & Availability: 2.1 million credits for a new system complete with weapons. 1.3 million for a used vehicle with no weapons.

NG-702 Stag Beetle

CS Designation: AFC-105 Skull Patrol Car

Modifications: M.D.C., speed, and performance are unchanged. The C-40PT Plasma Turret has been replaced with a modified NG E-6 Plasma Ejector (6D6 M.D.).

Cost & Availability: 1.8 million credits for a new system complete with weapons. 1.1 million for a used system with Plasma Ejector but no missiles.

CS Military Helicopter Knock-Offs

Northern Gun also sells knock-offs of CS Military Helicopters. Details on the originals can be found in World Book 11: Coalition War Campaign.

NG Wildcat

CS Designation: CH-10 Black Lightning Combat Helicopter

Modifications: The "knock-off" version does not have the nose laser or rail gun. The two C-33 rail guns have been replaced with NG-202 rail guns. The knock-off weighs 1 ton less, and the maximum speed has been increased to 320 mph (515 km).

Cost & Availability: 950,000 credits. Fair availability.

NG Viper

CS Designation: CH-12 Demon Locust Combat Helicopter

Modifications: The "knock-off" version does not have the nose laser. All three rail gun mounts have been replaced with NG-202 rail guns.

Cost & Availability: 1.2 million credits. Fair availability.

NG Mule Heavy Truck

By Mark Temple

Based on designs found in an old truck plant in what used to be New Haven, Michigan, Northern Gun engineers have long loved the Mule's design, and its ability to take on many roles. Early in its service life, the Mule was mostly relegated to duty as a basic cargo hauler, taking Northern Gun merchandise all over North America. But more recently, NG has met the increasing demands of mercenary consumers by turning the reliable Mule into a true multi-purpose vehicle. NG has designed special 'modules' that can be attached to the cargo bed of the Mule, fulfilling various roles as needed.

NG Mule Heavy Truck

Class: Heavy Cargo Carrier

Crew: one, up to two passengers in the forward Cab.

M.D.C. by Location:

Main Body - 200

Reinforced Cabin - 70

Cargo Bed - 100

Module - 150

Wheels (2 on front axle, 8 on the 2 rear axles) - 10 each

Speed

Top Speed: 70 mph (113 km).

Maximum Range: 420 miles on a full tank of fuel.

Statistical Data

Height: 9 feet (2.7 m).

Width: 8 feet (2.4 m).

Length: 30 feet (9.1 m).

Weight: 2.5 tons

Cargo: The Mule's basic cargo bed is rated to carry up to 15 tons.

Power Supply: Flex Fuel Power plant.

Market Cost: 150,000 credits; modules cost extra.

NG Mule Modules

Cargo Module: This is the original module produced by Northern Gun. It mainly serves to keep cargo protected from the elements and to deter thieves. The module is fitted with electronic locks and an alarm system.

Weight: 1500 lbs (680 kg).

Cost: 50,000 credits.

C3 Module: The Command, Control and Communications module replaces the cargo bed of the truck. It serves as mobile command center for units of up to a full company of infantry or armor. Inside, this module includes four command stations, a powerful computer for data processing, and a table with built-in holographic projector. The command station contains a small computer console tied into the tactical information and radio network. The radio transmitter/receiver cluster on the top of the module has a total of 5 M.D.C., and an effective range of 100 miles (161 km). Additionally there is a 25-foot extendable mast that contains a radar unit with a 75 mile (121 km) range. This module is a slightly better armored than the others, having a total of 200 M.D.C., and it is completely environmentally sealed. Multiple C3 modules can be linked with up to five other modules to allow for coordination of larger groups.

Weight: 8 tons.

Cost: 8-10 million credits. Poor Availability.

Passenger Module: This module converts the truck into an APC capable of carrying two dozen soldiers and their gear. The soldier's are somewhat crammed in, with little personal space, and their gear must be stowed under seats and/or in the center isle. This module is very common and readily available.

Alternatively, the seats may be converted into stretchers, allowing 16 wounded people to be housed and transported.

Weight: 2 tons.

