

A STAR FRONTIERS®

ALPHA DAWN ADVENTURE

Mission to Alcazzar

By Douglas Niles



The mining operation on Alcazzar was one of the Frontier's best-kept secrets, worth millions of credits—until somebody wiped it out. Now you're here, to set things right.



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Alpha Dawn Adventure

Mission to Alcazzar

By Douglas Niles



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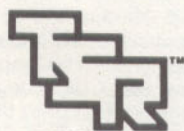
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ALPHA SECTION: MODULE BRIEFING

Alpha .1 THE STORY

Recently, the Cassidine Development Corporation (CDC) located substantial amounts of gold and uranium on the planet Alcazzar, in the remote Rhianna system. Under tight security, CDC started a limited mining operation on Alcazzar.

The mines centered around a small compound where a staff of 12 technicians and an equal number of robots operated an automated processing plant. CDC earned millions of credits from this operation, while keeping it secret from the Pan Galactic and Streel Corporations—CDC's major competitors.

Unfortunately, the aggressive Streel Corporation learned of the mineral wealth through a series of carefully placed bribes. Never an organization to use subtlety when brute force will work, Streel decided to terminate the CDC operation and begin a much larger operation of its own. Then, when the wealth of the planet eventually became public knowledge, Streel would be in position to control access to (and administration of) Alcazzar.

This adventure begins after Streel wiped out the CDC operation. The Player Characters (PCs) are specialists hired by CDC to go to Alcazzar and discover what happened to the CDC operation and its staff.

All that is known about the planet is information that was collected by a CDC environmentalist and relayed to the corporate headquarters on Cassidine before the operation was destroyed. This information is in the System Brief and is furnished to the PCs during their briefing in Gamma .2. Much more information is provided for you, the referee, in Beta .1, Beta .2, and the encounter sections.

An attack on the PCs' ship soon after it delivers them to Alcazzar strands the PCs with no subspace radio. They will be able to salvage some equipment, including several explorers and heavy weapons, from the ruined CDC compound. Many obstacles stand in the way of their cross-country journey to the only other inhabited area on the planet—the Streel Corporation mining camp.

The PCs may leave a swath of destruction across the face of Alcazzar, or they may establish friendly relations with the native creatures. Whether the PCs accomplish their mission with courage and resourcefulness depends entirely on their reactions to the problems they face.

Alpha .2 EXPLANATION OF MAPS AND FILES

This module provides four maps to aid you and your players. Informational files are also included; some are for the players, others for you only. The maps and file are explained below.

MAP 1. ALCAZZAR

On the outside of the module cover is a full color map of the entire surface of Alcazzar. Use this map if the PCs leave the Map 2 region where most of the adventure takes place. You will have to create descriptions of the specific areas they enter, but with Map 1 as a guide, you should be able to let them journey anywhere on the planet they wish.

Show this map to the players during the PCs briefing in the CDC headquarters (Gamma. 2). Since the PCs are given a copy of this map, the players may look at it as often as they wish.

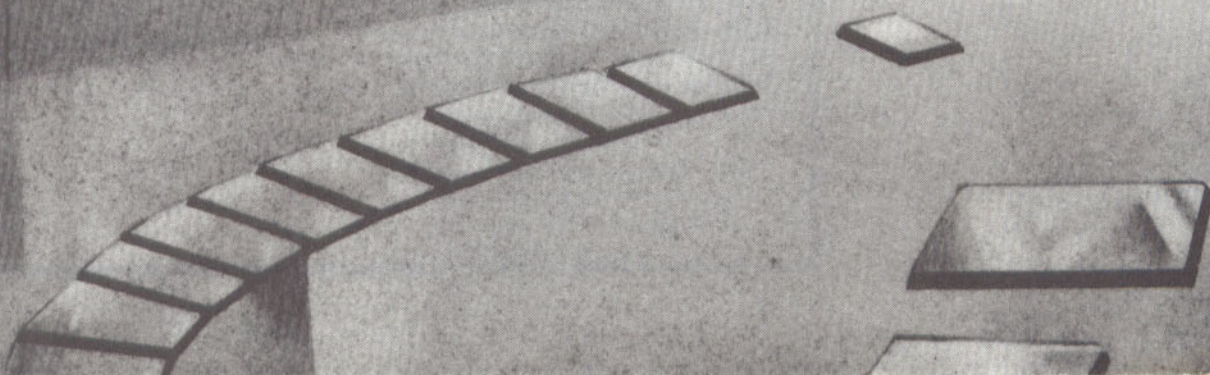
MAP 2. ALCAZZAR: MINING OPERATION REGION

This map covers the inside module cover, and displays a small region of the planet at a scale of 2 kilometers per hexagon. Both Streel corporation mining camps are in this region, so the bulk of the adventure occurs here.

Show this map to the players during the PCs' briefing (Gamma .2). After they see it, they may refer to it as often as they wish.

MAP 3. CDC COMPOUND

This map is in the center of this module, on p. 16-17. To remove the map, carefully bend the staples back with a blunt object and lift out the top sheet of paper intact. Then lift out the next sheet, p. 13-14 and 19-20, to use later. Finally, bend the staples back down. You can use your STAR FRONTIERS® counters on this map to aid movement and combat in the CDC compound. Describe the compound to the players during the PCs' briefing (Gamma .2), but don't show the players this map until they reach the compound on Alcazzar (Delta .2).



