

LEAGUE OF MERCHANTS™

A **Space Master™** Campaign Module



LORDS OF THE IMPERIAL UNDERWORLD

LEAGUE OF MERCHANTS

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GUIDELINES

"Begin at the Beginning", the King said gravely, 'and go on till you come to the end: then stop.'"

Lewis Carroll
Through the Looking-glass
Prelimp C. 9775

The **Space Master** Campaign Series is designed for GMs who want to run an extended series of adventures with a common theme; or these modules can also be used as sourcebooks for reference to various aspects of the Imperial Milieu. The adventures in a Campaign module are by nature somewhat more complex than those in an Adventure book, and while they may require a bit more preparation time, also may last several play sessions and can be more satisfying as part of a cohesive campaign.

Like the other **Space Master** Campaign modules, this one is set in the Imperial time period Imp. 470-480. References to the overall political and cultural situation assume that time period.

The League of Merchants has four parts. Section One deals with guidelines regarding the use of the module. Section Two provides a general introduction to the League and its history. Section Three contains data on League operations and structure. Section Four provides backgrounds on significant League personalities, from Masters to Pirate captains. Section Five is a detailed description of the League HQ: Starhaven, as well as some League-associated locales and examples of League ships. Sections Six through Nine are the Adventures; each adventure stands on its own, although a common theme unites the stories.

1.1 HANDLING PLAY

The adventures are divided into five standard parts:

- 1) Background Information, which describes the setting and covers the background and plot;
- 2) The NPCs, a person-by-person description of the prominent non-player characters, including their stats;
- 3) The Settings, a level-by-level, room-by-room description of the adventure site, complete with numbered diagrams, floorplans, and illustrations;
- 4) The Task, a discussion of how to start the adventure, along with the aids, clues, obstacles, and rewards awaiting the adventurers, and
- 5) Encounters, which cover typical or probable meetings between the adventurers and the NPCs.

The GM should skim each section of an adventure before beginning play, making any necessary notes and generally familiarizing himself with the material. He may also wish to create some additional layouts or elaborate the provided material.

1.2 DIFFICULTY LEVELS

While reading through this module, the GM will notice that references to levels of difficulty are often made. This is meant to represent the ease or difficulty that one encounters in trying to resolve a particular problem. In terms of **Space Master** and **Rolemaster**, the degree of difficulty translates into a bonus or subtraction applied to the dice roll when a character tries to overcome the problem in question. For instance, if a character is trying to defeat internal security safeguards in a computer system, it will be much harder for him to gain access to the files if the program safeguards are **Sheer Folly** to defeat as opposed to just **Routine**. Note that it will often be the case that the GM will have to assign a difficulty factor to a given action. The difficulty levels and their coincident modifiers are listed here for convenience.

Routine	+30
Easy	+20
Light	+10
Medium	±0
Hard	-10
Very Hard	-20
Extremely Hard	-30
Sheer Folly	-50
Absurd	-70
Insane	-100

Difficulty levels are very flexible and handy tools for the GM who wants to run a game with a great deal of variety and flavor. A certain metal alloy might be Very Hard to scan through. A race of mimickers could be so good that detecting one as such could be Extremely Hard. A simple N-Space astrogation plot would be Easy or Light, while an absolutely crazy maneuver might be designated as Sheer Folly. In any event, as already stipulated, the modifier applies to the resolution dice roll for the action and is cumulative with skill bonuses, stat bonuses, and any other miscellaneous modifiers that the GM deems applicable to the situation. Generally, a maneuver either requires a modified roll of over 100 to be successful, or the maneuver's success is checked against the appropriate maneuver table found in **Space Master**, the RPG.

1.3 ADAPTING THE MODULE TO YOUR GAME

Like the rest of the series, this module is designed for use with the **Space Master** (SM) Role Playing System, but is adaptable to most other major SFRP games. Statistics are expressed on a closed or open-ended scale, using a 1-100 base and percentile dice (D100). No other dice are required.

1.31 CONVERTING HITS AND BONUSES

Bonuses: When converting percentile values to a 1-20 system a simple rule is: for every +5 on a D100 scale you get a +1 on a D20.

Hits: The concussion hit numbers found in this module only represent general pain and system shock. They cover bruises, general pain, and small cuts rather than 'wounds'. Critical strike damage is used to describe serious wounds and fatal blows. The hit figures shown here are less important than those used in game systems where death occurs as a result of exceeding one's available hits. Should you use a game system that employs no specific critical strike results, simply double the number of hits your characters take or halve the hit values found in this module.

1.32 CONVERTING STATS

If you play something other than *Space Master* and you do not use a percentile system, use the following chart to convert 1-100 numbers to figures suited to your game.

STAT CONVERSION CHART				
1-100 Stat	D100 Bonus	D20 Bonus	3-18 Stat	2-12 Stat
102+	+35	+7	20+	17+
101	+30	+6	19	15-16
100	+25	+5	18	13-14
98-99	+20	+4	17	12
95-97	+15	+3	16	—
90-94	+10	+2	15	11
85-89	+5	+1	14	10
75-84	+5	+1	13	9
60-74	0	0	12	8
40-59	0	0	10-11	7
25-39	0	0	9	6
10-14	-5	-1	7	4
5-9	-10	-2	6	3
3-4	-15	-3	5	3
2	-20	-4	4	2
1	-25	-4	4	2

1.33 CONVERTING ARMOR

AT	Covering	Description
	ClothSkin Base	
1	Skin	
2	Robes/Environmental suit	
3	Light Hide	
4	Heavy Hide	
	Light Body Armor	
5	LBA Flak Vest	
6	LBA Extended Flak Vest	
7	LBA Reinforced Flak Vest	
8	LBA Reinforced Flak Armor	
	Pliable Armored Bodysuits	
9	ABS Pliable Breastplate	
10	ABS Pliable Breastplate & Greaves	
11	ABS Pliable Half Plate	
12	ABS Pliable Full Plate	
	Mesh Armored Body Suits	
13	ABS Mesh Shirt	
14	ABS Mesh Shirt & Greaves	
15	ABS Full Mesh	
16	ABS Battle Mesh	
	Armored Exoskeletons	
17	AEX Exoskeleton Breastplate	
18	AEX Exoskeleton Brstplate & Greaves	
19	AEX Half Exoskeleton	
20	AEX Full Armored Exoskeleton	



TAK YALARIAN

1.4 ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

The following abbreviations and terms are defined for easy reference.

1.41 ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations are listed alphabetically within subcategories.

Game Systems

RM *Rolemaster*
SM *Space Master*

Professions / Character Classes

Arm Armsman
ArT Arms Technician
Cri Criminologist
EIT Electrical Tech
Eng Engineer
Exp Explorer
Med Medic
Pil Pilot
Phy Physician
Pla Planetologist
Res Researcher
SyT Systems Tech
Adm Administrator
Ent Entertainer
The Theologist
Tel True Telepath
xxx/T Semi-Telepath of class xxx

Game and Technology Terms

AT Armor Type (a range of 1 - 30)
AT (DB) Armor Type with the Defensive Bonus given
Auto Automatic Projectile (attack table)
Bon Bonus
CAT Construction Armor Type (AT's 21 - 30)
D10 A die randomizer for a range from 1 - 10
D100 A dice randomizer for a range from 1 - 100
DB Defensive Bonus
EI Elmonits (cost in electronic monits)
FTL Faster Than Light
GM Gamesmaster (game referee)
K 1,000 (a quantity of one thousand)
KIN Kashmere Intelligence Net
km kilometers
LS Light Second (300,000 kilometers)
Lvl Level (experience, attack or Psion level)
LY Light Year (the distance light travels in a year)
m meters
M Monits (hard currency denomination)
MA Martial Arts
M/A Matter/Antimatter
MERLOGH MERCantile League Of Greater Houses
Mk.# Mark Number (size, strength, and/or power)
NPC Non-Player Character
OB Offensive Bonus
PC Player Character (also 'player')
RR Resistance Roll
SFRP Science Fiction Role Playing
Stat Statistic or characteristic
TBD Tachyon Beam Dictor
TLD Trans Light Displacement

1.42 DEFINITIONS

A few crucial concepts of the module are detailed below.

Colos: An Inner Provincial Major House (or 'Family'), the Colosians control several star systems near Devon Province, and the two Families are frequently at odds. During the time period of this module the ruler of the Family is Lord Alexander Telax Colos IV; the Homeworld is Gamma Vulpeculae IV.

Construct: Anything artificially produced. Most larger constructs have an Armor Type of 21 - 30 in the Space Master system.

Devon: A powerful Major family, one of the Inner Provinces, and administrators of The League of Merchants (under the watchful eye of Imperial 'aides'). The head of the family is Lord Yama Pythagor III Devon, and the Provincial Homeworld is Delta Cassiopeiae.

Empire: A geopolitical jurisdiction encompassing every star system known to be inhabited or claimed by Terran humans as well as those systems harboring indigenous sentients who have come into the Terran fold. The Empire consists of a central territory, known as the Imperium, and a multitude of Provincial territories governed by Family groups who pledge fealty to the Emperor and his court. At present, the Empire is over four and one half centuries old. The Emperor keeps his seat of power on Terra (also known as Old Earth).

Family: Political connotation. An abstract concept which has gained a great deal of popularity since the consecration of the Imperium. A Family is an almost intangible representative essence which denotes a society of people, practically separating them from the rest of humanity as a specific race. In practice, the administrators of a given Province take on the Family name, behind which all citizens of the Province can rally. It is often the case that the governors of a Province declare themselves nobility, thus elevating the title to Royal Family. The concept of the Family is akin to, and synonymous with; House, Major Family, Greater Clan, etc.

Frontier Province: One of those territories, encompassing several star systems, which were colonized after the consecration of the Imperium and the first Inner Provinces. Having a low population density and little or no initial development, the Frontier Provinces are governed by Minor Clans who are in turn carefully scrutinized by Imperial observers. After long periods of development, Frontier Provinces can often obtain Inner Province status, with the governing Clan elevated to Royal Family status.

Homeworld: A geosphere which is capable of supporting standard hydrocarbon based lifeforms. There are precious few of these naturally occurring bodies so they are in great demand as territorial capitals. Candidate Homeworlds with unsuitable atmospheres can often be transformed into viable geospheres through the introduction of specially developed micro-organisms which can transform undesirable gasses into desirable ones.

Hypershunt: The act of crossing the speed of light barrier and propelling one's craft into Hyperspace. Controlled hypershunts have allowed Terrans to colonize distant star systems at a rate far exceeding predictions based on the restrictions of Einsteinian space.

Hyperspace: Hyperspace is the vernacular term for that cosmos known as the Tachyon Universe. It has been determined that in Hyperspace the speed of light is the lower boundary of a radiative propagation spectrum quite unlike our own. Recent engineering feats have allowed man to travel through Hyperspace, but as of this time, actual occupation, and action within, the Tachyon Universe is an impossible aspiration.

Imperium: The Imperium is that area of space which encompasses every star system colonized or claimed by man, which is not governed by a Royal Family or Minor Clan. The leader/figurehead of the Imperium is the Emperor himself who defers many of his responsibilities to planetary governors. The governors are prevented from taking too many liberties with their assigned systems due to the omnipresent Imperial Fleet. Geographically, the Imperium is situated centrally in the Terran Empire with Old Earth maintained as the territorial Homeworld.

Inner Province: Often containing upwards of ten star systems, the Inner Provinces are feudal territories governed exclusively by Royal Families. As far as locational references are concerned, these Provinces usually border on, or are actually within Imperial space. Also, it is not uncommon to find Inner Provincial administrations who, in turn, parcel out systems in their own territories for Minor Clans to govern.

Instation: Akin to Orbital stations, Instations are much larger counterparts which are set into orbits around stellar primaries as opposed to planetary bodies. They serve as military fleet bases and as communication backup systems for the inhabited planets in the given system. They usually offer civilians the use of their repair and overhaul facilities while a few are actually capable of undertaking space vessel construction operations.

Jade-London: An Inner Provincial Major House, they are (usually) on friendly terms with House Devon, and unfriendly terms with the Colosians.

Kashmere: Formerly a coalition of Minor Clans, the Kashmere families have formed a commonwealth directly under Imperial Supervision. Together they rank equal to one Major House and are ruled by their Duke from the capital planet of Olympus.

MERLOGH: The economic monitor and stock market of the Terran Empire. MERLOGH's existence can be attributed to the PreImperial territories who swore to fight the forming Imperium to the bitter end unless independent watch-dog institutions were allowed to operate in the Empire-to-be. To this day, MERLOGH, VegaPol, and the Galactic Court of Humanity have kept their autonomous and unbiased (well, mostly unbiased) status in the Emperor's realm.

Minor Clan: Clans are family societies Imperially designated as minor royalty. Although not entitled to the near autonomous operative capabilities afforded the Royal Families, Minor Clans can often be found governing their own systems or continental states (under the watchful eyes of higher authorities — usually a Family). Minor Clans, by law, are prevented from keeping their own soldiery or minting their own hard currency; however, a Clan's economic performance is scrutinized in MERLOGH as thoroughly as any larger political unit's economy would be. Minor Clans are often allocated Imperial garrison forces when they occupy areas troubled by conflict, despite the fact that the Clan is often the conflict's instigator.

N-Space: Normal Space. This defines the universe and time that Terrans presently inhabit and operate within; governed and bound by the physical laws which have lasted for ages untold.

Orbital Station: Orbital stations are environmentally controlled structures kept in orbit around various planets in the Empire. Their primary purpose varies according to the types of activities which are carried out on the planetary surface below. If it is a resource world, the orbital station will usually perform the function of heavy cargo transfer terminal. If it is a Homeworld, then the station will be equipped to handle communications and personnel. In many instances, orbital stations have repair and overhaul facilities and are quite capable of orchestrating spur of the moment military activities. Defensive armaments are usually geared to the amount of danger inherent to the given system. Their orbital maneuverability is severely restricted. They can often sustain 20 to 200 people, depending on function.

Outstation: The Outstation is the interstellar counterpart of the Instation, although its primary function differs slightly. The Deep Space Outstation, as it is more properly called, often takes the role of Tachyon Beam Dictor relay base, as they are constructed along important communication lines where there is no convenient star system within which to place a more conventional relay station. They also serve as supply bases for the fleets or the political entity which has constructed and staffed the structure. Outstations are not perfectly stationary, as, like other celestial bodies, they circle the galactic core.

Sianetic Harbingers: A title given to that ancient spacefaring race which spread Hominids from earth to several nearby habitable worlds, giving rise to humanoid and xeno-human races. They are known by several other titles, most of which are culture specific: the Ancients, the Forerunners, the Fathers, the Ta'kon, the Klattu, the K'ta'viir, etc. Harbinger artifacts fetch a high price in the scientific and collectors communities.

Spacefaring Port: A surface-bound installation which contains maintenance and repair facilities for civilian and military ships alike. All Spacefaring Ports are staffed with a complement of customs officers and garrison troopers who try to uphold the laws of the administration in control of the system in question.

Stellar Primary: A planetary system's sun. In polystar systems there would obviously be several stellar primaries, but it is the major star (determined by mass or size) which gives a system its name.

Tachyon Beam Dictor: An instantaneous communication system, critical to the unity of the Empire. Data is transmitted in the form of tachyon streams, usually through a number of relays (the effective range for one transmit being only about 50 light years).

VegaPol: An interstellar police force which operates independent of Imperial and Provincial jurisdictions alike. It is based in the Vega system, and operates in conjunction with the Galactic Court of Humanity.

1.5 A BRIEF TIMELINE

Following is a summary of important events in the history of Mankind, including specific events in the history of the League of Merchants.

PREIMPERIAL TIME

(all dates are negative to year 0: the Consecration of the Imperium).

c. 80,000? — Starhaven constructed.

c. 15,000 — The dawn of civilized man.

c. 11,650 — The first rise of the Dia Khovaria: the Holy Tabernacle of the Word.

c. 10,000 — First use of steam power brings about the dawn of technology.

9769 — First discovery of Access Technology.

9700 — The first utilization of a holocaustic attack delivery system (in this case nuclear) on a civilian population.

9670 - 9668 — First Fossil Fuel Crisis.

9663 — The Technic Tabernacle is broken up by a jealous Terran regional government.

9660 - 9608 — Feasible fusion power generators are in development.

9645 - 9643 — Second Fossil Fuel Crisis. Energy needs cause international tensions to mount.

9643 — Limited thermonuclear exchange causes population shifts on Terra, and mild Nuclear Winter effects depopulate some regions. Most major cities are intact, though some areas suffer minor Technological Recessions.

c. 9600 — Cryogenic sleep units come into widespread use. The next five hundred years are marked by a number of 'colony' ship launches from Earth and her near colonies to the stars.

9540 — The first practical microfusion power generator is produced.

9525 — Terraforming of Venus is complete: the planet is converted to an earthlike world.

8450 - 5698 — The period required by researchers to gain a mastery of the gravitic field.

8104 - 8068 — Research period of molecular data storage for informational processing systems. The potential of Optical Electronics ("Optronics") is fully realized.

8068 - 5655 — The study of molecular electronics leads to the advent of living circuitry.

7900 — The first known successful human alterant replicant is produced on a near-earth colony.

7887 - 7610 — The Universal Technological Recession of mankind. As if motivated by a single will, almost every colony is cast into a technological dark age as the human masses revolt against the ever increasing control of automation over their lives. The duration of the revolt varies for each colony, so the dates given are rather artificial. The first date marks the initial instance of a violent revolt, although there had been notable unrest over the preceding three decades. The end date marks the general desire for renewed technological progress incarnated in the form of a scientific symposium held on the Solar Mars colony.

c. 7600 — Tachyon physics becomes the main focus of study in the scientific community.

c. 7500 — Starhaven is entered and reactivated. It soon becomes a pirate haven.

c. 7500 - 6000 — Secondary relapses of the Universal Recession of Technology intermittently strike down promising settlements; progress is painstakingly slow in most areas.

5705 — Humanity is firmly entrenched on ten core worlds but communication problems lead to cultural drift. This is more acute in the frontier areas.

5655 — The development of true Molecutronics sparks an android construction boom. Virtual Humanatronics, the pre-eminent producer of molecular circuits, is soon recognized as the top-quality producer of android brains.

5603 — The Relative Inertial Field Suspension Effect is discovered.

4002 - 3621 — There is a booming interest in temporal physics: hypotheses of alternative universes and practical applications abound.

c. 3500 - 3000 — A general antipathy towards technological trappings leads to a scientific recession in many colonies. This anti-tech drive is sporadic and does not lead to a collective psychosis. Claims that the Dia Khovaria ("The Church of the Word") is responsible remain unproven.

c. 3000 - 2000 — This millennium sees the bits and pieces of humanity drifting further from each other and their common heritage. Many far-flung settlements cut themselves off from their parent societies by ceasing their already sporadic speed-of-light communications.

1921 — Andrium, the elemental source of powerful matter/antimatter reactions, is created on a near-earth colony.

1921-1480 — The secret of the production of Andrium is shared between allied near-earth scientific groups. It is kept from the political leaders of the day in an effort to prevent its hypothetical use in a military weapon of unparalleled destructive capability. The Andrium for Science League (AFSL) is born.

1190 — In a secret test, witnessed only by representatives of the Andrium for Science League, a spacefaring vessel successfully hypershunts with an Andrium power source.

c. 1100 — The Andrium for Science League develops an interstellar translight merchant service, the revenues from which are channeled into research and development.

1076 — The Tachyon Beam Dictor is invented. This device allows instantaneous communication over great interstellar distances. The first units to appear have an effective transmission range of about 10 LY. Because the TBD system is developed by a research group sponsored, and closely supervised, by a leading political force of the time (a coalition of near-earth colonies), no production monopoly is held, and the system spreads quickly to several scattered colonies. The Dia Khovaria sees this as a chance to link their famous databases and make a new place for themselves.

1076 - 457 — The period of time generally referred to as the Wars of Integration. As a quickly installed TBD network begins to dominate the data transferral markets, the merchants of the Andrium for Science League lose the revenues which they were making in this field. To counter the subsequent decline in their importance, several members of the organization sell blueprints and manuals for the construction and maintenance of Andrium-fueled hypershunting drives to powerful political institutions. FTL fleets are slowly built up, and the Andrium for Science league is coerced into supplying precious antimatter fuel. The League, which still holds the secret of Andrium production, degenerates into a mere production cartel. With ships, fuel, and command communications provided by the Dia Khovaria's TBD system, the united core worlds embark on their self-proclaimed mission to reunite all of humanity. During this time a limited number of Andrium bombs appear.

c. 1000 - 500 — With data as a valuable commodity, and a far-flung TBD network, the D.K. experiences a return of their former prominence — at the expense of the last vestiges of their religious beliefs. By PreImp. 500 they have become a purely secular organization.

457 — The culmination of the Wars of Integration is the creation of the Terran Federated Democracy (a.k.a. "United Federation," and more recently, as the "Old Democracy"). The Democracy's parliament is located on Old Earth.

324 — The Terran Federated Democracy holds sway over Terran humanity and the homeworlds of affiliated xeno-races. This was the first (and nearly successful) attempt at a unified political structure to administer all of the colonized worlds.

323 — Several sectors and homeworlds declare their independence from the Terran Federated Democracy as their specialized needs are not fulfilled by this institution. They begin to fortify their systems against anticipated reprisals from the Federation.

320 — Linna Wulei comes to Starhaven

313 — First meeting of the LeagueCouncil, chaired by Linna Wulei.

320 - 275 — The pre-Imperial core worlds initiate a massive arms race as they construct the awesome Imperial Navy.

270 — The fledgling political unit which will, in time, gel as the Imperial Court unleashes brute force to deal with the old Democratic leaders and systems which have refused to come into the fold.

256 — The Imperium-to-be issues a declaration to all inhabited worlds stating that it claims ownership rights of all systems colonized/conquered by man to date.

255 - 50 — Various uprisings, revolutions, and back-room politicking thwart attempts to quickly solidify the pre-imperial power base.

25 — Macedon Gaius Triptolemus of Terra emerges as the leading candidate to ascend the Imperial Throne. Several Mega-corporations rally to his name.

14 — This date marks the last known utilization of a holocaustic attack delivery system on a mass civilian target; the population in question is the society occupying the Xi Sinva Star system.

12 — VegaPol (An independent policing force), which supports the Galactic Court of Humanity and MERLOGH (MERchan-tile League Of Great Houses), is granted operational status.

3 — MERLOGH begins operating as the financial monitor of Terran space.

1 — The Emperor-to-be makes clear his intention to outlaw the production of holocaustic attack delivery systems.

IMPERIAL TIME

0 — Macedon I receives the Imperial Scepter and consecrates the First Terran Star Empire (consisting of a myriad of systems organized into Regions, Quadrants, and Sectors), and 27 Provincial Territories. The Andrium for Science League changes its name to Andrium Producers of the Imperium (API) in order to more properly reflect its latest primary function. This cartel retains its power through to the present.

1 — The Great Hoarding.

96 — Tak Yalarian is born.

113 — Personal Velocity Shields appear commercially.

127 — The advent of improved sensor fields allow safe hypershunts out to a range of 50 LY. This instigates an age of unprecedented expansion. Frontier Provinces proliferate, bringing greater wealth to the Imperium.

127 — Tak Yalarian takes a seat on the LeagueCouncil.

301 — As a result of the War of Tarquinis (a.k.a. "The Rebellion of the Provinces"), Emperor Itzamná II allows Major Families to acquire additional systems directly from the Imperium and Frontier holdings. Restrictive Quotas remain in effect through the present, however.

412 — Matter/Antimatter torpedoes are first fitted on Imperial vessels. The Inner Provinces protest this as a violation of the Emperor's own holocaustic production ban, then furiously begin developing such weaponry for their own use.

462 — Personal Absorption Shields first appear commercially.

470 - 480 — The present.

INTRODUCTION

Cui Bono?
"To Whose Profit?"

L Cassius Longinus Ravilla
 Prelmp c. 11,775



A large circular room slowly emptied of echoes after the unseen gong struck its seventh and final note. Seven columns separated the central, domed portion of the chamber from a wide aisle. The outer wall of the arcade was broken by seven great doors of polished gold, alternating with narrow tubes of blue luminescence.

Through the transparent dome glimmered a thick starfield shrouded in a violet nebula cloak: twilight over a round table perhaps four meters across. Fashioned of black marble, it shone wetly in the dim room. The last echoes of the gong had barely failed before the doors, one by one, opened to admit members of an elite Council.

Moryn K'aldo arrived first, his short, blue-black hair like a dark halo about his head. A light, easy stride matched his youthful appearance, and the shimmering violet tunic he wore revealed more than it concealed of his athletic physique. Black leather boots rose to mid thigh (still several centimeters below the hem of the tunic). On one arm he wore several heavy gold and platinum bracelets, encrusted with blue and purple gems, flashing with barbaric beauty. He stood at ease next to an ancient Terran backless throne-chair. His two bodyguards, Jerin and Kell (who could be his big brothers by the look of them) stood behind him with arms folded.

Oberon Neumaan, his completely shaven head making him appear much older than his 40 standard years, clasped

his large hands together in the voluminous sleeves of his dark green robes as he strode purposefully into the chamber. The Imperial Intelligence Sub-Minister frowned as he glanced at his wrist computer, then nodded to Moryn and took his place in front of a black autocontour chair.

Nakira T'sraang entered, flanked by her Centurion bodyguards. Nakira wore her usual black uniform tunic and pants, as did her 'boys' (as she referred to them). Lars and Fredrik, both a muscular 198 centimeters tall with white-blond hair, pale skin and blue eyes, were a stark contrast to the slender, tan Nakira: mahogany maned and brown eyed. Her flared epaulettes identified her as a Planetary commander in the Kashmerian Ducal Service.

Soris entered next, in long, leisurely strides, backed only by one guard — but a giant of a man, especially adjacent to the slightly-built Soris. The LeagueMaster was a man of 170 centimeters and slender, his hair short, straight and snow white (except where an azure streak colored it from left temple to nape), his skin chocolate brown. He wore a pale orange tunic draped over one shoulder and falling to mid-thigh, and pair of polished irulon hoop earrings, no more. Even his feet were bare. Smiling to reveal large, gleaming teeth, Soris stood next to his carved wood chair, eyes glazed. Om, his bodyguard, clad only in loose black truesilk pants, hulked near the door, his huge brown fists clenched.

Jaison Menzies-Lloyd, a smirking youth of 26 years, was the nephew of Baron Kevin Skakis Kubischev-Lloyd. He sauntered in through his doorway with a swagger which was almost a parody of the others already gathered. He wore a simple, loose grey coverall over his slender form, open at the neck and adorned only with the silver triangle of his family on the left breast. Eyeing each of his compatriots with a conspiratorial smile, he then turned his green eyes downward, rocking forward and back on the balls of his feet. His personal guard, a handsome, imposing young man named Kaal, watched his master possessively.

Sixth came a tall man with dark-blond hair partially hidden beneath a skullcap. His full length purple and white vestments and the glittering ring on his hand identified his station beyond question. Julian Triton Kosinski III was quite young for a Bishop, being only 35 standard years old, but his initiative, his holographic memory, and his unequalled computer abilities had rocketed him up through the ranks of the Dia Khovaria. Even this was not enough for Julian's insatiable lust for power, however, and he thus found himself a member of an even more elite group. Julian's face usually carried an expression which was dour even for a clergyman; today was no exception. Two D.K. monks hovered behind him, hands hidden in the long sleeves of their black habits. The Bishop turned an annoyed glance towards the remaining empty seat, as if to shift blame from himself for being the last to arrive.

Nakira looked about the room and broke the silence. "I believe we are all here. The Duchess is aware of the meeting and has waived her right to attend." Nakira placed her palm on the table in front of her and the others followed a moment later. A rectangle of red light appeared around each hand as not only their palm prints but their bodies' electrical patterns were analyzed and compared. Jaison cast an uneasy glance at Moryn's hand, the six fingers splayed for all to see. Moryn's gaze rose to meet the young Viscount's and a sinister smile wreathed his smooth face.

A voice rang through the room. "All identities confirmed." The gong sounded again, and the seven sets of doors closed with a hiss and a quiet thump of airtight seals. The dome's faint light grew as a ring of bright blue around the glass-domed ceiling brightened. The voice spoke again. "The room is closed; all security systems are now operational."

Nakira T'sraang smiled. "You may be seated. As this meeting's moderator, I call the 27th gathering of the 118th League of Merchants' Executive Council, to session."

In any capitalistic society there are not only the huge corporate trade networks competing with each other in the large, high-profit fields, but also the independent merchantmen, scavenging a subsistent living on the cargoes too small to be worth a megacorp's trouble. These 'free traders' often engage in marginally legal (or indisputably illegal) runs in order to turn a profit, and as such, find themselves always dodging Imperial and Provincial — not to mention VegaPol — police troops. Many of these traders are allied in a loose association which bears the name League of Merchants.

2.1 XXXXXXXXXX

THREE TALES OF THE LEAGUE

There are myriad legends surrounding the League; its origins predate the Empire, and some say it existed even before the entrance of Terran Man into space (although its present membership is dominated by Humanoid species). The League has even inspired countless sensationalist Holovids, most of which paint the Mythical League as a powerful, evil organization bent on the downfall of the Good and Just Empire. Of course, the Empire is not painted as evil, for fear of censorship and/or arrest of the writers and producers. His Majesty is usually not amused by what can only be considered treasonous propaganda. In truth, the League is not as evil as it is sometimes portrayed, but neither is it a righteous band of do-gooders rebelling against an oppressive Empire. The League is after profit and power, not enough to overthrow the Empire, just enough to get a good chunk of the action.

2.11 THE LEAGUE'S BEGINNING

In the dying years of the Terran Federated Democracy, corruption in the government was rampant. As with all huge bureaucracies in their death-throes, officials shamelessly pursued their own interests, usually at the expense of the public. They also — trying to divert attention from their own crime — pursued "enemies of the state" with a frothing obsessiveness. Starhaven, already a nexus for illegal activity and a hideout for criminals wanted by the Federation, became a gathering place for political rebels.

This situation did not last long, however. The previous inhabitants of Starhaven did not want their home to become a base of operations for a rebellion; that was far too profitless. Eventually the political dissidents were forced out, fled or turned to a more pragmatic philosophy. The most powerful seven formed the League Council, and established a structure which thrives even now.

2.12 TAK YALARIAN, PIRATE CAPTAIN

The League of Merchants was in its romantic heyday during the early second century of the Empire. Expansion was at its most fervent, and there were more freighters hauling rich cargoes than there were escorts to protect them. The Frontier was expanding with unprecedented speed, and civilization spread after it like a great cloud. Lurking just behind was the League of Merchants.

It was during this period, around Imp125, that the young pirate Tak Yalarian was making a name for himself in the spacelanes. His favorite pursuit was raiding wealthy passenger liners, and relieving the very rich of their monies and personal treasures.

Yalarian was a romantic Pirate in the truest sense: tall, handsome, with blond hair and eyes that melted girls' hearts. He became a cult hero, despite — or partially because of — the fact that he was one of the most wanted men in the galaxy by the IID and VegaPol.

His ship was the *Fagin*, named after some mythological thief from pre-starflight Earth; it was fast and powerful, said to be the match of an Imperial destroyer. His crew was fiercely loyal, well-trained and disciplined: Yalarian was said to run a tight but fair ship. But despite this, he presented to the public a carefree attitude, showing no guilt over stealing, yet no tinge of cruelty or the sadistic bloodlust which was the hallmark of most pirates. His men (and women) never killed in cold blood, and were even known to aid wounded enemies. Sort of the Robin Hood of space, he even had a pet phrase which he used when personally relieving a guest of his possessions: "Your cash, I'll carry." It became famous throughout the Empire. His luck was also legendary

Once, however, Tak Yalarian's luck almost ran out. While boldly lurking on the fringes of the Sol system, the *Fagin's* sensors picked up a small passenger liner, with only two light gunboat escorts. Closing fast, the *Fagin* disabled one of the gunboats before the convoy was even aware of him. The other was crippled by pinpoint laser fire. As the *Fagin* activated tractors and closed for boarding, the liner was strangely quiescent in response to Yalarian's orders to surrender. Was it some sort of trap? His instincts said no, but something was clearly wrong; there was none of the usual pleading and whining as from civilian liner crews.

The ships joined and in moments the Pirate lord's men had breached the nameless ship's hull. With a dull boom the bulkhead fell inward and the raiders rushed in to meet — a dozen Imperial Police, with assault arms ready. In their midst stood Aurelis Anubis I. The Emperor of the Known Galaxy, wore a black uniform and his everpresent gold and platinum crown: fashioned as a laurel garland and studded with diamonds and emeralds.

"I have always wanted to meet you, Captain Yalarian," His Imperial Majesty smiled, completely without fear. "Though I never thought I would have the pleasure."

"Uh, good day, Your Majesty." If Yalarian was taken aback, he recovered quickly, his blaster levelled at the Emperor. "I hope for your sake that the Crown jewels are not on board. Your cash, I'll carry."

For a moment the Emperor's smile faltered. "Very amusing, Captain, though I suggest that you and you little thugs lay down you weapons before my Elite troops are forced to make atomic dust out of the lot of you."

"By that am I to assume that you'll not give up your valuables willingly?" Yalarian smiled again, cocking an eyebrow.

His Majesty's face crystallized into a mask of surprise, quickly replaced by anger. His lips began to form the words "Kill them!" but before he could, Yalarian gave the signal.

A spray of rainbow glitter filled the room as Yalarian took out three guards with his blaster. Meanwhile, the Imp's fired their pulse lasers, sending splashes of scintillating light through the glittering cloud all over the chamber. Guards screamed as they were burned and blinded, but random laser sprays were repelled by the *Fagin* crews' reflective armor and protective contact lenses.

In a particularly bold (and foolish) move, Yalarian leapt through the surging crowd of combatants. His hand moving slowly to penetrate the Majesty's Personal Shield, he seized the Emperor's laurel-crown and tumbled back for the breach, calling for retreat. The crew of the Fagin barely got out before the rest of the convoy (three destroyers and a Dreadnought) dropped out of Hyper.

Yalarian always wore the garland after that, though he had to spend the next several years in hiding, avoiding the hundreds of assassins and bounty hunters the Emperor sent after him. He retired to Starhaven and began to build his power base in the League of Merchants.

2.13 LINNA WULEI, LEAGUEMISTRESS

Leaguemistress Linna Wulei (sometimes known as the Black Widow) is an earlier tale, being one of the first Seven to form the Council during the upheavals of the dying Federated Democracy. Wulei was a wealthy industrialist whose vast holdings (including the legendary *Alloyed Metals Company*) were appropriated ("nationalized") by the government, which was desperate for raw materials as it struggled to maintain its fleet in the face of rampant rebellion. Infuriated and monitless but helpless to strike back legally, she turned to her contacts in the underworld, and within days found herself on Starhaven. The station was mostly sealed off and in poor repair in those early days, but the former corporate chairman immediately recognized tremendous potential.

She convinced several pirate captains that it would be profitable to raid the freighters of her own company. Intimately familiar with the routes and schedules, she coordinated dozens of strikes on Alloyed ships before word got back to the bureaucracy. Heady with these profits, she established herself at Starhaven and encouraged an ambitious rebuilding project. She selectively recruited dissatisfied employees of her former corporation and other nationalized groups, bringing them in secret to the base where they participated in the restoration. With the aid of computer experts, she tapped into the databases at Alloyed and learned the new schedules, again directing raids, though on

a smaller scale. She also redirected funds (this was before the days of MERLOGH, of course) to anonymous accounts. The government began to suspect who was behind these crimes, but was unable to trace her. They shut down the computer embezzling quickly, but could do little to stop the raiding.