Cost: 100,000 credits for the basic model. An enhancement module with environmental sealing costs 145,000 credits.

MASH Module: This module is built with expandable sections, allowing it to shift its walls outward to 30 feet (9.1 m) wide. The floor of the expanded sections are each supported by a half dozen foldable pillar like legs, which keeps the expanded sections stable, but requires the module to be compacted again before the truck can move. Two full surgical teams with operating tables and equipment can fit inside, although when the module is compacted, only the equipment can be carried. The floor and walls of this module are made of non-stick materials, for ease of cleaning and sanitizing. The medical team usually arrives in a second vehicle, typically a Mule with Passenger Module.

Weight: 12 tons.

Cost: 500,000 credits.

Mess Unit: The module is a full mobile kitchen, installed in a expanding module identical in

deployment to the MASH module. This kitchen includes storage for both dry and frozen goods, electric stoves and oven (large sized), folding counters, water processor and storage, sink, dishwasher, and storage for pots, pans, and cooking utensils. Designed to supply 150 - 200 hot meals an hour if constantly supplied and properly manned.

Weight: 9 tons.

Cost: 250,000 credits.

Maintenance and Repair Module, Infantry: This module houses a repair facility geared toward maintaining infantry weapons and environmental body armor. The module has four built in work stations, each with a variety of clamps and straps used to hold weapons in place while being serviced, as well as a basic diagnostic computer for energy or other hi-tech M.D.C. weapons. Each station has enough tools and supplies to repair or service up to 25 rifles each. Larger weapons like a rail gun may take more supplies while a pistol takes less. In addition to the repair stations, there is a racking system that holds four Universal E-Clip Rechargers. These units alone help drive up the cost of the module, but together they can recharge 32 standard e-clips an hour. Also included in the module are two complete conventional ballistic reloading sets for S.D.C. bullet reloads. The armor repair station is capable of restoring up to 200 points of mega-damage with the supplies in the module. Standard procedure is to have a second Mule equipped with a Cargo Module of additional supplies for extended campaigns.

Weight: 8 tons.

Cost: 5 million credits.

Maintenance and Repair Module, Power Armor: Building on the Infantry Maintenance and Repair Module, NG engineers have designed a separate module for power armor units. The designers took an assembly line approach to the repair module. A damaged power armor unit enters from the rear of the module via a lift gate. It is then hooked onto a track system in the ceiling that moves the PA into the module. Once inside, repair techs can run a full diagnostic on the units' systems, noting any problems and repairing them as needed. Armor and weapons repair or weapon reloading can also be done inside. The module holds enough replacement armor to repair 300 points of mega-damage, and enough other parts to repair two electronic systems. Once repairs are completed, the power armor exits out via a second lift gate on the passenger side of the vehicle, towards the front. Note that this module is larger than most: 10 feet (3 m) wide and 12 feet (3.7 m) tall.

Weight: 10 tons.

Cost: 8 million credits.

Maintenance and Repair Module, Robot: The third module of NG's Maintenance and Repair series is geared for the giant Robot Vehicles. This module tilts up on hydraulics, and opens up to create a 20 foot gantry for the repair of large robots. Armor repair, electronics diagnostics and repair, some motive system repair, and weapon replacing, rearming, reloading is all possible. Major repair like the reattachment of a limb, engine repair, or massive overhauls are not possible. Each module holds enough armor supplies to repair up to 600 points of armor damage and repair up to four major electronic systems.

Weight: 15 tons.

Cost: 10 million credits.

Drone Launching Module: The cargo bed is replaced with a large, special duty launch system for launching NG "Eye in the Sky" Drones. This system can launch one drone per minute and can carry up to 12 drones. To launch drones, the vehicle must be at a complete stop. The Front Cab section is lengthened to include four control stations, designed to activate and control the drones. The Command Stations in the C3 Module can also control the drones if needed as well.

Weight: 12 tons.

Cost: 1 million credits, Drones not included.

NG Wolverine ATV

Post-apocalyptic Earth is still a largely rugged wilderness and to traverse this wilderness rugged vehicles are needed. Northern Gun is a market leader in light-armored vehicles and the Wolverine is one of the most popular. This six-by-six light vehicle is fast, durable, and bristling with weapon mounts for energy rifles.