MAP 4. STREEL COMPOUND

This map is on p. 28. The encounter areas and guard positions in the Streel compound are marked on this map. When the PCs reach the Streel compound, show the players the "FORT" map from your STAR FRONTIERS® game box. That map also describes the Streel compound, but it doesn't contain the details that Map 4 does. Don't show Map 4 to the players.

SYSTEM BRIEF

Page 13 is the System Brief. Remove that page, and the attached Alien Creatures Update File with Map 3 (see instructions above). This brief represents all the information CDC has regarding Alcazzar. It will be given to the PCs during their briefing, so assume that they take a copy with them and allow the players to use it whenever they wish. Read this brief before going on.

ALIEN CREATURES UPDATE FILE

This file contains information about the animals on Alcazzar. The information here goes far beyond what the CDC environmentalist learned, so don't show it to the players. As the PCs adventure on the planet, and particularly if they decide to stay and study the world after the adventure is over, they may learn this information. Read this file before going on.

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLES

Use tables 8, 9, and 10 on p. 32 to determine when the PCs have random encounters, and what those encounters are.

PRE-GENERATED PLAYER CHARACTERS

This is group of eight PCs your players may use if they do not have characters of appropriate experience, or do not wish to risk their own characters on this expedition.

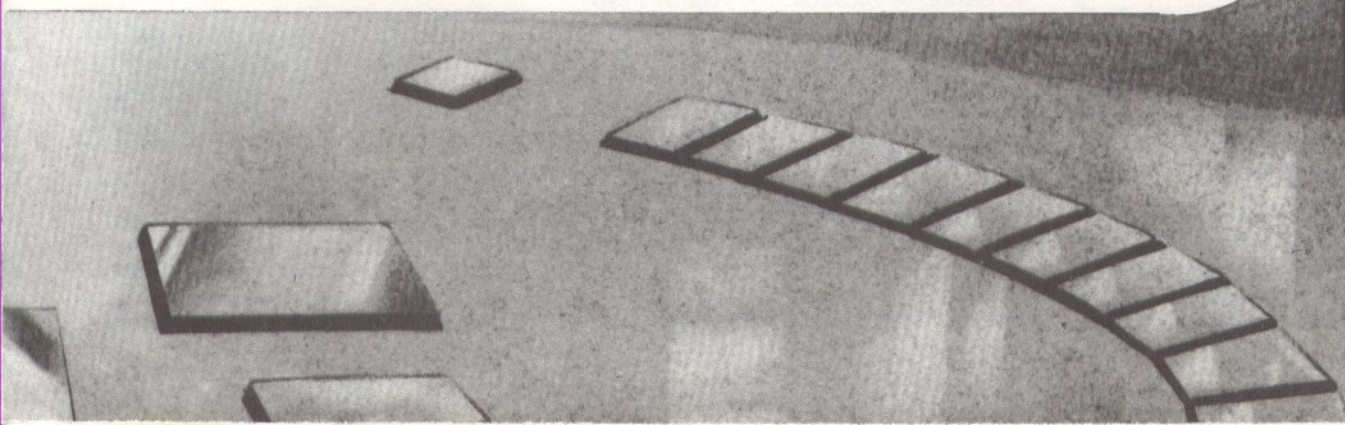
Alpha .3 FORMATS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Sections of text are enclosed in boxes; they are descriptions of action, places, and things the PCs encounter. Read boxed text aloud to the players. You can also refer back to boxed text for descriptions later.

When the PCs encounter creatures, non-player characters (NPCs), or robots in this adventure, statistics for the encounter are included in a shorthand format so you can easily refer to the material you need. Table 1 lists the abbreviations used in statistics and the rest of the module.

TABLE 1. ABBREVIATIONS

ATT	= Creature's attack rating
CDC	= Cassidine Development Corporation
d10	= Ten-sided die
DEX	= Dexterity
DM	= Damage caused by successful attack
GST	= Galactic Standard Time
IM	= Initiative Modifier
M	= Melee attack score
MV	= Movement Class
NPC	= Non-player Character
PC	= Player Character
PS	= Punching score
RS	= Reaction Speed
RW	= Ranged weapons attack score
SA	= Creature's special attack forms
SD	= Creature's special defenses
SEU	= Standard Energy Unit
STA	= Stamina point total
STR	= Strength



BETA SECTION: ALCAZZAR

Beta .1 TERRAIN EFFECTS

Only one-third of Alcazzar's surface is land. The rest is taken up by two vast oceans and numerous rivers and lakes. Seventy percent of the land area is virtually impassable to characters traveling overland. Much of the impassable land is mudflats; the remainder is made up of a series of rugged mountain ranges.

The terrain of the planet will greatly affect any traveling the PCs attempt, as well as determine the types of creatures they are likely to encounter. This section defines each terrain type, including movement requirements and restrictions and a description of what a typical area looks like.

To determine movement rates for the different terrain types, refer to page 19 of the Expanded Game Rules. The Terrain Effects Table there applies to Alcazzar, with the following definitions in table 2.

**TABLE 2. TERRAIN EFFECTS TABLE
DEFINITIONS**

ALCAZZAR TERRAIN	DEFINITION IN THE TERRAIN EFFECTS TABLE
Forest	Broken
Mountains	Rugged
Moraines	Rugged
Ice fields	Hazard
Mudflats	Bog
Prairie	Clear

PRAIRIE

This is an expanse of lush green grass, easily rippled by any passage of wind. Growing about one meter high, the soft blades bend readily beneath the weight of a traveler. Mostly grasses grow here, but the scene is still one of incredible fertility.