It was during this period that she got her nickname — relating to the unusual yacht she had built with her newly recovered riches. In retrospect, the unusual design of the ship (almost like a great scorpion in appearance) and its construction of the rare Ordium II would certainly imply that it was constructed by the Cygnus Shipyards of House Kashmere. But Kashmere was ununited and undiscovered by civilization until Imp. 190 — or was it? At any rate, the appearance of Wulei's dark and mysterious craft bristling with barbed weapons and flanked by League attack ships quickly became an all-too-common sight of despair for merchant ships throughout the Federated Territories.

Within five years Wulei had Alloyed on its knees, while she had become a chief coordinator of Starhaven activities. She was one of the first seven to gather around the council table.

2.2 ATTITUDES TOWARD THE LEAGUE

The League of Merchants is essentially a parasite (keeping in mind that some parasites are actually somewhat beneficial to their host) and, like any parasite, it is not necessarily in the Empire's best interest to kill the host outright.

2.21 THE IMPERIAL POSITION

While officially condemning the League, in reality the Empire has done little to aggressively curtail the League's activities. This may be due to the fact that many high-ranking Imperial bureaucrats are receiving kickbacks and cooperation money from the League. It may be that the Empire doesn't really care that much. Certainly the Imperial House has had a particular dislike for the League since the days of Tak Yalarian, but a pogrom against the League would prove expensive and probably unsuccessful — and His Majesty knows it. Purging such an elusive foe as the League would be like trying to remove a virus from a human body with a dull scalpel: you would end up hacking the body to shreds and still wouldn't come close to removing the problem.

2.22 VEGAPOL POLICY

MERLOGH and the Vega Police have resigned themselves to the existence of the League, and devote themselves primarily to minimizing the damage. The League, for its part, does not indulge in sweeping monetary fraud or other large-scale activities which might actually damage the Imperial economy. They also don't want to tangle with the Truthsibyls.

2.22 THE PROVINCES

The attitude of the Royal Houses towards the League varies from open hostility to — in at least one case — complete cooperation. Duchess Zirina Thaan leads a secret life as one of the Seven.

In general, however, the Houses do not appreciate League meddling, and though none have dared to launch a full-scale assault on the organization, most will harass League operatives every chance they get.

THE LEAGUE OF MERCHANTS

"The greatest of evils and the worst of crimes is poverty"

G. B. Shaw
Old Earth
PreImp c. 9730

3.1 HIERARCHY

Some basic guidelines regarding the complex infrastructure of this vast network are discussed below.

3.11 THE LEAGUE COUNCIL

The ruling body of the League, the Council meets every 50 days and holds special meetings in case of emergency. The moderator position rotates among the seven members. In addition to setting basic policies regarding League activities and coordinating schemes, the Council acts as a high court, judging any of the League's members who are accused of betraying the organization.

Through the years the nature of the members has gone through a number of interesting cycles, from the early days of the human-dominated League when Tak Yalarian gathered six of his cronies and created the Council. From a band of disorganized (if oddly honorable) pirates essentially led by one man, the League degenerated after Yalarian's death into a more sinister group. Changes in Council membership were common, mostly precipitated by brutal assassination of current members.

3.12 INDEPENDENT LORDS

Below the level of League Council, the exact parameters of League membership begin to grow vague. Indeed, the membership rules for Free traders are more specific than those for the lords which maintain operations on hundreds of worlds throughout Human Space.

3.13 FREE TRADERS

Interstellar trade is handled on two basic levels in the Terran Empire: Megacorps and House fleets, and by Free Traders. The large trade combines handle bulk cargoes and other transfers of goods which have a clear and predictable profit, while the small traders ply the lanes where profit is uncertain, risks are high, and the law is a vague line. Once a trader captain deals with the League, he is always tied to them. The League can get you out of trouble, intervening in their usual subtle way: smoothing out some minor customs confusion, lending monits when a trade

falls through, providing information on law enforcement activities or the planned moves by the MegaCorps. But League membership has its price, too, and that price is high. When a Leaguelman asks you to transport a mysterious cargo along your normal trade route, you do not ask what it is or why; you are paid well for your services. If you strike sudden profits in a new trade, a Leaguelman will be there for his cut. If you default on your loan payments, it won't be VegaPol coming to repossess your ship; it will be the League looking for your skin.

3.14 RAIDERS

A special group of League lackeys, the raiders (also called 'jacks' or 'jackers' — short for hijackers) are free-lance pirates, murderers, terrorists and thieves. Dozens of raider crews hang about Starhaven waiting for an assignment from one of the lords who reside there, or, if very lucky, a job from the Council itself. Raider captains quickly build a reputation at Starhaven. Some are known to be dependable, daring and efficient, while some have rather flawed records: they dump their cargoes at the first sign of the Law, they miss the carefully timed opportunity, they kill when unnecessary (The League does not approve of *pointless* killing). Unfortunately, when working with the scum of space, consistency is sometimes a problem. The reckless, undependable psychotics are weeded out fairly quickly, however; they get themselves vaporized.

3.15 OTHER MEMBERS

Many companies and individuals also have ties to the League, many of them on a completely legal level. Most of these are service-oriented: appraisers of fine jewelry, works of art and technology, Medics, scientists. These may have completely up-front businesses, but are also known to deal with the League. They simply don't ask too many questions, and in return they receive a considerable bonus to their regular fee.

Then there are the fringes: people who buy goods of questionable origin from League dealers, those on the kickback payroll, those who pay for insider information.

Finally, there are also the "full-time" League employees: drug dealers, extortionists, kickers (hired killers), and the other criminal scum of the galaxy who have, at one time or another, moved from small-time freelance to an association with the "big guys". It's these that law enforcement officials most often catch: the small fry of the organization with no protection.

3.2 LEAGUE OPERATIONS

Spread through the reaches of Human Space and beyond, the arms of Starhaven are long, and many.

3.21 VICE

As technology has advanced, so has the number of ways for intelligent beings to alter their minds for recreational purposes. Mind alterants both chemical and mechanical make up a large portion of the League's profits in this area, though other forms of illegal recreation are also in demand.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

While there are a number of forms of chemical diversion available legally, there are still dozens of drugs banned by the Empire and most provinces. In addition, substances which are legal on fully advanced worlds are often forbidden on subject or developing/integrating societies. League dealers make high profits there. Below are listed a number of drugs, some legal but restricted, others completely banned from legal consumption. All such drugs are produced in 'tabs', 1cm diameter discs which adhere to the skin and slowly infuse the drug into the blood stream at the correct rate. When infusion is complete, the tab drops off. Tabs are adhered by a Medtab applicator, available in a variety of designs.

Legal Drugs (may be restricted or illegal in certain areas)

Jirolene: A mild stimulant that aids in wakefulness and alertness.

Gorteline: (Sold by one company as *Hyperdrive*) Lasting about an hour, Gorteline produces a somewhat euphoric, energetic effect. It is psychologically addictive and thus restricted.

Rebillis: Reputedly allows a character to "see a few minutes into his future". The drug is not addictive, but is also very unreliable.

Mirandil: (Marketed by one company as *Musalof*) a depressant, it creates a mellow, reflective mood for about five hours.

Restricted Drugs (requiring a Certified Medic's prescription or very controlled use)

Teledrine: A difficult drug to obtain and totally illegal in many provinces, Teledrine increases the effectiveness of psionic endeavors by Telepaths and Semi-Telepaths. It is sometimes used by Truthsibyls of the GCH.

Illegal Drugs (banned virtually everywhere)

Hypershunt: An incredible stimulant, Hypershunt sends the user into a 30 minute blaze of seemingly pointless, frenzied activity. User will talk, sing, shout and laugh, all while running amuck with endless energy. He is outgoing (obnoxiously so) and full of excitement, feeling like he can do anything. (It is compared to Gorteline, but with a much more powerful 'rush'.) There is a 2% chance that a Hypershunt user will have a fatal heart attack every time he uses it.

NeverMind: Sends user into a semiconscious stupor for about an hour, in which he enters a quasi-dream state. Outside stimuli interface with the subconscious dream world, providing user with entertaining adventures. The drug is dangerously addictive, however, and each time it is used, the stupor lasts about 10 minutes longer (longest recorded Nevermind voyage: 28 days (user was fed intravenously)).

Motormouth: Essentially a super-truth drug, this substance releases all of the mind's inhibiting barriers, allowing an interrogator with even rudimentary skill to extract the user's most deeply submerged secrets. While the danger of this drug is not readily apparent, it has been learned that the user is also open to suggestion which can carry over after the drug has supposedly worn off. Such suggestions as "You will murder your best friend in five days" will not seem foreign to someone after the right dose of Motormouth, and he will do his very best to carry out the instruction, acting perfectly normal up to the moment of the act.

GAMBLING

Though legal throughout the Empire and in most provinces, many gambling operations are 'fronts' for League headquarters and other, more frowned-upon activities. There are gambling resorts on nearly every civilized planet, with some recreational planets harboring entire cities of casinos.

While casino games and the like are legal, betting on some activities is not. In recent years, the sport of Power Raking (see Adventure 5.0) has become a gathering place for illegal betting operations.

Raking itself is not yet illegal in the Empire, and the arenas are invariably located in the sleazier districts of large cities, where Leos (Law Enforcement Officers) rarely dare enter.

CONTROLLED RECREATION

In the year Imp. 461, an unnamed biotech corporation developed a device as unique to history as the role it was destined to play — the (Direct response Environment Actuator Matrix) or DREAMgame. In layman's terms, the DREAMgame "places" the user in a hallucinatory reality (the parameters of which are programmed into the matrix) and creates sensory input (via electrodes connected to the temporal lobes and fingertips) which corresponds to the user's own responses. In addition, the matrix can dull or sharpen neural competence in specific areas of the brain, allowing alien "mind-sets" to be temporarily superimposed. The result is a total sensory hallucination in which the user may consciously interact. For two years DREAMgames were manufactured in abundance (carefully monitored by the Technology Ministry of course). Not only popular for recreation, the uses they presented for training put them in high demand. Eventually pirated version and then entirely new innovations, appeared. This boom period ended in Imp. 463, when Imperial researchers informed His Majesty of two recently discovered facts: one, that severe psychological dependence frequently occurs amongst DREAMgame users, occasionally accompanied by even more serious neuroses; and two, that an as yet small but slowly rising percentage of regular users were showing signs of increased psionic ability. This increase was first and most easily spotted in registered Telepaths, but psionic research soon showed that even non-Telepathic gamers developed an increased ability to defend themselves against psionic intrusion. As a result, production, maintenance, distribution and ownership of DREAMgame systems was declared illegal for all but authorized Imperial researchers. Needless to say, this legal action had little effect on the already established black market, now dominated by League operatives.

There are numerous variations on the DREAMgame, and other electronic sense altering devices too numerous to mention here, most are unreliable, and many are very dangerous.

The League has numerous DREAMGame machines in use throughout the Empire (half a dozen on Starhaven alone). They are in high demand by the wealthy and bored, and since the Game is somewhat addictive, the user must keep coming back

for another adventure. Additionally, the League uses a few machines to enhance the powers of their Telepathic Agents.

3.22 INTELLIGENCE

Blackmail and bribery are proven tools to gain information, and in addition, the League utilizes a vast collection of high-tech means to gain access to sensitive data.

ESPIONAGE

The League of Merchants has bugs everywhere. Their spy network is exceeded only by the Empire and a very few other organizations. The League controlled corporation "Security Systems" supplies much of the organization's classified information.

TECHNOLOGY

The League of Merchants has equipment available to them which is exceeded in sophistication only by the Imperial Intelligence Directorate, and perhaps the Dia Khovaria. Part of the reason for this is the League's 'aggressive technology recruiting' policy. What this means is that League raiders are always on the lookout for unusual equipment in alien laboratories. As a result, League ships and bases are often equipped with one-of-a-kind devices with bizarre and powerful properties.

BRIBERY

A favorite, this has proven quite profitable in the end, especially with minor political officials. The League does have a well-earned rep for being rather generous when information they want is available. However, they have been known to be rather harsh with people who abuse them.

They have numerous operatives in the IAI (Imperial Archaeological Institute) from whom they get their inside information about Sianetic Harbinger discoveries. Without the slow morass of bureaucracy, the League can send out a fast raider vessel to steal the creme of the find before the scientists of the Empire can arrive.

PROPAGANDA

In general, the League of Merchants is a relatively low-profile organization. However, they are active in promoting their puppet organizations and representatives.

BLACKMAIL

The other side of the carrot-and-stick bribery card, blackmail bookkeeping is a full-time occupation for many League operatives. Often the League blackmails to gain information rather than monetary wealth.



3.23 PARAMILITARY

While a separate division, the paramilitary forces of the League (which amount to a sizeable fleet when combined) are often united with other departments for large operations.

SABOTAGE

Industrial installations, military bases, satellites, and security systems are just a few of the targets of recent League 'adjustments'.

HIJACKING

These activities are more on the fringe of League tactics, usually performed by free-lance 'Jackers and pirates.

RAIDING

Depending on the nature of the raid, the League sometimes hires a third party to perpetrate the crime, or else operates under extreme secrecy.

DEFENSE

Offering support to other divisions, the League troops are not the jaded mercenaries one might suspect. Instead, they are often loyal, well-trained warriors.

ENFORCEMENT

Again, this is on the fringes of the real League membership, as the organization prefers to keep its hands clean of such lowly operations.

KIDNAPPING/LIQUIDATION

For some reason this job is considered more 'honorable' than others, and the League has a number of highly trained assassins and kidnappers. They are very careful to obey their unwritten rules of honor for kidnapping, never breaking agreed-upon rules with their captive's associates.

3.24 TRANSPORT/ACQUISITIONS

The League secretly owns, controls or influences a number of legal shipping companies in addition to its vast illicit smuggling network. Between these two, the League is able to effectively transport just about anything to anywhere in the Empire or Frontier.

SMUGGLING

In any society, there are substances, materials, or information which are restricted or prohibited outright. Naturally, transporting these items is dangerous and highly profitable. The League coordinates the lion's share of the smuggling operations through private traders and their own couriers. Illegal items which are hot commodities:

1. Replicant genetic material.
2. Drugs and other recreational aids (see *Vice*)
3. Weapons
4. Black-market high-tech goods.

ARMSDEALING

Beyond smuggling weapons, the League has a thriving armsdealing operation, in which they supply weapons to warring factions throughout the Empire, and especially the Frontier. Often these groups are low-tech, and the planet is restricted from contact. Opportunistic Leaguemen, however, manage to run the blockades with regularity.

RARE MERCHANDISE

Many items are not in themselves illegal, but are not legal to be transported through certain channels. Certain drugs, devices, and data are prohibited to be transported into or out of various provinces or the Imperium itself. The League especially favors high-profit, small mass items like Sianetic Harbinger artifacts, other art objects, and high-tech goods.

3.3 LEAGUE TERMINOLOGY AND SLANG

Following is a partial list of slang and 'inside' terms used among League members, along with some common phrases heard throughout the Imperium but most commonly in the League circles.

SLANG

Most of the terms in this list are intended to be at least somewhat insulting; some are considered profanity.

Buddy — A particularly cruel or blood-thirsty person. "Fred can be a real buddy to his crew sometimes."

Fawnie — A self-seeking, servile flattering type.

Ferret — A League Spy, usually one in an Imperial or Provincial government agency.

Fujee — A fugitive from the authorities.

Hykur — Originally referred to a genetically superior male; also may mean an attractive male or a gigolo.

Jackers — (or sometimes simply "Jacks"): Term for the raiders or 'hijackers' who perform high-risk pirating operations.

Jym-bob — semi-insulting term for any android.

Kick — To assassinate someone for a fee; a "Kicker" is a professional Assassin.

Leaguelman — Anyone who is directly in the employ of the League; also sometimes refers to someone effectively blackmailed by the League and under their control.

Leo — Law Enforcement Officer (normally local police). "The Leo's not looking; let's go!"

Librarian — Anyone in the Dia Khovaria hierarchy.

Pop — To murder someone. "I popped three guys in that raid last night."

Prince — (or 'Princess') Derogatory term meaning a difficult person, usually because the target of the reference is condescending and/or patronizing. It is usually used in reference to actual nobility who want everyone to be clear that they *are* nobility, thus the term.

Slib — An attractive female in a purely sexual sense; a female prostitute.

Slurg — Refers to a large, slug-like lifeform on an Imperial world. It is a catch-all insult to call someone a slurg, but is often used to imply a dishonest dealer.

Sprints — Couriers or smugglers, usually of high-profit materials such as drugs or special weapons.

Spunk — Someone who is very brave (perhaps foolishly so). "He's a real spunk, isn't he, Natasha?"

Timmie — A coward. Can be an adjective or noun. "Why don't you want to go, Boris? Feeling a little timmie?" or "Boris is being a Timmie; let's go without him."

Tox — something incredibly great (originates from toxic: so good as to be deadly). "The fight was tox, Boris, you should have been there."

Xec — (Short for executive) A high-ranking member of the League.

COMMON PHRASES

Heavy Hold and Rare Space! — A phrase used at parting with a fellow trader, wishing him a full, rich cargo and a course without obstacles.

Your Cash, I Carry — A slogan made famous by the immortal raider captain Tak Yalarian, who would smilingly announce it to wealthy passengers of interstellar liners he was raiding.

Take an Airlock Walk! — An angry suggestion that someone get away and not come back soon.

Not All of His Thrusters are Firing — Someone who isn't thinking clearly.

4.0

THE LEAGUE: PERSONALITIES

"It is worse than a crime, it is a blunder"

Antione Boulay De La Meurthe
PreImp. 9841

As much as any other organization in the Empire, the League is held together by the strong personalities of its leaders. Without the will and charisma of these Lords and Ladies, the League of Merchants would long ago have disintegrated into a fragmented collection of mutually destructive petty thieves. Instead it has risen to considerable power, giving new meaning to the term 'organized crime'.

4.1

THE LEAGUE COUNCIL

At the top of the League organization is the League Council: a group of seven men and women who coordinate large-scale operations, exchange information, and settle disputes between individual Lords. As may be expected, there are frequently heated discussions in Council meetings, and issues are rarely settled to everyone's satisfaction. However, even the League cannot function in chaos, and those who fail to adhere to a Council decision invariably suffer the wrath of League enforcers.

Although each LeagueMaster or Mistress operates independently, they meet to coordinate an occasional large effort, and to avoid getting in each others' way. (Of course, a LeagueMaster might decide on his own that another Leagueman is "in his way" and dispose of the obstacle.)

4.11 MORYN KÁLDO

The most enigmatic of the Seven, Moryn Káldo is a man of just above average height with thick blue-black hair kept short and spiked. His eyes are a brilliant blue when not covered by the transparent inner eyelids he frequently keeps drawn over their sensitive irises. In origin he claims to be a native of a world in the Beta Orionis system; that bright star would account for the protective eyelids and his deeply tanned skin. In physical age, he appears to be no older than a youth just reaching maturity, but his manner betrays a mind much older and more experienced. Naturally beardless, he in fact has no body hair except on his scalp; the short truesilk tunics he seems to enjoy wearing reveal a great deal of his smooth skin. His physique is muscular but not overdeveloped. One last feature: Moryn's long-fingered hands have six digits. They are structured just like 'normal' humanoid hands, however, and the extra finger is almost unnoticeable to a casual observer.

It is a fact known by no one but suspected by at least three of his Council peers that Moryn Káldo is more than he seems. He is in truth one of the *Luar*: the Sianetic Harbinger race which ruled much of the galaxy tens of thousands of years ago. His real eye color is bright violet, his pupils slitted — a fact he conceals with contact lenses. Something which Moryn also hides is his Psionic ability. He is a formidable Telepath, though rarely employs his powers. This is partly to maintain his cover, partly out of a certain pride: he wants to do well at what he considers 'this little game' of gaining power without using 'unfair' measures.

His two bodyguards, Jerin and Kell, are similar in appearance to Moryn, except that they are both true mesomorph physiques, a good 30 centimeters taller than their master (their eyes are really bi-colored, one blue, the other violet — also hidden by tinted contacts). Moryn and his men survived the long interim asleep in an advanced form of cryogenic freeze, awaking just a few years ago. Moryn quickly insinuated himself into Imperial society and seems very comfortable for now right where he is.

THE K'TA'VIIR

Appearance: Unusually homogeneous, the K'ta'viir uniformly possess brown skin (similar to descendants of Old Terra's Indian subcontinent, or darkly tanned caucasians) and straight coal-black hair which grows very thickly on the scalp and is usually worn short and fanned straight out from the scalp. Neither sex has any other body or facial hair whatsoever. Eyes are slit-pupiled and deep violet. The violet coloring is quite vibrant and cannot be missed. K'ta'viir eyes also possess a thin, transparent inner lid which screens certain ultraviolet radiation as well as dust and impurities. It is barely noticeable when closed. Men average 195-200 cm and appear slender, though dense bone and muscle structure cause them to mass more than would be expected. Women are slightly smaller.

Hands and feet are six-digitated, with fingers and toes slightly longer and more slender than humanoid average. Ears are small and more rounded. In general the K'ta'viir are very attractive humanoid specimens, all having soft, youthful features and graceful bodies.

SYSTEM NOTES: K'TA'VIIR

All K'ta'viiri possess the equivalent of the following Special Abilities (From the **Player Book of Space Master**; note that the corresponding system penalties are not included — the K'ta'viiri do not suffer them).

- 1) Inner eyelid (protection from dust/sand/bright light). +20 when operating under such circumstances.
- 2) Six-digitated hands/feet. +10 to Balance rolls and manipulative rolls (Picking locks, delicate repairs, etc).
- 3) Acute sense of smell: distinguish odors at +50; 30m upwind and 1000m downwind; 60m in still air. Tracking at +25. Skill in recognition possible at 1/3(IN/ME).
- 4) Natural night vision allows perfect sight in equivalent to Terran normal clear night, 10m even in pitch dark.
- 5) Unusual voice ability provides a +20 when using Public Speaking, Acting, or utilizing the psionic powers of *Voice*.
- 6) Acute hearing allows isolation and analysis of any sound within 300m under normal circumstances, and through up to 3m of solid (non-dampening) material. Also can use high pitched, whistling sounds to determine the size and shape of enclosed spaces (up to 300m) with great accuracy using sonar.
- 7) Incredible appearance provides +30 to all Seduction, Public Speaking and Acting rolls and certain charisma-oriented Telepath Psions (useable against own or very similar race of course). For other skills using Presence add a 20 bonus to that Stat.
- 8) Improved bone and muscle structure allow a +20 to all leaping maneuvers, as well as double the normal range (2m vertical; 6m horizontal static start; 15m horizontal running start). This attribute also allows a +20 bonus to movement and such skills as Skiing, Tumbling, Zero-G Maneuvering, and Dance.
- 9) Training and selective brain use allow you to slip into Memory Mode which allows assimilation of data at 10x normal speed (reading about 5,000 wpm) and total recall. This is particularly useful for learning languages and other memory related skills. Short-term *Memory Mode* (memorizing a brief manuscript or conversation) has no such ill effects.

It is important to note, however, that *Memory Trance* duration is pre-set before entering to last, for instance, as long as the conversation, tape or manuscript. Someone in the Trance cannot be awakened prematurely except by extreme means (slapping or other pain) in which case the memory of the trance in progress is lost completely.

10) Superb synapse development allows for blinding reactions: +20 to OB, and DB (in addition to normal Stat bonuses). You will always strike first unless surprised; and have the option of using adrenal *Speed* at will, 100% chance of success (with appropriate Adrenal Moves Rules applicable).

11) Due to unusual joint design you gain a +20 to all thrown attacks as well as static maneuvers involving the hands (Locks, repair/construction) or feet (Balance). You also gain a +30 bonus to Contortions, being able to realign many joints.

12) A superior conscious control of your body's internal functioning gives you a number of abilities: to concentrate platelets at a bleeding wound and stop up to one hit per round bleeding for every round of concentration; to be immune from the effects of *Stun*; to enter a trance and devote your body's full power to resisting a poison or disease (+50 to RR); to take double the normal number of hits without losing consciousness.

Consider all K'ta'viiri to have unlimited Telepathic communication skills with a range of up to 50 kilometers. Some have a longer range. They also often possess *Voice*, *Mind's Truth*, *Mind's Eye*, and *Mind Assault* to as high as 20th level.

4.12 OBERON NEUMAAN

Oberon Neumaan, his completely shaven head making him appear much older than his 40 standard years, is the Imperial Intelligence Sub-Minister for His Majesty. As such, he is always on top of the Empire's attempts to infiltrate the League. Slender, with a long face and beak-like nose, Neumaan has many birdlike tendencies which reinforce his nervous, hyperactive presence. His small, dark eyes are very penetrating, however, and his skill with computers has few equals. One of his few boasts is that there isn't a computer security system he cannot break, given time. He is never without his pocket computer, a sophisticated, extremely compact (1 x 9 x 15 cm) device which combines a number of scanning, recording, memory and analytical functions.

Neumaan keeps his cover with the Empire intact by orchestrating frequent Imperial 'busts', where League underlings are caught and brought to justice. These victims are usually League operatives who have fallen from favor with the Council and need to be eliminated anyway.

A man obsessed with detail, Neumaan frequently irritates his associates with his ability to shoot holes in their proposed plots. His clipped speech and emotionless, almost robotic voice, have made some suspect him of being an android. He is a human, however, more pure-blooded than most of the rest of the League Council.

Oberon Neumaan's bodyguard is a robot named ARG (Ambulatory Robotic Guardian) 387, an ominous machine, vaguely anthropoid in form, but metallic with glowing red eye-sensors.



4.13 SORIS

The LeagueMaster is a slightly-built man of 170 centimeters, his hair short, straight and snow white (except where an azure streak colors it from left temple to nape). Soris' skin is a chocolate brown — many shades darker than the tan Moryn — inherited from his Terran ancestors. He likes to wear flowing garments of silk sometimes long, sometimes a short tunic, but always in bright colors like orange, yellow or blue. His only other adornment is a pair of polished irulon hoop earrings. Even his feet are usually bare.

Soris commands a considerable fleet of fast, scout-class, unregistered 'trade' vessels, well-equipped for small strike missions. He also is the official commander of Starhaven, the League headquarters, and is responsible for its security. (Moryn Kâldo secretly monitors all operations on Starhaven, for he once lived there, thirty thousand years ago. Only Kâldo knows *all* of the base's secrets).

Perhaps of all the Seven, Soris is the most 'cut-throat'; that is not to say that he is the most power-hungry (that would be a difficult distinction to make). Rather, he has little regard for human life other than his own. He earned his seat on the Council nearly forty years ago by personally murdering his predecessor (as such, he is the eldest Council member). The other Council members are always wary of Soris' machinations, fearful that they might be liquidated in favor of someone he prefers to work with.

Om, his bodyguard, is a giant (200 cm tall, 140 kilos) who wears only in loose black truesilk pants. Om can crush a man in the crook of each arm in only a few seconds.

4.14 NAKIRA ANASTASIA T'SRAANG

With her deep red-brown hair, and gold-flecked, tawny eyes and deeply tanned skin, Nakira T'sraang is a beauty — and a Planetary commander in the Kashmerian Ducal Service. Nakira's authority gives her unquestioned passage throughout the normally restrictive Kashmere Province, as well as the respect (albeit somewhat grudging: she is a woman from the province of pre-bred Telepaths) of her military counterparts in other Provincial services.

On the surface a cool, even-tempered leader, Nakira is in reality a passionate woman who has broken the heart of many a man. She has never (at least never intentionally) used her beauty to help her gain her position or power, and is proud of the fact that she has achieved her current position through intelligence and skill rather than through sexual manipulations.

Nakira is rarely parted from her "boys" (as she calls them): Lars and Fredrik, both a muscular 198 centimeters tall with white-blond hair, pale skin and blue eyes, a stark contrast to the dark Nakira. The 'boys' are her loyal, not-too-bright *Transhuman V* bodyguards, Centurions of the Ducal fleet and classic examples of the Kashmerian eugenics program.

4.15 VISCOUNT JAISON MENZIES-LLOYD

Jaison Menzies-Lloyd is the nephew of Baron Kevin Skakis Kubishev-Lloyd. Strikingly handsome with pretty-boy features, sandy hair and emerald green eyes, he wears only the latest fashions of Imperial designers over his slender form. The Viscount of a subject world in the Kubishev-Lloyd province, Jaison's main value to the Council is his political affiliations. Though impulsive, vain, arrogant and disrespectful of his elder fellows, he has an undeniable genius at concocting devious schemes, and his intuition is flawless. Those qualities allow the rest of the Council to overlook his poor manners — though one day he may go too far and find himself taking a spacewalk outside of Starhaven without a suit.

Among Jaison's many talents are his considerable combat pilot skill, his expertise with a power sword, and a mastery of combat tactics quite unusual for a youth of only twenty-six years..

His personal guard and companion is a dark-haired, handsome, imposing young man named Kaal Randolph. The Viscount is never without his bodyguard, hovering close and watching his master with a more-than-loyal possessiveness.

4.16 JULIAN TRITON KOSINSKI III

190 cm tall man with dark-blond hair, Julian Kosinski looks even younger than his 35 standard years, though the scowl which seems to be his perpetual expression does nothing for his appearance.

Kosinski was blessed with a natural holographic memory and an intuitive understanding of memory molecutronics, both of which — combined with a compulsive hunger for work and a drive to succeed — rocketed him up through the ranks of the Church. Even the powers of a Bishop at age 29 were not enough to sate Julian, however, and it was not long before he had crossed over into the ranks of the League. From there it was a quick journey to the top.

Still, however, Julian seems unfulfilled, always seeking another challenge to his considerable intellect and his enormous reasoning faculties. His lust for power has brought him far, yet neither his 'church' nor his betrayal have given him satisfaction.

Naturally, Julian trusts very few with the secret of his League association. Two who are in his confidence are the D.K. monks hover behind him at all times, their hands hidden in the long sleeves of their black habits.

4.17 DUCHESS ZIRINA THAAN

Zirina Thaan is young, beautiful, and Duchess of one of the Empire's Inner Provinces. Like her compatriots, however, this was not enough of a challenge for the young noblewoman, and she sought diversion by trading illegal secrets to a League spy. Now she shares mastery of the mighty League with only six others; she finds it a diverting 'recreation'. Her particular weakness is for Sianetic Harbinger Jewelry — especially of Ta'kon creation. She has killed before to get such. Of all the Seven, she may be the most cruel, actually enjoying the suffering of others. This vice is particularly disturbing in contrast to her cheerful, seemingly carefree, countenance.

Duchess Thaan's bodyguard is a handsome if vaguely 'vacant' looking young man who seems neither particularly strong nor quick. His name is Jamieson, and he is actually an android, stronger and faster than any of the other guards except — perhaps — the robot ARG

4.2 INDEPENDENT TRADER LORDS

These men and women are masters of their own crime empires, yet bow to the League of Merchants in certain areas. Their relationship with the LeagueMasters is an uneasy one, almost like satellite nations: while thankful of the Mother Country's support, they are always wondering when the occupation will begin...

4.21 EMERICH RACH

Emerich is one of several "free traders" who are occasionally approached by the Devonian court to execute various fringe operations. He is one of five main privateering kingpins on the independent world of Hyperion, a planet within Devon space, but granted limited self-government.

Like all other successful businessmen of Hyperion, Emerich sells manpower services to the Devonian court for dirty jobs in which the Devonians would rather not be directly implicated. Emerich is shrewd, but not as much of a cut-throat as other crime-lords on Hyperion tend to be. He is a Terran human without family or inheritance, having managed to assemble his vast private operating army in only fifteen years of operations.

He also managed to win most of his extensive military hardware reserves through gambling set-ups on other independent worlds. Because of this there are quite a few gutter rats — not to mention League Lords — of the underworld that would prefer to see Emerich in vacuum.

His operatives are carefully chosen by his first officer of operations, Jewel Coz, who uses her telepathic powers to determine the sincerity of allegiance pledging privateers. Those admitted into Emerich's ranks tend to look up to him as a father figure. He is stern, fair, and has given the more promising drop-outs of Devonian society a place to call home.

Since many of Emerich's activities are covertly sanctioned by the Devonian court of nobles, his ships, although often boarded, are usually granted free passage by Devonian security forces. Emerich never, well... only occasionally, abuses the quasi-trust that has been granted to him by the court out of the necessity to have non-Devonian forces at their disposal. Emerich likes the position that he holds because he receives exorbitant fees for his performance of covert operations. He would never like to find himself in a situation where he could get cut off from the Devonian slush fund.

4.22 MOIRE 'MOTHER' TALFAY

A powerful matriarch of Hyperion, "Mother" Talfay actually has a more sweeping operation than Emerich Rach, but since her interests and his rarely overlap, they get along peaceably enough. Mother is an elderly woman, bent with age (she shunned all of the many youth drugs available until very recently — and only takes enough to arrest further aging), grey haired and wrinkled. Her mind is sharp as a forceknife, however, and she rules her Intelligence network with the skill of a brilliant tactician and the energy of a woman a quarter of her age.

Rumors tell that Mother was actually a Truthsibyl candidate but dropped out of the program, or even more unlikely, that she was a fully trained Truthsibyl who deserted the school. (Such an event is unheard-of except in the most nebulous of unconfirmed heresy.) Mother does display an occasional flair for seeing through deception, an invaluable talent in her profession.

The center of the Talfay operation is a grand old mansion set on a vast estate on Hyperion; a façade for a sophisticated underground complex staffed with a bevy of intelligence agents and operators.

Her grandson, Erin Talfay, is heir to the family operation, but is somewhat of a fool. Darkly handsome, he is young and without self-discipline. He has a bad habit of squandering Monits on Xantha and Epsilon Party.

4.23 LORG VILLIT

Another member of the ranks of Free Trader Lords, Lorg Villit has risen through the ranks, starting out as a freelance Jack, to become a Starhaven resident with his own contingent of operatives. His specialization now is weapons smuggling, mainly supplying arms to some of the myriad rebel groups throughout the Empire.

Villit lost a hand while a raider and has since had it replaced with a cybernetic one. An interesting aspect of this prosthetic is that — while it functions exactly as a human hand, having five fingers including opposable thumb, and is even equipped with tactile sensors — no attempt has been made to conceal its mechanical nature. Smooth, flexible, fully transparent tissue covers the hand and lower arm mechanism to just below the elbow where it joins Villit's real arm. Beneath the tissue is a beautiful, gleaming mechanism, constructed of materials designed to be shown-off. There are even decorative gems and tiny gleaming lights within. Truly a work of art, this mechanism is also frighteningly powerful. The clasping power of the fingers can easily crush most handheld weapons — or a man's neck.

While Villit isn't a cruel man, and indeed seems rather relaxed and informal, he runs his operation with little tolerance for mistakes.

4.24 GRAAK LOKKAR

Lokkar is an Idorian, and mean as they come. 201 cm tall, but massing only 83 kilos, the Leagueman has the characteristic Idor build, as well as the snow-white hair and bluish, pale skin. Mercenaries are Lokkar's main business, and he has many contacts with illegal Replicant manufacturers. Like Villit, he has an apartment on Starhaven and spends most of his time there, when he is not out making deals with those who require cheap manpower. As a reflection of his vicious nature, Lokkar packs a Mk III disruptor pistol when he travels — a brutal weapon banned on almost every Imperial world.