What makes this vehicle so versatile across any type of terrain is its six wheel independent suspension. Each wheel can move up and down over the terrain making the vehicle stick like glue to most terrain and ensuring the vehicle can maneuver even if only one wheel is touching solid ground. The wheels also make it possible to traverse slopes and grades in excess of sixty degrees. The pilot sits in the center of the vehicle behind a windshield while two gunners sit on either side using small arms attached to weapon mounts. The rear gunner stands in the back and operates the heavy weapon, usually a rail gun.

Electric engines not only keep the cost down but give the vehicle a low noise profile and low infrared signature, making it ideal for stealth and reconnaissance. The engines can also be recharged anywhere that e-clip charging can be done, providing a more dependable fuel source than gasoline and less expensive one than nuclear. In an innovative move the armored frame of the vehicle is made from the same light-weight ceramic materials used in body armor. This design features not only makes the vehicle extremely tough but also light weight. The driver is protected by a windscreen made of ballistic materials and angled to deflect fire. However, passengers in the Wolverine are exposed and must depend on their own personal body armor for protection from small arms fire.

The biggest user of the vehicle is the Ishpeming Defense Force and their mercenary armies. In IDF configuration, the roll bar weapon mount features an NG-202 rail gun. Wilderness patrols from Iron Mountain and Iron River regularly use the vehicle for missions into the Wisconsin Wild Lands. Also, the Sky Hawks of the 1st Michigan Airborne Regiment prefer the vehicle because it is light weight and easily air portable in transport aircraft.

Although originally designed for wilderness purposes, the vehicle is gaining popularity in the Pecos Badlands as a raider and fast-attack vehicle preferred by bandits. The Coalition Department of Special Divisions has purchased one hundred twenty units for use by Special Forces personnel and the CS State of Lone Star has purchased three hundred units for use in anti-bandit and reconnaissance operations. The CS version comes standard with a C-40R rail gun on the roll bar, but can also be equipped with the CTT-P40 Particle Beam Cannon or CTT-M20 Missile Rifle.

NG Wolverine ATV

Class: All Terrain Vehicle

Crew: Four: pilot, two passenger gunners and one rear gunner

M.D.C. by Location:

Tires (6) - 25 each

Pilot's Windshield - 15

*Main Body - 80

*Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body will destroy the vehicle, making it useless.

Speed

Maximum Speed: 70 mph (113 km)

Range: 400 miles (644 km)

Statistical Data

Height: 6 feet 1 inches (1.9 m)

Width: 5 feet, 2 inches (1.6 m)

Length: 13 feet, 5 inches (4.1 m)

Weight: 1.6 tons fully loaded

Cargo: The flat bed in the back can carry a few supplies.

Sensors & Equipment of Note: The vehicle comes standard with a long range field radio with wide-band, long range capabilities, frequency equalizer, field strength detector and scrambler. Range is about 60 miles (96 km).

Power Systems: Electric engine.

Cost: 50,000 for a new, undamaged system with electric engine. Add 70,000 for an NG-202 Rail Gun attachment.

Weapons Systems

1. Roll Bar Gun Mount: The mount can be used to house a variety of small arms. The gunner stands in the back of the vehicle and can traverse the weapon along a 180 degree arc of fire across and 70 degrees upward. The standard weapon is the NG-202 Rail Gun, although any weapon can be substituted.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Personnel.

Secondary Purpose: Anti-Armor.

Mega-Damage: A burst of 40 rounds and inflicts 1D4x10 M.D. One round does 1D4 M.D.

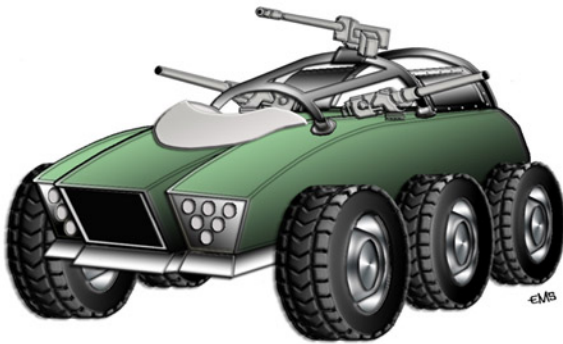
Range: 4000 feet (1200 m).