These grassy areas would be true havens for Alcazzar's herbivores except for one factor: the sky-shrikes. These vicious predators

constantly circle over the prairies, searching for the slightest movement that might indicate the presence of something edible.

Occasionally, a huge gwerrah shambles across a prairie, quite unmolested by the shrikes. Lokkuku sometimes band together, carrying an array of clubs, and move across the prairie with wary eyes toward the sky. Most herbivores stay near the edges of the forests, however, venturing into the grass for a quick bite, then scurrying to the shelter of the trees when the shrikes appear overhead. Sky-shrikes keep a respectful distance from all vehicles.

FORESTS

Towering to heights of 100 meters or more, the mighty karakah trees seem to declare dominance over the rest of the planet. These trees sprout from huge bases, 10 meters wide, and shoot straight upward. Long slender branches extend to the sides at about 5-meter intervals, drooping with the weight of heavy, pointed needles and fat fruits.

Although the forest canopy is dense enough to practically blot out the sky, the floor is remarkably open. Visibility averages 100 meters. Many overripe fruit, as well as large, hard pits from inside the fruit, litter the ground, but no underbrush impedes progress.

The upper reaches of the forest are draped with long, supple vines, creating easy passage from tree to tree; but no vines fall within 10 meters of the ground.

Forests are the major shelters for the many herbivores on Alcazzar. The karakah fruit is sweet and nourishing, and the pits also have food value. Many hibernating creatures eat the fruit during the warm season and store a large collection of pits for winter.

Lokkuku rule the forests because they travel easily through the trees. Sky-shrikes cannot effectively break through the upper branches, and even the huge gwerrah cannot reach anything higher than 10 or 12 meters above the ground. Many of the smaller herbivores, including the gnaw-

hares, live in burrows excavated among the karakahs' mighty roots.

MUDFLATS

This vast expanse of putrid bog seems to ooze filth and decay. The deep-pitched hum of millions of insects provides a constant drone; and in fact, clouds of the creatures are swarming over the central part of the mudflat.

The mud is a rich brown color, occasionally marked by floating patches of dark green scum. Now and then, bubbles of swamp gas burst from the water, causing the already unpleasant stench to assume nauseating proportions. Every few minutes, a small creature suddenly breaks from the surface to snatch a bug from the air and quickly plop back into the mud. Despite all the activity, this seems to be a place of stillness and death.

Despite their oppressive smell, mudflats offer little to threaten PCs. Hover vehicles and explorers can cross the mudflats with little difficulty. However, other ground vehicles become mired quickly. After several hours, mired vehicles sink below the surface.

Characters attempting to cross the mudflats on foot will find the going very slow—much like trying to swim through pudding or mashed potatoes. The mud is dense enough that a character can lie on top of it without sinking. Traveling on foot in mudflats is so tiring that characters doing so must rest one hour for every hour they travel.

Many kinds of algae grow in the mudflats. Insects are the most common animals in the mudflats. Even fire locusts sometimes cross them. The only other creatures living in the mud are small carnivores that prey on insects, and pose no threat to PCs. However, warm water pools are scattered across the mudflats, and these pools hold many fish, including sea-shrikes.

MORAINES

Moraines are long, high hills of sand, crushed gravel, and clay, covered with a thin layer of topsoil. Alcazzar's moraines

are not described in boxed text since the appearance of a moraine varies, depending on whether it is in a prairie or a forest.

The moraines on Alcazzar were created by the movements of glaciers thousands of years before the setting of this adventure. Since that time, the topsoil formed and plants grew on the hills. The moraines and their origins will be obvious to any environmentalist.

The animal life on a moraine is the same as the animal life in the area around the moraine.

Explorers and characters on foot can cross moraines, but all other forms of ground transportation are stopped by the steepness of the climb.

MOUNTAINS

Sheer spines of grey and black stone rise abruptly into the sky. Traces of snow cling to the higher pinnacles, and steep, narrow gullies scar the shoulders and sides of the awesome formations. The clatter of falling rocks is a common sound here, first near, then far away—erosion is a living force at work.

The steepness and height of these stone mountains is forbidding. So too, is the absence of life. Only the howling wind and the occasional crash of a rock slide disturb nature's silence here.

Any hexagon adjacent to a mountain ridge on Map 2 is considered mountainous terrain for travel purposes. The ridges themselves are impassable to all hover and ground vehicles, including explorers. Characters traveling on foot take 4d10 hours just to cross a ridge (add this time to the travel time to enter the hex on the other side of the ridge).

Rock slides are frequent in mountainous terrain. Rock slides occur as random encounters on table 10. If a rock slide occurs, each character must roll his RS or less on d100 to leap out of the way of falling rocks. Each character that fails his RS check suffers 5d10 points of damage. If a vehicle is caught in a rock slide, the driver must make a successful RS check to drive the vehicle to safety. If the driver fails his check, the vehicle suffers the result of a 3d10 roll on the Vehicle Damage Table (Expanded Game Rules, p. 32).

Sky-shrikes occasionally drift over mountains on their way from one prairie to another, but very few creatures live in the mountains. Except for some primitive

lichens, even plant life is unknown to these barren reaches of cold stone.

WATER

Although most of Alcazzar is covered by water, the difficulties of water-travel will probably prevent the characters from spending a lot of time afloat. Nonetheless, they may use explorers amphibiously, or even construct rafts or boats, so the following guidelines are included.