4.3 SOME IMPORTANT OPERATIVES

The persons here are not yet powerful to be considered lords (or "Xecs") but they constitute some of the more prominent free-lancers or particularly prominent league 'employees'.

4.31 KORT KASYGA

One of the many pirate captains who frequents Starhaven, yet always in high demand for a dangerous job, Kort is definitely not a man to be trifled with. At a surprisingly young age — twenty-seven standard years — he commands a small raider (the *Golden Dagger*) and a crew of ten loyal men who would willingly die at his word.

Of just above average height (185 cm) he is powerfully built — massing about 95 kilos of fair-skinned muscle. With white-blond hair ten centimeters long and spiked from his head in a snowy halo, delicate features and pale blue eyes, Kort is a striking presence. He might even be called handsome, though his preferred style of dress definitely lends a barbaric quality to his appearance. One ear sports several dangling earrings, (the other is unadorned to accommodate a headset). His most recent favorite costume includes an Imperial Starmada Admiral's dress tunic with dozens of medals and precious-metal awards worn open at the front (bare-chested underneath) and the sleeves ripped off at the shoulder; trousers of golden truesilk; knee boots of pure white Karolinian seal fur; fingerless gloves of real Terran leather, a Kashmerian special edition pulse-laser pistol (with platinum handle and jeweled fittings) strapped to his thigh, and his personal treasure: a Sianetic Harbinger armband of a glimmering silvery alloy. Though Kasyga does not know it, the armband has very unusual powers: it protects the wearer vs all mental attacks (Psions and Mentalism) as if he were 60th level. It will also act as a Absorption Shield protecting the side of the body it is worn on, activating automatically when needed.

When it comes to work, however, Kort is all business. He has never failed to deliver after accepting a job — except on the occasion when something beyond his control has gone wrong, such as Imperial intervention, or a double-cross. Kort has survived more than one of the latter, and his double-crossers haven't survived any.

4.32 VIKTOR OLMEERI

Although Viktor is over 180cm tall, he is very thin and always seems to move about in a crouch. This, combined with the ultrablack coveralls he perpetually wears makes him appear quite small and spidery. Olmeeri has black hair which he keeps short, and a face that probably could not be made attractive even with radical reconstructive surgery.

Olmeeri is a master lockbreaker and burglar. Preferring to work alone, he claims he can steal almost anything from anywhere, and though his price is high, his reputation is equally impressive.



KORT KASYGA

4.33 TERUK CAONABO

A League Ship Captain, Caonabo can be charming and intellectual, fitting in with the upper crust of Imperial society. He can also be harsh, brutal and cold-blooded.

With ruddy skin, dark brown hair and eyes, Teruk Caonabo is boyishly attractive — ironic considering his reputation for cruelty. Standing at 200 centimeters and slender (he masses only about 95 kilos), Caonabo is nonetheless impressive in his black and silver Captain's uniform.

Caonabo was a Captain in the Kashmere Star Fleet, but when his new assignment — the experimental ship *Prometheus* — met with misfortune during flight tests, he became disenchanted with the service. Nakira T'sraang, having heard of this talented Captain, offered him an alternative. He eagerly accepted a position in the League.

While technically a Transhuman VII, Caonabo is one-quarter Transtwelve. As such he is less bulky than a Seven, and has many of the exceptional mental abilities of a Twelve. Unfortunately, his psychoscans show some emotional disturbances, and he was monitored by KIN (Kashmere Intelligence Net) operatives for some time.

In the League he commands the *Jezirius*, an advanced Imperial Frigate recently stolen by the League of Merchants and refitted at Starhaven. His crew is fiercely loyal to him, bound by his personal charisma. He has his eye on a seat on the League Council, and intends to have one if he has to dispose of one of the current members to get it. Caonabo and his ship theoretically serve the Council as a whole, though it is generally accepted that for all intents and purposes he is Nakira's 'creature'. His somewhat depraved recreational preferences are also well-known in inner League circles, but since many of these corrupt crime lords have unspeakable vices of their own, his tendencies are judiciously overlooked.

4.34 TAMI KAVARA

This petite woman, with her short blonde hair and large brown eyes, hardly looks the part of a bounty hunter. Tami Kavara is among the best, however. A skilled martial artist, she is also deadly with a laser, and is rumored to have an arsenal of personal weapons at her disposal. Her ship — a stolen and modified DeBarton Courier — is fast and her instincts are flawless. Her name is feared by League Fugitives everywhere, because Tami always gets her man.

STATS FOR LEAGUE NPCs

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	Weapon:OB	Skill:Add	Skill:Add	Skill:Add	Notes
LEAGUE AND BODYGUARDS								
Moryn K'aldo	30	210	20/1 (50)*	LsrPstl:140	Diplom:130	Subdue:160	Seduct:150	K'ta'viir Lord Explorer/ Telepath. Most lists to 30th lvl, many other skills; see text. Mk V Laser Pistol, enhanced barrier shield (+90 DB vs all attacks); leotard-like garment which protects vs all physical (non-energy) attacks as AT 20; Hooded robe which adds 100 to hiding and generates a personal EW field making scanners at -100; sensors at -75 to detect him.
Jerin	15	240	1 (45)*	M/Aboth:150r4	Subdue:120	LsrPstl:140	Acrobat:110	K'ta'viir Armsman. Belt Barrier Shield; Mk III Laser Pistol. Note special abilities.
Kell	15	235	1 (45)*	M/Aboth:145r4	Subdue:130	LsrPstl:150	Acrobat:100	K'ta'viir Armsman. Belt Barrier Shield; Mk III Laser Pistol. Note special abilities.
Oberon Neumaan	23	78	1 (10)*	MLAPstl:100	CmpTc:185	CmpThry:190	Crmolgy:150	Neo-Human Comp Tech. Ultracompact Mk 20 Computer. Belt Deflector Shield.
ARG 387	—	300	20 (80)	Mk VLsr:190	MkVstr:170	Multiscn:150	NSPilot:140	Combat Bot. Scanners and weapons built in; maneuvers on gravitics.
Soris	25	120	1 (20)	LsrPstl:160	FrcKnif:150	Ambush:20	Admin:110	Human Explorer.
Om	15	210	1 (40)	M/Aboth:150r4	Subdue:200	Disarm:110	NSPilot:90	Human. Armsman.
Nakira T'sraang	20	110	1 (30)	LasPstl:124	OrPilot:100	Tactics:90	Admin:76	Transhuman XII Explorer. Belt Barrier shield, Mk III Laser Pistol.
Lars	10	160	1 (20)*	Autoblstr:130	Subdue:160	M/Aboth:90	NSPilot:120	Transhuman V Armsman. Belt Deflector Shield; autoblasters (fires on the
Fredrik	10	155	1 (25)*	Autoblstr:135	Subdue:140	M/Aboth:100	NSAstro:120	Transhuman V Armsman. Belt Deflector Shield.
Jaison Menzies-Lloyd	10	120	1 (20)*	Pwr Swrd:145	HndLsr:100	Act:110	NSPilot:110	Neo-Human Explorer. Deflector Shield, Mk II Hnd Lsr.
Kaal Randolph	8	145	1 (30)*	PwrSwrd:120	Subdue:110	BlstPstl:110	NSAstro:90	Human Armsman.
Julian Kosinski III	14	110	1 (20)*	M/Aboth:80	Comp:120	CompTc:110	Admin:100	Human Theologist. Absorption Shield.
Skir (Monk)	10	140	1 (30)*†	M/Aboth:140	Subdue:130	Crimlgy:100	CmpTch:80	Human Theologist (DK)
Theren (Monk)	9	145	1 (25)*†	M/Aboth:150	Subdue:120	Blst Pstl:95	Acrobat:65	Human Theologist (DK)
Zirina Thaan	13	85	1 (15)*	Admin:95	Act:110	PubSpk:86	Propgn:80	Human Administrator.
Jamieson VIII	9	200	4 (40)	M/Aboth:135	Subdue:100	StunPstl:110	Diplom:90	Android Armsman.
TRADER LORDS								
Emerich Rach	13	105	1 (5)*	StnPstl:72	HyAstr:99	HyPilot:98	Admin:85	Human Pilot. Barrier Shield.
Mother Tallay	18	76	1 (-5)	LsrPstl:60	Admin:120	Act:80	Propgn:110	Human Administrator.
Lorg Villit	16	130	? (20)*	LsrPstl:130	Criminol:90	NSPilot:110	ScnAnal:80	Human Armsman. Velocity shield, mechanical hand.
Graak Lokkar	15	125	? (20)	DisrptPst:112	Trading:110	Trick:86	Gamble:65	Idorian Armsman. Mk III Disruptor Pistol.
IMPORTANT OPERATIVES								
Kort Kasyga	10	141	? (??)*	LsrPstl:98	NSPil:101	HyPil:88	Tactics:70	Transhuman XII (randomly bred) Deflector shield, armor.
Viktor Olmeeri	14	98	1 (30)	HndLsr:124	CrmTch:135	CompTch:93	Hide:130	Hman Criminologist. Stealth Coveralls, +20 'repair' scanner.
Teruk Caonabo	12	180	1 (40)*	BlstPstl:126	SMG:84	OrPil:82	NSPilot:83	Transhuman VII Explorer. Deflector Shield
Tami Kavara	8	111	1 (20)	LsrPstl:95	AutoBlst:90	CrimTc:97	ScanAn:91	Human Criminologist.

Notes:

* DB does not include shield modifier. Check notes under character listing for what type of shield, check modifiers below, and incorporate in DB:

Velocity Shield:	+30 vs melee,	+45 vs missile,	+60 vs projectiles,	+0 vs energy.
Deflector Shield:	+5 vs melee,	+15 vs missile,	+40 vs projectiles,	+60 vs energy.
Absorption Shield:	+30 vs melee,	+30 vs missile,	+30 vs projectiles,	+30 vs energy.
Barrier Shield:	+60 vs melee,	+70 vs missile,	+70 vs projectiles,	+90 vs energy.

† DB does not include Adrenal Defense (varies depending on type of attack — see *Space Master* rules). Check notes under character listing for A.D. bonus

THE LEAGUE: FACILITIES LISTING

*"Many roads lead to Starhaven;
somewhat fewer lead away again"*

Tak Yalarian
Pirate and First Chairman of the League
Imp 125

The League owns (or at least controls) a vast number of facilities in the Imperial neighborhood, and is as powerful as any Inner House. The Headquarters of the League — *Starhaven* — is described here in detail. Additionally, three other facilities are discussed which, while not necessarily under the League's control, are centers of influence and League communication.

5.1 STARHAVEN

The location of the headquarters of the League of Merchants is one of the best-kept secrets in Human Space. Just mentioning the name is enough to evoke fantastic tales from Independent Traders who claim to have been there at some dark point in their careers. The legends vary in the grandness of their vision: some claim that the League headquarters is actually on Old Earth or the Moon; others place it on the other side of a black hole or other singularity, kept safe by some incredible Sianetic Harbinger artifact. More modest claims tell of a small outpost on a dead moon at the fringes of the Empire, or hidden within the bureaucracy of a megacorporation within Imperial Space. None of these claims is quite correct.

Not situated on a planet at all, *Starhaven* is actually a large and very ancient space station, a huge artifact of one of the younger Sianetic Harbinger races. It orbits a white dwarf in a dead solar system; this alone has helped to confuse any search, and it is only the beginning.

Apparently, not so long ago (in stellar terms) the dying sun Omega Aenus novaed. The explosion threw off much of the star's mass and collapsed the remainder into a white dwarf. *Starhaven* was in the shadow of the planet it orbits and was spared the full fury of the destruction. That, combined with its still-operational deflectors, spared the already long-abandoned station. The expelled stellar material created a nebula about the system, clouding the star and its six planetary children (now all blasted cinders) from accurate analysis.

The secret of *Starhaven*'s location continues to be protected via the use of code-locked coursetapes, which cannot be duplicated or read. The tape is fed into a ship's navigational computer and the trip is completely automated — including two or

three out of the way jumps to mislead passengers about the distance and location of the base. Once visitors have arrived at the Omega Aenus system, they are within the dense, hazy nebula where very few stars can be made out through the beautiful violet cloud without careful study. Before a thorough analysis can be made, any unwanted intruders are invariably dispatched.

Starhaven is itself — as previously noted — an ancient space station, apparently intended to function in a manner similar to current Imperial Instations. In design, however, it differs radically, being torus-shaped with a large core which holds the main docking bays.

5.11 OMEGA AENUS

The planet which *Starhaven* orbits is a dead world with virtually no atmosphere or any other non-mineral substance. The solar explosion ripped nearly everything from this once-earthlike world, leaving it barren and stark — not unlike Earth's moon in appearance, though there are far fewer craters.

DEV:tau AOv

Planet: Omega Aenus III

Circumference: 34,500 km

Natural Satellites: None

Mean Orbit: 450 LS

Day: 22.1 Standard hours

Year: 310 Standard Days

Province: Imperial Space

Status: Omega World

Population: Uninhabitable

5.12 THE STATION

Starhaven was abandoned perhaps tens of thousands of years ago by the original builders and left to maintain itself for the long millennia. Why the first inhabitants left is not clear, for the records which can be interpreted imply that they departed long before the system's sun went nova, and that the station had been empty for hundreds of years before the cataclysm which almost destroyed it.

Surviving the destruction of the system, *Starhaven* managed to maintain orbit and operate on minimum power until some nameless explorer discovered it centuries ago. Most agree that this explorer was not even from Earth; Terran Man was still fighting over the worlds close to his home when the lights of *Starhaven* came on again.

The long years passed and the old artifact was sporadically repaired. Between the solar explosion and the stretch of time, even the ancient ship's screens were unable to stop every meteoric intrusion, and there were many small punctures and tears. The location of the station became an open secret among a loose alliance of 'political criminals' who used it as a meeting place and sanctuary. Eventually this group became more organized and cohesive, and the seven most powerful crime lords made a pact. They took formal control of the station and coordinated a staff to keep the headquarters secure and in good repair. Since the main source of income for this band had always been piracy, the Seven named themselves — with more than a little ironic humor — the League of Merchants.

OPERATIONS

Starhaven is much more than a hideout for a few interstellar pirates. It is practically a resort in its luxury, and it serves as a clearinghouse for stolen goods, an information exchange, and a recruiting center for various League operations. All of levels Five and Six of Sector One form a single great marketplace where thieves and pirates (or anyone else with "hot" merchandise) gather to sell their wares to the merchants of *Starhaven*. These in turn have many contacts throughout the Empire and associated territories where they can dispose of their merchandise.

Starhaven has a 'permanent staff' made up of skilled men and women dedicated to their jobs. This may seem strange, but while employment on *Starhaven* means a life of exile, these sentients have a career with unique challenges, and they are well-treated by their superiors. Most are not even criminals, merely Imperial citizens who have grown dissatisfied with life under His Majesty's rule, observed and then carefully recruited by LeagueMaster Soris' agents. Some are even kidnap victims who have elected to join forces with their captors (a twisted, but historically not uncommon decision). Within *Starhaven*'s permanent staff are a number of divisions:

Security

The only people on Starhaven allowed to carry lethal weapons besides the Seven and their personal guards, the Security troops pack blasters — and no one fools with them. They wear charcoal grey uniform coveralls with a six-spoked wheel emblem on the left breast and sleeve. There are 120 security men on the Starhaven payroll, 40 on duty at any given time. Eighteen of these are trained Fighter pilots, able to man the station's 20 (two backups) SMAC Interceptors if necessary to defend the station. Security Chief Bennett Graves captains his troops with a firm hand.

Engineering

Responsible for keeping Starhaven operational, the team of 21 engineers and technicians is constantly at work patching together the ancient electronic systems, grafting on new equipment, or just trying to figure out the advanced yet foreign technology of a long-dead race. Chief Engineer Martia Suurlis has her hands full, but the job offers many unique challenges.

They are aided by three dozen robot assistants who do the majority of the basic labor. While most of these robots are current Imperial models, seven are reactivated original residents (no one entirely trusts these). Their design is quite unusual; often non-anthropomorphic, they float down the corridors on silent gravitics.

Also part of the engineering crew's job is servicing ships which visit here (some of them are quite badly damaged, having narrowly escaped from the Law or some other trigger-happy group).

Operations

The 42 operations personnel include the crews who man Hub Control, as well as the deck crews who perform basic maintenance (such as refueling) on visiting and resident craft. Chief Operations Officer Alexei Ippolitov is effectively second in command of the station (after Soris) and, in addition to directly supervising Hub Control, he coordinates all other departmental activities.

Medical

18 full-time medical staff are always on call, including six Certified Medical practitioners, six Medical Technicians, and six emergency care specialists. Chief Surgeon Chelsea Stargol presides over her department like a protective mother.

In addition, Starhaven's Sick Bay is a combination of some of the most advanced Terran Imperial technology and some rather amazing equipment still functioning from the original station. Nine Medical Function Beds — three of which are very sophisticated Harbinger models — form the nucleus of Sick Bay, supplemented by 27 Scanner beds. Twelve medical bots are also on staff to assist in surgery and patient care.

OVERALL DESIGN

CLASS: Orbital Station
PRODUCER: Unknown
TONNAGE/HITS: $\approx$ 5,100,000 tons
COMPUTER Mk#: $\approx$ 600 (two auxiliaries)
ARMOR TYPE: 28 (+20 due to flaws)
(-160 total)
EW RATING: 80
SCREEN RATING: 100
CREW: Special: see above
PASSENGERS: Special: see above
MAX SUBLIGHT ACCEL: (RTG 1 = 10 km/
second² max acceleration)
TRANSLIGHT DISPLACEMENT: —
OPERATING RANGE: —
WEAPONRY:
— six rim-mtd Mk 40 Laser Cannons;
— six hub-mtd Mk 30 Disruptors
(3 each end);
— one hub-mtd Mk 50 Ion Cannon

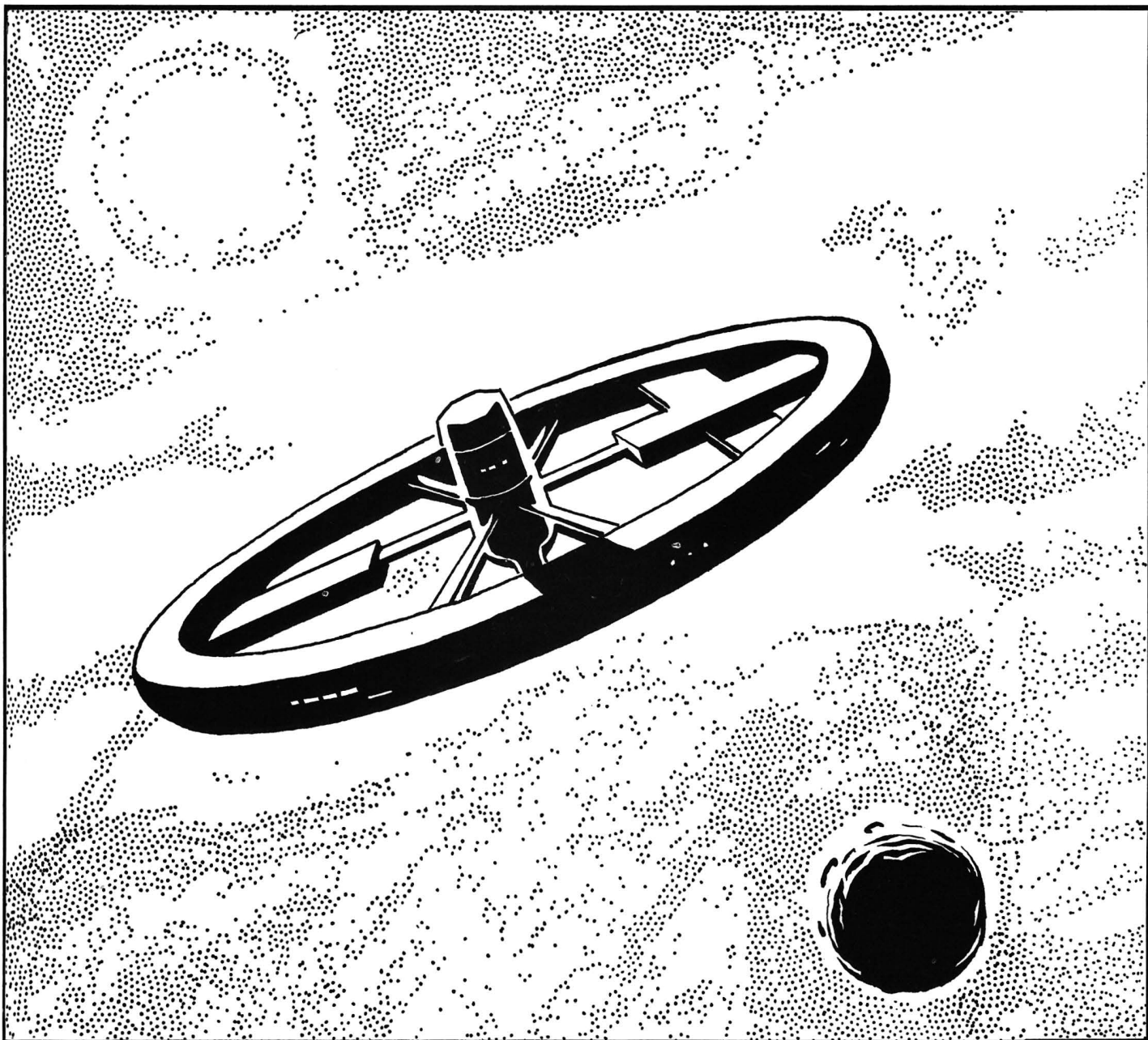
In basic concept, Starhaven is similar to space stations built during man's earlier space exploration period, before gravitic control was developed. The station is basically a great wheel with six spokes, radiating from a central hub. The wheel spins at a rate such that gravity is simulated by centrifugal force on the wheel rim: a very simple and ancient idea, and actually rather efficient. It is odd that the designers resorted to this means of supplying gravity, however, as they clearly had technology of gravitics (gravitic generators with other purposes are found throughout the station — and are even used to stabilize spin!). Perhaps the builders liked the aesthetic of a great wheel turning in space, with an ever-changing view through the many ports dotting the rim. Their real reason will probably never be known.

The wheel is approximately 450 meters across (about half the length of an Imperial Outstation) and the circumference of the ring is just under 1500 meters. The rim is 70 meters wide, and encompasses six levels; thus the entire wheel encloses well over 600,000 square meters of 'floorspace'.

The station was originally fashioned of a dark grey metal with a crystalline gleam to it (the engineers theorize that it is some form of advanced crystalline steel) and while it is not as strong as Ordium II or Ardinium, it is close to the latter. The surface is pitted and pock-marked from numerous micrometeor collisions long ago; all patched with various metals, in some places in a haphazard fashion. The station has an unusually large number of observation ports, though they are of glassteel so fairly resilient. All such ports also have protective panels which can be closed over them in times of danger. Every chamber on Starhaven can be sealed, and major sections have armored, reinforced bulkheads which can also be closed off. Such panels can be controlled locally, and also overridden from Hub Control.

The technology of the place is (to Terrans) a strange amalgam of indecipherable technology and archaic anachronisms. Food processors can flawlessly synthesize any comestible desired, once they have been provided with a sample to digitize (quite a triumph) while the whole station depends on spinning for gravity. Starhaven is equipped with deflector screens so sophisticated that the resident engineers barely have a clue as to how they work (much less are they able to duplicate them) yet the stations control consoles use mechanical buttons and switches, rather than the much more resilient heat/pressure sensitive controls used in Imperial technology.

Starhaven's main power source (a laser fusion reactor) is located at the core of the Hub, supplying energy to the entire station. There are also six auxiliary reactors located around the wheel, designed to supply energy to one sixth of the ring should the main go off-line. In the direst of emergencies, one reactor could supply enough power to maintain the entire station on emergency status. Lighting is provided in a variety of ways in different parts of the station. Residential areas have quite a selection of lighting, from luminous walls which glow and change color at a touch and thought (Telepathic control!) to simple tubes filled with charged gas giving off a plain blue-white light in most of the public access corridors, to the dim, eerie blue-green light which pervades the hub areas.



All basic systems are controlled by the station's main computer, which answers to the name *Guardian* with a calm, deep, masculine voice. It maintains temperature, controls lighting levels (to simulate day and night) and a variety of maintenance procedures in concert with the Engineering staff and Interface Bots. *Guardian* serves as a sleepless backup on the long-range sensors, ready to alert the Operations staff should an intruder be detected. While *Guardian* himself cannot "see" the interior of Starhaven, the original Starhaven bots can act as his "eyes". (Perhaps that's why no one entirely trusts them.)

One interesting aspect of Starhaven which makes it different from other space stations is that it is actually *movable*. With powerful fusion engines mounted on the rim, it is able to accelerate at 10 km/second

squared, enabling it to approach the speed of light after less than nine hours of acceleration. The station is equipped with a RIF generator, annulling the effects of Einsteinian near-light acceleration. While sublight may not be the most elegant or speedy way to travel, it could conceivably save the station should the secret of Starhaven's location ever be discovered by Imperial Forces.

THE HUB

The hub of Starhaven is actually a hexagonal form, 210 meters long through the axis and 100 meters across. One end forms a short, truncated pyramid with six sides, while the other end is a flat face. Crowning the summit of the pyramid is a ten meter wide dome of glassteel, and inside this dome, nearly weightless at the center of rotation, is Hub Control, where a ring of consoles are constantly manned by

Operations personnel who coordinate the coming and going of ships, monitor the system for intruders, and (if necessary) activate Starhaven's many defensive facilities.

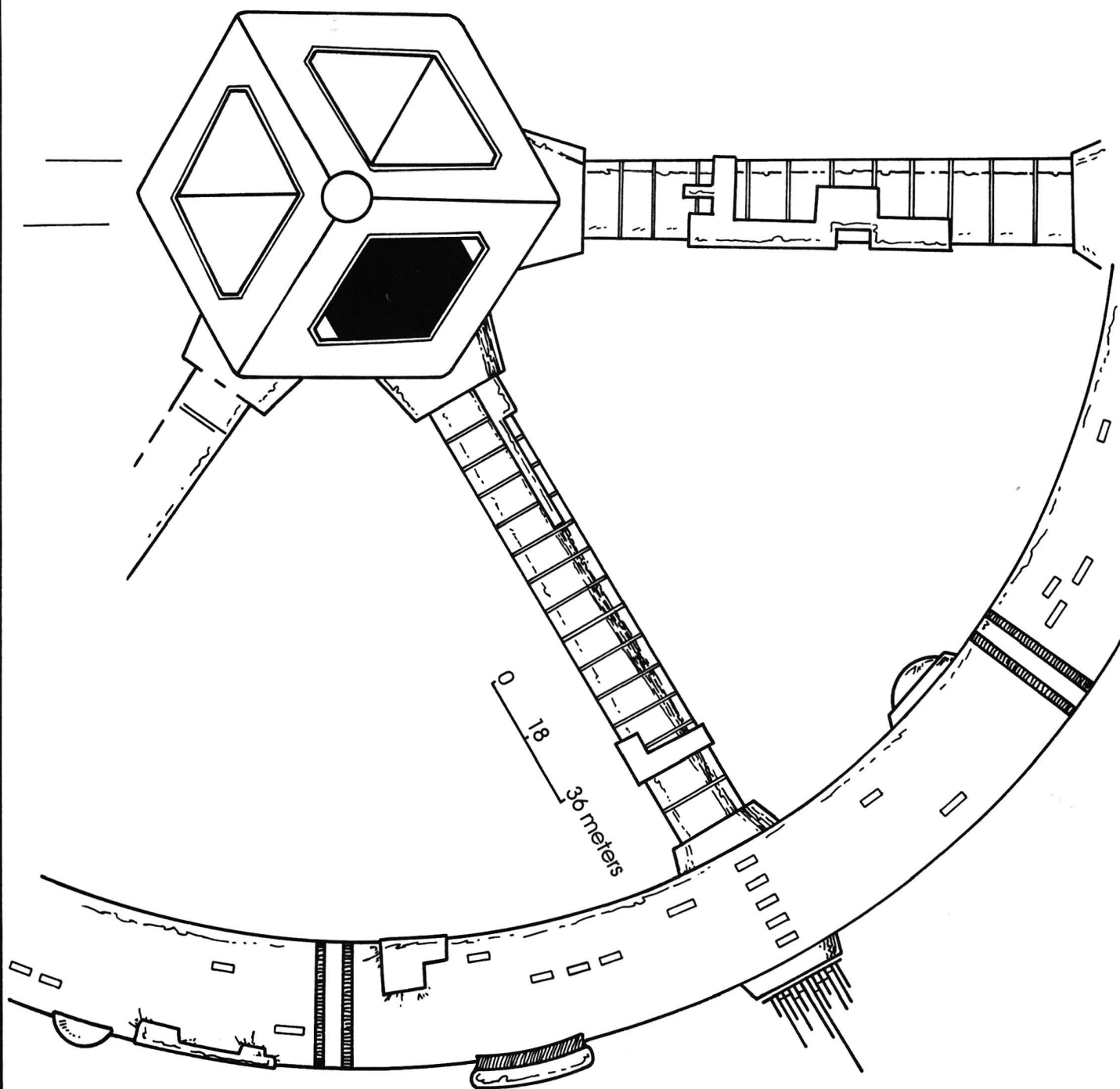
Three small docking bays surround Hub Control, each 40 meters across and 70 deep. They are able to accommodate most small craft up to and including Survey class vessels. At the other end of the Hub is a single large bay 100 meters across and 120 deep. Even larger than a standard bay on an Outstation, this drydock can accommodate several small craft or even a single Frigate class vessel. Each bay is equipped with state of the art equipment and supplies to repair or even overhaul a spacecraft.

STARHAVEN

view along axis

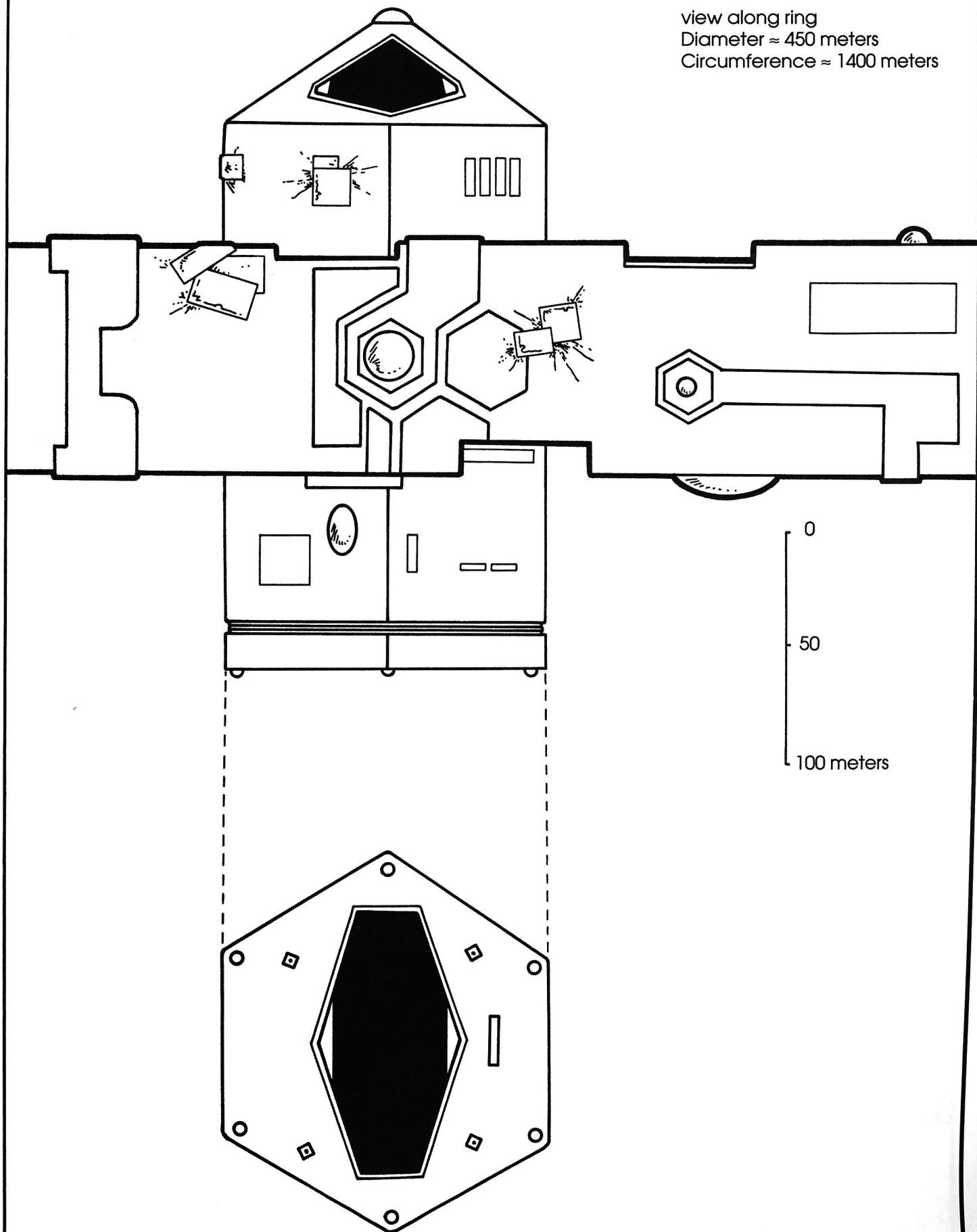
Diameter $\approx$ 450 meters

Circumference $\approx$ 1400 meters



STARHAVEN

view along ring
Diameter $\approx$ 450 meters
Circumference $\approx$ 1400 meters



1. Hub Control. Nine consoles ring this ten meter radius dome, with "up" being the center of the dome, and a very tenuous "down" being the perimeter. The consoles have the following functions:

- A. Communications, including Microfreq and Laser, as well as short-range (in-system) TBD. TBD communication through the system nebula is impossible and the League would not desire such communication anyway.
- B. Defense. Including sophisticated shield control and computer assisted EW manipulation. This station is always manned, should a supposedly friendly visitor suddenly turn bad.
- C. Weapons. Controlling all weapons on the station (none can be manned by gunners).
- D. Sensors. Capable of scanning the entire system with ease (though penetration of the nebula cloud is -50). This station tracks all vessels in the system.
- E. Docking Control. Manipulates the tractor beams which guide ships into the three docking bays at this end of the Hub (a separate control dome monitors operations at the large bay).
- F. Computer Interface. Monitors all computer activity, allows a skilled user to access nearly all databases and computer functions. It is the master tie-in to Guardian, the Starhaven computer.
- G. Engineering Subsystems: Power Core Monitoring. Usually unoccupied, this console monitors the seven fusion reactors on the station to make sure that there are no irregularities. If necessary, any of the reactors can be manually shut down from here (a Complex process).
- H. Engineering Subsystems: Power Distribution. Monitors power usage and re-routes power should a reactor shut down, or a power drain be unusually high in a given area. Power can be manually routed or shut down in any given sector from here (a very powerful capacity, allowing the operator to cut off light, air and heat to certain sections). This console also controls station maneuvering, keeping Starhaven rotating at the correct speed, maintaining orbit, and — should the need arise — controlling her course through space (this latter function is not obvious, concealed in an auxiliary panel which is only reveal by a coded command).