Rate of Fire: Standard.

Payload: 800 round belt (20 bursts).

2. Passenger Gun Mounts (2): Passengers sit to the left and right of the pilot with their personal guns mounted and directed outward and can fire in 45 degree arcs on either side and 5 degree arcs upward. Any type of energy rifle or conventional rifle can be used; these mounts are not suitable for rail guns although they could conceivably house man-portable plasma ejectors or particle beam rifles.

3. Smoke Dispensers (2): Two smoke dispensing units are mounted on either side of the front center roll bar. Each unit can release a dense cloud of smoke that will cover an 80 foot (24 m) area in front of the vehicle. The unit can also be equipped to emit tear gas.



NG Black Bear ATV

An upgrade over the Big Boss ATV, the Black Bear is designed to go cross-country and provide maximum protection to its occupants and cargo. The vehicle isn't much more than an armored box with a large engine on the front. Smaller kingdoms and mercenary companies like these comparatively inexpensive vehicles for their off-road capability and versatility. Black Bear ATVs can often be found employed by local police forces for urban combat and used by mercs and militaries for reconnaissance and convoy protection. Adventurers and everyday folks use the Black Bear like a pick-up truck to move around outside major cities and be afforded some measure of protection.

The four-wheel independent suspension allows the vehicle to manage slopes up to thirty degrees and roll over a variety of terrain. Large tires allow the vehicle to roll over obstacles as high as eighteen inches without any trouble. Adding a weapon to the roof mount can turn this armored transport into a fairly capable combat or command vehicle. Passengers are seated in the back in comfortable high-back chairs with seatbelts to protect them from inevitable bumps and jolts. The driver and one passenger sit in the

front of the vehicle. Two firing ports on each side of the vehicle can slide open allowing passengers to fire out, or they can be used for ventilation.

NG Black Bear ATV

Class: All Terrain Vehicle

Crew: One pilot, can seat up to nine passengers.

M.D.C. by Location:

Tires (4) - 15 each

Front Windshield - 15

*Main Body - 110

*Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body will destroy the vehicle, making it useless.

Speed

Maximum Speed: 65 mph (105 km).

Range: 500 miles (805 km).

Statistical Data

Height: 9 feet 4 inches (2.8 m).

Width: 8 feet, 4 inches (2.5 m).

Length: 25 feet (7.6 m).

Weight: 13.5 tons fully loaded.

Cargo: If not being used to transport personnel, the vehicle can carry up to 1500 lbs (680 kg) of cargo.

Sensors & Equipment of Note: The vehicle comes standard with a long range field radio with wide-band, long range capabilities, frequency equalizer, field strength detector and scrambler. Range is about 60 miles (96 km).

Weapon Systems: None. Although there is a top hatch that can mount an energy rifle or rail gun.

However, these do not come standard. There are also two firing ports on each side of the vehicle (four total) which passengers can use.

Power System: Electric engine.

Cost: 65,000 for a new, undamaged system with gasoline or electric engine and no weapons systems.

NG Bison GTV Truck

Northern Gun has stripped down their Rolling Thunder vehicle to make a more every day vehicle, ideal for more mundane uses. The truck is affordable and durable, and it was released to compete with GAW's Hummer. The Bison looks like a basic pick up truck.

NG Bison GTV Truck

Class: General Transport Vehicle

Crew: One driver, but can seat up to three additional occupants.

M.D.C. by Location:

Main Body - 25

Tires (4) - 5 each

Windshield - 15

Speed

Top Speed: 90 mph (144 km).

Range: 500 miles (805 km).

Statistical Data

Height: 6 feet (1.8 m).

Width: 8 feet (2.4 m).

Length: 18 feet (5.5 m).

Weight: 2 tons.