Frequent storms cross the oceans, creating huge swells and crashing breakers. No vehicle short of a submarine or powerful ship can travel safely on the oceans.

The breakers smashing against the shore should convince the characters not to travel on the oceans. If they try anyway, their vehicles capsize and wash ashore soon after they enter the water. Each character in a capsized explorer takes 1d10 points of damage.

The ocean floor plunges to tremendous depths in places (8,000 meters or more), but the huge lakes sometimes found in the mudflats are no deeper than 3 or 4 meters in their lowest locations. The lakes in mountain valleys often plunge to depths of 500 or 600 meters.

The current in many rivers and streams is too rapid for crossing by explorers or rafts. Most rivers are 50-300 meters wide and average four meters deep.

If the characters reach a river in explorers, there is a 50% chance that the water before them is too rough to cross safely. If they travel up or downstream 2 kilometers, they reach a quiet spot where they can cross safely.

If they attempt to cross at a rough spot, each driver must roll a number equal to or less than his technician skill x 10 on d100. If a driver's roll fails, his vehicle capsizes.

If the PCs inside a capsized explorer try to escape, they each suffer 1d10 points of damage and lose their rifle weapons, but manage to get to shore. The explorer, on the other hand, sinks to the bottom. All equipment carried on the outside of the explorer is lost, and all electronic gear inside the explorer is destroyed. The PCs must drag the explorer from the river before it can be used again.

If the PCs inside a capsized explorer shut all the hatches, the explorer floats downstream before grounding on the far bank. Characters inside the explorer suffer 1d10 points of damage. All equipment carried on the outside of the explorer is lost, but the explorer and equipment inside it remain undamaged.

Characters traveling on foot can swim across rivers, but must abandon equipment they cannot tuck into their belts or backpacks, including rifles and power backpacks!

Fish are plentiful in nearly all of Alcazzar's bodies of water. Fish range from small pin-fish that subsist mainly on algae to the monstrous sea-shrikes that eat anything they can sink their teeth into.

Beta .2 CLIMATE EFFECTS

Alcazzar's climate and seasonal changes are very unusual because the planet barely rotates as it orbits its star, Rhianna. At any one time, 40% of the planet is in daytime/summer, another 40% is in nighttime/winter, 10% is changing from summer to winter, and 10% is changing from winter to summer.

At the start of this adventure, the mining operation region, the area in Map 2, just entered high summer. This region will move into a transitional season in 3000 hours GST (150 20-hour GST days).

WINTER WEATHER

The areas of winter/night are nearly void of active animals, since Alcazzar's creatures either migrate with the more hospitable summer/day, or hibernate deep beneath the thick blanket of snow that arrives with the winter. The only active animal is the snow sloth, loping along the , feeding on hibernating animals whenever it can find them. (See the Alien Creatures Update File for more information about the snow sloth.)

In winter/night, snow falls heavily, often at a rate of .25 meters/hour. There is a 90% chance of cloud cover, and a 50% chance of snowfall at any given time. When snow is falling, there is a 20% chance of a blizzard. During blizzards, visibility is reduced to zero, snow falls at at least .25 meters/hour, winds blow at 10-100 kph, and the temperature drops to 5-50 degrees below zero, Celsius.

On those rare occasions when clouds do not blanket the winter/night region, the display of stars is stupendous. However, the absence of the insulating cloud blanket causes temperatures to plunge to anywhere from 45-90 degrees (5d10 + 40) below zero, Celsius.

The snow-cover on the planet increases as the winter passes. A snow base of 3-5 meters develops in the first wave of winter storms. By the end of the season, the snow-cover increases to an average of 40 meters.

Severe winters with twice this accumulation are possible.

Winter is 4,000 hours long, GST (this is equivalent to 200 20-hour GST days).

TRANSITIONAL WEATHER

The regions of the planet between the winter/night or summer/day areas are in transition, either warming (changing from winter to summer) or cooling (changing from summer to winter). In both cases, the following conditions apply.

The sky is always a dim, twilight gray. In part, the dim light is caused by Rhianna staying near the horizon. Thick, dark clouds also contribute to the grim, gray appearance.

Almost constantly, violent storms rack the land, dumping large volumes of rain or snow. Fierce winds and lightning are very common. Radio communications have only a 5% chance of succeeding in these areas, because of the great amount of electrical activity.

Transition periods last 1,000 hours GST (equivalent to 50 20-hour GST days).

Warming: In transitional areas moving from winter to summer, the snow melts at phenomenal rates. Mud flats become shallow lakes, and all streams and rivers flow with tremendous force. Nearly all of the winter's snow-cover disappears in the violent period of transition.

Cooling: As the cooling transition arrives, animals begin to enter their shelters for hibernation, or begin a panicked stampede eastward if winter starts catching up with them. The weather cools steadily, and snow begins to fall frequently. Near the start of the cooling transition the snow melts shortly after hitting the ground.

SUMMER WEATHER

Like the winter, the summer/day period on Alcazzar lasts 4,000 hours GST (200 20-hour GST days). The summer/day season is usually topped with clear blue skies and the gleaming, yellow dot of Rhianna. Clouds cover the sky a mere 10% of the time in summer, and these often bring refreshing, cool rains. Thunderstorms are common close to the transitional periods, but in high summer the weather is usually hot and calm; even the rain showers seem gentle.