I. Security. This console is banked with screens, and is able to monitor every inhabited section of the station. Interestingly, it *cannot* show rooms with no occupants (thus unexplored regions of the station remain unexplored). The console operator is able to seal or unseal any door or bulkhead in the station, overriding all but the highest clearance at the local level.

In the center of the hub is a chair, suspended to face outwards but pivot just off the exact nexus. Here sits the head of Operations, where he can oversee every aspect of the station's operation. Hub control itself may be sealed off from the access tunnel (#4) by means of an alloy iris-valve door.

2. Docking Bay. The outline of one of the bay doors is shown here (the interior of the bay is *not* shown in this schematic). Interestingly, all three of these bays are lit by an eerie blue light from the central reactor: the inner wall of the bays is of a transparent material reinforced with a great Ordium grid and struts.

3. Mechanical. Filled with machines powering the doors and the atmospheric control of the bays, this area rings the hub.

4. Access Tube. This weightless shaft is of some resilient, transparent material, running from just behind Hub Control to the edge of the reactor.

5. Main Reactor. One of the most interesting sights in the entire station is the huge fusion reactor, encased in a transparent sphere of some unknown material. Whatever it is, it shields the surrounding station from radiation, yet lets through enough visible light to show a bright (but not blinding) blue glow. The sphere is reinforced with baroque Ordium struts, and inside can be seen the large laser firing rods and other fusion machinery. The reactor also gives off a continuous thrumming vibration/sound.

6. Lift Tubes. Six, small (capable of carrying three men at most) transparent tubes connect the hub access tube to a drum-shaped observation deck.

7. Observation Deck. Since the hub is rotating, providing a slight fraction of artificial gravity here, the reactor in the center is "up".

8. Mechanical/Storage. This torus-shaped area contains operating machinery and storage for repair parts and supplies for drydock. Here are also stored 12 maintenance pods, which have their own exit ports around the Hub.

9. Struts Hub. Here the six struts which connect the Hub to the Ring come together.

10. Strut Lift Tubes. Four tubes cluster in each of the six struts. In the hub there are access points at the center, at the observation deck (allowing connection to Hub Control and the Docks) and at the perimeter (mainly for service and access to the maintenance pods).

11. Bay Control. Three consoles in this small dome manipulate the clamps, bay doors, and atmospheric control in the large bay.

12. Elevators. These platforms are equipped with large grid platforms with magnetic and physical clamps for holding ships secure. They can be lowered/raised out of the main entry area once a craft has entered and been affixed to a grid.

13. Manipulator Arm. Useful for moving large parts and equipment.

14. Clamps. For holding a craft in place.

15. Bay Doors. A meter thick, they are hollow, but of reinforced Ardinium alloy.

16. Tractor beams. For safely guiding a ship in.

17. Disruptor Cannon Apertures. Three are at each end of the Hub.

THE SPOKES

Six slender rods, each 150 meters long, radiate from the central hub. Within each of these rods are four elevator shafts, two narrow service shafts, and a vast bundle of cable and conduit. Two crysteel rods flank each spoke, providing additional tensile strength against the spin forces. Although there are no windows in the spokes, there are a few small exterior hatches along the service crawlways. Naturally they cannot be opened normally, since the service ways are pressurized and the hatches do not have airlocks.

THE RING

The Ring is six levels deep, the outermost ("bottom") level being Level One, on up to the innermost ("top") level being Six. The ring is further divided into six Sectors, each being centered around one of the six elevator-spokes of the wheel.

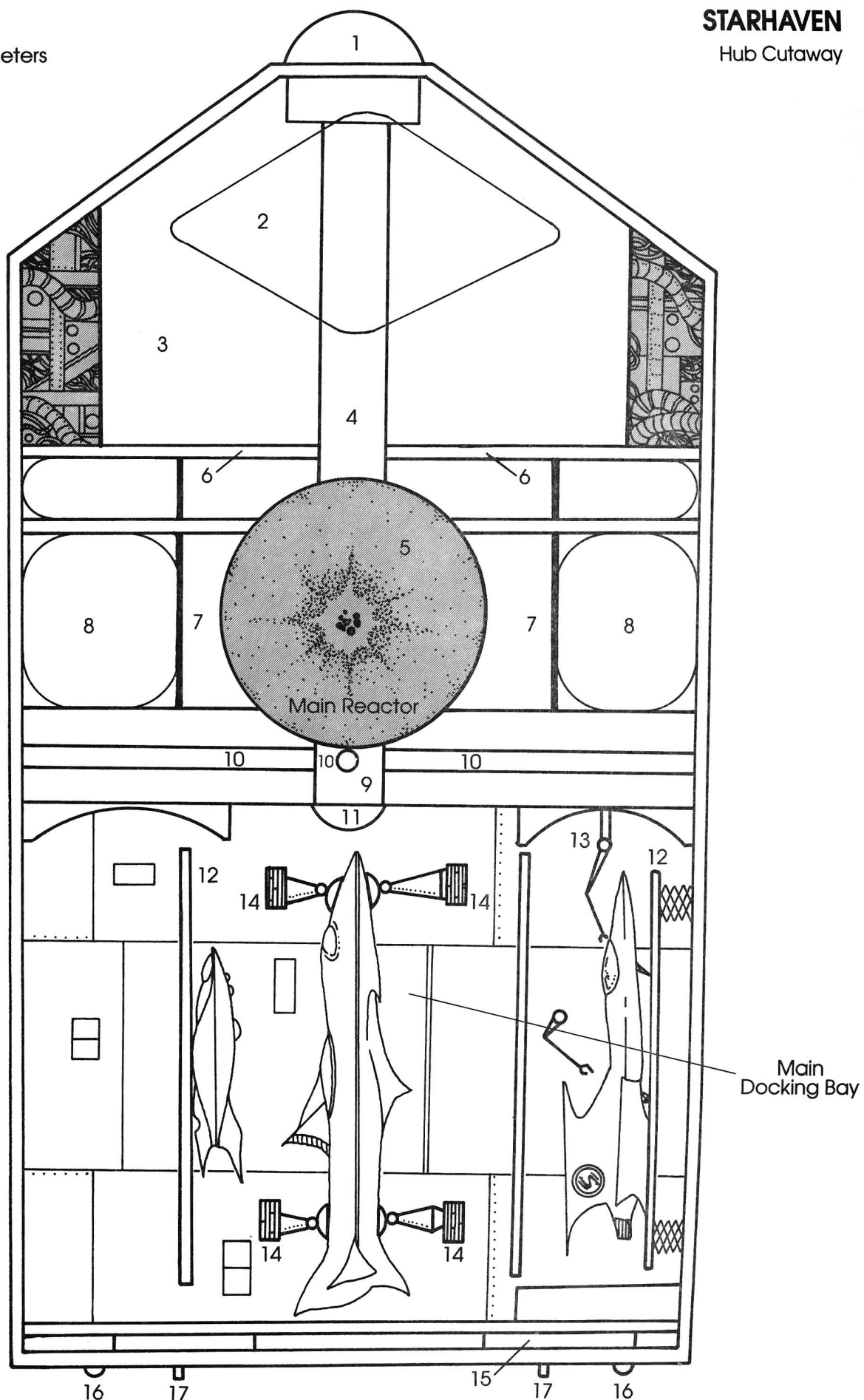
While the station has lodging facilities to accommodate nearly 1500 people in comfort, the it has only about 300 residents, with a transient population of from 100 to 500.

***Note:** To detail the entire Ring would indeed be a Herculean and unnecessary task; on the other hand, leaving areas undetailed also allows the GM to design his own sections of Starhaven. A few important areas are covered here, and displayed in layout form.*

STARHAVEN

Hub Cutaway

0 3 6 meters



Marketplace

The top (or innermost) two levels of Sector One are devoted entirely to the Marketplace. The four Lift tube shafts of Spoke One open onto each of the two levels, the top one being a diamond-shaped balcony with four cantilevered balconies extending out from it. The lower one opens onto the main floor of the Marketplace. The area itself is as loud and bright as any market on a populous world. The many domed skylights show darkness or an occasional view of the planet, but are dim compared to the many suspended lights and the flickering signposts of the more gaudily decorated vendors. The Market is over 200 meters from end to end, with dozens of shops lining the balconied upper level (most of these are smaller, more restrained vendors who deal in fine merchandise) and nearly a hundred stores, dining areas and entertainment centers packed into the lower level. The Marketplace never closes, and while none of the vendors are officially sanctioned by the League, the Council monitors their activities and exacts a fee for rental of a shop in the marketplace.

Escape Pods

Located throughout the Station, these escape pods are more sophisticated than the standard model used in Imperial ships. All are interstellar capable, (powered by a small antimatter reactor, capable of 10 LY/day) with a 50 LY range (though they are -20 to operate because of alien controls). They are kept stocked with field medical supplies and ration food for five for 50 days. All also have a Microfreq transmitter.

Council Chambers

Seven chairs of varying design surround a large table of obsidian. Set in the table are seven palm-keyed identity scanners and computer tie-in consoles. Above the table is a large transparent dome (which appears opaque when viewed from the outside). The room is circular, with seven columns and seven alloy doors. Outside is a ring-shaped chamber (for added security) which opens onto two escape pods and the main ring corridor. Beyond this are twin "ready" rooms (luxurious lounges with autobar, Replicant servants and every convenience). Beyond these rooms are guest suites for visiting friends of the Council (Each Council Member has his or her own office/bedroom suite area in other parts of the Ring).



Soris' Suite

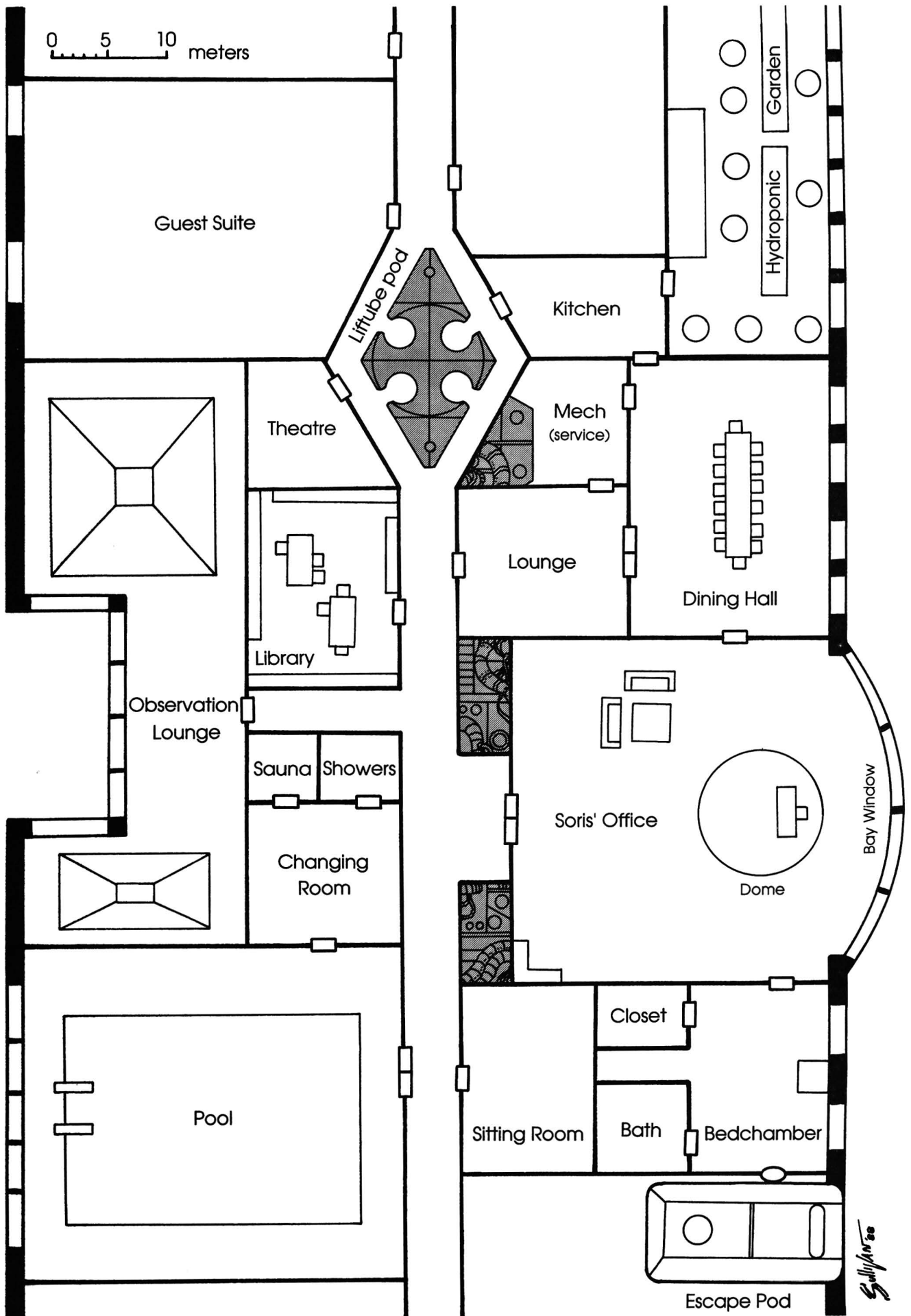
The quarters of the Chief Administrator of Starhaven are palatial by any standards; certainly they display conspicuous consumption for an environment such as a space station. The LeagueMaster's rooms and adjacent areas include fabulous guest suites, and a private hydroponic garden containing huge vats of beautiful flora adjacent to expansive viewports. There is also a dining room with seating for 14 (the

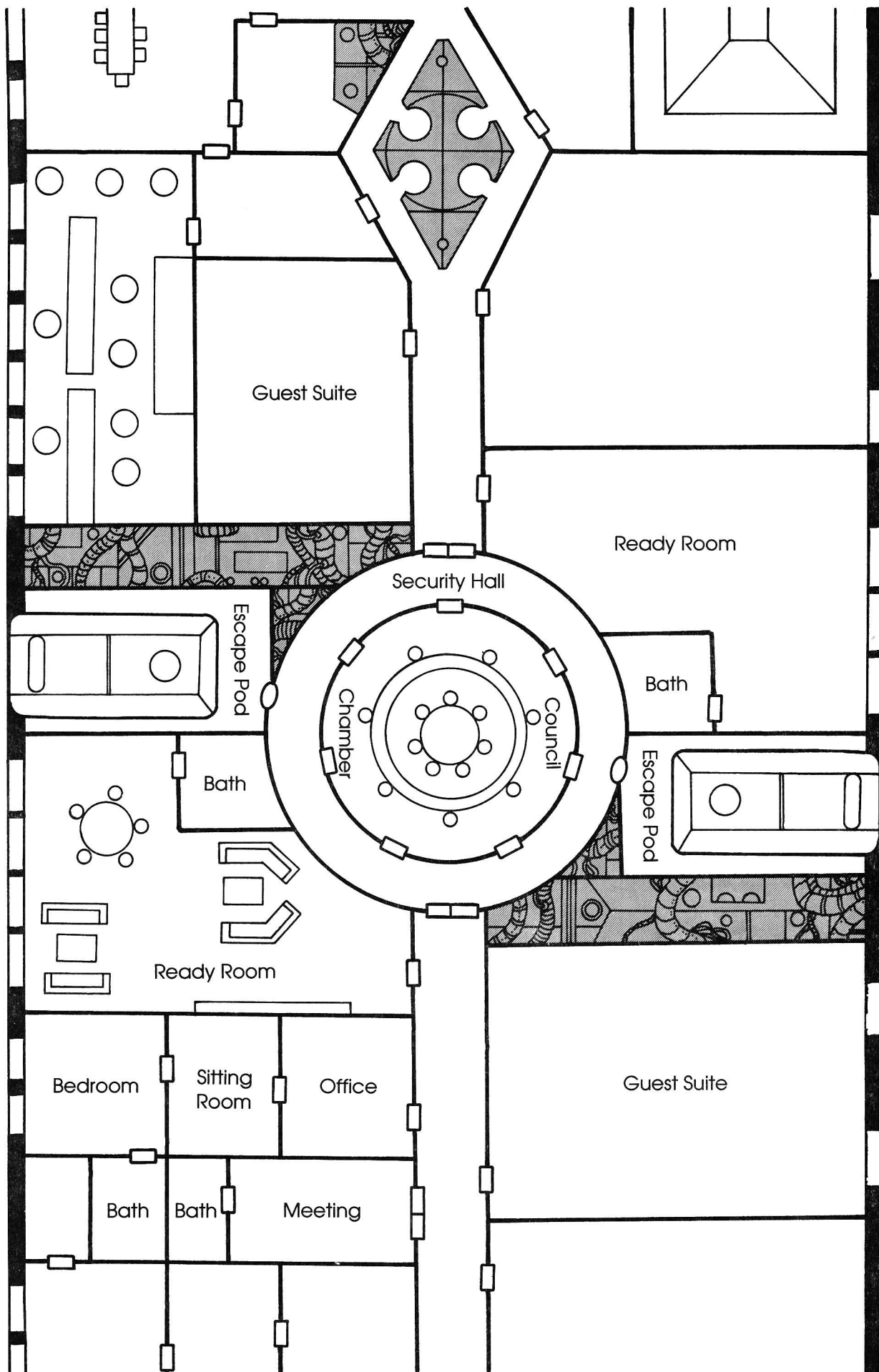
council and one guest each) and a lounge. Soris' office is over 25 meters square with a huge bubble-viewport behind his desk and a large dome over his head. Adjacent is a massive bedroom and sitting-room suite. Across the corridor is a private theater, an extensive computer library (also stocked with over 50,000 real printed books, many priceless!) and a panoramic observation lounge/gallery. There is a 25 by 15 meter swimming pool, with adjacent sauna and changing room. Certainly the quarters of a king!

SECRETS OF STARHAVEN

Starhaven is like an ancient, mostly-abandoned city. Only half-capacity at its most populous, there are entire sector-decks which lie dark (though the computer maintains atmosphere and heat in the whole station, partially as a reserve) and practically unexplored. 600,000 square meters is a tremendous area, especially when it is broken up into a maze of corridors, service accessways, airlocks, mechanical rooms, and other strange chambers. Some rooms are even locked and have yet to be opened, their electronic keys long ago lost or destroyed (a few of these even Moryn Kâldo cannot get into). Many of the lower, uninhabited sections are mechanical, or backup systems, or less than spacious residential areas.

Perhaps the biggest secret is not exactly of Starhaven itself, but one of the league Council residents. Moryn Kâldo (See Section 4) is actually a *Luar*, one of the High K'ta'viir, who ruled this section of the galaxy many thousands of years ago. Starhaven, while not constructed by the K'ta'viir, was built by one of their subject races. Moryn can read the cryptic symbols on the various controls and understands the original speech of the station computer. He learned all there was to know about Starhaven and selectively purged the computer memory before the bumbling human engineers even knew that anything was missing. Moryn and his bodyguards know all the secret ways through the station, and they alone are aware of the auxiliary control room hidden in the Hub. Moryn can tap into any communications line on the station, and videomonitor any room on Starhaven. The K'ta'viir lord rarely uses his special information, but it useful to keep his detractors at bay.





LEAGUE SHIPS

In this section are mentioned a few of the many ships controlled by the League of Merchants. Some are referred to specifically in other parts of the book, while others are just specific 'types' which would be encountered when facing the League.

SHIP NAME: Jezirius
 CLASS: Cruiser
 CAPTAIN: Teruk Caonabo
 OWNER/REGISTRY: League of Merchants/none
 PRODUCER: Imperial Transtar/Cygnus-Corp/modified at Starhaven
 TONNAGE/HITS: 60,000
 COMPUTER Mk#: 140
 +60 Predict
 +60 Evade
 ARMOR TYPE: 29 (60 Evade + 50 EW + 60 Screens = 120 DB + Pilot)
 EW RATING: 50
 SCREENS RATING: 60
 CREW: 200 (15 Officers)
 PASSENGERS: 20 max
 MAX SUBLIGHT ACCEL: Rating 15 (125 km/second²)
 MANEUVERING THRUSTERS: Rating 15
 TRANSLIGHT DISPLACEMENT: 14 (12 LY/day)
 OPERATING RANGE: 300 light-years
 WEAPONRY:
 — Four turret-mounted Mk 30 Laser Cannons;
 — One fore mtd Mk. 40 Ion Cannon
 — 2 fore, 2 aft Mk 30 payload pallets.
 — Tractor Beam: Mk 20
 ONBOARD: two shuttles
 NOTES: The Jezirius is a very powerful Imperial Frigate which was just about to begin testing when the League made off with it. Caonabo is especially proud of this command, seeing some sort of twisted justice in capturing a stolen ship, since his was stolen from him.

SHIP NAME: Golden Dagger
 CLASS: Scout
 CAPTAIN: Kort K'syga
 OWNER/REGISTRY: League of Merchants/none
 PRODUCER: JadeFleet/modified at Starhaven
 TONNAGE/HITS: 2,000
 COMPUTER Mk#: 60
 +30 Predict
 +30 Evade
 ARMOR TYPE: 26 (30 Evade + 50 EW + 50 Screens = 180 DB + Pilot)
 EW RATING: 50/100 plus invisibility cloak
 SCREEN RATING: 50
 CREW: 8
 PASSENGERS: 3 max
 MAX SUBLIGHT ACCEL: Rating 15 (125 km/second²)
 MANEUVERING THRUSTERS: Rating: 15
 TRANSLIGHT DISPLACEMENT: 15 (12.5 LY/day)
 OPERATING RANGE: 100 light-years
 WEAPONRY:
 — Tractor beam: Mk 20
 — Two Mk 20 M/A Payload pallets
 — Two fore-mtd Mk 20 Laser Cannons
 ONBOARD: One 6-man flitter
 NOTES: The Dagger, designed to be a fast, light, advance scout craft, was stolen from House Jade-London a few years ago. It has since been fitted with an experimental cloaking device which the League recently 'acquired' from a plundered laboratory of an alien scientist — given to K'syga as reward for a successful mission. It is effective as 50 vs missile/comm jamming, but 100 to prevent sensor detection, and can render the vessel 'invisible'. Once detected, however, the EW DB is 50.

SHIP NAME: (Typical Raider)
 CLASS: Scout
 OWNER/REGISTRY: League of Merchants/none
 PRODUCER: ?
 TONNAGE/HITS: 3,000
 COMPUTER Mk#: 60
 +50 Predict
 +50 Evade
 ARMOR TYPE: 25 (50 Evade + 40 EW + 50 Shield = 140 DB + Pilot)
 EW RATING: 40
 SCREEN RATING: 50
 CREW: 6
 PASSENGERS: 2 max
 MAX SUBLIGHT ACCEL: Rating 15 (125 km/second²)
 MANEUVERING THRUSTERS: Rating 15
 TRANSLIGHT DISPLACEMENT: 14 (12 LY/day)
 OPERATING RANGE: 200 light-years
 WEAPONRY:
 — 2 Mk 10 Laser Cannons
 — 1 Mk 20 Autocannon
 — 1 Mk 10 Missile launcher

EPSILON PI

Epsilon Pi (or '*Epsilon Party*', as it has come to be known) is a large moon orbiting a gas giant in the House Carlisle home system of Aldebaran. Although technically just one orbit out from the capital planet of Imara, the gas giant Oreign is on the far side of an asteroid belt.

ALDEBARAN

System Coordinates: (+6x,+12y,-39z)
Moon: Aldebaran Vπ (Epsilon Pi)
Circumference: 36,000 km
Mean Orbit: 300 LS(9.0 x 10⁷ km)
Day: 21 Std hrs
Year: 110 Std days
Province: Carlisle
Status: Provincial Colony World
Population: 900,000
Productivity %: 4%
Production Emphasis: Recreation, Tourism

Somewhat more developed than the Devonian moon of Xantha, Epsilon Pi attracts a younger clientele of excitement seekers. It is famous for its Adventure Islands, a chain of isolated isles where the staff and computers create whatever fantasy adventure the customer wants. The price is high, but reportedly the fantasy is incredibly realistic.

Dotted along the coasts of the many other small continents on Epsilon Pi are a variety of other resort complexes and facilities, catering to every imaginable taste and race. The higher elevations also provide a number of cold-weather activities. And everywhere are casinos which provide not only gambling, but a plethora of other indoor diversions — including, for the right price and discrete client, DREAMGames and similar illegal electronic mind-alterants, and controlled drugs.



5.4 **THE PLEASURE DOME**

Located on one of the six primary planets of Kashmere Province, the Pleasure Dome is a unique recreational environment.

DIFDA K5v

Planet: DIFDA II (Argo)

Circumference: 41,800 km

Natural Satellites: 1

Mean Orbit: 610 LS (1.8×10^8 km)

Day: 20 Std hrs

Year: 380 Std days

Province: Kashmere

Status: Provincial Colony world

Population: 82,600,000

Productivity %: 12%

Production Emphasis: Aquaculture, metals extraction, light industry.

The Pleasure Dome is a huge, glassteel hemisphere (200 meters in diameter, 75 meters high, actually just less than a true hemisphere) constructed on a gigantic hydraulic mechanism set in bedrock about 100 meters below the surface of Argo's ubiquitous ocean. Set all about the interior of the dome, on many levels and balconies, are entertainments of every conceivable type. Within the pyramidal core of the Dome are the guest accommodations. The dome can be raised up out of the ocean and lower so that the guests have a view of the local undersea flora and fauna. Quite a spectacular setup.

STATS FOR NPCs: STARHAVEN GARRISON/GUESTS

Name/Type & Number	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	Weapon:OB	Skill:Add	Skill:Add	Skill:Add	Notes
Bennett Graves (Starhaven Security Chief). Belt Deflector shield. Struptrgn:130	14	125	12 (50)*	Struptrgn:130	Perc:90	Subdue:110	Admin:70	Human Armsman
Security Leader (25) Humanoids and Idorians). Deflector shield.	8	100	12 (40)*	BlstPstl:100	Perc:80	Stalk/Hide:70	Subdue:80	Armsmen (mostly)
Security Guard (95) Humanoids and Idorians).	4	65	11 (35)	BlstPstl:80	Perc:60	Stalk/Hide:40	Subdue:60	Armsmen (mostly)
Martia Suurtis Engineer (Starhaven Chief Engineer). Personal Barrier shield, +25 Repair Scanner/Computer.	13	80	1 (25)	StunPstl:55	ElecEng:125	CmpEng:110	ElecTch:90	Transhuman X
Tech (21)	5	50	1 (10)	—	Tech1:80	Tech2:65	Tech3:50	Mostly Humanoids.
Alexei Ippolitov Systems Tech. Deflector Shield.	17	110	1 (20)*	StunPstl:90	CmpTch:110	Computers 85	Admin:90	Neohuman
Operations (42)	6	60	1 (10)	StunPstl:60	CmpTch1:85	PwrSys:65	Comm:50	Humanoid Techs.
Chelsea Stargol	21	97	1 (15)	MiniStrn:85	MedPrc:124	MedDiag:122	1stAid:103	Human Physician.
Medical Staff (18) cians or Med Techs.	6	50	1 (10)	—	MedPrc:80	MedDiag:80	1stAid:74	Humanoid Physi-
TAR 412 Service Bot (29)	—	200	15 (0)	None	Special — See <i>Space Master Companions</i> or 6.12 in the Tech Book			
Starhaven Bots (7) machines, each is armed with twin assault Struptors (can be set to stun or disrupt) have built-in tactical scanners and full visual perception. They move via 'slow gravitics' (up to 100 kph) and can tie in directly with Guardian.	—	300	20 (50)	Struptr:150	ElecTch:100	PwrSysT:90	CompTch:80	Powerful, ancient
Jacker Crewman Idorian Armsman.	4	55	5 (10)	AssltBlstr:80	Stalk/Hd:60	Survive:60	M/A:Stk:55	Humanoid or
Jacker Captain Explorer, Armsman or Pilot. Some may have a personal shield.	7	80	5 (15)*	BlstPstl:95	Pilot:85	ScnAnal:45	CrimTch:35	Humanoid/Idorian
Shopkeeper/Dealer	6	45	1 (0)	MiniStrn:50	Trade:90	Trick:70	Diplomacy:35	Any Race.
Visiting Trader Crewman man, Explorer or Tech.	3	40	1 (10)	LsrPstl:65	Trade:50	Tech:50	Survive:50	Any Race Arms-
Visiting Trader Captain or Pilot. Some may have personal shields.	9	85	5 (15)*	LsrPstl:100	Trading:85	ScnAnal:70	Pilot:80	Any Race Explorer

Notes:

*DB does not include shield modifier. Check notes under character listing for what type of shield, check modifiers below, and incorporate in DB:

Velocity Shield:	+30 vs melee,	+45 vs missile,	+60 vs projectiles,	+0 vs energy.
Deflector Shield:	+5 vs melee,	+15 vs missile,	+40 vs projectiles,	+60 vs energy.
Absorption Shield:	+30 vs melee,	+30 vs missile,	+30 vs projectiles,	+30 vs energy.
Barrier Shield:	+60 vs melee,	+70 vs missile,	+70 vs projectiles,	+90 vs energy.

5.5 XANTHA

A Devonian possession, Xantha is a quiet retreat for corporate executives, and a vast resort complex for tourists from all over the Empire.

ELORA K9v N8DWARF F1DWARF

Moon: Elora II 7 (Xantha)

Circumference: 31,000 km

Natural Satellites: none

Mean Orbit: 900,000 km from E. II

Day: —

Year: —

Province: Devon

Status: Habitable Acquisition

Population: 4600

Productivity %: 1%

Production Emphasis: Tourism

Xantha is a serene and beautiful world with strikingly earthlike conditions, with near-normal gravity (due to a dense planetary core) and a mean temperature between 5° and 35° c. Elora's two companion stars orbit beyond that primary's normal planetary satellites, basking Xantha's surface in a soft glow at all hours.

Xantha is dotted with several dozen resort complexes, of which the League has some influence over more than half.

ADVENTURE: FUN AND GAMES

The players are given a rather straightforward courier assignment, which is completed without incident. In addition to payment, the recipient of the communication (an Imperial Planetary Official) invites the PCs to join him that evening at a Power Raking Game. Accepting, the players find themselves unexpectedly plunged into a bloody power struggle within the ranks of the shadowy League of Merchants.

6.1 BACKGROUND DATA

The PCs, in need of cash to cover maintenance fees for their ship, are talked into what sounds like a rather dull courier assignment by one of their semi-shady 'friends': Emerich Rach of Hyperion. A sealed message tube needs to be delivered to the Undersecretary of Industry for the Imperial planet of Caledonia. Why the Undersecretary might be expecting a message from a Hyperion smuggler should be of no concern to the PCs (hopefully they've learned to not ask too many questions by now!).

6.1.1 A SMALL COMPLICATION

Aside from the usual hassles which are inevitable when dealing with Imperial security officials, the PCs should have little problem getting to their destination. The capital city of Caledonia is New Glasgow, a sprawling industrial metropolis which looks suspiciously like it is not meeting Imperial atmospheric preservation standards (and it isn't). However, the PCs' ship develops a quirky N-Space drive problem just as they are entering Caledonia Orbit. Since the N-Space fusion drives are not used in actual landing (most modern craft land on gravitic fields and thrusters) this is not a problem. Upon inspection after landing, however, the malfunction is discovered to be somewhat serious (about 1200 Imperial Elmonits and five local days to repair).

Note: the GM should stress that this is something that a quasi-skilled Player Character could not easily fix; it requires fully equipped workshop facilities. As the GM prefers s/he can roll dice and pretend that this is a random event or not; it is important to delay the PCs' departure however, so they can accept an invitation to a Power Raking game that night.

6.1.2 POWER RAKING

Spectator sports have always been an important part of Terran civilization. From the ball-court games of Mayan Mexico, the Greek Olympics and the Coliseum events in Ancient Rome to the myriad athletic competitions which pervade Imperial society, sports continue to obsess the psyche and deflect fans' thoughts from daily drudgery.

However, sports gatherings are often used as a vehicle for a number of baser purposes than seeing the human body perform to its potential. Underworld organizations like the League of Merchants send their many agents to these events and turn an immense profit in illegal gambling, drug peddling and other illicit activities. Some sports are more vulnerable to such abuse than others; Power Raking is an excellent example of one such sport.

POWER RAKING: THE GAME

Power Raking (or simply "Raking" as it is sometimes called) is not well known on a wide scale, and historians believe that it (like many of the current athletic competitions) is based on a much older sport from Terra's pre-spaceflight centuries involving contestants on 'roller skates' on an oval track. This sport involves two teams of four men, and is played in a concrete, bowl-shaped arena up to about 30 meters across. All players move about the area standing on small platforms about 50 cm long, equipped with a small motor and four wheels. This *powerboard* is controlled with a handheld plunger throttle cable-connected to the motor (braking and steering is handled by dexterous weight-shifting and twisting the board). All movement in the arena must be on the boards — players are not allowed to walk or run. Each player wears a colored scarf at his waist, and the object of the game is to collect all the scarves of the opponents before the other team does the same, and reach the upper lip at the perimeter of the arena. A trend in this sport is towards younger players (who are quicker and more agile); in fact many planetary leagues require that all of the players be between the age of sixteen and twenty.

In addition to the four players (one of whom is team captain) each team has a manager (basically an equipment handler) and a trainer/medic. These two support people are the only others allowed within the play area during a game.

Where the gruesome aspect of this game comes in is the special gloves worn by the contestants: reinforced hand-sheathes with 15 cm long claws, used not only to snatch the scarf, but to 'rake' the opponent (usually across the exposed stomach or thigh), injuring him enough to take his scarf and also keep him from taking yours. Players go at each other in strafes from one edge of the arena to the other (there is a narrow lip of level area around the bowl, just above which the spectators are stacked in tall grandstands). Hurtling downward in a crouch to minimize vulnerable areas, they attack and hopefully sweep past each other, snatching the opponent's scarf.

Play proceeds for ten minutes uninterrupted, after which there is a two-minute break. These cycles continue until one team is declared the winner by the Referee. Each team also has three "time-outs" which they can call at any point in the game; a time out lasts one minute (and is usually used to pull an injured player off the arena floor).

Contestants are allowed to wear armor, including elbow, knee and shoulder pads, but protective clothing beyond that is considered cowardly. Therefore, players often wear shorts and no shirt, soft shoes with good traction, exaggerated shoulder pads and little else. Injuries are inevitable, and the abdominal wounds are sometimes serious. Play does not stop when a man goes down, though it is not permitted to hit a down man (this doesn't mean it doesn't happen).

The end of a match sometimes finds the losers bloody, bruised, and unable to walk for days. Since Power Raking is more of a low-budget gutter sport, teams rarely have the funds for more than basic medical attention. Owners replace an injured player rather than spend monits to heal a current one. It should be noted, though, that the players are not out to injure each other just to do it; the violence of the sport has grown out of the fierce competitiveness of it. The players are under tremendous pressure to win at any cost, and so they are sometimes driven to extreme measures to succeed.

Raking has become immensely popular in some circles in the last five years, centered mostly on the lower-technology planets. It is one of the more exploitive sports, as the preference is for underage players, often orphans or black-market slave youths owned by wealthy promoters. Poor youths on backwater industrial planets desperately compete to be on Raking teams, seeing it as a way to get out of their environment. In some areas Power Raking is illegal, though it flourishes nevertheless underground.

6.13 A BIG COMPLICATION

The Undersecretary, Ulvor Kylax, will invite the PCs to join him in his box at the Raking game tonight, where a team he owns — the Rigel Racers — are going against the Malevolent Maulers. Raking is an exciting game, and what else do the PCs have to do?