Cargo: Can hold up to 1 ton in its cargo bed or tow 1.5 tons.

Power System: Conventional gasoline or electric engine.

Cost: 75,000 credits.

NG Civilian Hovercraft

In addition to a very successful line of hover cycles for both civilian and military use, Northern Gun boasts a range of hover vehicles designed with passenger room and comfort in mind. Within the City of Ishpeming and the surrounding area, citizens will often use civilian model hover cars for transportation as they offer slightly more comfort than hover cycles and can be produced at low cost. All NG Civilian Hover Transports have the following standard features:

Automatic Climate Control. Each vehicle has air conditioning and heating systems that can be computer programmed to maintain specific temperatures. Additionally, the passenger and driver can have separate settings, although they usually have to be within 10 degrees of each other. Using pre-programmed settings, the system can be voice activated, and people usually choose words like "cold" or "hot" although any word can be used.

Vehicle Information System. This heads-up-display (H.U.D.) keeps the driver aware of average speed, outside temperature, maintenance needs, compass direction, distance to nearest towns/communities and other pertinent information.

Passenger Entertainment Stations. Built into the dash for the front passengers, and the back of the seat for the rear passengers, are touch screen computer systems. These computers offer a variety of functions from digital movies and musical selections to reading material. New music and data can be uploaded via PDD. Options allow music and sound to be pumped through the vehicle speaker systems or to individual headsets so each person can enjoy their own selections.

Smart Entry System. Called the "Sentry" system, this security feature allows the owner to unlock the vehicle with a voice command. In addition to voice recognition the owner can pre-program numeric codes, key words, or other layers of security. If the vehicle is tampered with, a short pulse signal is sent to the owner's key to alert them of the trouble without setting off any annoying bells and whistles.

Passenger Safety System. Both driver and passengers wear race car style harnesses that offer maximum safety. Additionally, the on-board computer monitors bumps and impacts. It uses the vehicle's thrusters to try and create an opposing force, thus minimizing the severity of bumps and impacts. The vehicle is +3 to roll with impact. A successful roll means all passengers suffer half damage from the impact.

NG-CT500 Dove

The Dove is one of the original NG model hover cars. It's widely used inside the city of Ishpeming and exported to other major cities for civilian use. The Dove is comfortable, reasonably fast and offers some protection in case of accident or emergency. The Dove is purposely designed to be heavily modified, and competent Operators can easily add extra armor or other external features with little trouble.

Class: Civilian Transport Vehicle

Crew: 1 pilot; it can seat 3 other passengers comfortably.

M.D.C. by location:

Front Windshield - 5

Rear Windshield - 5

Main Body - 75

Speed

Maximum Speed: 120 mph (193 km)

Maximum Altitude: 120 feet (36.6 m)

Maximum Range: 800 miles (1288 km)

Statistical Data

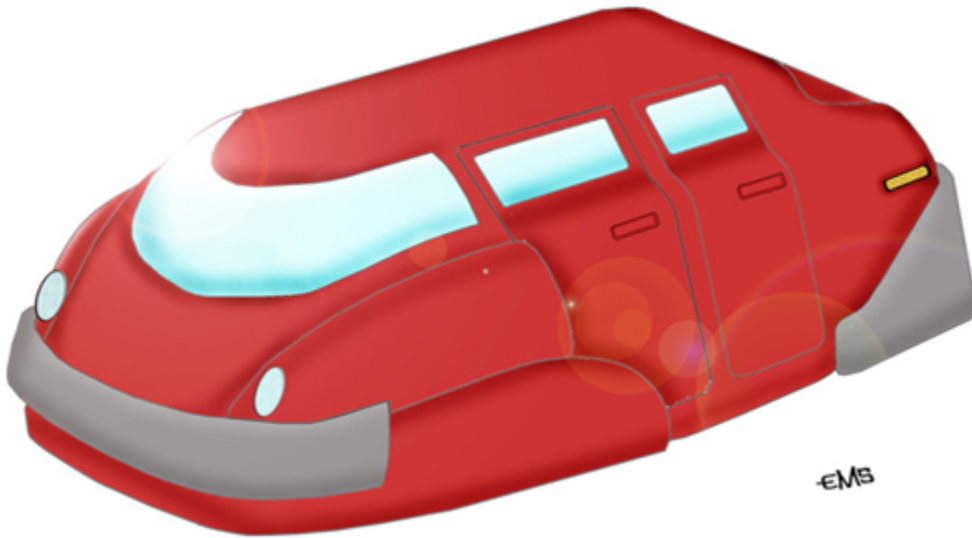
Length: 11 feet 2 inches (3.4 m)