Strong ocean currents carry cool water from the winter regions all over the planet, so most of the summer does not become unbearably hot. The same oceans also cool the planet by reflecting a great deal of

Rhianna's energy. Of course, heat does build up; at the height of the season, the average surface temperature can climb above 45 degrees Celsius.

Wildlife is plentiful and active in summer regions. A gradual eastward movement of migratory creatures is common all summer long.

Beta .3 MINING OPERATIONS

The facet of Alcazzar that first attracted CDC, and now Streel, was not its weather, but its vast mineral deposits, particularly heavy metals. Gold, silver, uranium, lead, copper, platinum, magnesium, and titanium were discovered at CDC's two initial test sites. The two compounds on the planet were built on those sites.

The metals are locked in bedrock, for the most part. Thus, expensive, large-scale operations are required to remove them. Many violent streams and rivers cut through the planet's mountain ranges, carrying minerals down from the mountain rock. The minerals in rivers are easier to remove, so the test sites and compounds are near rivers where they emerge from mountains.

Placer mining is the process of removing minerals from a riverbed, where they have been placed by the water over many centuries. Typical placer operations on an outpost world involve construction of a compound near a river. The compound houses a small staff and basic processing equipment. Heavy duty robots perform the actual mining. When environmental protection laws are not in effect—and they usually aren't on a newly discovered world—these robots systematically excavate long sections of a riverbed, carrying the raw material to the compound for processing.

On a world as rich as Alcazzar, placer mining can produce anywhere from 1,000 to 100,000 (d100 x 1,000) credits worth of metal gathered every 20 hours. Of course, transport, processing, and personnel costs bite into this; but the profits are still substantial. However, setting up a mining operation costs around 5,000,000 credits and average daily operating costs are between 1,000 and 10,000 credits. Even if the capital can be raised, the risks of claim-jumpers and other thieves are formidable. All in all, mining a wilderness world is a very risky operation.

Beta .4 HISTORY

A CDC exploration vessel, the *Twilight Moon*, discovered the route to Rhianna, and its sole habitable planet Alcazzar, two years before the start of this adventure. Preliminary geoscanner tests were extremely favorable for mining operations—so encouraging, in fact, that the company tried to keep the planet's wealth a secret from other corporations.

The star, Rhianna, is located in the vast reach of space between Cassidine, White Light, and Timeon (see the map of the Frontier Sector in the Expanded Game Rules, p. 51). Don't feel bound by this location if it does not fit in your campaign; you can use any uninhabited and unexplored system.

The region CDC selected for mining passed into winter shortly after the planet's discovery, so operations were postponed until the following summer. It was hoped that this delay would throw any suspicious competitors off the track.

The following summer, the CDC compound was constructed and placer mining operations began in earnest. In 120 days (GST) of operation, the mine produced 6,300,000 credits worth of metal, mostly gold. The winter season was judged too hazardous to leave any personnel on the planet, so the compound was evacuated for the season.

When its second summer of operations began, the mine was producing beyond the previous year's levels for 40 days. Reports and shipments arrived regularly. Then, all communication ceased.

Highly placed CDC officers were bribed by agents of the Streel corporation, and revealed the Alcazzar operation. A strike team of Streel mercenaries eliminated the CDC operation and fused the compound's nuclear reactor to make sure it was never activated again.

Then, Streel began an operation of its own, about 120 kilometers from the CDC compound. Gambling on its great size as a deterrent, Streel decided that CDC would leave well enough alone, and abandon its Alcazzar operation as it had abandoned many other ventures in the past, once the larger competitors moved in.

This time, however, the Cassidine Development Corporation is determined not to sit idly by while its much larger competition reaps the profits of its discovery. By sending an elite team of its own to Alcazzar, CDC will see that its rights are duly protected, by force if necessary!



GAMMA SECTION: STARTING THE MISSION

Gamma .1 THE CHARACTERS

This adventure requires a very skilled group of player characters. They must travel to a wild planet and face hostile NPCs who outnumber them and have greater resources, so the PCs must be tough, clever, and resourceful.

The pregenerated player characters on p. 18 represent an ideal collection of skills and levels for this mission. If your players' characters have not achieved those levels yet, but they want to play this adventure, try to give them a little more experience before sending them to Alcazzar. If your players' group of PCs is too small in number, feel free to fill it out with any of the pregenerated characters, either as NPCs allied with the PCs, or as alternate PCs.

CDC agents will contact the PCs to hire them for a mission. These agents are authorized to pay twice the listed rates (see Expanded Game Rules, p. 60) to specialists hired for this mission. (Characters of this level have established reputations in their fields, and CDC wants the best.)

The PCs are taken to the corporate headquarters on Cassidine as quickly as possible. They are treated politely, and given a chance to get to know each other (if they don't already) while waiting for their briefing. Of course, they will be paid from the moment they board ship for Cassidine.

After all the PCs arrive at the CDC headquarters, they are ushered into a room high atop the CDC tower in Triad City. Their adventure begins.

Gamma .2 THE BRIEFING

The walls of this room are paneled with real mahogany. Lush carpeting covers the floor beneath several ultra-soft bioform chairs. This room, and the fine refreshments provided, make a very pleasant setting. After everyone is comfortably seated, the lights dim and a trivid image appears in the center of the room.

The slightly overweight and balding man in the trivid picture is still readily recognizable as Karral Willthatch. Formerly famous as a daring adventurer, he has turned his energies toward running his multi-million credit corporation, now, as chairman of the board. He begins to speak.