Unfortunately for the PCs, their evening of entertainment will be rudely interrupted as one of the Maulers gets into a fight with a player on the Racers' team (one Alec Scudder) right in front of Kylax's open box. Then, to everyone's surprise, the Mauler will knock Alec down, leap over the railing and kill the incredulous Kylax with a vicious sweep across the throat. The Mauler will be gone before anyone can react, and zoom out of the arena before security can catch him.

6.14 A FRAMEUP

On the surface, this incident will appear to be some freak extreme of rivalry between the Raking teams which got out of hand. The local media will paint it as such, using this as an excuse to preach about the evils of Raking (which will backfire and only increase the public's fascination with the sport). In the meantime, the Mauler will not be caught — having mysteriously disappeared in the shadows of New Glasgow. But there is a much more complex motive behind Kylax's death.

Emerich Rach is a "Free Trader" who is known by VegaPol and the IID to have dealings with the League of Merchants along with numerous other criminal activities. Both of those agencies also know that Rach is a tool of the Devonian Court for a number of covert illegal operations. As long as such activities remain relatively quiet, however, those law-enforcement agencies are willing to look the other way (they have more pressing problems).

But there are people within the League who do not like Emerich Rach, his increasing power, and his influential place with Lord Devon. A plan was hatched to bring Rach down and disgrace House Devon as well — making them look like a criminal-infested house. This plan also included a way of disposing of a tool of the League, who, while cooperative, had just about played out his usefulness. His bragging ways were eventually going to get him into trouble — and perhaps drag down valuable League operatives.

A sealed message is passed down through the League HQ on Epsilon Pi and sent to Emerich Rach for quick delivery to Kylax. Naturally Rach has no idea what the contents were and can only assume that

they have nothing to do with him. Kylax receives the note and reads it; the contents are as follows:

Kylax,

I am disappointed that the titanium contracts went to Kubishev-Lloyd instead of one of our companies.

You have denied us our full rights long enough on Caledonia, and the way must be made for a more cooperative successor.

Have a good time at the game tonight.

*Emerich Rach
For the League*

Obviously it is an announcement of his impending death. Poor Kylax is taken completely by surprise, since he believed himself to be on excellent terms with the League (he awarded the titanium contracts to Kubishev-Lloyd *as per* League instructions! He does not destroy the message, thinking to take it to his contact and demand an explanation. Perhaps it was a joke or some other confusion. But he is unable to reach his League contact and has to go on to the game.

The people who set up the frame know Kylax well, and knew that he would not destroy the message: it was key piece of evidence which would damn Rach. Not trusting to his safe, Kylax would carry the message on his person, planning to present it (along with considerable righteous rage) to his League contact.

Thus, after his murder the authorities would find the evidence leading directly back to Emerich Rach and House Devon. What the perpetrators did not count on was the interference by the off-world couriers.

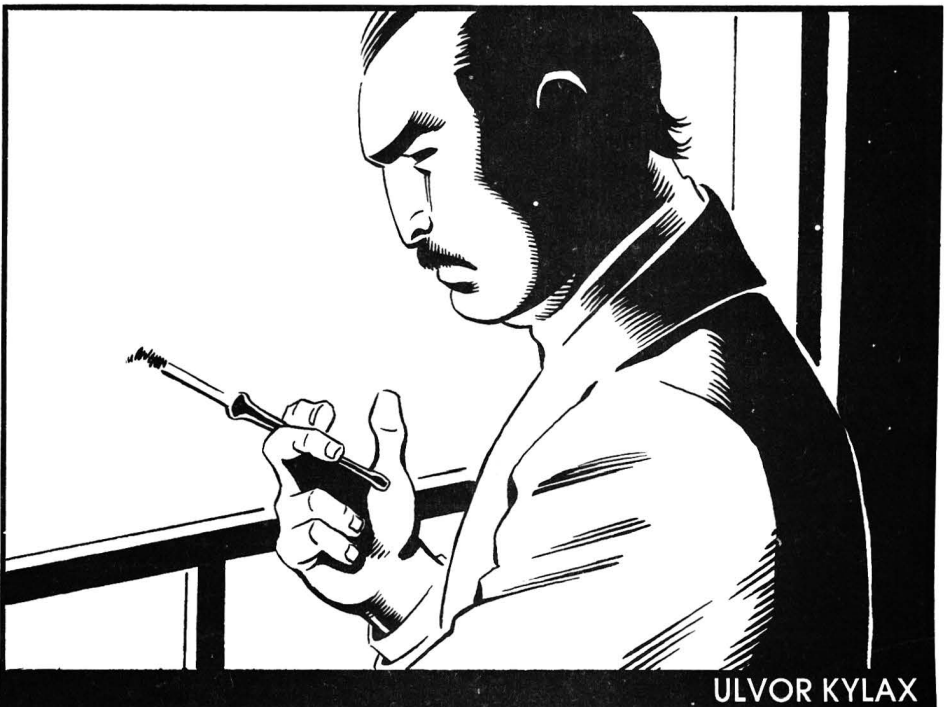
Ideally, the PCs might think fast when the murder occurs — and even faster if the search the body and read the message. As the paid couriers, they could be accessories to murder. True, that charge is pushing it, considering they wouldn't have known the contents of the message, but the PCs are clearly in the employ of Emerich Rach.

The PCs might also realize that some government agencies such as the IID don't necessarily feel constrained by the law when they are close to getting what they want. If they think they can get information out of the PCs, they will do whatever is necessary to get it.

6.15 OPTIONS

The PCs have a number of options, depending on how they decide to approach the situation. Each will be touched on here, then some will be covered in more detail (as necessary) in the **Encounters** section.

- 1) If the players stay where they are and don't search Kylax, they will be detained, then arrested moments after the note is found on his body — an IID agent was at the Raking game, observing Kylax. Fully informed about Rach and the League, he will want the PCs to try to wring info out of them. This resolution leaves the PCs in the questionable hands of the IID. It may be curtains...



2) It is unlikely that they will think of searching Kylax as he lies dying in front of live global HoloVision. Alec the Raker will kneel next to Kylax and check his vitals, then stand with a look of horror on his face and announce "He's dead! Let's get out of there before the Leos show up!" (Leo is slang for 'Law Enforcement Official.') Board in hand, he'll rush through the door, clubbing any security guards in his way. It should occur to the PCs (and they can be reminded if they don't think about it) that they are here with forged weapon permits, delivering a message from a Hyperion Crimelord for the League of Merchants. Even though they might be clearly innocent of anything to do with this altercation, their credentials don't bear close scrutiny. Paranoia should be setting in.

3) If they grab the message and flee, the PCs would (you'd think) keep the whole scheme from surfacing. However, the message crops up *somehow* anyway (we'll get to that later). But if they do have the message, they will no doubt read it and realize that there is something very wrong going on.

Either option 2 or 3 will get the PCs out of trouble temporarily, though with 3 they might get a grasp of the situation sooner. They now have new choices:

- 1) Return to the hotel as if nothing had happened (this is tantamount to turning themselves in — see 2 above).
- 2) Following Alec, they can make their way to the service tunnels under the city, and start thinking about what to do. They are stuck for another several days with their ship out, though Alec will claim to be able to get them to it — if they take him along to Hyperion. They can hide out with Alec until time to get to the ship. There is a good chance they won't get caught — until they try to break for the ship. If it is the Baburnican shuttle it will have left without them as soon as the Amazons picked up the news on their vids. If it is their own ship, the authorities will be watching it closely. Their chances of slipping past are slim — and they won't be able to get clearance to lift anyway.
- 3) Try to contact a person who Emerich suggested would help if they ran into trouble.

Option 3 is the wise choice, for the gentleman who can help them is an elderly man by the name of Tal Wu Sim, a retired GCH lawyer and old friend of Rach. He tells them that the Mauler who killed Kylax was found dead — shot with a blaster in the back of the head — in an alley. Mr. Sim also says his informants in VegaPol have told him about the note found on Kylax's body, and that the local Police are trying to have Rach extradited, while VegaPol is working investigating the possibility of Conspiracy by Rach and House Devon. Alec will look confused through this, then finally say "Well, I guess he had two notes on him then, 'cause I was wondering what this was all about!" And he will pull out the original note, along with the tube.

GM Note: *if the PCs do not think to search Kylax and get the note, Alec will have deftly lifted it while checking the man's condition. It is important that there be an out for Emerich — not to mention the PCs.*

Quick PCs will begin to put together the truth: Obviously someone in local law enforcement was working with the League faction out to discredit Rach. When the message was not found on the body (a possibility anyway) the operative planted the fake message. Coupled with the evidence that a message was delivered to Kylax that day, the validity of this one was apparently not checked. Armed with that knowledge, Mr. Sim can make inquiries and arrange for closer scrutiny of the message. He encounters resistance, but does find out who claimed to find the message: a certain Lieutenant Vimmic. The PCs can either wait it out (probably not a good idea; things will only get worse) or track down Vimmic and try to make him talk. It isn't hard for Mr Sim to find out where Vimmic lives, and Alec says he can get them there. If they decide to go, Mr Sim will advise them to contact him should they find anything useful; the evidence will have to be legally acquired, and Sim can arrange that if he has sufficient cause.

At Vimmic's the PCs will either find:

- 1) An empty apartment (Derg Vimmic is out) with no easily accessible clues of interest except a used pass to the Racers vs. Maulers Raking game. There is a small wall safe, Extremely Hard (-30) to open, however. Should the PCs try and fail to open it, the GM might have Alec show his worth again and make a try. Inside is a small DeBarton Courier package, opened, containing an unlabeled Hyperspace coursetape and a note:

My Dear Citizen Vimmic,

So far, everything has gone as planned. Enclosed is a backup message should Kylax's paranoia fail us. There is also a coursetape. Visit me to receive your reward when Rach is destroyed.

JML

JML is Jaison Menzies-Lloyd, nephew of Baron Kevin Kubischev-Lloyd (though of course the PCs won't know that). Jaison has always hated Emerich Rach and House Devon, and conceived this plan to destroy them both. This note, however, with Vimmic's fingerprints all over it, could put him away. Wily and clever PCs will keep the coursetape for themselves — for later.

- 2) An apartment with Derg Vimmic inside. Depending on how well they sneak in they might catch him by surprise; otherwise he'll put up a fight. If captured, he has a +20 to resist interrogation unless confronted with the facts, in which case it drops to -30. If the PCs do their jobs well, he will be ready to confess.

In either case — assuming the PCs don't screw up and get caught burgling or something like that — Mr. Sim will use this information with his VegaPol friends to get the PCs off the hook. They will soon be publicly cleared, and the VegaPol heat will be off Emerich Rach again (for a while, at least) while they try to figure out who JML is.

However, the IID does not like to be outdone by VegaPol, and the PCs will be followed from now on.

6.2 THE NPCs

6.21 EMERICH RACH

Emerich Rach's overall background can be found in Section 4. Mentioned here are a few key points which should apply to the solicitor in this adventure, Rach or not. Emerich Rach is associated with the League of Merchants, but is certainly not completely entrenched in their hierarchy. He remains somewhat independent by virtue of his location (Hyperion IX, an independent world in Devon Province) and his special relationship with the Devonian Noble Family. In addition, Rach does not have quite the same mindset as many of the League inner circles; for one thing he is not comfortable with assassination (or any excessive violence) as a means of getting what he wants. This aspect of his personality should be known to at least two or three party members, as it is important to this scenario.

6.22 ULVOR KYLAX

As the Undersecretary of Industry on Caledonia, Kylax is responsible for the productivity of the entire planet. This includes meeting a variety of quotas to satisfy his superiors, most of whom are not at all interested in excuses such as "but it is impossible to meet this production demand without exceeding environmental tolerance quotas!" Thus, Kylax is often forced to break a few rules in order to get the job done. This doesn't seem to bother his conscience much, since indeed it will be hard for the PCs to tell if the man has a conscience at all. Of average height and stocky build, he has greying brown hair and close-set grey eyes. Though outwardly friendly (some might say obnoxious), it is soon apparent that the man is an opportunistic bureaucrat who has gotten to his current position by disposing of his competitors.

That is not to say that Kylax is a murderer or anything of the sort. He has employed blackmail on many occasions, and he has several underworld contacts on Caledonia which he employs when he requires strong-arm tactics. A large percentage of his Elmonit account is League kickbacks for contracts awarded to League-controlled industries and similar 'favors'.

Kylax has several annoying habits besides his loud voice. He is a braggart, constantly talking about himself and how he's "turned New Glasgow around" since the last Industry Secretary. He also likes to slap people on the back in 'friendship'

(especially offensive in more elite Imperial Circles, where casual personal body contact has lately become gauche in social situations. Kylax also tells off-color jokes that are at best only vaguely amusing.



6.23 ALEC SCUDDER

Seventeen-year-old Captain of the Rigel Racers, Alec is a very intelligent but uneducated youth from the lower class of Caledonia society. His parents were slaves but managed to buy freedom for their son. Both died when he was still a small child. After that Alec lived as little more than as a street urchin in New Glasgow, doing odd jobs, begging for Decimonits and stealing. He did earn enough to buy a powerboard and practiced his moves religiously, for Alec — like any child growing up on the lower side of New Glasgow — was familiar with Raking and what it could do for you if you were the best. With hundreds of sponsored teams on the planet, and over a dozen right in New Glasgow, he figured he had a chance.

One of Kylax's scouts picked him up at fifteen, doing flips on the plascrete playground ramps. It wasn't hard to convince the starry-eyed Alec to sign a commitment contract. Altogether, Alec isn't treated badly. He and his teammates

are given a stipend and reasonable room and board. They are expected to practice several hours a day, and, naturally, to win a certain percentage of games. The main drawback is of course the game itself. Alec has a row of four cruel scars across the front of one thigh, and has seen one teammate's guts literally torn out by a hard swing with the raking claws. If you win enough in a big league, though, many young Rakers make enough to buy themselves a small business or an education, or travel to a world more welcoming. That — aside from the excitement, the fame, and the thrill of winning (and staying alive) is the appeal of the sport.

At seventeen, Alec is wise enough to begin to worry how much longer he can survive in this sport before his luck runs out. True, he is faster and more agile than just about any player he knows, but anyone can have a bad day, and *bam!* you're lying on the plascrete with your internal organs all over the arena. But it's always just one more game...

Alec stands 175 cm tall and is a slender though muscular boy, massing a little under 70 kilos. He has collar-length wavy brown hair and dark blue eyes, with a naturally dark complexion. A truly handsome youth, Alec could be making three times what he is as a Raker if he chose an 'older profession', but he is too proud to prostitute himself in that way.

While there is no formal raking 'uniform', there are a few rules and unspoken customs. Although lightweight helmets are allowed, Alec doesn't wear one (most players don't). Alec wears shoulder pads, knee and shin guards, and fingerless gloves (and on one hand the raking claws). As a form of bravado, Rakers wear no shirt or a shortened one that leaves the stomach area exposed. Similarly, very short pants are worn to leave the upper legs unprotected. Many players do wear elbow guards, and shoes with good traction are a must for keeping a good stance on the board.

Alec has also learned to be a decent shot with a blast pistol (though he does not own one), and mastered a few basic Martial Arts techniques

6.24 TAL WU SIM

Mr. Sim is a slightly-built man clearly of Oriental descent. His head is shaved except for a single topknot braid. Other than that, however, he dresses and behaves just like any other slick and powerful Inner-province lawyer. He will help the PCs, but only if they help themselves and do not behave like simpering idiots.

6.25 DERG VIMMIC

Derg Vimmic is a cowardly bureaucrat who saw this scheme as a way to propel himself to quick power in the underworld. What he didn't know was that his ticket to Starhaven was one-way. Once Jaison was assured of his plan's success, he would have sent the snivelling Vimmic on an airlock walk.

175 cm tall, with greasy blond hair and squinty brown eyes, Vimmic is slightly overweight and though a deadly shot with a laser, has little else to recommend him as a sentient.

6.3 SETTINGS

Following are described the various settings for this adventure.

6.31 CALEDONIA

Planet: IMP:Sigma Herculis IV
(Caledonia)

Circumference: 43,000 km

Natural Satellites: None

Mean Orbit: 1.8×10^8 km

Day: 24 std hrs

Year: 342 Std days

Province: Imperial Territory

Status: Producing

Population: 2.74 billion

Productivity %: 0.04 %

Production Emphasis: Raw materials, heavy industry.

6.32 NEW GLASGOW

A huge sprawling city of over 20 million, New Glasgow stretches five kilometers along the coast of the planet's largest continent. It is dominated on one end by a cluster of skyscrapers — some over three kilometers tall — and professional buildings, and on the other by a vast industrial complex, always aglow in a cloud of steam from heat-dissipaters. Between stretch thousands of high-rises, housing the population of this metropolis.

The closer one gets to the Industrial park, the lower-class the buildings, until you reach a stretch of real estate known locally (and ironically) as "The Burbs." No one knows the origin of the term. At any rate, this is where the raking arena is located. Ulvor Kylax has his office in the Imperial Administration Building — the tallest in the center of the 'clean' city.

6.33 THE RAKING ARENA

The arena entry is described elsewhere. As far as the actual layout of the building, it resembles a standard large arena setup, with banks of seats around the circular

bowl of the arena itself. Stairways lead down to service and access areas which surround the main hall. The private booths are at the bottom, below the common seats, so the wealthy can have a close view of the carnage — uh — game. The player changing rooms and entries are completely separate from the rest of the arena, thus the easy escape of the Mauler. There are a number of emergency exits around the perimeter as well.

6.34 THE SERVICE TUBES

A maze of underground tunnels, connecting with sewage systems, electrical conduits, and subway repair accessways, the service tubes literally connect all across the entire city. The Tunnel Rats — as the urchins Alec knows are called — live in various enclaves throughout the tunnels, and keep in touch by tapping into the communication lines (many of them are rather clever little techs).

6.35 VIMMIC'S APARTMENT

A typical mid-range apartment, Vimmic's home is located in the city, in one of the taller residential buildings. It has two bedrooms, one converted to a study. It is in the wall of the study, behind a hidden panel, that the safe is located.

6.4 THE TASK

There are actually several tasks involved in this scenario, and they may vary depending on the behavior of the PCs. The first task is of course to deliver the message to Ulvor Kylax. Assuming the group accepts Kylax's invitation, things will later get very complex.

6.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

First the PCs must be given the initial assignment to deliver the message. If the PCs have already established a certain reputation for reliability with Emerich Rach of Hyperion, by all means use him as the solicitor. If not, however, the assignment should come from someone at least some of the group members know from their background. Undersecretary Ulvor Kylax is expecting the message delivery, and Emerich will supply the players with the necessary clearance papers. If they are flying on their own, he will also provide passage codes with a liberal stopover period on Caledonia. Emerich will inform the group that sidearm (pistol-sized) weapons are permitted to be worn in public on Caledonia if the wearer has a permit. He will issue a permit for one sidearm for each PC, advising them that these permits will not bear close scrutiny (i.e., they are

merely passable forgeries).

If, for some reason the players do not have a ship at their disposal, the Amazons of Clan Baburnica (see the Adventure in *Space Master*) are again useable as cab drivers. They are especially appropriate because not only are the Amazons willing to perform these services (they need the cash), but have coupled with that availability a complete disdain for almost everyone of any culture but their own — including their passengers. They won't leave the vicinity of their ship and certainly won't help out a group of PCs in trouble.

Thus, though Emerich can hire the Amazons for transport, he still needs a team who can complete the mission (in this case, deliver the package). That's where the players come in. If the GM does employ the Amazons, their ship will develop a minor sublight drive problem just as they arrive at Caledonia. It will require 'a few days' to fix, conveniently stranding the PCs on the planet for awhile.

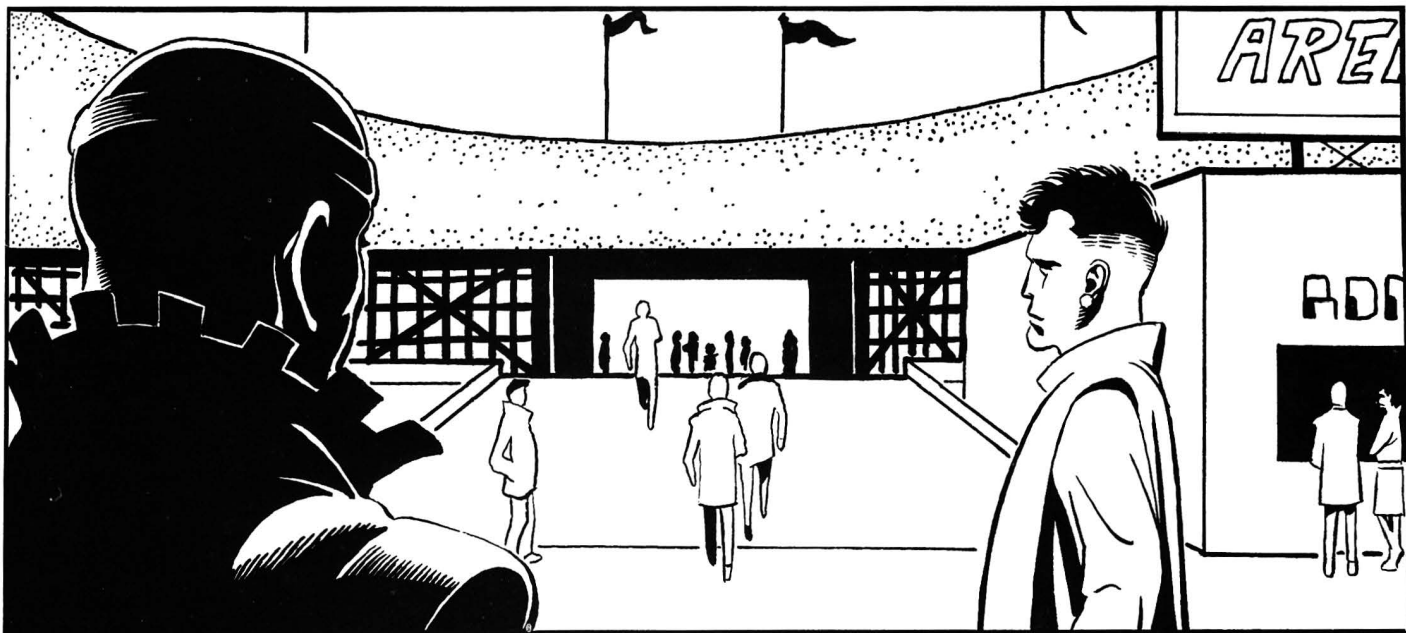
6.42 AIDS

Emerich will give the group the name of a person to contact should something go wrong: a Mr. Ta Wu Sim. Beyond his name and a Vidphone number, Emerich supplies no other details about Mr Sim.

Other aids might be made available throughout the adventure. Alec himself will be a tremendous help to the PC, as well as his friends.

6.43 OBSTACLES

The big obstacle here is unravelling what is really going on behind the obvious facts. It is up to the GM to decide how badly he might want to let things go. If Alec does not steal the note, for instance (assuming the PCs also fail), it could mean big trouble for Emerich Rach and serious charges against House Devon (what a mess!). The GM needs to carefully think through the possible repercussions of the worst case scenarios and take steps to make sure that things don't get out of hand. However, the GM must also take care to downplay the corrective backups. One doesn't want the PCs to feel either helpless or complacent. You never want to hear "Oh, it doesn't matter if we screw it up; the GM won't let anything *really* bad happen." Whether or not you *would* let anything really catastrophic happen, it is crucial to keep the PCs believing that it *might* if they don't do their best to stop it.



6.44 REWARDS

If all goes well, the PCs will be able to return to Hyperion with Emerich Rach in their debt. In addition, they might have picked up a coursetape which could lead them into even greater adventure if they have the nerve. It is, of course, a sealed tape to *Starhaven*. Emerich might try to convince them to go and discover just who is plotting against him... but that's another adventure.

As an aside, Emerich will happily recruit Alec into his ranks, the young Raker having no doubt proved his abilities during the course of the adventure. The pastoral beauty of Hyperion and a relatively easy life in Rach's employ was just what he dreamed of. Soon, however, he will be ready to earn his keep for the Crimelord, and if the GM so desires, he might be a useful NPC for future adventures (but not cannon-fodder).

6.5 ENCOUNTERS

The following sections detail each of the key encounter points in the adventure.

6.51 MEETING KYLAX

Since Kylax knows that the PCs are in the employ of a League-associated trader, he will spend a lot of time telling the players about how influential he is with the League (though he will deny actually being a 'member' of the League of Merchants). After the message is delivered and the PCs are paid (The Undersecretary does *not* open the message in the PCs presence!), Kylax will seem eager to further reward them. He will begin bragging about his ownership of a Raking team, the Rigel Racers (if the PCs are ignorant of raking,

he will explain the game in great glowing detail, punctuated with exclamations that he can't understand why the PCs aren't familiar with it). After all, Raking is the game of the future!

Hopefully the PCs will accept, since they have little else to do while waiting for their ship to get fixed, and an invitation to a private box at an Imperial world Raking game is quite a privilege. Kylax will send a car to pick them up at their hotel, and he gives them passes (Elmonit card-sized rectangles of encoded transparent plastic) saying he'll see them at the box.

6.52 OUTSIDE THE ARENA

Assuming the PCs don't get into trouble before the game, the car (a late-model automated gravitic) will arrive for them on time at their hotel, and from there they will travel for a good half-hour into what becomes increasingly apparent is the worst part of town. The car will let them out on a wide street flanked by tall buildings which look centuries old and filthy. Trash is everywhere, and there numerous 'shady characters' hanging about in the shadows. In stark contrast to this, (and perhaps to the PCs relief) there will be a succession of hovercars rolling up and disgorging the city's elite, who flock as one to the large portalway marked by lurid holographics: "GLASGOW BOWL" and under it "TONITE: Rigel Racers vs. Malevolent Maulers". An amazing cross-section of the city's population is lining up at the arena gates, where preference is showed to no one. Statuesque noble ladies are conversing with street punks, assessing the chances of the teams. Watching the spectators could be an evening in itself!

The PCs will only have been in line for a few moments when a wheeled van pulls up amidst a chorus of cheers and boos. The van door opens and two armed men step out, plainly bodyguards. They are followed by four teenage boys, decked out in full gear: they are the *Rigel Racers*, Kylax's team. They pass right next to the PCs as they enter a side door, shaking triumphant fists while fans try to mob them and detractors throw trash and even cans or small rocks.

GM Note: This is an appropriate time for the group members to have previous contact with Alec. He might bump into one of them and excuse himself politely (or as politely as a backplanet kid could). If there is a reasonably attractive female PCs in the group, Alec may smile shyly at her. This will help establish his credibility later on.

The rest of the wait in line will be uneventful, and once the PCs get inside they will see more of the same. The interior of the arena is run-down, though it appears that the executive boxes are well maintained and kept secure (the entrances guarded by security men). As noted in the layouts, the boxes are open to the arena bowl itself, but each has a locked door onto a private access hall.

A number of refreshments (including alcoholic beverages and a variety of mild recreational stimulants) are available inside — and there will also be several illegal drug transactions going on, obviously so to the trained observer, *Hard* (-20) to detect by the PCs if they are casually looking about for the like. The PCs will also see several bookies in stalls taking bets. They may wish to make wagers: Raking betting is normally done with a winner chosen and how long it takes to win; there is also more

gruesome under-counter betting on how many players of each team will be incapacitated or even killed. PCs that are paying attention at all will notice that betting is heavily in favor of the Malevolent Maulers.

The GM may also wish to have the chance of one of the PCs having his/her 'pocket picked'. The likelihood of this is slim unless he shows off a lot of hard currency while buying a 'concession'.

The PCs will be admitted to the private box using their passes (which were passes through a scanner but not taken at the door) where they find a dramatically different Citizen Kylax. The Undersecretary will seem nervous and edgy, his hand visibly shaking as he drinks. Should the PCs inquire about his condition he will be come defensive and claim that nothing is wrong. He will begin talking about his team, though, and as he becomes more involved, he will seem somewhat less distracted. He will offer the PCs whatever they want from the Autobar.

6.53 THE GAME

Excitement builds as game-time approaches (a large suspended clock ticks down minutes to start time). Amid a thunderous cheer the two teams arrive from opposite doors at the edge of the arena, careening across the bowl on their powerboards. As the teams warm up, it will be apparent that the Maulers are bigger and somewhat older than the Racers, though the latter team may be a little more agile. Towards the end of the warmup period the Racer team Captain will zoom up to the edge of the bowl right in front of Kylax's box (this could be rather startling as the edge of the arena bowl is a mere one meter from the booth railing). He salutes Kylax, who makes some encouraging comments. Alec may look curiously at the PCs, especially if he noticed one of them when entering the arena earlier. In any case, Kylax will proudly present Alec, his star player. Alec will be stutteringly polite, with the horrible local accent of an uneducated youth.

Soon after Alec returns to warm up, the buzzer sounds and the teams are directed to various points on the bowl perimeter. At a signal, one member of each team starts the descent, accelerate to strafe past his opponent. Before the first two meet, the second pair start, and soon after the third and fourth. This way there is always a staggered succession of clashes near the center of the bowl. Players do not head straight for the center, instead making an elliptical path across, which carries them up almost to the opposite rim, about 200° around the circle.

Alec and his Mauler opponent go first, both in a crouch, arms extended out from the sides of the body for balance. The Mauler sweeps in first feinting for the red scarf at Alec's waist, then suddenly extending his arm, plainly to rake the other boy's stomach. Alec barely dodges in time, and, thrown off balance, misses in his rake for his opponent's yellow scarf.

Play proceeds excitingly for several passes (though no more clear attacks) with one of the Racers losing his scarf, then one of the Maulers. The period ends, then the second begins. Tension mounts, as pass after pass yield nothing. At one point, a Racer is knocked from his board... but comes up uninjured. Then, late in the second period, Alec and his opponent pass, and Alec gets the scarf! Exulting, he waves it before the crowd, and speeds up to the PCs booth, pausing on the rim with the scarf. Out of nowhere zooms a Mauler, diverting his normal path to sweep the unaware Alec with deadly claws as a horrified hush falls over the arena.

6.54 THE INCIDENT

At the last second the Racer Captain turns and dodges the attack. Then, in an even more shocking move, the Mauler leaps off his board, over the booth railing, and rakes Ulvor Kylax right across the throat, nearly decapitating him. Face expressionless, he flips back out, right onto his waiting board (handheld cable throttle

never having left his other hand) and hurtles out of the area through the narrow players' entrance amidst a confused uproar.

Alec, still standing on the rim, looks at the bloody Kylax in horror and confusion. "I thought we were just supposed to get into a fight in front of Citizen Kylax's booth for the Holoviewers! I didn't know he was going to attack *him!*"

Alec will then kneel over the body, pronounce him dead and flee, suggesting the PCs follow him (see 6.15).

6.55 THE AUTHORITIES

This encounter assumes that the PCs do not attempt to flee with Alec. A man in a static cloak will appear with two very tough looking guys flanking him. He identifies himself as an IID agent, and would like to talk to the PCs.

6.56 FLEEING THE ARENA

It shouldn't be too difficult to get away; there aren't very many cops at or near the arena. There are a few dumbfounded security men, and also the IID agents, and of course Derg Vimmic and his assistant. Derg is enough of a hothead to start shooting into the crowd to try to stop the PCs, so he is really the worst problem at the Arena if the PCs flee.

6.57 IN THE SERVICE TUBES

Alec is clearly in his element in the service tunnels under the city, where he and the PCs are helped by any number of street urchins, most of whom are fledgling Rakers who think of Alec as their hero. Through his friends the PCs can learn the news about being wanted by the cops, etc.

There is an occasional chance of being caught in the tubes by either local cops (not too likely) or IID agents (more likely — they have better location equipment). This could mean some exciting firefights in the dank, dark tunnels as Alec and the PCs try to elude Imperial Intelligence agents.

STATS FOR NPCs: FUN AND GAMES

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	Weapon:OB	Skill:Add	Skill:Add	Skill:Add	Notes
Ulvor Kylax	15	92	1 (5)	PubSp: 110	Admin:94	Acting:90	Propgnda:85	Human Administrator.
Alec Scudder (Raker)	4	75	1 (30)	BlstPstl:70	AthGm:120	Acrob:95	M/AS: 60/R3	Neo-Human "Explorer"
IID Agent (at arena) Cloak adds 20 to DB. Has miniature Multiscanner w/security scanner feature.	10	104	7 (45)	StrptrPstl 115	Subdue:90	CrimTch:110	M/A:Stk:88	Neo-Human Crime Tech.
Arena Guard 1	6	97	5 (20)	StunPstl:80	Subdue:80	—	—	Human Armsman.
Arena Guard 2	5	88	5 (15)	TangleRfl:72	M/A:Stk:74	Subdue:76	—	Human Armsman.
Raker 1	3	61	1 (25)	Forceknif:50	AthGm:80	Trickery:62	Acrob:45	Human "Armsman"
Raker 2	2	43	1 (20)	M/A:Stk:45	AthGm:70	Acrob:50	—	Human "Armsman"
Tai Wu Sim	15	110	1 (65)	M/Aboth:90R4	Admin:110	Act:100	PubSpk:120	Neo-Human Administrator.
Derg Vimmic	8	115	1 (20)	LsrPstl:90	Admin:45	Falsif:60	Subdue:70	Human Criminologist.

ADVENTURE: A TRIP TO STARHAVEN

*"Many a ship and man was lost
their souls bought at little cost
by the silent shadows cross'd
and taken to Starhaven."*

Free Trader Folk Song
Origin unknown

The theme of this adventure is — amazingly — a journey to Starhaven, the inner sanctum of the League. While the scenario presented here is constructed as a sequel to **Fun and Games**, the GM may use this as reference material for any journey to Starhaven (though it should be kept in mind that *no* trip to Starhaven should be taken casually, and under no circumstances would the PCs *ever* learn the location of the base.

7.1 BACKGROUND DATA

As is detailed in *Fun and Games*, the PCs acquire a coded coursetape which the intelligent player could only deduce is a ticket to Starhaven. Returning to Hyperion and reporting to Emerich, the players will become a little more involved in the complex politics of the League of Merchants.

Emerich Rach, though unquestionably a Free Trader Lord, is closely associated with both Moryn Kâldo and Nakira T'sraang, both of whom frequently send profitable ventures his way, while he compensates with information and counter-favors. In the ongoing chess game of League powerplays, important persons in the organization are always trying to undermine the infrastructures of the other Lords' empires. Menzies-Lloyd's little frame-job was clearly one of those maneuvers, and Emerich would not hesitate to call upon one of his beneficiaries to alert them to this antagonism and perhaps retaliate — but only after he has proof. He would not contact Kâldo or T'sraang before he knows who is responsible, mainly because they would not listen otherwise.

7.2 THE NPCs

NPCs for this adventure would consist of the staff, residents and guests of Starhaven. See Section 5.

7.3 SETTINGS

The setting for this adventure is anywhere in Starhaven. See Section 5.1 for details on the League Headquarters.

7.4 THE TASK

In brief, the mission is to go to Starhaven and secure information as to whether Jaison Menzies-Lloyd was really behind the scheme to frame Emerich Rach for the murder as detailed in **Fun and Games**. There are a number of ways to go about it, and the PCs had better have a good plan, and half a dozen backups.

7.4.1 STARTING THE PLAYERS

The voyage will have to begin in the Caledonian system (see 7.42, and the nature of coursetapes). Though the group will need to be briefed by Emerich Rach himself, so the PCs may either have to return to Hyperion, or Rach may very well come to Caledonia (in disguise, with a false identity).