Weight: 1,100 lbs (500 kg)

Special Bonuses: The NG-CT500 handles so well it provides a +10% bonus to the Pilot: Hovercraft skill.

Power Supply: Typically electric; nuclear and combustion are available

Cost: 60,000 credits for electric, 65,000 for gasoline, and 450,000 for nuclear with a 10 year life.

**NG-CT550 Osprey**

If a customer feels the need for speed, then the Osprey was designed with them in mind. This design sacrifices leg room for speed and handling. Modified Osprey vehicles are often raced for sport and entertainment; there is even a racing circuit in Ishpeming. The design is sleek, and it looks almost like a jet aircraft rather than a civilian transport. In addition to passenger room, this design also has less armor in order to keep it lightweight.

Class: Civilian Transport Vehicle

Crew: 1 pilot; it can seat 1 other passenger.

M.D.C. by location:

Front Windshield - 5

Rear Windshield - 5

Main Body - 50

Speed

Maximum Speed: 220 mph (354 km)

Maximum Altitude: 300 feet (91.5 m)

Maximum Range: 300 miles (483 km)

Statistical Data

Length: 13 feet 4 inches (4.1 m)

Weight: 1.4 tons

Special Bonuses: The NG-CT550 handles so well it provides a +15% bonus to the Pilot: Hovercraft skill.

Power Supply: Typically electric; nuclear and combustion are available.

Cost: 120,000 credits for electric, 125,000 for gasoline, and 550,000 for nuclear with a 10 year life.

NG-CT600 Stork

Like its name suggests, the Stork is designed for carrying things in safety and comfort, particularly one's family. This eight passenger hover vehicle is a favorite among families, but it also serves well in light military use, as rear echelon transport for large armies and as a cargo hauler. The six rear seats are easily removable, making the transport an ideal field ambulance, light transport, or even police vehicle.

Class: Civilian Transport Vehicle

Crew: 1 pilot; it can seat 7 passengers.

M.D.C. by location:

Front Windshield - 5

Rear Windshield - 5

Main Body - 80

Speed

Maximum Speed: 100 mph (161 km)

Maximum Altitude: 120 feet (36.6 m)

Maximum Range: 600 miles (966 km)

Statistical Data

Length: 19 feet (5.8 m)

Weight: 3.2 tons

Power Supply: Typically electric; nuclear and combustion are available

Cost: 120,000 credits for electric, 125,000 for gasoline, and 550,000 for nuclear with a 10 year life.

NG-CT650 Eagle

The NG-CT650 is a favorite for light industrial users and mercenaries on a budget. The NG Eagle Civilian Transport is a flat bed hover truck with a two passenger front cab and an outstanding engine for hauling and towing. As rugged as Northern Michigan itself, this vehicle promises performance and is even designed to 'rumble' slightly when the accelerator is pushed (this is purely for effect and a feature which can be turned off; the electric engine is extremely quiet). Mercenaries and under-funded militias have been known to mount a heavy weapon in the back and use the Eagle as an assault vehicle. The CT650 can regularly be seen towing artillery, moving supplies, and hauling cargo in the rear echelons of many armies.

Class: Civilian Transport Vehicle

Crew: 1 pilot; it can seat 1 other passenger.

M.D.C. by location:

Front Windshield - 10

Rear Windshield - 10

Main Body - 90

Speed

Maximum Speed: 80 mph (129 km)

Maximum Altitude: 120 feet (36.6 m)

Maximum Range: 600 miles (966 km)

Statistical Data

Length: 21 feet 5 inches (6.53 m)

Weight: 5.6 tons

Cargo: Can hold up to 1.25 tons in its cargo bed or tow 1.5 tons.