"I am sure you are all curious about your mission with the Cassidine Development Corporation. As you know, CDC tries to develop star routes to undiscovered worlds, then exploit the wealth of those worlds before larger corporations can move in and take over. Ideally, we have moved on to other areas before our chief competitors, the Pan-Galactic and Streel Corporations, move in to begin their wholesale operations.

"You do not know that CDC located one of the richest deposits of heavy metals in the known galaxy on Alcazzar, in the Rhianna system. We have been mining there secretly for two years.

"Last week, however, communications from our Alcazzar compound suddenly ceased. At the same time, remote survey-satellite transmissions indicated the presence of another settlement on Alcazzar.

"Your first mission objective is very straightforward: Go to Alcazzar and determine what happened to our outpost and staff of 12 there. Rescue the staff, if possible.

"If foul play is involved, you have a second mission objective: Learn who is responsible. If, as we suspect, a rival corporation is interfering with our operations, you must contact us via subspace radio, and identify the culprit. Then, while we verbally make our commitment on Alcazzar clear to the foe, you must strike back at their operations, terminating it, if at all possible. "Needless to say, you will be in a position of high risk. Let me assure you that, should we emerge victorious, all of you will be very well taken care of. Furthermore, Alcazzar has much potential and will eventually develop; skilled individuals with

knowledge of the planet will be in commanding positions. I'm sure some things begin to come clear now, including the high rate of pay on this job.

"You should understand, now, why we gathered this team of skilled and experienced agents. This will not be the first time any of you have participated in conflict on an outpost world. You all know that the UPF generally turns its back on these little wars, leaving private concerns to settle them in their own way. We at CDC try to avoid outright hostility. But the wealth on Alcazzar and the likelihood of an attack on our staff warrant this kind of mission!"

Suddenly, the image of a planet, bright against the blackness of space, replaces the chairman. A voice begins to narrate.

"Alcazzar's climate and seasonal changes are very unusual because the planet does not rotate as it orbits its star, Rhianna. Thus, all areas of the planet, except both polar caps, pass from a long summer, during which the star never drops below the horizon, to an equally long winter when the star is never seen. The largest of two continents circles the globe, separating two large oceans, one in the north and one in the south. Many lakes and rivers break up both continents. The terrain varies from steep stone mountains to vast plains and forests."

The narrator pauses, and the image expands until a hemisphere of green is visible opposite a cloak of ice. As details become clearer, you see a pleasant expanse of plains and forests, similar to the huge parks of Triad. The narrator continues.

"Lush grasses cover the plains, which in lower areas, turn to boggy marshes. The large trees do not shed their needles at any time in the year. During the day, which is the summer, the sun, Rhianna, is always visible from the temperate zone, providing constant illumination. Most clouds remain over the ice in the night, or winter, region. Thousands of clear brooks and streams running from mountains and glaciers keep the summer region well

boxed text continues

boxed text continues

watered, despite an almost total lack of rain."

The image of Alcazzar expands even more, revealing a narrow stretch of plains and forest between a rugged mountain range and Alcazzar's Great Sea, the southern ocean. A light blinks at the mouth of a mountain valley.

"The light indicates the location of our compound, which was built over a tremendous deposit of gold and other heavy metals." Another light blinks, at the mouth of a valley about 120 kilometers away.

"The second light marks the location of the new settlement discovered by satellite. This new settlement is on one of our first test sites, a potentially rich mineral deposit.

"Nothing is known about creatures—if any—that live on the ice fields. The CDC Twilight Moon expedition's environmentalist reported that many types of animals exist in the summer regions, however. Most of these types are mammals, the rest an assortment of harmless insects. Of the mammals, only three are large enough to conceivably affect your mission: the gwerrah, a huge shambling omnivore known to inhabit the hilly and mountainous regions; the sky-shrike, a medium-sized carnivore that flies in huge, soaring packs; and the lokkuku, a primate with some intelligence and a noted tendency toward pranks."

More trivid images appear. First, a stocky quadruped covered with coarse black hair is shown towering over an explorer. The gwerrah could have crushed the vehicle without difficulty. Next, a flight of sky-shrikes—dog-like creatures with huge, leathery wings—seems to soar through the briefing room. Finally, a lokkuku, a little creature that is almost comical after the other two, blinks into sight. Looking much like a small Yazirian, it tilts its head quizzically and then scampers away on all four feet.

The lights come up quickly as the trivid images fade out. A security robot enters and hands you a system brief, an equipment list, and two maps. The robot informs you that, as is standard procedure on outpost worlds, the CDC compound contained a cache of heavy weapons. The weapons are underground, below the very center of the maintenance garage. The robot will answer questions for 15 minutes. Then, you should board the Nightrunner, a fast CDC freighter. It will lift off in two hours.

Let the players see the System Brief, the equipment list below (table 3), Map 1, and Map 2. Allow the players to ask questions about their mission. If they ask about the CDC compound on Alcazzar, describe it to them, but do not show them Map 3 until they reach the compound. You may give them information about placer mining and the terrain and weather conditions on Alcazzar. Do not give the players any information about the other settlement that was located on Alcazzar (the Steel compound).

TABLE 3. CDC SUPPLIED EQUIPMENT

Players should note on their character record sheets all the items their characters carry. CDC provides each PC with the following equipment.

1 rifle*
1 pistol*
1 skeinsuit*
1 defensive screen*
1 melee weapon*
200 SEU or 200 rounds for each weapon
100 SEU for each energy-using device (except weapons)
1 toxy-rad gauge
1 gas mask
1 compass
1 chronocom
1 everflame
1 flashlight
1 rope (25 meters)
survival rations
toolkits for the PC's skills

* PC may choose any type listed in the rules.