7.4.2 AIDS

The original aid is the coursetape, and perhaps a few words should be said here about the niceties of these little items.

Firstly, a coursetape is not in fact a 'tape' at all, since such mechanical storage means were long ago abandoned as unreliable. Coursetapes are actually precision crafted crystal rectangles measuring .5 x 5 x 7 centimeters (similar to a hologlass) coated on all but one narrow side with a protective material. Usually they are also inscribed on the exterior with the departure/arrival coordinates, but this one only has the departure 'co-ords.'



EMERICH RACH

Note: coursetapes are only valid to deliver you one specific starting point to the relative destination; starting from any point but the Caledonian system would spell disaster for the travellers.

The tape is fed into a reader slot on a ship's Astro console and the course is laid in automatically. Usually the route is displayed on the Astro courseplot display board as well, matched to starcharts in the ship computer banks (useful as a safety check: if your destination point doesn't match where you think you're going, you have a problem) but coded tapes reveal no such data; they display only the duration of the jump — and only *after* entering Hyperspace.

Coded coursetapes are quite unusual, and while all coursetapes are digitally coded and must use the same sublanguage (*Astra-2*), so that astrocomputers can read them, League tapes are coded Security level 5 with special self-destruct protections, causing the data to be lost if there is any tampering or copy attempts.

Also critical is Emerich's knowledge of a clearance password to the system. This is necessary once a ship arrives in normal space so that Starhaven patrols do not vaporize the PCs. Emerich has been to Starhaven, but only once many years ago, so he will not be helpful as far as providing a detailed description of the base.

Emerich may supply a reason for the PCs to go, such as posing as fledgling pirates with a haul of valuables and the desire for a League assignment (lots of bluffing needed here). Other ideas may come to the GM, but the players should be forced to concoct much of the plan themselves.

7.43 OBSTACLES

Starhaven itself should present a sufficient obstacle for the players.

7.44 REWARDS

Should the PCs secure information which clearly leads back to Jaison Lloyd, Emerich will be extremely grateful and willing to grant a generous reward (if the group does not have a ship he might turn over the one he sent them to Starhaven in (if it is used or not too sophisticated), or allow them to only pay a fraction of the cost for such as vehicle. A large percentage of this reward would actually come down from the League Lord who is rewarding Emerich for uncovering the plot. However, Emerich believes in sharing some of the wealth with his operatives.

7.5 ENCOUNTERS

Encounters at Starhaven can take many forms, and occur in any number of settings. The GM will have to do some preparation for this one if he wants to present the base as the complex environment it is. Some ideas for leading the players through exciting situations:

- 1) A brush with a Pirate captain such as Kort K'syga in one of Starhaven's cantinas and maybe almost getting killed.
- 2) Meeting one of the well-known LeagueMasters at the Marketplace — and maybe one of the PCs recognizing the Duchess, Viscount, Bishop or Minister. Can he keep a straight face?
- 3) A creepy run-in with Moryn Káldo, who might read their minds just for fun.
- 4) A clash with one of the Old Starhaven Security Bots (they are more intelligent than they seem).
- 5) A chase through the abandoned Outer Levels, fleeing capture by security men on to the ruse.

8.0

ADVENTURE: ENEMY WITHIN

"Beware of the appearance of a thing; so often it is designed to deceive.

"Instead, observe function and deduce purpose from actions and reactions; and the context in which these occur. Often these will betray the true nature of your subject. Assume nothing, especially that Function follows Form."

Bishop Morois ao S'jiriko
from his lectures
Dia Khovaria
Monk Novitiate School

In this scenario, the PCs come out of Hyper on the fringes of a system due to a slightly faulty courseplot (not an unheard-of event) and pick up a distress beacon. Sensor analysis reveals that the source of the signal is in fact a small lifeboat with a single occupant — or is it only one?

8.1 BACKGROUND DATA

Tumbling through space at the fringe of the solar system is a six-man lifeboat with only one occupant: an Android security guard who's recent memory is mysteriously elusive. He is guarding an unusual vessel of greenish protoplasm massing about 2 kilos. The protoplasm is 'alive', but only on a very basic level. The Android — a Jym-bob model IX — does not remember why the protoplasm is important, only that he was to stay with it at all times.

The strange box of protoplasm is in fact more than it seems: it is an Aoemaran criminal, Ohr-Nyugouu ("Ohr" is actually a title similar to 'leader' or 'master'), who was en route to confinement on a prison colony when the prison ship was attacked by sentients loyal to the Ohr. When it appeared that the craft would be taken over by the attackers, a zealous crewman activated the ship's self-destruct sequence. Jym-bob, quickly realizing that the ship was about to detonate, and taking quite literally his instructions that he should guard the Aoemaran, rushed to an escape lifeboat. On the way, however, he was attacked by members of the boarding party armed with molecutronic scramblers (which they brought, knowing that Androids might be guarding their leader, since an Aoemaran cannot telepathically control an Android, nor could it enter his body and control him that way). At any rate, Jym-bob unfortunately failed to resist the cruel scrambling ray, but luckily was only marginally affected. His brain was not damaged at all, and only his memories of the last few days were erased.

Dispatching his pursuers, Jym-bob made it to the lifeboat and escaped with his charge, even as the prison ship detonated, taking with it the raider. Since then, he has drifted in the lifeboat for several months, able to remain active on a minimal amount of water (to power his reactor). The Ohr has gone into a dormant state to conserve energy.

8.2 THE NPCs

Two NPCs make up the heart of this adventure, an Android and an Aoemaran. The residents of the Ohr's terrorist base are discussed in a more abbreviated format.

8.21 JYM-BOB IX

Jym is a Model Series IX Humanatronics self-programming Android. Although not the most advanced model, he is a very sophisticated, and could not be distinguished from a normal human without a sensor scan. If questioned, of course, he will freely admit to being an android, although he suffers somewhat from the desire to be 'really human.' 200 cm tall, lanky and seemingly a bit uncoordinated (though he never actually *does* anything clumsy; he just *looks* clumsy) Jym-bob is friendly and very eager to please. He is brown-haired and brown-eyed, with a perpetual, vaguely stupid look on his face. His recent memory problem will only heighten the expression.

Jym-bob is very honest and dedicated, and when things begin to go wrong and the PCs inevitably suspect the Android he will be very hurt.



8.22 OHR - NYUGOOO

Aoemarans are described in detail in the *Space Master Companion* and *Space Master Second Edition*. For those who don't have those products, here is a brief description:

The Aoemarans, while physically bearing absolutely no resemblance to mankind, have a mental outlook surprisingly similar. To all appearances the average Aoemaran is a blob of protoplasm about two kilos in mass, semitransparent and blue-to-greenish. Aoemarans themselves possess virtually no manipulative abilities and would certainly never have progressed to their current evolutionary level without their unique parasitic/symbiotic abilities. Amorphous in form, they are able to move very slowly on their own and penetrate most tissues and semi-solid materials through osmosis.

Long ago the Aoemarans evolved into creatures which could infuse themselves into a "host" body (preferably one with manipulative abilities), take control of the host and utilize its form. The resident Aoemaran gained nourishment from the host's bloodstream, and in return was able to effectively fight infections, heal wounds, and provide a number of other helpful compensations. This was originally done with non-intelligent creatures on the Aoemaran Homeworld, but as the race developed starflight and met with other beings, they learned that the same results could be achieved with intelligent humanoids, while maintaining a cooperative rather than dominating relationship. Some humans find the whole idea disgusting and revolting, while others welcome the intellectual intimacy — not to mention the

physiological benefits. Zosma VI [-45x, 21y, -25z] is the Aoemaran Homeworld. They have Minor Clan status under Imperial Supervision. The Aoemaran favored ecosystem is a healthy host body. They are very resilient, however, and can survive for short periods in almost any environment.

As noted above, Aoemarans prefer to inhabit a willing intelligent host, with whom they can freely communicate Telepathically. Once inside a host, the Aoemaran is able to extend itself, spreading throughout the body to be hardly noticeable as extra mass. It is able to close any bleeding wound and hold it so until it heals naturally (and the wound will do so without scarring). Aoemarans are even able to replicate most organ functions for up to 10 days should the natural organ be damaged or destroyed (only one organ, however — and not the brain). They can hold a broken limb in place, protect burned tissue and even act as muscles for a short period. Once again, this ability is limited; the little Aoemaran is only 2 kilos, can only do so much at a time, and only so well! They can neutralize any poison with a 100 bonus, and are able to stimulate the host immune system to ward off bacterial and viral infection at +100. Aoemarans can — in an emergency — take control of the host body, though clumsily. They also allow a +50 RR vs stun effects. Able to perceive through the host's senses, the Aoemaran is cognizant of the outside world. They require no sleep (a condition of the host which they find endlessly fascinating and inexplicable).

Caught outside of a host, Aoemarans are AT 4 (-30 vs Stun and disruptors, -80 vs all other attacks) and are able to take about 50 hits. It isn't that they are hard to "hit"; they are hard to really damage. Inside a host they are virtually impossible to hit or damage physically without killing the host body.

THE OHR

Like any society of intelligent beings, the Aoemarans have their criminals. Ohr-Nyugoo is one such; it is actually a League of Merchants terrorist leader, one of the most sadistic. It commands a small base on an almost uninhabitable planet in the Razmun star system (+43x, -2y, +18z), manned by a cruel — if otherwise unremarkable — band of Human and Idorian raiders. The Ohr is an antisocial individual who has murdered several sentients who interfered with its plans of conquest.

The Ohr was arrested and tried in the Galactic Court for murder and a variety of other crimes. As a citizen of a Minor Clan under Imperial supervision, it was subject to Imperial Law. Found guilty, Ohr-Nyugoo was sentenced to 100 years imprisonment on an Imperial prison moon.

It is not dissuaded from its plans, however, and will make every effort to take control of the PCs and their ship, using them in any way necessary to forward its schemes. Its main desire is to return to its base and take command of its men once again. Though it is a Telepath, it can only use its Psions against a person it is in physical contact with (such as inside).

As far as controlling a body it inhabits, an Aoemaran works best with a cooperative — or at least unresisting — host. The **Thought Master** Psion of *Unminding* is particularly useful for this; *Unconsciousness* is also useable. Once the body is cooperating (having failed vs. the Psion) The Aoemaran can control its actions manually.

An alternative to this is to control the victim using **Voice** — which the Ohr can do without actually speaking. However, the Ohr is not high enough level to command the target to kill its friends (that takes a 25th level Psion!). He can manually do so, however, using the **Thought Master** Psions mentioned above. Once the deed is done, the Ohr can direct the host back to bed, cast forget, and no one will be the wiser.

8.23 THE TERRORISTS

Fortunately for the PCs (assuming they decide to take on the base after they have dealt with the Ohr) the garrison is sadly depleted. Twenty of the Ohr's men were lost — along with a ship — in the attempt to rescue their leader. Another three teams of five are out on various raids, leaving only one raiding party and the normal base staff.

The raiding party consists of five Idorian individuals, the most fierce among them being the bloodthirsty K'kar Zotta, an Idorian with a particular dislike for humans ("fat, soft pink things" he calls them). He will not hesitate to gun down the group. His four team members — all Idorians — are of like disposition.

The base staff is made up of three humanoids and two robots. One humanoid is a female pleasure model human Repllicant whose secondary duty is communications, the second is a Repllicant Tech, and the third is another Idorian, a Tech also. All three will fight to defend themselves but are not inherently aggressive. One of the robots is a Medbot, the other Maintenance. Neither has any combat skills.

8.3 SETTINGS

8.31 THE LIFEBOAT

Jym-bob's and the Aoemaran's home for decadays was a standard issue Imperial Transtar Mk VI Lifeboat.

CLASS: Mark VI Lifeboat
PRODUCER: Imperial Transtar
TONNAGE/HITS: 150
COMPUTER Mk#: 20
ARMOR TYPE: 22
EW RATING: —
SCREEN RATING: 5
CREW: 1 (or automatic pilot)
PASSENGERS/Additional Crew: 8
MAX SUBLIGHT ACCEL: Rating 1 (10 km/second²)
MANEUVERING THRUSTERS: Rating 1
TRANSLIGHT DISPLACEMENT: —
OPERATING RANGE: 25 days (with full occupancy)
WEAPONRY: None

The Lifeboat is generally unremarkable, except that the ship's computer has been damaged (apparently): the ship registration and other identifying data has been erased. Naturally, the ship name is still on the hull of the lifeboat: *Tantalus III*. This will undoubtedly mean nothing to the PCs, and their onboard computer would not be large enough to contain ship name and registry for every craft in the Empire.

8.32 THE TERRORIST BASE

First, a brief overview of the planet Razmun IV is in order.

THE PLANET

RAZMUN O2v

Planet: Razmun VI (Storm)

Circumference: 38,00 km

Natural Satellites: None

Mean Orbit: 8.2×10^8

Day: 13 Hours

Year: 580 std Days

Province: Devon

Status: Omega World

Population: 5-50

Located at the coordinates (+43x, -2y, +18z), Storm is a young world orbiting a very hot star. The orbital distance is such, however, that the planet is largely in an ice age. The equatorial areas are constantly buffeted by violent storms (caused by the planet's incredible rotation). While the atmosphere is not wholly poisonous, it is not breathable by humanoids. Anyone venturing outside must wear a breather mask and goggles (the latter to protect from the sun).

THE BASE: OVERVIEW

Razmun Six-Alpha is located at 21° N, 37° W, at the base of a mountain range and about 100 kilometers from an icy, stormy sea. The base is utilitarian, a collection of prefab bubbles linked together with airtight seal corridors. It may have once been an Imperial Survey base from a hundred years ago or so; it has an old, poorly repaired look about it. Three smaller domes cluster around a central dome, all of grey autoform plasteel, reinforced with Aligned crystalline ribs. Numerous storm punctures have been repaired (some with questionable skill, though all seem to be holding) and debris has piled up against the sides of the domes as a result of the incessant winds. Although the base is equipped with deflector screens, they are rarely used because of the power drain.

Although the dome structures would imply higher ceilings in the center of the domes, the central rooms have only 3 meter high ceilings, the rest of the space being taken with localized environmental equipment.

THE BASE: INSIDE LAYOUT

1. Road. Leading from the small landing pad, this asphalt road is kept fairly clear by the maintenance bot.

2. Airlock. Large enough to hold six men (three in bulky armor) this airlock opens onto the pedestrian path towards the pad.

3. Garage. Capable of accommodating the base's six-man ATV, the garage has a remote control door and acts as a secondary airlock.

4. ATV. The ATV is a battery powered, wheeled vehicle with a sealed environment. It has a maximum range of 300 kilometers at 50 kph.

5. Changing Room. Equipped with ten environmental suits (necessary for extended stays in the outside) and thirty filter masks and goggles (adequate for expeditions outdoors lasting less than 15 minutes). There are also two Multiscanners (one of which operates at -20 due to previous mishandling) and a tactical scanner.

6. Mechanical Room. Contains equipment for manipulating the airlock environments.

7. Access Hub. All corridors to the ancillary domes lead here. There are general monitoring screens on the walls.

8. Ladder. A ladder in the center leads up to the Mk 20 laser cannon mounted at the apex of the dome. It can be operated from Control or by a gunner.

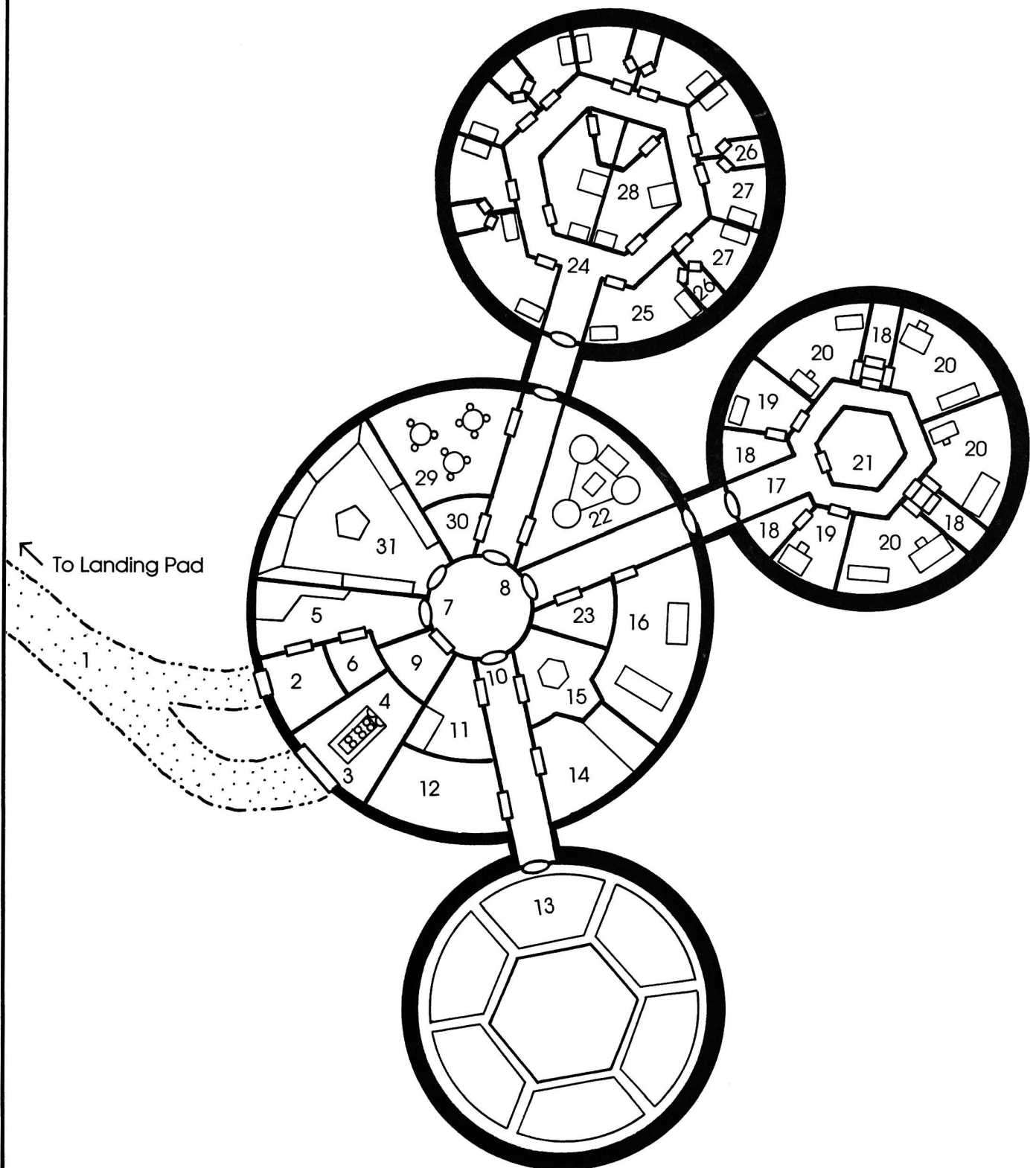
9. Storage.

10. Airtight Portal. All doors leading into the Access hub, as well as those leading to the other domes are these heavy-duty portals. These are not the typical 'pocket-panel' doors which slide into a recess, but two meter tall ovals which swing open on hinges. Although the doors open mechanically, they must be activated by a manual control switch adjacent to the door itself (they can also be sealed from the control room)

11. Infirmary. Containing two fully operational medical function beds and the Medbot, this infirmary is quite well equipped. Fortunate considering the number of raiding teams returning home with members in bad shape.

12. Workshop. Fairly well equipped, this shop will add +40 to any electronic, weapons, computer or small mechanical repair/construction tasks. An observant person will note that many of the hand tools are stolen Imperial Starmada issue.

0 2 4 6 8 10 meters



RAZMUN SIX-ALPHA

13. Reactor Room. This dome is dominated by an unusually bulky fusion reactor and power grid. This reactor is designed for a much greater load than could possibly be put on it, and it would be reasonable to assume that the original builders of the base had planned to expand it to a small colony at some point. What became of that plan is probably lost in the Imperial Survey archives. The reactor is currently running at 10% capacity, and is able to collect up enough fuel in an electromagnetic scoop it creates above the base. Should the laser cannon and/or shields be required, however, the reactor's small reserve (in a tank beneath the base) would be depleted in 25 hours.

Note: very observant PCs, using their sensors, would discover this fact with a successful Extremely Hard (-30) Sensor roll.

14. Storage.

15. Auxiliary Reactor. A small fusion reactor capable of maintaining emergency lights and environmental control for 10 days without refueling; indefinitely if refueled with purified water — an *Easy* maneuver.

16. Shield Generators. Massive, outdated but powerful shield generators would provide a 70 Defensive Bonus to the base if activated. However, they have a 2% chance per hour of shorting out because of poor maintenance; 5% every time they are hit with a Mk 10 or better weapon attack.

17. Residence Dome. The rooms in this dome are all designed for one or two occupants.

18. Bath. Steam shower, the usual necessities.

19. Private Room. Spartan furnishings.

20. Double room.

21. Gym. A mini-gym, equipped with variable weights and a "*Holo-coach*" (a holographic sparring partner, computer controlled, capable of many difficulty settings and programmed to give instruction and 'pointers' in many types of personal combat. Stolen from Carlisle Province.

22. Environmental Control. This is the main operations room which controls the environment for the entire base. There are backups in each dome, but their capacity is limited and would not be sufficient during an extended hot or cold period. The equipment fails on the average of once every 50 days, and is quickly repaired by the technical staff.

23. Storage.

24. Residential Dome. All rooms in this dome (except the two in the center) are furnished with bunk beds, housing two or four residents.

25. Quadruple room. Mostly strike team crew occupy these rooms.

26. Bath. The basics, in a slightly more cramped setting than in #18.

27. Double room. Two of these share a bath.

28. Master Quarters. The Aoemaran (and his host) occupied one of these rooms, while the other is a 'guest room'.

29. Mess Hall. Seating for twelve, with lovely views of the storm-swept outdoors.

30. Food synthesizer. Also stolen (from a luxury passenger liner that no longer has any need for it), it is a very advanced model, capable of creating virtually any dish a human or Idorian could want.

31. Control Center. A central column houses the base computer, a Mk 80 model, quite old, but with a personality. Its name is Madeline, and 'she' sometimes must be coddled to perform a task she might find distasteful. She has narrowly escaped having her memory dumped on more than one occasion.

Note: She certainly won't look kindly on invaders, except Jym-bob, who her sensors will tell her is a robot (Android, but close enough) and she will fall in love with him. Smart PCs—who haven't already blown poor Jym-bob to the big mainframe in the sky—will be able to exploit this opportunity once on the base. It would be merely a Hard (-10) task for Jym-bob to convince her to mutiny as long as killing on her part was not involved.

The rest of the control center is fairly standard, though some of the consoles are quite antiquated, while some are very new and poorly installed. Consoles are: Communications (Microfreq only, though with an uplink to an orbital satellite equipped for system-range TBD.); Defense (shields and laser cannon); Sensors; Computer Control; Environmental and Engineering Subsystems.

8.4

THE TASK

First the players must discover the existence of the Aoemaran and his purposes. Ideally they should do so without alienating the android, who could be invaluable in controlling the creature.

8.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

Soon after the PCs drop out of hyper at their destination (it could be anywhere in the Empire), they will pick up the distress signal. By Imperial Law such signals must be investigated, so the PCs have little choice there. They will discover the Android and Aoemaran, and bring them on board. From there, it will proceed as noted in *Encounters* below.

8.42 AIDS

Jym-bob is sort of an aid, but of course his information is flawed and incomplete. Other than that, the PCs are on their own.

8.43 OBSTACLES

The Ohr itself is quite an obstacle, with its formidable Telepathic powers, skill at intrigue, and sheer determination.

8.44 REWARDS

For turning in the Aoemaran the Empire is offering 500,000 Imperial Elmonits (alive), and for returning Jym-bob intact, they will pay 300,000 ImpEI. Informing them of the location of the terrorist base is worth 100,000 ImpEI. To collect the reward, the PCs will have to suffer through considerable red tape (e.g., 'debriefings', background checks, etc.). Don't make it too easy on the players; a criminal record might partially or wholly disqualify the PCs from a reward—though they might get some of their offenses purged if they play their information right.

An alternative for the 'turn 'em in and collect the reward result is if the PCs want to claim the base for their very own. They will have to be on the lookout for other raiding teams returning, though the base defenses could—if activated—take out any of the group's remaining vessels.

8.5 ENCOUNTERS

It won't be long before the Aoemaran will leave its home (it can open the container from the inside) and move into a sleeping (or otherwise unaware) humanoid PC. The Ohr, once in command of an individual, will discover which crew member is the pilot and inhabit him. After that, when everyone is asleep, it (and the pilot) will go to the cockpit, set course for its base, then sabotage the console so that no changes can be made. When the console sabotage is discovered, no one will understand what happened, but naturally suspicion will fall on poor Jym-bob.

The Aoemaran will proceed to eliminate anyone else as soon as it is convenient, though it knows all it needs to do is get the unaware humans to Storm and its people will take care of them.

GM Note: *The GM can run the Aoemaran control one of two ways: either he can let the possessed player in on what is happening, or at least let him know he is controlled by something, but tell him he must play it straight; or — and this is the preferable scenario if the GM knows the Character RR's — don't let anyone know what is going on. Even the inhabited player is not told, after all, his character would not know if the Aoemaran's Forget Psions work properly.*

If the players have not caught on to the scheme by the time the ship drops out of Hyper, they are in big trouble, as the Aoemaran will find a way to alert it's lackeys to be ready to bump off the poor PCs when the ship lands. If they have

caught on, brave and clever PCs might be able to set a trap and lure the pirates out, then waste them. Not-so-brave, but still clever PCs may note the coordinates of the base and flee with their Aoemaran captive.

It should also be noted that learning the truth about the protoplasm has a 5% chance per day of Jym-bob's memory returning. The kindly GM may choose to use the Android's finicky mind to aid players who would otherwise be hurtling towards their doom. Of course, if the PCs blast the Android as soon as something goes wrong, assuming he is the culprit, they deserve whatever they get (the GM might remind them that killing a sentient Android is the same as murder in Imperial space).

STATS FOR NPCs: ENEMY WITHIN

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	Weapon:OB	Skill:Add	Skill:Add	Skill:Add	Notes
ESCAPEES								
Jym-Bob IX	5	150	4 (30)	StunPstl:110	M/AS:80/R4	Perc:90	Subd:100	Android Security Guard.
Ohr-Nyugoo	20	25	4 (80)	—	NSpPil 80	HySpPil 85	HySpA 70	Aoemaran Telepath/Pilot.
League Lord. Can use <i>Voice</i> w/o speaking; all psions only on body it is in contact with. Lists: <i>Voice</i> 10, <i>Thgt Mstr</i> 20, <i>Mnd Asslt</i> 10. PP: 60								
RAIDERS								
K'kar Zotta	12	115	10 (15)*	DsrpPstl:120	NSPilot:80	HyPilot:75	MLARifle:90	Idorian Astronaut. Deflector Shield.
Raider #2	10	102	1 (20)*	LsrPstl:95	NSAstro:90	HyAstro:85	Multisc:75	Idorian Astronaut. Deflector Shield.
Raider #3	7	95	15 (10)	PlsmaRR:110	DsrpPstl:85	Multisc:60	Percep:45	Idorian Armsman.
Raider #4	5	87	8 (15)*	BlstRf:85	Multisc:45	Percep:55	CrimeTech:80	Idorian Criminologist.
Absorption Shield.								
Raider #5	4	63	1 (50)	LsrRfl:60	M/AS:85/R2	AdrenDef:30	Subdue:85	Idorian Armsman/martial Artist.
BASE PERSONNEL								
Lola XI	8	100	1 (20)	Seduc:120	Comm:90	Dance:70	Sing:55	Humanoid Pleasure Model
Replicant.								
Sparky VII	5	80	1 (20)	ElecTech:110	CmpTch:95	PwrSTech:80	CyberTch:65	Humanoid Technician Model
Replicant.								
Orko Fugg	6	91	1 (10)	ElecTech:90	CmpTch:55	PwrSTech:60	WeapTch:45	Idorian Elec Tech
Medbot Beta	10	12	15 (20)	MedPrac:130	MedDia:120	1stAid:100	MedTec:110	Robot.
Maintenance Bot Delta	5	20	17 (30)	ElecTech:100	PwrSTch:90	CmpTch:85	WeapTch:45	Robot.
Notes:								
*DB does not include shield modifier. Check notes under character listing for what type of shield, check modifiers below, and incorporate in DB:								
Velocity Shield:	+30 vs melee,	+45 vs missile,	+60 vs projectiles,	+0 vs energy.				
Deflector Shield:	+5 vs melee,	+15 vs missile,	+40 vs projectiles,	+60 vs energy.				
Absorption Shield:	+30 vs melee,	+30 vs missile,	+30 vs projectiles,	+30 vs energy.				
Barrier Shield:	+60 vs melee,	+70 vs missile,	+70 vs projectiles,	+90 vs energy.				

ADVENTURE: THE ULTIMATE STARDRIVE

A Secret report to the League Council, Starhaven

SUBJECT: Imperial Archaeological Institute Report 29776759132758-FD-23

SUMMARY: It has come to the attention of the League that an apparent Sianetic Harbinger outpost has been discovered on the moon DEV:tau Primeβ inside Devon Province territory. Further investigation has revealed that the site is intact and may include working equipment and/or vehicles.

RECOMMENDATION: Send a League Acquisition Force immediately to DEV:tau Prime β, avoiding if possible any Devonian military forces present. Seize all records and artifacts, scan and destroy any equipment which cannot be readily transported. Nullify any IAI staff on-site and Devon personnel as needed.

A mysterious artifact — a spacecraft — has supposedly been unearthed along with an ancient outpost on an asteroid in the Dev:tau system in the Imperial Province of Devon.

9.1 BACKGROUND DATA

Its atmosphere ripped away nearly fifteen hundred years ago, Dev:tau Prime is a barren planet with little remaining of interest on its scarred surface, thus it earned the title of *Omega World*, an unenviable rating which places it in a category worse than useless: it is off-limits to all but Imperially authorized personnel. The Devonians have a small orbital station in the Dev:tau system, ostensibly to patrol Dev:tau Prime, but also no doubt to enforce House Devon's claim to the system. As the system is under quarantine, all traffic into the Dev:tau system is restricted — though there is little to draw anyone to this unremarkable interstellar island anyway.

The following warning is automatically beamed via standard hailing frequencies to any ship which enters the Dev:tau system. The Kashmerians have placed a number of sensor bouys throughout the system; they together with the Instation monitor all space traffic in the system

WARNING:

Devon Directive Gamma 241-Alpha 71283: Dev:tau Prime: Planetfall restricted to authorized vehicles and personnel only. Biohazard and Radiation quarantine in effect. Transmit clearance passage code immediately.

With the exception of a few minor smuggling incidents, assignment to the Dev:tau station has proven its reputation as one of the more tedious in the Province.

However, the service team stationed there had been testing some newly installed short-range sensor systems, and noticed peculiar low-level readings emanating from the planet's second (and larger) moon. This was especially strange considering the moon was a barren rock with no atmosphere to speak of, and had been thoroughly scanned when the system was claimed by House Devon in Imp. 226. The Station commander sent out a team of SMAC fighters for a closer look, and they — guided by these new readings — discovered the entrance to what appeared to be a small, underground spaceport. By their appearance, the sealed alloy panels looked extremely old; perhaps more importantly, they were fashioned of an unusual alloy, similar to the most resilient metal yet created by Man: Ordium II. Clearly this was an artifact of the Sianetic Harbingers. Over the strident objections of the SMAC pilots, the Station Commander called his men back, and put in an urgent TBD message to the Devon Capital.

Since the Emperor 'by right' has ownership of all pre-Terran artifacts in the Empire, Lord Yama Pythagor Devon sagely opted to notify his Imperial Majesty immediately of the find. Lord Yama did not stop at notifying his ruler, however.

9.11 THE FINDERS

As per standing policy in the Technology Ministry, a team from the IAI (Imperial Archaeological Institute) was dispatched to Dev:tau prime under a veil of secrecy. The system's quarantine status was declared absolute by the Technology Minister, and the Devon Military commander was instructed not to rotate the Orbital Station garrison until the investigation was complete.

Within hours after their arrival at Dev:tau, the IAI team uncovered what was clearly the greatest (widely known) Sianetic Harbinger find to date: a spacecraft, in perfect condition. Subsequent analysis revealed that the ship was still operational, its power supply somehow maintained through the millennia. The Archaeotechnologists hadn't yet dared to try moving the ship; there are too many horror stories of how uncautious investigation of such "Old Ones" machines has (literally) blown up in the investigators' faces.

9.12 THE FIND

The IAI has indeed found a spaceship of the Sianetic Harbingers, the Old Ones (who are also referred to as the "K'ta'vuir"). It is a small, six-man affair of bizarre design, but the most incredible thing about it is that the scientists strongly suspect that it is able to do what the Imperial engineers have been striving to achieve for centuries, an effect known as *Simultaneity Hyperwarp*. A completely different concept in Translight travel, the Simultaneity Drive would not have the requirements of 'conventional' Hypershunting (that the ship be some 500 diameters from a gravity-exerting body, among other things). Nor would the duration of translight trips be dependant on distance; it takes decadays in Hyperspace to cross the Empire using the current most powerful Hyperdrive. However, it is theorized that a SimDrive ship need only be in vacuum and weightless and that trips would be absolutely instantaneous, passing through a realm called by some *Foldspace*; where the concept of 'distance' does not exist; all points in space are adjacent. Simultaneity Drive is the true "Space Warp".

The discovery of such a drive would of course completely revolutionize Imperial society. All economic ramifications aside, fleets powered with the SimDrive could appear at a target, strike and vanish again before the victims could raise their defenses. Whatever group controlled the SimDrive could easily rule known space.

9.13 THE OWNER

What no one knows yet is that the original owner of the starship is alive and wants his craft back. V'liir K'taan is an Althan who escaped the cataclysmic self-destruction of his race, fleeing to this moon. Hidden deep under the installation is a cryosleep chamber where he lay in suspended animation for tens of thousands of years. The base computer awakened him (and began recharging his ship) when it detected the scanning beams of the Orbital Station, but he was unable to escape before their arrival. Instead, he

retreated to the most remote area of the base to wait for the intruders to leave — or at least get away from the ship. It would be easy for him to trap the Archaeologists in the base using the computer to seal off parts of the installation, but it has been damaged over the span of time, and most systems are on manual or in some cases completely inoperative. Also, there is a Telepath in the team, and he already suspects V'liir's presence. Although a powerful Telepath in his own right, V'liir does not possess the power to Psionically overcome the entire group. And his troubles are only beginning.

9.14 HOUSE DEVON

After alerting the Imperial Authorities, Lord Yama Devon promptly called upon his associate on Hyperion IX, Emerich Rach, in the hopes of convincing Rach to send a reconnaissance team to Dev:tau. In the event that the Harbinger find is truly exceptional, Lord Devon certainly doesn't want to see it get shipped off to Terra.

9.15 THE LEAGUE

Unfortunately for Lord Yama (and the PCs) a League spy intercepted the information regarding the newly-discovered station, and the information has reached the ears of Soris of the League Council. Soris has commissioned none other than Kort Kasyga, the infamous raider captain, to raid the site and take whatever is valuable. Any witnesses are to be silenced — permanently.

9.2 THE NPCs

These are the prominent Non Player Characters the PCs are likely to encounter.