Power Supply: Typically electric; nuclear and combustion are available.

Cost: 125,000 credits for electric, 130,000 for gasoline (very popular), and 600,000 for nuclear with a 10 year life.

IHA Treaty

By Brian Hardwick & Ian Schroen

When the Coalition invasion force swept over New Kenora, Iron Heart Armaments (IHA) came under their control. IHA was one of big players in the vehicles market, and one of Northern Gun's biggest competitors in North America. The fall of this industry player pleased the Board at Northern Gun, but what pleased them even more was when the Coalition government offered up IHA as new terms of the Trade Agreement.

To firm up the alliance between the two powers, the Coalition agreed to hand over the IHA production facilities outside of Iron Heart, as well as the rights to their product line. However, the deal wasn't without strings attached. First, the CS seemed willing to part with the burden of maintaining the IHA facility due to its state of disrepair. An investigation after the invasion revealed that word of the attack had been leaked, and that the workers at IHA had advanced notice. Schematics were missing, computer equipment was destroyed, abandoned vehicles had been booby-trapped, and unfinished boats had been sunk. As part of the new deal, Northern Gun was required to return the dockyards to full capacity within six months. Additionally, all IHA naval ships, with the exception of the Black Eel Torpedo Boat, must be sold exclusively to the Coalition and sold at cost. Production quotas must be met to maintain the deal.

Additionally, Northern Gun is required to share sales information on who is buying the products from the newly acquired IHA line. The Coalition continues to push for the company to share all of its sales information, but it has resisted this request (thus far). Further, Northern Gun has agreed to completely cut off all sales to nations the Coalition considers an enemy or threat. However, the effect of this concession is limited, as the rogue traders often resell the products to these areas. While supplies still reach these areas, these supplies are low, which drives up the prices.

As part of the deal, Northern Gun got the Coalition to release eight IHA scientists who were captured and imprisoned during the invasion. Each of these scientists had been investigated by the RAID Industrial Espionage department, and most of them were selling secrets to NG in some capacity prior to the invasion. The eight have now effectively become prisoners of Ishpeming, required to work on the IHA projects in exchange for small freedoms and luxuries. And their assistance was imperative, as most of the information at the IHA plant was destroyed and anything that wasn't destroyed was encrypted.

After five months of research and reverse engineering, the IHA dockyard was once again operational, renamed Northern Dockyard. Meanwhile, RAID Ruins Recovery teams scoured the land and air production plants; when that research was concluded, they shipped what usable information and tools they had found back to Ishpeming and sold off the former IHA factories. The new deal required them to operate the dockyards, but it didn't require them to operate the other factories, and Northern Gun wasn't interested in operating any more facilities outside of its own jurisdiction that it had to.

Since then, the IHA product line has been absorbed into the NG line:

NG Rolling Fury Battle Tank

Old Designation: Iron Hammer Main Battle Tank

Intended Use: The former Iron Hammer tank caught the eye of CS commanders. As part of the treaty, this tank is to be sold exclusively to the Coalition for three years once it reaches production.

Modifications: The Rolling Fury tanks sold to the CS all utilize a nuclear powerplant. They also have an improved auto-loader for the main gun (doubling the rate of fire) and a multi-purpose smoke / gas / grenade launcher unit will be mounted on either side of the turret. Once sold to the CS, a C-40 rail gun will be mounted coaxially with the main gun and a dual C-40R2 mini-turret that can be controlled from inside the tank will also be added.

Availability: Currently only available to the CS.

NG Rolling Storm Medium Tank

Old Designation: Iron Fist Medium Tank

Intended Use: The design was sold to Northern Gun, under the condition that NG only sell the gasoline powered version. Nuclear versions are produced for use in the Ishpeming Defense Force.

Modifications: IH-100 Rail gun has been replaced with the NG-404 Heavy Rail Gun, and the IH-105 has been replaced with the NG-202 Rail Gun.

Availability: Somewhat poor; NG is still trying to perfect the assembly process, as well as supply themselves. Some gasoline powered versions are available, however.