CDC also provides the following items that the PCs must divide among themselves.

4 holoflares
2 radiophones
1 polyvox
2 freeze fields
2 pair of magnigoggles
2 infrared jammers
5 water packs

Tell the players that level 6 technicians can fuse a nuclear reactor into a worthless lump of radioactive slag—a very efficient way to shut down most mining operations. Common sense suggests that if the CDC compound was indeed attacked, its reactor was probably fused. The fusing process can only be performed by a level 6 technician, and is not reversible.

Gamma .3 THE JOURNEY

Read the following boxed text to the players after the PCs board the Nightrunner.

After a quick lift-off, the Nightrunner starts accelerating to jump speed, bound for Alcazzar. The crew of the freighter is close-mouthed and unfriendly. They do not even engage in the simplest conversations, seeming to desire no knowledge of your mission.

If the compound was attacked, identifying the guilty party should not be difficult; only the Pan Galactic and Steel corporations have the resources to pull off such an attack so deep in uncharted space. However, if PGC or Steel are responsible, terminating one of their operations will be quite a project. Frontal assaults on armed compounds are seldom successful.

One way to shut down a mining operation is to break into the main compound and fuse the reactor core, leaving the outpost without power. Another tactic is to destroy all the processing equipment, which is probably also in the main compound. Obviously, shutting down a rival mining operation won't be easy!

The Nightrunner's captain, a human named Gerfritz Dale, will respond if the characters insist on speaking to some member of the crew. Captain Dale is a gruff old spacer. He ordered his crew to keep silent because those were his instructions. He is sympathetic to the PCs' mission, and will bend the rules very slightly if the PCs ask him for aid.

A shuttle from the Nightrunner will set the PCs down on Alcazzar, 2 kilometers north of the CDC compound. Captain Dale won't land a shuttle any closer because hostile forces may occupy the compound. He will not allow a shuttle to fly over or near the other compound.

DELTA SECTION: THE CDC COMPOUND

Delta .1 LANDING THE SHUTTLE AND GETTING TO THE COMPOUND

Read the following boxed text to the players as the Nightrunner's shuttle sets down on Alcazzar.

The shuttle doors open onto a meadow that is radiant with flowers of every color. Tall trees surround the clearing, blocking any view of the compound about 2 kilometers away to the south. "Move It!" the pilot growls, obviously eager to return to the security of the freighter above. The shuttle quickly lifts away, leaving a scorched patch of earth among the flowers.

You have instructions to contact the Nightrunner every 20 hours. The Nightrunner will remain in orbit around Alcazzar, waiting for information from you.

If you want to use the optional gravity rules (Expanded Game Rules, p. 20), tell the players that the PCs immediately notice the light gravity (.8 g).

As the shuttle arrives back at the Nightrunner, a Streel Corporation assault scout ship attacks the CDC freighter. Through skillful maneuvering and use of the Nightrunner's single gun, Captain Dale escapes with his ship. The Nightrunner is forced to flee the Rhianna system, however, and is only able to transmit a brief message to the PCs before fleeing. Dale radios the PCs, "I am under attack by an unidentified assault scout ship and must leave the Rhianna system to save my crew and ship; good luck."

The Nightrunner will not return for 50 20-hour GST days, unless the PCs reach the subspace radio in the Streel Compound and call for a pick-up earlier. The PCs should not know if, or when, the Nightrunner will return.

If the characters use a compass, they have no trouble reaching the CDC compound in one hour. The walk takes them through a

majestic forest of tall trees and little underbrush. The woods remain silent during this walk, and the characters see no creatures. They should notice, however, a number of large fruit on the ground. If they look up, they see the same kind of fruit growing from the large trees that make up most of the forest. Each fruit is about 50 centimeters in diameter and contains a hard pit, 10-15 centimeters across.

Delta .2 OUTSIDE THE CDC COMPOUND

Place Map 3 before the players, and put robot counters on their starting positions. The robots are explained in Delta .3.

Up ahead, you can make out the compound's reactor tower. Soon, the wire fence surrounding the compound becomes visible. The entrance gates in the fence are swinging loosely, obviously blasted open. A security robot stands motionless just inside the gates.

The compound contains four buildings, the largest of which is the reactor and processing plant. Several antennas and a shattered radar ball are mounted atop the reactor's cooling tower. A large building next to the processing plant is the maintenance garage. On the east side of the compound are two smaller buildings. The smallest of these, the computer shed, also has an antenna atop it. The other building is the barracks. Three heavy duty robots, another security robot, and a maintenance robot are visible. None of them are moving.

Signs of damage are apparent. The maintenance garage has a large hole in its north wall, and several skeletons are sprawled about the compound.

Massive piles of tailings (the waste products of the mining operations) sit outside the fence behind the processing plant.

The fence around the compound was electrified, but now the power is off, so the PCs can climb it safely, if they wish.

Delta .3 INSIDE THE CDC COMPOUND

THE ROBOTS

Four more maintenance robots (robots I, J, K, L) are in the barracks and two security robots (robots F, G) in the reactor and processing plant, but don't let the players know about them yet. None of the robots will move until a character approaches to within two squares of the computer shed. Then, all 12 robots attack the characters nearest them.