9.21 V'LIIR K'TAAN

V'liir K'taan is a K'ta'viir — a being superior in many ways to any of the known Terran breeds or near-mutations. Some anthropologists believe that they are actually the original *Homo Sapiens*, and that Terran man is a throwback descendant. Oh, well.

At any rate, V'liir has all of the attributes of a K'ta'viir (see Section Four under Moryn Káldo) which the GM should study beforehand to familiarize himself with their special abilities.

9.22 LEAGUEMEN

A few of the more prominent members of the *Golden Dagger* crew are mentioned here. For details of Kort Kasyga, see Section 4, and of the *Golden Dagger*, see Section 5. If everything goes according to plan, he will be the one piloting the SimDrive ship out of the hangar.

REN WELKIR

As First Mate of the *Golden Dagger*, Ren Welkir is Kasyga's second-in-command and chief Astrogator. His temperament is also quite the opposite of the Raider Captain's; and might even wonder what he is doing on board a League Hijacker. He is introspective, soft-spoken, and keeps to himself. Certainly not the flamboyant pirate image.

Welkir is actually a friend of Kasyga's from the Jade-London Fleet Academy, and when the young Kasyga went AWOL to join the League, Welkir went with him. Tall and slender (192 cm, 87 kilos) Ren has short black hair, grey eyes, and wears plain grey coveralls nearly all of the time. Quite a contrast to the flamboyant captain. Welkir will be along with Kasyga infiltrating the base; his Astrogation skills might be needed to comprehend the ship. He is much more reluctant to fire on an uncertain target, and only kills when he feels he must.

ALESEUS THORSSON

Aleseus is a Kashmerian Transhuman VII (200 cm, 125 kilos, blond hair, blue eyes), an Armsman who is rarely without his Plasma Repeater Rifle. Since that is not a subtle weapon appropriate for an infiltration mission, however, Aleseus is forced to carry nothing more powerful than his Kashmerian Autoblaster. He fires it at anything that moves (and some things that he only *thinks* move).

AYLI MASORI

The lone female member of the *Golden Dagger* crew, Ayli is a Criminologist who seems out to prove something. Her skills are quite considerable, and she is a respected member of the crew — though she has a difficult time seeing that respect. Nevertheless, she is along on this strike team.

LOKI STRUAN

A skilled martial artist, Loki was actually a student in the Clan Yung Ninja school, but dropped out less than a month before graduation. He quickly found his way into the ranks of the League of Merchants. A mere 172 cm tall, 67 kilos, Loki is a dark-haired oriental young man and deadly master of powersword kata.

9.23 IAI ARCHAEOLOGISTS

Four members make up the IAI survey team.

OLIM NALUU

A Churg, Olim is an Astro-Archaeologist specializing in Ancients' gadgetry. He can't be frightened or bullied, but neither is he very good in a fight. Middle-aged and somewhat paunchy, the Churg is the leader of the expedition.

SHERI XII

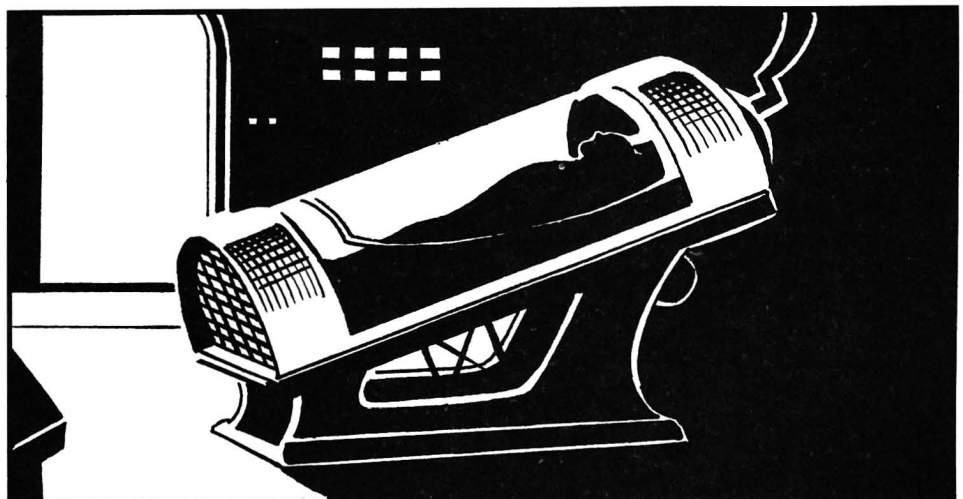
Sheri Twelve is in fact a very advanced Humanatronics Android. The XII series are extremely sophisticated and completely self-programming (not to mention monstrously strong and quick). She is instructed to get the ship at all costs — though she has developed an affection for Alvin and might override her programming to save him.

ALVIN REVUSK

A young Intern in the IAI Field Service, Alvin was picked for this assignment out of sheer luck (whether it was good or bad luck we won't know until the dust of this adventure has settled). Talented though somewhat erratic, he might panic if faced by a crew of League Pirates.

"DARWIN" (DPR Bot)

Darwin is a Diplomatic/Public Relations Bot (produced by the Maircon Corp.) modified to be a general assistant to the Archaeological team. He talks constantly and is useless as anything more than an errand-bot.





9.3 THE SETTINGS

Essentially there is only one setting in this scenario: the lunar base and environs.

9.31 THE MOON

DEV:tau AOv

Moon: DEV:tau prime β

Circumference: 31,200 km

Mean Orbit:

Day: 18.5 hours

Year: 44 days

Province: Devon

Status: Omega World Satellite

Population: 0

Productivity %: 0

Production Emphasis: None

Comments: DEV:Tau Prime Beta is an uninteresting moon, about half the size of Old Earth's satellite. Completely without atmosphere (and apparently always so) it resembles Terra's moon in many ways. A sterile grey, pocked with craters upon craters and jagged mountains, it is an unwelcoming sphere.

9.32 THE OLD ONES' BASE

Although a rather small installation, this base is a priceless find for Imperial Science. Built underground, it surrounds the small elevator landing pad. The installation was apparently originally designed as some sort of remote research station, because many of the chambers appear to be some sort of laboratories.

BASE EXTERIOR LAYOUT

1. Landing Pad/Elevator.
2. Personnel Elevator.
3. Heat Exhaust Vents.
4. Sensor Towers.
5. IAI ship.
6. Devonian Microfreq Transmitter.

BASE INTERIOR LAYOUT:

GENERAL NOTES

The scale of the base while small overall, indicates a lack of need for conserving space: all of the corridors are wide, and the rooms are very large with four meter high ceilings.

All of the doors on the base are reinforced oval panels which slide up into a slot above the entryway. They're controlled by a heat/pressure-sensitive panel next to the door on either side. The entire base is functional, with the exception of the equipment in Lab room 9, and all power has failed in the ship maintenance section. Lights come on automatically when a door to a room is opened, and remain on as long as someone is in the room (except in the staterooms). Corridors are always lit — although a few lighting elements in the wall panels have failed, though there are some dimly-lit sections.

1. Elevator landing Pad. A typical combination landing surface and elevator platform, this pad is marked with a targeting grid and descends flush with the hangar floor. There are perimeter lights on the surface which blink in sequence to accentuate the pad outline.

2. Airlock Hangar. Slightly larger than the pad itself, this hangar is fifty meters high inside. Three sliding panels can be closed across the top of the hangar when the elevator is in the lowered position, allowing atmosphere to be pumped into the hangar itself.

3. The Simdrive Ship. See below.

4. Airlock. A fairly large chamber, capable of accommodating several men in environmental suits

5. Hangar Control. What would seem to be quite an elaborate setup to control the sparse traffic of this base, the control room has three communications consoles (although exactly what kind of communication is unknown) and a large panel facing the large hangar window to control operations.

6. Sensor Control. Six large consoles face a central holomap projector which can show the immediate planetary vicinity, the solar system, or even as much as a 200 light-year sphere. How this is managed is unknown.

7. Elevator. Connects to the moon's surface.

8. Geology Laboratory. This room is littered with a variety of strange ore samples. The analytical equipment is indecipherable, however.

9. Workshop. A strange gallery of machines fill this room.

10. Computer Room. The four far sides are covered with dark transparent panels, behind which blink patterns of multicolored lights. The only furnishing in the room is a single reclining chair set before an extremely sophisticated heat/pressure sensitive console.

11. Suit Storage. Contains half a dozen environmental suits of strange, bulky design. They do protect as AT 17, however.

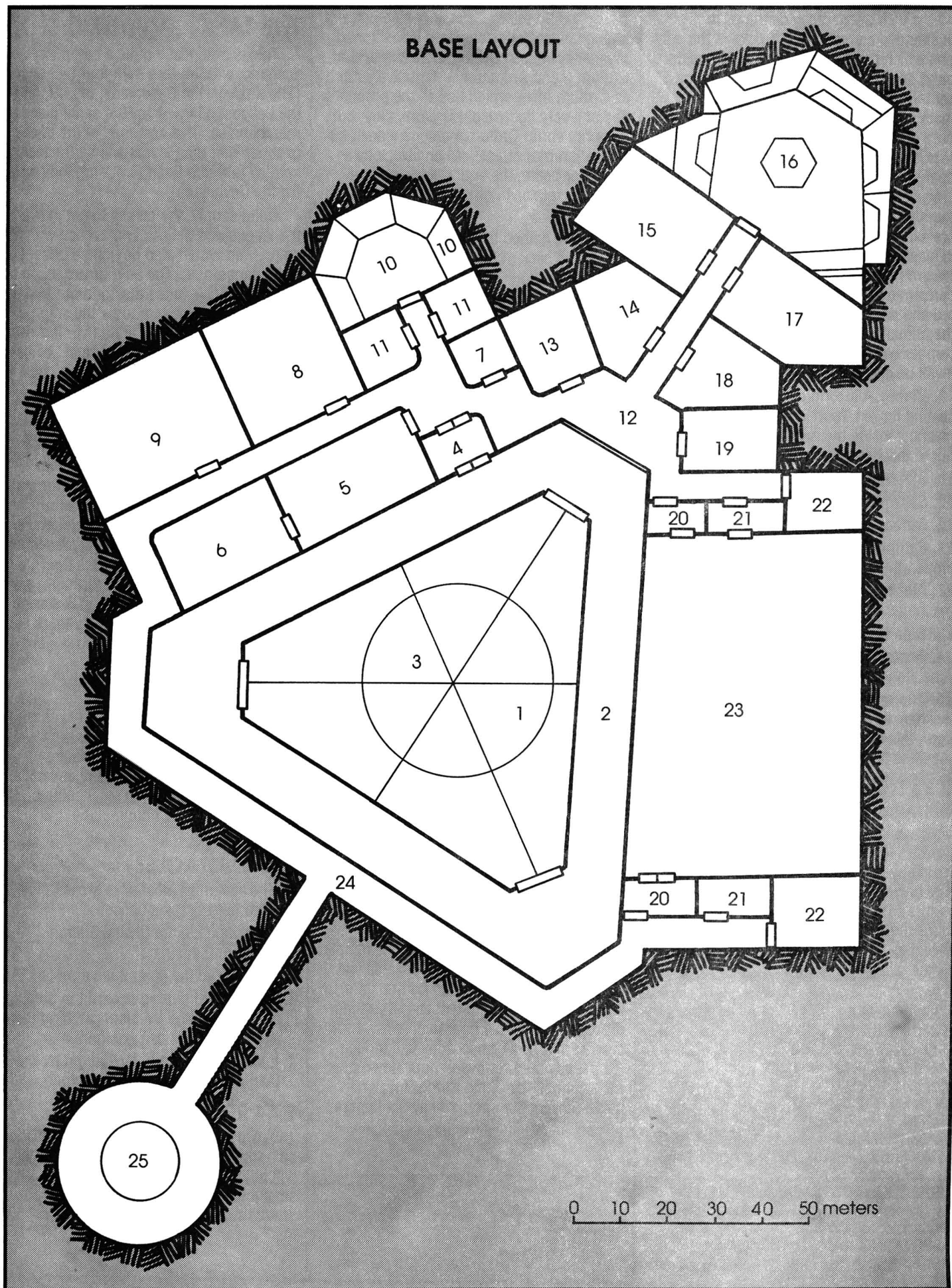
12. Foyer. One wall is devoted to a large glassteel portal, with a view of the hangar.

13. Stateroom. Large and elegantly furnished, this is actually a suite of rooms including sanitary facilities of peculiar design.

14. Stateroom. As #13.

15. Recreation Room. A bare room, but with resiliently padded walls, floor and ceiling.

BASE LAYOUT



16. Cryogenics/Infirmary. This room is where V'Iir spent many centuries in suspended animation. The door is the only one which can be locked (from the inside only) and is Absurd (-70) to pick. In the center of the room is a complex-looking machine which is a sophisticated medical bot (+120 to Medical Practice, First Aid and Medical Technics). It is capable of operating on humans at +100, though their physiology is slightly different from that of the K'ta'viir. Five cryogenic/healing beds are set about the perimeter of the chamber in glass-fronted 'crypts', and can roll towards the bot on glides. The bot can perform extensive surgery, and performs pre and post cryogenic treatments. When the humans enter the base, the door to the chamber will be locked, but in a later search it will be openable (after V'Iir is awake).

17. Dining. A luxurious chamber with seating for ten, food is processed by a machine inside the massive table, and rises out of hidden niches within the tabletop.

18. Stateroom. As #13.

19. Stateroom. As #13.

20. Airlock.

21. Equipment. A collection of seemingly inoperative items.

22. Mechanical. Large, incomprehensible machines.

23. Side Hangar. This large area is empty.

24. Access Corridor. At times poorly lit, it runs along the third side of the hangar.

25. Thermal Core. Tapping into the inexhaustible heat energy of the moon's core, this reactor controls the energy and modifies it for the bases use.

9.33 THE SIMDRIVE SHIP

The ship itself, the object of the controversy, is indeed capable of Simultaneity Jumps, allowing it to travel (theoretically) from any point in the universe to any other. The only limiting factor is range of the craft's sensors, since attempting a SimJump into unscanned space is inviting disaster. The ship's stats, in *Space Master* terms, are given below:

CLASS: Scout
 TONNAGE/HITS: 150
 COMPUTER Mk#: 100
 ARMOR TYPE: 29/30 (-30)
 EW RATING: 80
 SCREEN RATING: 100
 CREW: 1 Astro.Pilot/1 Tech
 PASSENGERS: 4
 MAX SUBLIGHT ACCEL: Rating 20 (150 km/second²)
 TRANSLIGHT DISPLACEMENT: 100 LY/
 jump (limited only by sensor range for 'safe' jumps)
 OPERATING RANGE: unknown
 WEAPONRY: twin Mk 30 Ion Cannons

The ship (unofficially dubbed the *Black Bat* by the IAI team because of its color and strange, winglike extensions) is fashioned of an alloy which appears to be a hybrid of Ordium II and Ardinium — tentatively rated as Ordium III — which has all the properties of a very lightweight Ordium alloy, but does not suffer Ordium's unique vulnerability to disruptor attack. When struck by a disruptor beam, the entire outer surface becomes mirror-bright, largely deflecting the attack.

Entry is gained through an oval hatchway in the back of the ovoid hull, opened via a surprisingly simplistic mechanical twist-handle inset in the hull. Inside, the single cabin is about eight meters long and five wide, accommodating couches for two crew members and four passengers. The pilot sits facing forward just beneath a sweeping transparent viewport, while the astrogator/gunner sits behind him, in a slightly raised egg-shaped structure. The navigator's couch and wrap-around console is covered by a clear dome, which projects a variety of heads-up-display information. The four passenger couches face outward from the central Astro console. All of the controls are mechanical: dual-position buttons, small levers and switches, etc. This is consistent with some Althan Harbinger designs, but does not match the installation control system designs. No access to the power systems or any of the ship's mechanisms can be found, although sensors show that the hyperwarp is effected by two nodes, one in each of the forward-sweeping 'wings'. The craft has no landing gear; instead it automatically hovers at half a meter above a surface.

The sublight and maneuvering drive is no less a mystery than the Hyperwarp. It appears to be some type of reactionless drive capable of considerable acceleration. The vehicle is equipped with internal gravitic control, and uses gravitics to maintain its "landing" altitude.

Anyone (with appropriate skill) attempting to operate the *Black Bat* consoles will be at an initial -100, but the controls are so logical and easy to use that the subtraction drops by 5 for every minute of study to a penalty of -50. Further study will reduce the penalty by 5 for every hour down to a minimum of -20 which cannot be eliminated (unless the operator has six fingers on each hand).

9.4 THE TASK

This is potentially quite a complex scenario, with no less than four factions (The K'ta'viir, the Devonians, the IAI, and the League) all vying for the same piece of merchandise. It is assumed in the backgrounds that the Players will be the team sent by Emerich Rach (working, indirectly, for the Devonians).

Quite simply, the task is to get in evade the league and the IAI, and escape with the ship. V'Iir would also be quite a prize, but quite dangerous. The bold group might try to capture V'Iir (once they find out that he is there) and force him to fly the ship wherever they want. The K'ta'viir is clever, though, and between his physical abilities and his formidable Psionic powers, he ought to be able to overpower any but the most impressive PC groups.

9.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

If the PCs are "on Call" by Emerich Rach, the beginnings of this adventure are fairly straightforward. If they are not, however, they could be approached by a shady person who is actually representing House Devon, but will never tell the PCs that. He will claim to be representing a 'private concern. Should the PCs accept his offer, he will make it clear to them that any cheating on the deal could result in their unattractive incineration.

9.42 AIDS

Emerich may supply the PCs with a stealthy shuttle (such as the *Rosetta Colossi* in the original Space Master adventure, sans Amazons), EW coveralls, and some lock-defeating mechanisms. He might also provide a coursetape to Dev:tau system

9.43 OBSTACLES

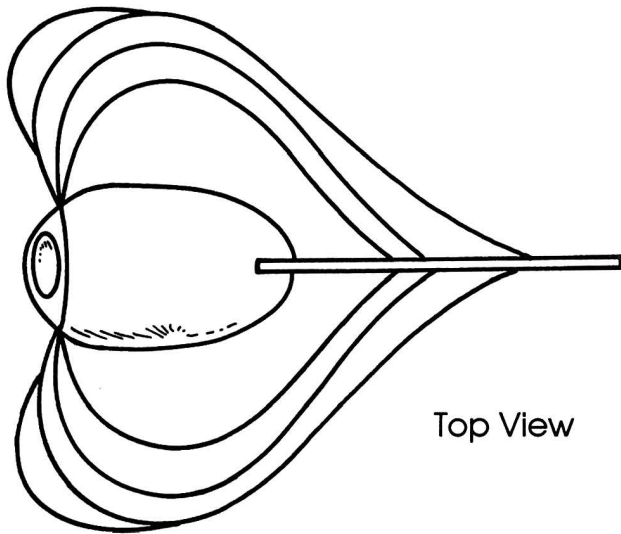
The adventure obstacles break down into the following sequence:

1. Sneaking past the Orbital Station monitoring systems
2. Getting into the lunar base unnoticed.
3. locating and getting aboard the SimDrive ship without the IAI team catching them, and before V'Iir can get there.
4. Escaping without being caught by the Devonians or killed by the League.

9.44 REWARDS

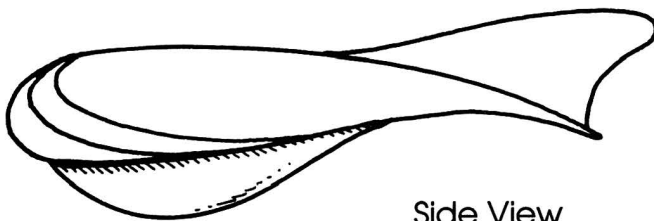
A group who returns with the SimDrive ship to Hyperion can be certain that they will be richly rewarded, perhaps with advanced equipment, cash, or a fairly snazzy ship of their own.

THE SIMDRIVE SHIP

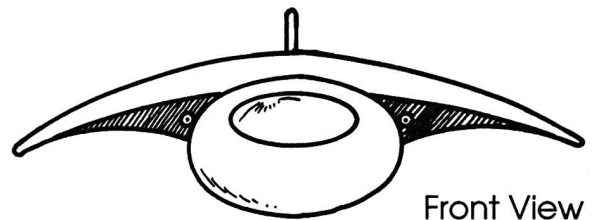


0 1 2 5 10 meters

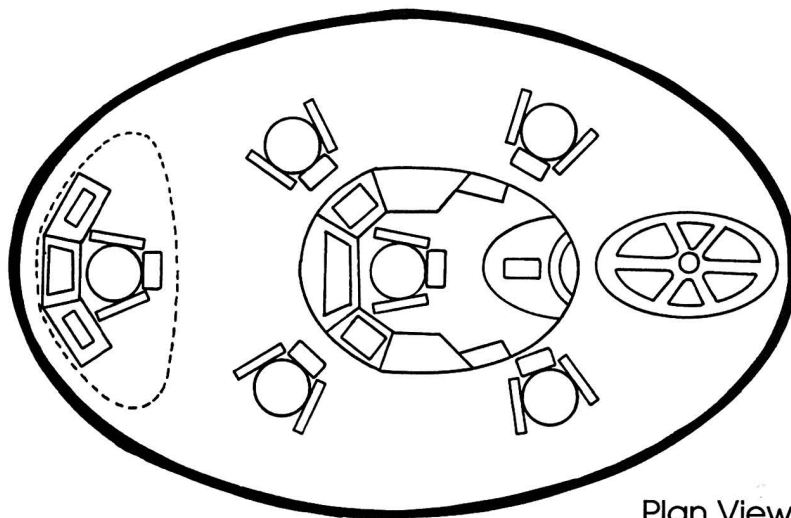
Top View



Side View



Front View



Plan View

0 1 2 3 meters

Note: Under no circumstances should the PCs be allowed to keep the SimDrive ship. Should the PCs grow enamored with the ship, the GM should launch a pogrom by the Empire to hunt them down and take it away. They'll be caught or destroyed eventually.

9.5 ENCOUNTERS

Assuming that the PCs are sent by Emerich Rach secretly for House Devon, they have three factions to worry about: the IAI team and the Orbital station garrison (who are for all intents and purposes working for the Archaeologists in this scenario), the K'ta'viir, and League raiders.

9.51 THE IAI TEAM

The Imperial Archaeologists will have already been at the base for some time when the PCs arrive, and will hopefully have uncovered some information about the ship. The GM will have to decide how much has been discovered, how it is stored (are all of the records kept locked away on datadiscs, security encoded, or are they lying about the base on portable computers, uncoded and available? The Archaeologists will not, of course, be expecting any intruders, assuming that they are being protected by the Devonians.

9.52 THE DEVONIAN GARRISON

Three soldiers of the Devon garrison will be on the base at all times, ferried across using the orbital station's 8-man shuttle (which will normally be at the station, not

here at the base). These soldiers are ostensibly to aid the IAI team, but they are also there to observe and report back to Lord Yama Devon. Under most circumstances, this will be the extent of the garrison's involvement. If the base is threatened, they will defend themselves, and half-heartedly help the Archaeologists. They do have a portable Microfreq transmitter set up on the surface, which can tie in to their personal communicators. With it they could send a distress call to the station.

The Sensor officers at the orbital station have a total +70 bonus to pick up any intruders in the system. Naturally any EW can be used to counter this. Should intruders be detected, the station commander is able to order out a strike force of 6 SMAC Fighters:

CLASS: SMAC Interceptor
PRODUCER: Devon Transtar/Cobra
TONNAGE/HITS: 100/105
COMPUTER Mk#: 50
ARMOR TYPE: 23 (-10)
EW RATING: 50
SHIELD RATING: 0
CREW: 1
MAX SUBLIGHT ACCEL: Rating 17 (135 km/second²)
TRANSLIGHT DISPLACEMENT: —
OPERATING RANGE: 200 light-years
WEAPONRY:
— One Mk. 10 Laser, nose mounted
— 2 wing-mtd Mk. 10 explosive missile launchers

9.53 V'LIIR K'TAAN

The K'ta'viir would prefer not to be 'encountered' at all, instead using his powers to elude the swarms of humanoids, get to his ship and escape. If cornered, however, he will be a formidable foe, both mentally and physically. He has no respect for the lives of any of these inferior creatures, but neither will he go out of his way to hurt them.

9.54 THE RAIDERS

If the GM wants to go easy on the players, he may wish to give them some time before the Raiders arrive; they will be quite a challenge. Kort will only be interested in getting in, quickly assessing the situation and getting out as fast as possible. He has no desire to incur the wrath of the Orbital Station forces, so will try to avoid them entirely. He also has no desire to kill anyone without reason; he is not bloodthirsty. He will, however, kill without remorse if he feels it necessary.

The scheme is for the *Dagger* to drop out of Hyper at the edge of the system, and launch a specially-cloaked lifeboat with the four-man infiltration crew to the moon. From the landing site several miles away they will debark the lifeboat and travel overland to the base which has a time-delay auto-return (should Kort and his men fail and need transportation back it will wait 25-hours).

The *Golden Dagger* will hover at the fringe of the system, monitoring all activity, poised to enter the fray should Kort and his raiding party need aid. Its stats are listed in Section 5.

STATS FOR NPCs: ULTIMATE STARDRIVE

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	Weapon:OB	Skill:Add	Skill:Add	Skill:Add	Notes
V'liir K'taan	25	200	20 (45)*	Lsrpstl:150	Hide:170	Subdue:160	All Pilot: 150	K'ta'viir Semi Telepath Pilot. Note special abilities. Knows 10 Psion lists to 25th level. Laser pistol fires on Mk IV (special model and energy cells); Special black coverall adds 70 to hiding and protects as AT 20 with no encumbrance; personal barrier shield, special bracelet model. Other bracelet is a sophisticated auto medtab applicator which can administer doses of the nonaddictive equivalents of the following drugs: Torethine, Korteline, and Tri-adrenaline. It has ten doses of each.
LEAGUEMEN								
Kort K'syga — SeeSection 4								
Ren Welkir	8	110	1 (30)*	LsrPstl104	M/A:Stk:88	AllAstro:102	NSpPilot:88	Human Explorer. Absorption Shield, Multiscanner.
Aleus Thorsson	6	165	15 (20)	PlasRR:102	Autblstr:98	Stalk/H:80	MScan:66	Transhuman VII Armsman.
Ayli Masori	8	65	5 (15)	NldPstl:106	Subdue:70	Crimin:92	Perc:77	Neohuman Criminologist. Tool Kit, Repair scanner.
Loki Struan	6	90	1 (30)	M/A:Stk:98	M/A:Sw/t:88	Stk/Hide:80	Perc:70	Human Armsman.
IAI ARCHAEOLOGISTS								
Olim Naluu	12	85	1 (0)	MiniStr:45	—	Hist(X):110	Anth(X):98	Churg Researcher. His Xeno "(X)" skills are in Sianetic Harbinger concentrations.
Sheri XII	8	200	4 (40)	AssltStrptr:130	Subdue:130	MedPrac:110	MedDia:120	V.H. Android. Somewhat 'quirky' and prone to independent thinking.
Alvin Revusk	5	71	1 (15)	LsrPstl:65	HyPil:80	Hist(X):80	Anth(X):68	Human Explorer. His Xeno "(X)" skills are in Sianetic Harbinger concentrations.
"Darwin" (DPR Bot)	—	100	15 (0)	None	None	Comm:100	Drive:80	Robot.

ADVENTURE: THE PRISMS OF HESTUS V

Rumors through the network of League intelligence have reached Emerich Rach: a new type of powerful *Psion Prism* has been discovered! A world near the frontier is the suspected location of these crystals, on the borders of Jade-London Province. However, it is a restricted planet under quarantine and heavy guard by the infamous Jadist Military Service (J.A.M.S.).

Can the PCs sneak past the blockade and make off with a fortune in Psion Prisms? Or is it even that simple — the planet has intelligent natives who might not be willing to part with their beautiful crystals.

10.1 BACKGROUND DATA

Following is data on the 'prism planet', as well as some general information on Psion Prisms.

10.11 HESTUS V

The planet in question is Hestus V, an interesting world of beautiful flora and low gravity (see Section 10.31). The PCs will be sent by their League dispatcher (be it Emerich Rach or whomever) to Hestus V with the standard planetary data and the following classified information, stolen from Jade-London files.

DATAFILE 3454-JL Beta

SECURITY: Level Two

TOPIC: Planet Hestus V Prelim Survey

COMMENTARY:

Environment: A temperate mix of jungle and mountainous forested regions. One sentient humanoid race, though other life includes only complex flora, insects, and very simple reptilian/avian/mammalian forms. Sentients resemble closely the Pearta Ghed, though seem unaware of their unusual origin and appear to believe that they are indigenous (though this seems highly unlikely). Oxygen/Nitrogen (25/69%) atmosphere with no harmful trace elements. Atmospheric pressure low but acceptable. 71% of surface is covered with low-saline oceans, most land masses are very fragmented. Gravity field light (.7G). Temperature range over tropical regions is +20° to +42° C.; +5° to +18° C. in temperate areas. Large Polar ice caps. Unusually thick and persistent cloudcover over land areas.

History: Hestus V has only recently been actively investigated, the reason for the delay being in part because of its proximity to the Frontier (and rumors of Snee incursions in that region) and the wealth of other systems in the Jade-London fold to be developed. However, Imperial Scouts made an orbital scan of all twelve planets in the system in Imp 450, noting planet five as a potential habitable geosphere. No action was taken until Imp

465 when House Jade-London requested stewardship of the system. This was granted and subsequent surveys have followed. All results to date indicate a world rich in natural resources and colonization potential — provided the current populace can be successfully integrated.

Operations: Survey Team has completed preliminary study of planet; an orbital station has been established and in-depth analysis is progressing. While Jade-London clearly has the best claim to the system, Houses Hulugu and the Lilith Group both have small observation platforms in orbit.

10.12 PSION PRISMS

Psion prisms (also known as Psion crystals, Telepathic matrices, Mindstones, and other names) are extremely rare gems with a unique power. Bizarre anomalies of nature, these crystals have been discovered to exist in at least three distinct forms, though all have the power to 'step up' natural Psionic abilities to varying degree. Interestingly, careful shaping can actually enhance their power, just as correctly faceting a diamond enhances its beauty.

In appearance the three known types of Prism are as follows:

- Resembling a Terran opal, this type is (relatively) soft and usually in the form of a cabochon. It glows with a beautiful prismatic light when its owner is using Psionic power. It tends to be the most powerful — and rare — of the three types.
- Absolutely clear, this type is hard as diamond and faceted for maximum energy release. Though it does give off some light when 'tapped', it is less obvious than the first type.
- Clear but always tinted a smoky blue, green or grey, this type is the most common of the three. It glows slightly when used, and will sometimes shift color during its lifetime. It is faceted for use and fairly fragile. This is the type discovered on Hestus V, but in a quantity and of a power level previously unknown.

Veins of the various colors are prevalent throughout the world.

While all generally known types of Psion Prisms are the result of natural forces, it has been conjectured that certain Sianetic Harbinger races were able to actually manufacture them. This has yet to be proven or disproven.

10.2 THE NPCs

NPCs for this adventure are quite variable depending on how the mission is approached by the players. The key groups whose representatives might interface with the players are described below, and some example characters are detailed in the NPC Chart for the adventure.

10.21 HOUSE JADE-LONDON

Current Ruler: Count Matthew Daniel Jade-London VI (Imp. 463 —)

Homeworld: Alpha Volantis III (Lamaraine) [-19x, +45y, +3z]

Allies: Devon, Carlisle, Kubischev-Lloyd

Open Enemies: Colos, Lilith

Jadist military and paramilitary forces have a well-deserved reputation for loyalty, efficiency, and excellent training. They do not make mistakes, are Very Hard (-20) to influence or bribe, and are generally rather tough customers, especially when the security of their house is at stake.

10.22 LILITH GROUP

Current Ruler: Chairman Portu Kalakamm

Homeworld: Miaplacidus IV (Mia) [-42x, +44y, -23z]

Allies: Moskava, Hulugu

Open Enemies: Jade-London, Devon

The Lilith Group is actually an Inner Province like the other Major Houses, but, along with a handful of other Megacorporations, resisted the trend in the mid third century of the Empire towards 'nobilitating' the executives, and remains more of a conglomerate than a feudal state.

In most other ways, however, Lilith is very similar to the other Inner Provinces, possessing a large military force and a lust for control of ever more star systems.

Lilith has official permission to man an orbital station and observe J-L activities, but they are doing far more than that. Perhaps having heard the rumors of the powerful Psion Prisms, Lilith has several search teams on the planet, actively seeking artifacts or other high-profit potential before the world is absolutely secured by the Jadists.

They are also observing the Jadists teams very closely, in the hopes that they will make a mistake and thus void their stewardship rights (this is not very likely).

The Lilith Security and exploration forces are not quite as impressive as the Jadists, being Hard (-10) to influence and Medium (± 0) to bribe.

10.23 HESTIANS

Though not exactly the same as the actual Pearta Ghed, this race of humanoid felines is physiologically almost identical (that in itself is quite remarkable) and the racial description from *Space Master* bears repeating here:

...Apparently a race of very advanced Androids. Researchers cannot be sure of this, but their cellular replicative technique could have been an induced fabrication in the race's infancy. Needless to say, DNA has very little to do with these interesting creatures, as living metallic molecules are involved in their basic biochemical makeup. If they are Androids, their creators have not made themselves available for comment.

The Ghedians appear as man-sized bipedal felines covered with a great deal of fur. They are intelligent and integrate well into human societies. They are excellent mimics, and have been able to pick up human tongues with ease. They rarely procreate (or it is rarely successful), but they are nearly immortal by human standards. However, they do tend to be reckless and do not have a firm conceptualization of self-worth. Therefore, the Ghedians often get themselves killed.

With that in mind, what follows is a cultural outline of the Hestians.

Racial Origins: Unknown. Of course, it is assumed that the Hestians and the Pearta Ghed share a common ancestry, and the discovery of Hestus has led to new speculation regarding the true Homeworld of the Hestian/Ghedian race.

Favored Ecosystem: Highly adaptable, the Hestians are at home in a variety of gravities, but require an atmosphere similar to humanoid ideals.

Political Structure: The Hestians are scattered over the temperate regions of their world. This combined with a pre-industrial technic level dictates a plethora of small, isolated communities. Most are administered by a tribunal of elders, elected from amongst the people.

Social Structure: Females are little more than breeders, seemingly only semi-intelligent. Males rule extended households.

Military Structure: The Hestians are a very peaceful race and since the population is small and fragmented, there is rarely a conflict over territory. Each village has a

small squad of 'protectors' (all adult males serve in a rotation) who patrol the perimeter and defend the group from intruders — which are very rare, as the Hestians have no natural enemies other than the bearlike *koags* and other clans.

Currency: Barter is the order of the day.

Language: Though the Pearta Ghed have their own odd mewling tongue, they quickly pick up Anglaman.

Appearance: As noted above, except the Hestians' fur is silver-grey in color.

Housing: Architecture is an art for the Hestians, and they are very proud of their stone structures, which are well-constructed and often covered with detailed bas-relief designs

Diet: Strictly herbivorous, the Hestians dine on a variety of greens and tubers.

Worship: Though the Hestians have an elaborate religion shrouded in ritual, their beliefs are actually rather simple, involving one all-powerful deity. The only barbaric aspect of the religion is the 'holy' status of the Psion Prisms. Because of their luminous quality, they are considered 'tears of God' fallen as the world was made. The Hestian Priests are also Psionic, and have discovered the link between Psion Prisms and stepped-up Telepathic powers — all the more reason for them to be reluctant to part with them.