NG Rolling Lightning Missile Vehicle

Old Designation: Iron Bolt Missile Vehicle

Intended Use: The design was sold to Northern Gun, under the condition that NG only sell the gasoline powered version, with less armor and firepower. Fully powered and armored nuclear versions are produced for use in the Ishpeming Defense Force.

Modifications: M.D.C. reduced by 50% and Missile Launcher modified to fire only medium range missiles (Payload increased to 16, range and damage reduced).

Availability: Somewhat poor; NG is still trying to perfect the assembly process, as well as supply themselves. Some gasoline powered versions are available, however, at 600,000 credits.

NG Rolling Explorer APC

Old Designation: Iron Maiden APC-10

Intended Use: This design was also favored by CS commanders, and the IHA Treaty gives the CS exclusive buying rights for 2 years after it reaches production.

Modifications: No Modifications other than slight changes in the look. CS models will be modified after delivery to exchange the IH-34L laser turret with a standard CS version.

Availability: Currently only available to the CS.

NG Northern Harrier Attack Jet

Old Designation: Grey Falcon Attack Jet

Intended Use: The CS has no interest in purchasing any of the old Grey Falcons, and has placed no additional restrictions on its production or sale.

Modifications: The rail gun has been replaced with a NG-404 Heavy Rail Gun.

Availability: Somewhat poor; NG is still supplying themselves, which takes up a majority of the units produced.

NG Golden Eagle Jet

Old Designation: AC-29 Air Castle Bomber

Intended Use: This design was also favored by CS commanders, and the IHA Treaty gives the CS exclusive buying rights for 1 year after it reaches production.

Modifications: Two versions of the Golden Eagle are in R&D: the standard bomber is nearly ready for

production, and a missile ship variant is still in development. Expect the weapon mounts to be replaced with NG standard weapons.

Availability: Not yet Available. The bomber variant will be exclusive to the CS, but the missile ship will be open to the general market as soon as it hits production.

NG Northern Eagle Helicopter Gunship

Old Designation: Iron Eagle Attack Helicopter

Intended Use: This design was favored by CS commanders, but no sales limitations or terms were described in the agreement.

Modifications: The gunship targeting and communication systems have been redesigned to run on a crew of three: pilot, co-pilot /gunner, and communications / gunner. The nautical version is produced under the name NG Seabird, which has a sonar system, pontoon runners and torpedo launchers that replace the missile launchers.

Availability: Very poor availability. NG is still trying to produce for its own defense needs, and the Coalition is purchasing nearly all of the units produced for the marketplace. Only the very best and most loyal NG Distributors are able to order one of these. As a result, the price has skyrocketed up to 300% in some cases.

Bullhead Torpedo Boat

Old Designation: Black Eel Torpedo Boat

Intended Use: This design was sold to Northern Gun with no restrictions on sales.

Modifications: No modifications other than slight changes in the look.

Availability: Good. The CS has no interest in stocking their own fleets with this ship, so most of the units produced are available on the market.

NG Heavy Patrol Boat

Old Designation: Triton Patrol Boat

Intended Use: As per the terms of the IHA Treaty, NG must produce these boats exclusively for the CS and at cost. However, several new warship designs are in the works for the Coalition, and once those come into service, the design will be sold to Northern Gun (roughly 16 to 24 months away).

Modifications: No modifications other than slight changes in the look.

Availability: Currently only available to the CS.

Emperor Class Destroyer

Old Designation: James Bay class Destroyer

Intended Use: As per the terms of the IHA Treaty, NG must produce these ships exclusively for the CS and at cost.

Modifications: Modified to carry the Coalition motif. CS engineers will later upgrade weapons to Coalition models.

Availability: Only available to the CS.

Poseidon Missile Cruiser

Old Designation: Sea King Missile Cruiser

Intended Use: As per the terms of the IHA Treaty, NG must produce these ships exclusively for the CS and at cost.

Modifications: Modified to carry the Coalition motif. CS engineers will later upgrade weapons to Coalition models.

Availability: Only available to the CS.