10.3 SETTINGS

The setting for this adventure could be anywhere on Hestus V.

Hestus G1v

Planet: Hestus V

Circumference:

Natural Satellites: None

Mean Orbit: 460 LS

Day: 26 Standard Hours

Year: 310 Standard Days

Province: Imperial Space

Status: Protected "No-See" World

Population: Ghedians (?) $\approx 1 \times 10^7$

Production Emphasis: None

As noted elsewhere, Hestus V is a world of low gravity and riotous vegetation covering the vast majority of the land masses. The Hestians live in isolated communities in the tiny, deeply-enclosed vales and bays, thus making it (relatively) easy for the PCs to make contact with natives who are as yet unaware of any other extraterrestrial visitors on their planet. This is important, as the Jadists have already embarked on a campaign to inform the Hestians of their presence and warn them about 'evil counterparts' who resemble the Jadists but are actually thieves who wish to plunder Hestus.

10.4 THE TASK

The mission would be considered a success if the PCs made off with a decikilo (one tenth of a kilo) or so of uncut crystals — and therefore a handsome profit along with confirmation of the reality of the 'prism planet'.

This may seem easy, but consider the complications (as detailed in 10.43) and the number of things which could go wrong. The world is crawling with agents of various loyalty, most of whom are willing to ruthlessly defend their secrecy.

10.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

The familiar starting point of Hyperion IX — home of Emerich Rach — would do fine, or any other meeting-place with the appropriate League operative.

10.42 AIDS

It will be important for the players to be able to communicate with the Hestians, thus Emerich will be willing to provide one or more of the following options:

1. A translating microcomputer.
2. Special hookups allowing group members to tie in to the ship's translating computer through their headsets.
3. RNA 'Jamming' (a sophisticated, expensive and somewhat dangerous technique in which the recipient has the information imprinted directly on his memory).

In addition, PCs should have at least rudimentary information about Psion Prisms, and it wouldn't hurt to have a Telepath PC along.

Emerich would also be willing to loan the PCs some basic mining and analysis equipment, however

10.43 OBSTACLES

Getting past the Jadists will probably prove the most imposing obstacle initially, but the Hestians might prove to be a problem in their own right. They will be loathe to part with any of their mined crystals, since they believe them to be holy and belonging to the planet. And the Priests, who possess the vast majority of mined and cut crystals, know their power and will be suspicious of aliens wanting them.

KOAGS

Huge, bearlike beasts, koags have bluish-green fur, long claws, and fang-filled mouths. Averaging over 3 meters in height when on their hind legs, they are powerful, violent predators who feed on Hestians when very hungry (which seems to be rather often).

10.44 REWARDS

Emerich would probably offer something in the range of 20,000 Imperial Monits plus reasonable expenses for the return of at least one decikilo of uncut Psion Prisms. He would pay 1,000 Monits per additional gram (after cutting) of stones. It takes about a kilo of average ore to produce 10 grams of useable stones.

10.5 ENCOUNTERS

Depending on the PCs approach the planet, they could have quite a wide variety of different encounters.

10.51 HOUSE JADE LONDON

Failing to avoid detection on approach could draw the mission to a swift and unpleasant close for the PCs. The Jadists, while not cruel, have a deserved reputation for ruthlessness and will not tolerate intruders without proper identification.

Upon dropping out of hyper, the Players will pick up the following automated broadcast message on Laserfreq:

WARNING!

Imperial Directive HA 719-V
System ZY H 451 (Hestus) is under
stewardship of

Count Matthew Jade-London
by order of His Imperial Majesty.

Planetfall restricted to authorized
vehicles and personnel only. No-see
quarantine in effect. Transmit clear-
ance passage code immediately.

DETECTED IN SPACE

If the PCs are detected in space (this is unlikely until they are inside the orbit of planet seven in the system; after that it is an Extremely Hard (-30) maneuver every hour (modified by EW and skill, plus other factors at GM discretion until landing), they will be immediately warned on all microfreq and tight-beam laser frequencies that they must surrender or be destroyed. If they foolishly do not surrender when ordered,

the Jadists will dispatch a squad of five TMAC Fighters (with five in reserve):

CLASS: TMAC Enforcer
PRODUCER: Jade Turbofusion
TONNAGE/HITS: 240/288
COMPUTER Mk#: 50
ARMOR TYPE: 23 (-10)
EW RATING: 50
SHIELD RATING: 20
CREW: 2
MAX SUBLIGHT ACCEL: Rating 17 (135

km/second²)

MANEUVERING THRUST: 14

TRANSLIGHT DISPLACEMENT: —

OPERATING RANGE: 10.000 LS

WEAPONRY:

- Two wing-mtd Mk. 15 Lasers
- Two Mk 10 Lasers
- 2 fxd-fwd Mk. 10 missile launchers

These Two-Man attack ships pack quite a punch. They will attempt to disable the PCs craft and tow it to the orbital station, where the group will be interrogated. The commanding officer will do one of the following, depending on how important he thinks these unauthorized visitors are:

1. Allow himself to be bribed (only if a successful roll is made, see NPCs above), then let them go
2. Kill them.
3. Imprison them, file a report, and ship them to Lamaraine on the next shuttle.
4. File a report suggesting the possibility of interprovincial espionage. A Jadist special agent will soon show up.

DETECTED ON THE SURFACE

House Jade-London has no less than 20 teams of planetologists, Xenobiologists, and other scientists combing the surface of Hestus V for the Survey. Each team operates from a Gravitic Explorer (see *Space Master: Tech Book*). and is frequently scanning the countryside in a 500 kilometer radius for power emanations and any other unusual readings.

If the Jadists are encountered on the planet, it will be worse for the PCs (since they will have already seen 'too much').

They will be shipped up to the station and option 4 above is more likely.

As noted on the NPC chart, most ground agents will be armed with stunners, but they won't hesitate to use more powerful weapons once they establish that the targets are not Hestians (quite simple with a multiscanner).

10.52 HESTIANS

Hestians who have not been warned about the 'evil intruders' will be openly friendly to any newcomers as long as those newcomers show no sign of violence towards them.

Those who have been warned — as well as those who are victims of violence — will react with unhesitating attack. The average Hestian will use a simple mace or axe, while the priests wield their unusual throwing stars (treat as a +25 thrown dagger at 3x range).

Even friendly Hestians will be resistant to give up any of their mined stones. A successful Extremely Hard (-30) Trading skill roll (or other skill, if appropriate — not seduction!) is necessary to convince any one priest. The PCs might be better advised to go prospecting on their own.

10.53 LILITH

Though they are the second most visible alien presence, it is rather unlikely that the PCs will encounter Lilith agents. If they do, the agents might force the PCs to give up any information and/or materials they have gained in return for passage off-planet (their ship will be confiscated, of course). Lilith people are apt to be much less official (since they're not supposed to be on the planet, either), and might just kill the PCs.

10.54 KOAGS

Huge, vicious beasts, Koags roam all of the habitable regions of the planet. They are capable of moving with amazing stealth, and often attack without provocation. See the NPC chart for their statistics.

STATS FOR NPCs: PRISMS OF HESTUS V

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	Weapon:OB	Skill:Add	Skill:Add	Skill:Add	Notes
J-L Station Cmndr lent to Captain) in the J-L Service.	12	140	15 (10)*	StunPstl:120	Admin:85	Interrog:90	Subdue:110	Human Explorer. "Stroj" (equiva-
J-L Station Soldier	4	65	8 (5)	StunPstl:80	AsltBlst:65	Subdue:50	MA:Stk:55	Human Armsman.
J-L Explorer Leader	8	110	1 (10)	StunPstl:95	MultScn:80	Perc:95	Plntlogy:100	Human Planetologist.
J-L Explorers Skills may vary slightly.	5	60	1 (10)	StunPstl:70	MultScn:60	Perc:95	MscSci:80	Human Field Scientists/Explorers.
Lilith Explorers Skills may vary slightly.	4	55	1 (5)	LsrPstl:75	MultScn:50	Perc:50	MscSci:65	Human Field Scientists/Explorers.
Hestian Priest 5 lists from either Vision, Empath, or Control Fields).	10	120	2 (30)	ThrStr:110	Meditate:90	PublicSpk:85	Ritual:110	Ghedian Variant Theologist. Up to
Average Hestian	3	50	1 (10)	Axe:50	Stoncrv:40	Agricuilt:40	Herblore:30	Ghedian Variant No-profession.
Koag swords; use Envelop attacks with Crush criticals.	5	200	11 (30)	Claw:150 (2x)Grapple:100	—	—	—	Hestian beast. Claws are as

GM MATERIAL

In the following section can be found some general hints on running a campaign involving the League, a master Encounter Table for Starhaven, A few Corporate Readout sheet summarizing League-controlled companies, and useful Starmaps.

11.1

OTHER SCENARIOS

In addition to the adventures detailed previously, this section lists a few additional scenario ideas, along with suggestions for the GM running a campaign which involves the League of Merchants.

11.11 SMUGGLING

A very popular concept, and for obvious reasons: it is fairly straightforward and often reaps healthy profits. The imaginative GM, however, will be able to make things more interesting for the Players, by utilizing police patrols, random events, or difficult dealers. Perhaps even the cargo itself could become a problem...

Here are listed a few possible cargoes and their nature.

Electronics:

The technic level of the Empire is far from uniform. Not even all of the Imperial Homeworlds have consistently advanced technology and in fact, it can vary tremendously on one given planet. The Governments of the Provinces control the disbursement of technology so that they can reap profits on taxes and import fees, as well as to maintain an edge over subject planets and cultures. This situation is ripe for smugglers, who can slip in through the customs barriers and charge exorbitant prices for (often inferior) goods.

Obviously, the local situation will modify what is appropriate to try to sell: Entertainment Holoviewers won't sell too well on a transistor-age planet, while they would sell easily on a world with high tech centers (and so transmissions) with technologically depressed areas.

Replicant Materials:

A bit more restrictive, the PCs are going to need the right contacts before they can embark on this sort of trade. However, Replicant genes are in big demand in the tank labs, and superior materials are extremely valuable

Drugs:

Again, this will vary with the culture, but drug trafficking has been a popular activity for thousands of years. The GM will have to decide what sorts of chemical alterants are banned or restricted on what worlds.

Psion Prisms:

These beautiful, scintillating gems are absolutely priceless to a Telepath, and in great demand throughout Human Space.

Weapons:

Everywhere there is conflict, there is a demand for weapons. Hundreds of armed confrontations are taking place throughout the Empire and frontiers at any given time, and weapons of every type fetch high prices on the remote worlds.

Plant/Animal/Humanoid:

There are restrictions on transporting most plants and animals from planet to planet, for fear that they will multiply and destroy the environment of the non-native world. However, the wealthy or otherwise bizarre often desire some unusual flora or fauna as a curiosity, and will pay considerable sums to get them.

Many humanoids (especially primitive or not yet thoroughly studied cultures) cannot be transported off-planet for similar reasons, as well as to maintain cultural purity. However, slave traders seek out these worlds for fresh stock of exotic human slaves.

Works of Art:

All types of art — though especially ancient artifacts of all kinds — are extremely profitable cargoes. However, such opportunities are rare, and the risks often great.

11.12 RAIDS

Looting Sianetic Harbinger ruins would probably be the most profitable of raiding expeditions, but could also be the most dangerous. Some of the Harbinger Races are infamous for leaving behind nasty traps to vaporize the careless explorer

Other possibilities include raiding mining colonies for valuable ore, primitive cultures for their art or other rare commodities, and even remote scientific bases for technic data or equipment.

PCs AND THE LEAGUE OF MERCHANTS

If the GM wishes to run a campaign which involves the League on a more than peripheral level, there are two basic philosophies of approach: PCs as actual League operatives, and PCs as 'Free Agents'. Of the two, the latter offers more flexibility.

11.21 PCs AS LEAGUE OPERATIVES

While having the players actually working for the league offers a certain security, it poses the usual problems of lack of flexibility and freedom for the PCs.

Players might be special agents for a League Crimelord such as Emerich Rach or Mother Talfay, on the payroll and always on call for a mission. They might even be employees of one of the Seven (though of course they would rarely interact with the LeagueLord personally, instead getting instructions through an assistant). As workers for one employer, the PCs might have a wide variety of jobs, some easier than others, while some are dangerous and/or unpleasant. One might be deliberately suicidal, if the Lord wishes to dispose of his employees.

11.22 PCs AS FREE AGENTS

This method offers maximum flexibility, and also prevents the PCs from necessarily being chronic criminals and always being pursued by Law Enforcement Authorities.

Under such a scenario, PCs would have some legal livelihood, such as Free Traders or other merchants. They would pursue their normal (if uninteresting) careers until contacted by a League representative for a 'job'. Depending on their experience, transportation, and previous record, the PCs might be asked to do anything from a simple, short courier assignment (see Section 6) to an assassination, to an important, secret raid.

While the League would normally pay (and pay well) in Monits for a job, there are circumstances which might dictate other methods. PCs who have screwed up in the past might be 'encouraged' to perform one or more tasks for free to pay back a debt. PCs who have gotten in too deep might even be blackmailed into performing particularly odious jobs.

11.3 ENCOUNTER TABLE: STARHAVEN

The following table is included to provide the GM with an additional framework for random encounters at Starhaven. Down the left side are persons and across the top are numbers which are keyed to various locations at Starhaven. One roll should be made every ten minutes the PCs remain in a given spot, or whenever they enter a new one. The GM should also bear in mind the logistics of the situation; in large areas, two or more rolls might be made, as several groups would be present at once. Also, one can assume that most public places are always bustling with activity. It is for the out-of-the-ordinary, the especially interesting group, that this table should be used. Note also that some of the numbers given for the roll result overlap; this is to reflect the overwhelming likelihood of the presence of both persons in a place at the same time,

	Hub: Docks	Hub: Control	Ring: Market	Ring: Quarters	Ring: Public	Ring: Closed
PERSON(S)						
League Council and Guards						
Moryn Káldo	01	01-03	01-02	01-02	01	01-03
Jerin	01	01-03	01-02	01-02	01-02	01-03
Kell	01	01-03	01-02	01-02	01-02	01-03
Oberon Neumann	02	04	03	03	03	—
ARG 387	02	04	03	03	03-04	—
Soris	03-04	05-06	04-05	04-05	05-06	04
Om	03-04	05-06	04-05	04-05	05-06	04
Nakira T'sraang	05	07	06	06	07	—
Lars	05	07	06	06	07	—
Fredrik	05	07	06	06	07	—
Jaison Menzies-Lloyd	06	08	07	07	08	—
Kaal Randolph	06	08	07	07	08	—
Julian Kosinski	07	09	08	08	09	—
Skir	07	09	08	08	09	—
Theren	07	09	08	08	09	—
Zirina Thaan	08	10	09	09	10	—
Jamieson VIII	08	10	09	09	10	—
Trader Lords						
Emerich Rach	09	—	10	—	11	—
Mother Talfay	10	—	11	—	12	—
Lorg Villit	11-12	—	12-14	10-11	13-14	—
Graak Lokkar	13-14	—	15-17	12-13	15-16	—
Operatives						
Kort Kasyga	15	—	18-19	—	17-18	—
Viktor Olmeeri	16	—	20-21	14	19-20	05
Teruk Caonabo	17	—	22	15	21	—
Tami Kavara	18	—	23	—	22	—
Staff						
Security (1-5)	19-25	11-50	23-30	16-35	23-60	06-10
Techs (1-2)	26-85	31-50	31-40	36-40	31-35	11-13
Operations (varies)	26-27	01-00	41-43	41-45	36-38	14
Medical (varies)	28	51	44-45	46-47	39-40	—
Bot (new; 1-2)	29-40	52-53	46-49	48	41	—
Bot (original; 1-2)	41-45	54-58	50	49	42-44	15-17
Guests						
Jacker Crewman (1-5)*	46-60	—	51-55	—	45-55	18
Jacker Captain*	55-65	—	53-58	—	50-60	—
Shopkeeper*	66	—	01-00	—	61-75	—
Trader Crewman (1-4)*	67-80	—	59-85	—	76-85	—
Trader Captain*	77-85	—	75-90	—	80-90	—
Bizarre Guest*	86-88	—	91-95	50-55	91-95	19
No Encounter	89-00	—	—	56-00	96-00	20-00

NOTES:

* Indicates that the GM may wish to roll for the race of the being(s) encountered. While the vast majority of beings at Starhaven are Humanoid (at least in appearance) there are some alien League Members.

RACE SUBCHART

01 - 60	Human/Neohuman
61 - 70	Idorian
71 - 77	Transhuman (of type I to XII)
78-80	Android
81-83	Churg (would only be there for special scientific purpose)
84	Altha (likely as a slave)
85	K'ta'viir (would only be in disguise — undetectable to PCs)
86	Snee (perhaps caged)
87 - 88	Klakytheris Adanak
89 - 90	Olze Alirra-Mukarram
91- 92	Pearta Ghed
93 - 95	Aoemaran (always inside a host body, so probably not detected; reroll for host if desired)
96 - 99	Trilopter
00	Areed

Key to locations:

Hub: Docks — Anywhere in the docks themselves or the vicinity, including observation areas and circulation.

Hub: Control — The Control area itself, usually restricted.

Ring: Market — The two-storey marketplace of Starhaven, you can see just about anybody there. The GM may wish to make two or three rolls.

Ring: Quarters — The residential areas, including the Council section and Soris' Quarters.

Ring: Public — Any other section of Starhaven, including the Spokes, corridors, lift tubes, etc.

Ring: Closed — Anywhere adjacent to the closed sections of the Ring which have yet to be explored.

11.4 LEAGUE "DISCIPLINE"

AS has been stated before, the League of Merchants, while spread thinly throughout Human Space, is at least as powerful as any on Major House. This fact must be made clear to the Players, so that PCs don't flippantly decide that they are going to defy the League by making off with the profits from the first cargo they smuggle. While the League is (mostly) 'fair', they do not tolerate disobedience or failure. Defiance of the League could result in harsh retributions such as physical abuse, destruction of property (blowing up your home), murder or injury of loved ones, or even death. This last option is usually enacted if the PC in question is dangerous or no longer useful to the League.

11.5 LAW ENFORCEMENT

In a similar vein, it is crucial that the GM portray law enforcement agencies as efficient and effective organizations. Provinces which control a dozen worlds have not endured without strong, visible police forces.

Generally, the competence level and sophistication of police and military forces increases as the jurisdiction of the force expands. Law enforcement on a backworld in the Frontier is not likely to be as professional as that in VegaPol or a Provincial Police Division.

It is also not very easy to run away from a crime, as most technologically integrated worlds have planetwide database networks, allowing an officer to call up data on a suspect in seconds. Provincial police have TBD feeds to all planets sending daily criminal updates to these networks as well.

In summary, while crime does pay for some in the hostile future of *Space Master*, it only pays for the cautious and clever such as the Lords of the League of Merchants. Lazy, sloppy, or foolhardy PCs may quickly find themselves cooling their heels in a detention cell, their ship impounded, their possessions confiscated and their prospects for a quick release very, very dim.

11.6 CORPORATE READOUTS

On the following pages is a selection of 'readouts' summarizing companies over which the League has considerable influence. This list is by no means complete.

CORPORATE READOUT

Security Systems

Nature of Business: Offering surveillance and defensive security from the personal to planetary level, Security Systems has sophisticated sensor and other equipment at their disposal, as well as an army of security troops and robots.

Market/Clientele: Wealthy individuals, small corporations and governments.

HQ Location: Sirius VIII(-7x, 2y, 9z)

Gross Income: 108 Trillion E./yr

Secondary Interests: Intelligence Database Subcorp (known as Serendipity) is reputedly exceeded only by the Dia Khovaria's

Covert Activities/Interests: As a League Division directly under Moryn Kâldo's supervision, SS is a powerful and dangerous tool.

DIVISIONS/BRANCHES

Division/branch Name/Emphasis	Location/Territory	Staff	Prod%
SS Surveillance Division	Sirius VIII	850	45%
Serendipity/Information Gathering	Sirius VIII	1500	12%
SS Protection Division	Sirius VIII	1000	35%
Research and Development	Sirius XIIIb	200	0%

PRODUCTS/SERVICES

Product/Service	Cost	Product/Service	Cost
Electronic Surveillance Systems	Varies	Personal Bodyguard	Varies
Information gathering	Varies		
Computer Security Systems	Varies		
Building/Area Security Systems	Varies		

BACKGROUND DATA

History: Founded soon after the inauguration of the Empire, SS is a much larger corporation with more sweeping influence than many would suspect.

Reputation/Manner: SS has always been considered somewhat 'shady', though most shrug it off as necessary for a company in the intelligence business.

Allies/Affiliates: None

Enemies/Competitors: The Dia Khovaria, several Major Houses.

Security Rating: 10

Comp Security Rating: 10

Comp Languages: SPS, DoDEC, several others

IMPORTANT PERSONS

Name	Position/Title	Notes
Ia Borthus	President	Kâldo's assistant, charming and charismatic
Kor Laloshi	Serendipity VP	Seems incompetent, has holographic memory.
Porto Shen	Protection VP	Hulking, seems stupid, but a sly administrator
Mnerias Taro	Surveillance VP	Brilliant, but somewhat erratic.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

SS will often trade services and information for information, should the client have anything which might interest them. The Serendipity Computer banks are voracious in their consumption of 'random' data.

CORPORATE READOUT

Mnemonic Technologies

Nature of Business: Mnemonic is ostensibly a research & development company dealing in computer memory software and hardware, with some limited production facilities. They specialize in large database computers.

Market/Cienteles: many major provinces

HQ Location: Riangra II (31.5x, 42y, -65z)

Gross Income: 48 Trillion E./yr

Secondary Interests: Starship computer brains, superbrain assimilators

Covert Activities/Interests: Mnemonic smuggles computer hardware to underdeveloped planets using their shipping fleet, and deals in pirated technology.

DIVISIONS/BRANCHES

Division/branch Name/Emphasis	Location/Territory	Staff	Prod%
Corporate HQ (Administration)	Riangra II	500	60%
Think Tank (R&D)	Riangra VIc	80	(0%)

PRODUCTS/SERVICES

Product/Service	Cost	Product/Service	Cost
Database Computer	Varies	Access software	Varies
Starship Navigational Computer	Varies		
Personal database	Varies		
Worldcomp Computer system	Varies		

BACKGROUND DATA

History: Formed in Imp 280, MT has developed a reputation as a producer of high-quality computer memory components. Their softwares are not as highly acclaimed, but are still considered more than adequate. They are also on the cutting edge of new technology.

Reputation/Manner: MT is a low-key company, always trying to present the image of a small, unpretentious corporation devoted more to quality product than hype and propoganda.

Allies/Affiliates: None

Enemies/Competitors: Devon companies, Virtual Humanatronics in some areas. other comp mfctrs.

Security Rating: 5

Comp Security Rating: 8

Comp Languages: several

IMPORTANT PERSONS

Name	Postion/Title	Notes
Buck Melraenas	President and Chairman	Controls League interface
Heria Thomaas	R&D Director	She knows nothing of League involvement
Kol aj Goox	Distribution Manager	Coordinates illegal shipments

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Mnemonic Technologies is one of the League's smaller investments, but they pumped money into MT some years ago, keeping it from bankruptcy in the face of competition. They now control it, using it as a way to launder and profit from stolen technologies.

CORPORATE READOUT

MUFASTA ART DEALERS

Nature of Business: Buying and selling rare art objects, especially ancient sculpture and Sianetic Harbinger artifacts. The Mufasta Auctions are famous throughout the Empire.

Market/Clientele: The Nobility and very wealthy citizens.

HQ Location: Alpha Centauri III

Gross Income: 33 Trillion E./yr

Secondary Interests: Personal art appraisals, collection advice services, sponsoring of art shows throughout the Empire.

Covert Activities/Interests: Controlled by the League, which uses privileged Mufasta files to locate art treasures the League wishes to 'collect'.

DIVISIONS/BRANCHES

Division/branch Name/Emphasis	Location/Territory	Staff	Prod%
Main Galleries and Auction House	Alpha Centari III	350	70%
Imperial Gallery	Sol III	40	10%
D.K. Gallery	Hanaan IV	35	6%
Moskava Galleries	61 Ursa Majoris	25	5%
LeGrange Galleries	117 Phoensis	20	3%

PRODUCTS/SERVICES

Product/Service	Cost	Product/Service	Cost
Art Sale	10%		
Location/Purchase of Desired Art	20%		
Appraisal	varies		
Collection Consultation	varies		

BACKGROUND DATA

History: Founded during the early days of the Empire, as the Houses were seeking ways to outdo each other in a peaceful manner, Mufasta thrives on commissions alone, and of course is mainly a front for League activities. The League took control around Imp 150.

Reputation/Manner: Mufasta has an untainted reputation as a discreet art dealer and acquirer. Their interface with the League is such that communication is untraceable. Few even suspect the idea of such a tie.

Allies/Affiliates: His Imperial Majesty has a weakness for fine art, and is partial to Mufasta.

Enemies/Competitors: Athene Art Galleries, DeBarton

Security Rating: 8

Comp Security Rating: 9

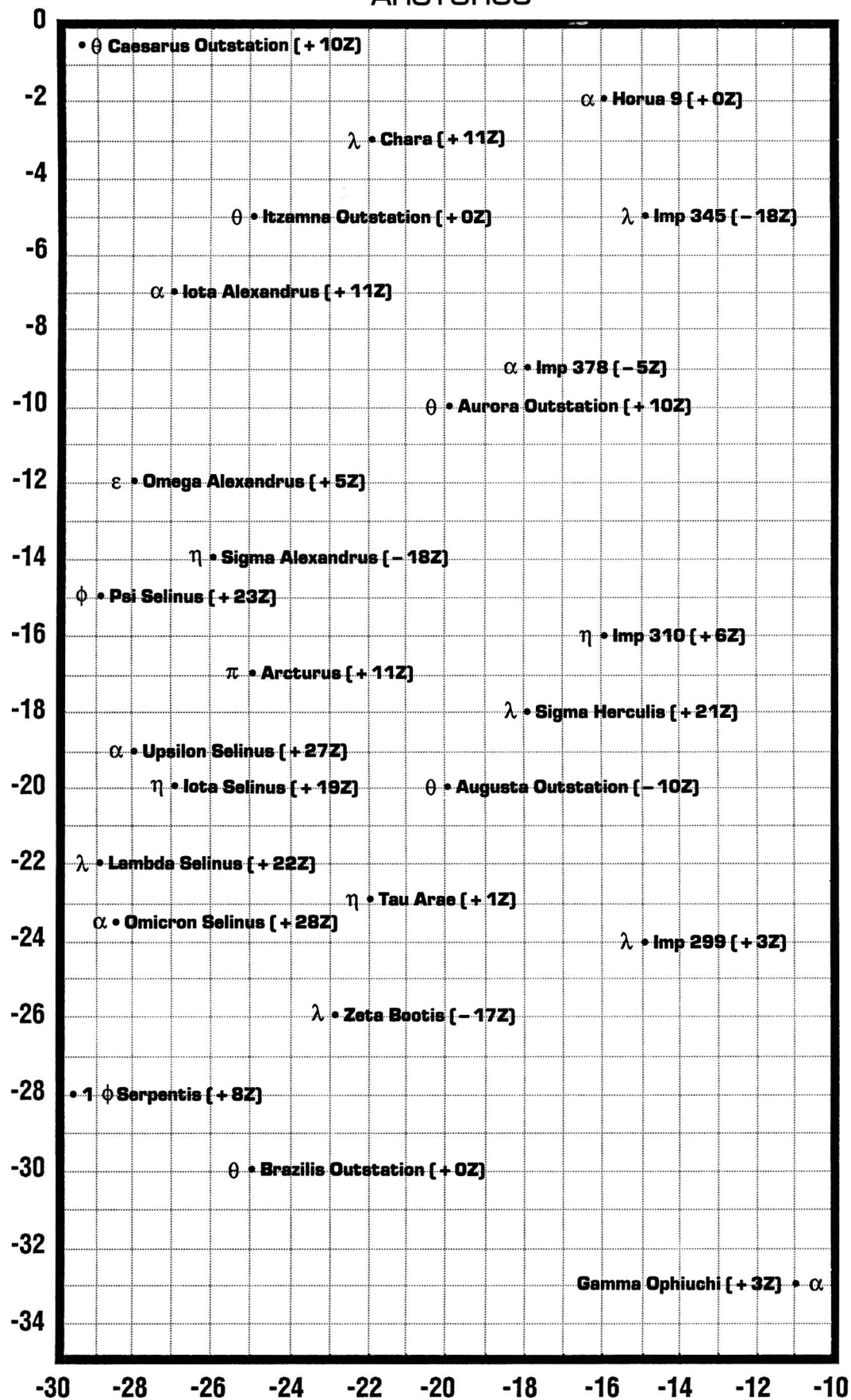
Comp Languages: Tablet, Visig

IMPORTANT PERSONS

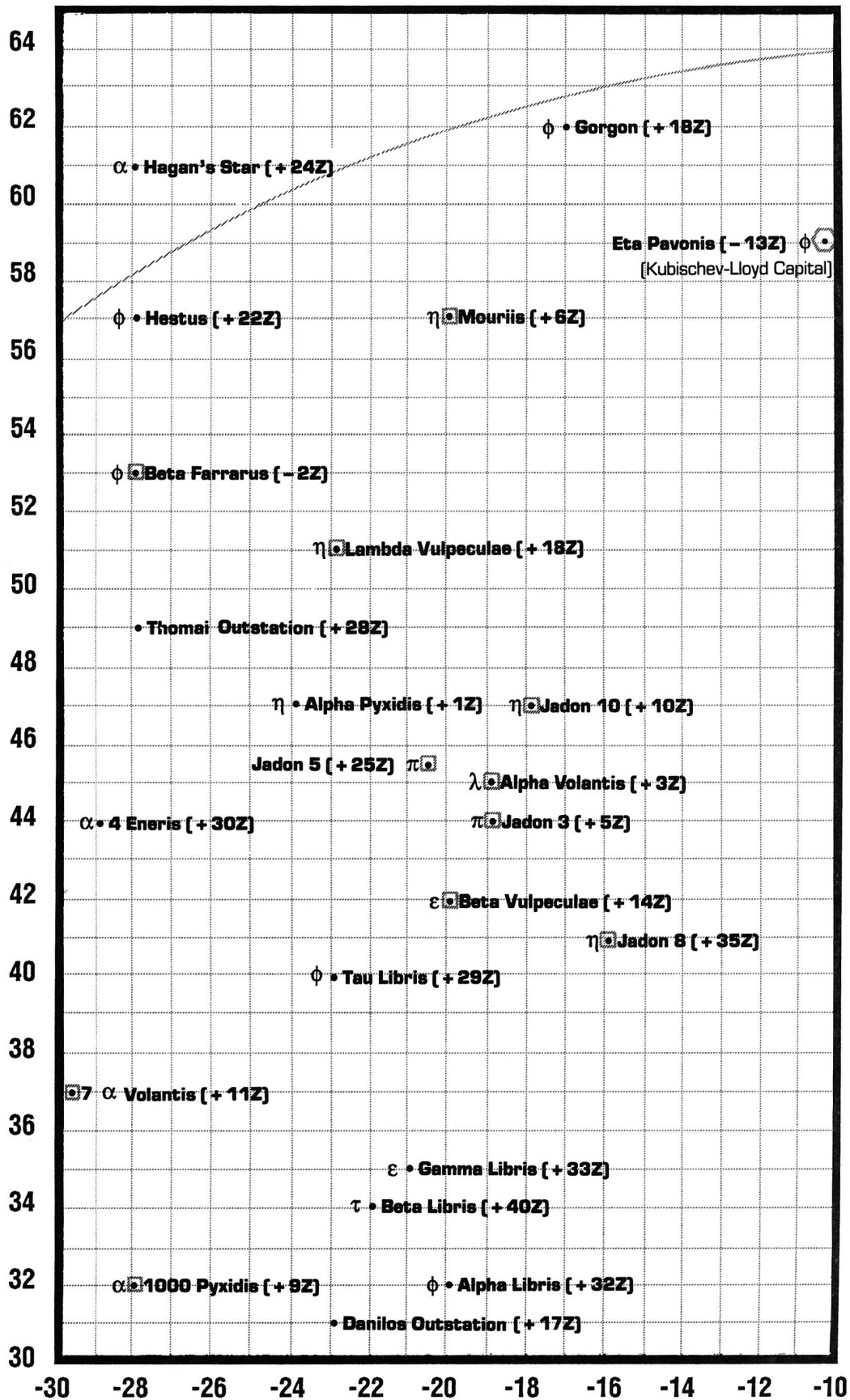
Name	Postion/Title	Notes
Julus Nookosa	Chairman	Charismatic Figurehead; knows nothing of Lg.
Fed Ahr Vocksi	President	League coordinator
Kii Tarsus	Chief Conservator	Devoted; blissfully ignorant of League

ADDITIONAL NOTES

IMPERIAL SECTOR
ARCTURUS



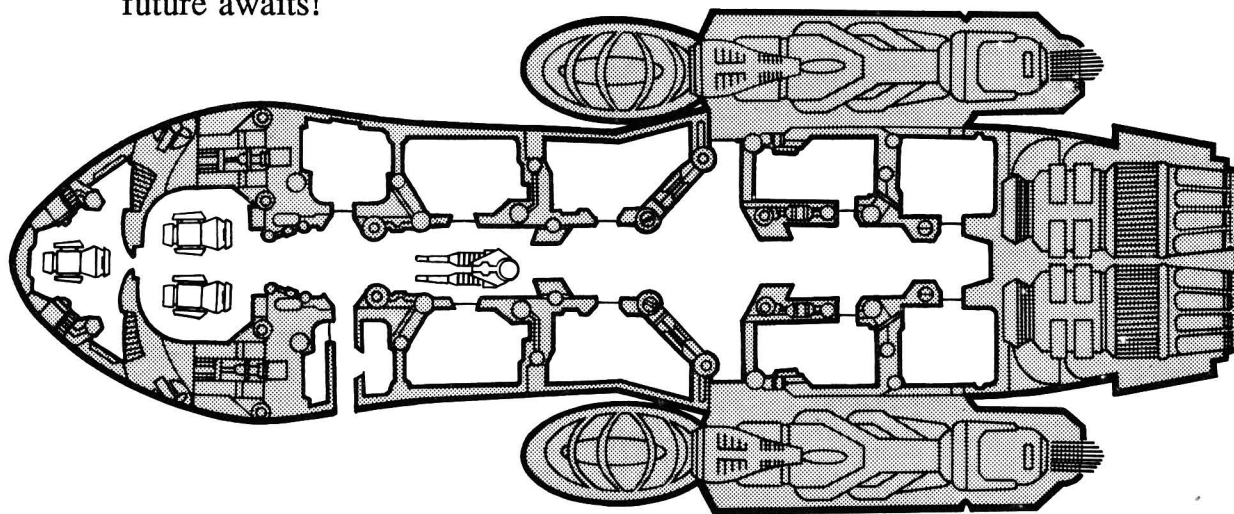
JADE-LONDON PROVINCE



Note: boxed stars are formally within the 'boundaries' of Jade-London Province. Stars in a hexagon belong to other provinces (placed here for reference purposes), and are so noted with their association. Other stars are currently under Imperial Control, but possible Provincial acquisitions.

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