These robots assisted in CDC's mining operation. After Streel agents took over the compound, they radically altered these robots' programming. Now, all 12 robots share the following mission: "After any intruder approaches closer than 4 meters to the computer shed, destroy all intruders in the compound." "Destroy" is defined as "inflict damage upon any intruder that moves." "Intruder" is defined as "any object not in the compound at the time the robot was reprogrammed," and the "compound" is "the area inside the fence."

The robots will never attack characters outside the compound. If a robotics specialist checks, he notices that the robots are switched "on," even though they aren't moving. *Nothing will activate the robots except a character approaching the computer shed.*

Robotics specialists can safely try to deactivate any of these robots, but only before someone approaches the computer shed.

3 HEAVY DUTY MINING ROBOTS

(robots A, B, C)

LEVEL:	2
BODY TYPE:	heavy duty
MOVEMENT:	tracks
NORMAL SPEED:	10 meters/turn
MAXIMUM SPEED:	30 meters/turn
RANGE:	1,000 kilometers
CAPACITY:	excavate 4 tons/hour
LIMBS:	robot A: scoop shovel robot B: huge drill robot C: rock crusher
PROGRAMS:	security lock, attack/ defense

PARABATTERY: type 2
 STAMINA: 500
 ATT: 50
 WEAPONS: (see LIMBS above)
 DAMAGE: 6d10
 DEFENSES: none
 IM/RS: 5/50

The three heavy duty robots are equipped, respectively, with a scoop shovel, a huge drill, and a rock crusher. They will crash through walls while chasing characters, but they will not leave the compound. All three are 2nd level. Streel agents erased these robots' excavation programs. They are now reprogrammed with only security lock and attack/defense programs.

4 SECURITY ROBOTS

(robots D, E, F, G)

LEVEL: 4
 BODY TYPE: standard
 MOVEMENT: wheels
 NORMAL SPEED: 10 meters/turn
 MAXIMUM SPEED: 90 meters/turn
 RANGE: 1,000 kilometers
 LIMBS: 4 mechanical arms
 PROGRAMS: security lock, attack/defense, search & destroy
 PARABATTERY: type 1
 STAMINA: 100
 ATT: 70
 WEAPONS: 1 laser rifle set at 8 SEU/shot, powered by a 100 SEU backpack
 DAMAGE: 8d10
 DEFENSES: albedo suit
 IM/RS: 5/50

The four security robots shoot their lasers (8d10 damage) until their 100-SEU backpacks are drained. Then, they attack with their limbs.

5 MAINTENANCE ROBOTS

(robots H, I, J, K, L)

LEVEL: 2
 BODY TYPE: standard
 MOVEMENT: wheels
 NORMAL SPEED: 10 meters/turn
 MAXIMUM SPEED: 60 meters/turn
 RANGE: 1,000 kilometers
 LIMBS:
 robot H: 1 vacuum,
 2 mechanical arms
 robot I: 1 electrosnip,
 2 mechanical arms
 robot J: 1 lasoldering iron,
 2 mechanical arms
 robot K: 1 electrodriver,
 2 mechanical arms
 robot L: 1 small drill,
 2 mechanical arms
 PROGRAMS: security lock, attack/defense
 PARABATTERY: type 1

STAMINA: 100
 ATT: 50
 WEAPONS: (see LIMBS above)
 DAMAGE: 2d10
 DEFENSES: none
 IM/RS: 5/50

Streel technicians erased these maintenance robots' processing and maintenance programs.

THE GROUNDS

A jumble of debris, foot prints, and wheel marks cover the ground inside and around the compound. It's impossible to estimate the number of attackers or determine any other details of the attack from the tracks and debris.

The skeletons in the compound are the remains of the CDC mining staff, slaughtered by Streel agents. Sky-shrikes have picked the bones clean, but five Yazirian, a Vrusk, and five human skeletons are visible. The twelfth member of the crew, a dral-site, had no skeleton to leave behind.

THE BARRACKS

This was the barracks for the workers. If the robots have not been activated, four maintenance robots (robots I, J, K, L) are standing around the single large room, immobile. Twelve bunks, an automated kitchen, a large table, and 18 chairs are the building's only other contents. If characters look closely, they notice clean spots at the foot of each bunk, where the workers' foot lockers were kept. The Streel attackers removed and destroyed all the workers' personal belongings. Blast spots on the walls show that some laser and automatic rifle shooting took place in here.

THE COMPUTER SHED

This building houses the compound's computer. The building shows no signs, inside or out, of the battle that raged in the compound two weeks earlier. Inside the shed, several huge type 4 parabatteries sit against the south wall. A level 4 computer occupies most of the rest of the building.

The computer is on when the PCs enter. After erasing the CDC files and programs, the Streel attackers reprogrammed the computer. It now contains only a level 3 security program. The computer has 100 structure points.

If a computer specialist attempts to display information on this computer after defeating or bypassing its security program, he learns that none of the original programming remains in the computer. However, if

his "display information" roll succeeds by 40% or more, he can call up rough pictures of the people who reprogrammed the computer. If the PCs ask the computer to enlarge the pictures, they see that the reprogrammers wore the Streel corporate insignia on their suits. More than one computer specialist in the party may attempt to use the computer.

You may determine other ways the players can find out that the Streel corporation is the culprit. Make the players dig for this information, however!

The antenna atop the computer shed is connected to a broken radiophone.

The PCs cannot interface this computer with the computer at the Streel compound because the Streel computer is not regularly linked to a radio.

REACTOR AND PROCESSING PLANT

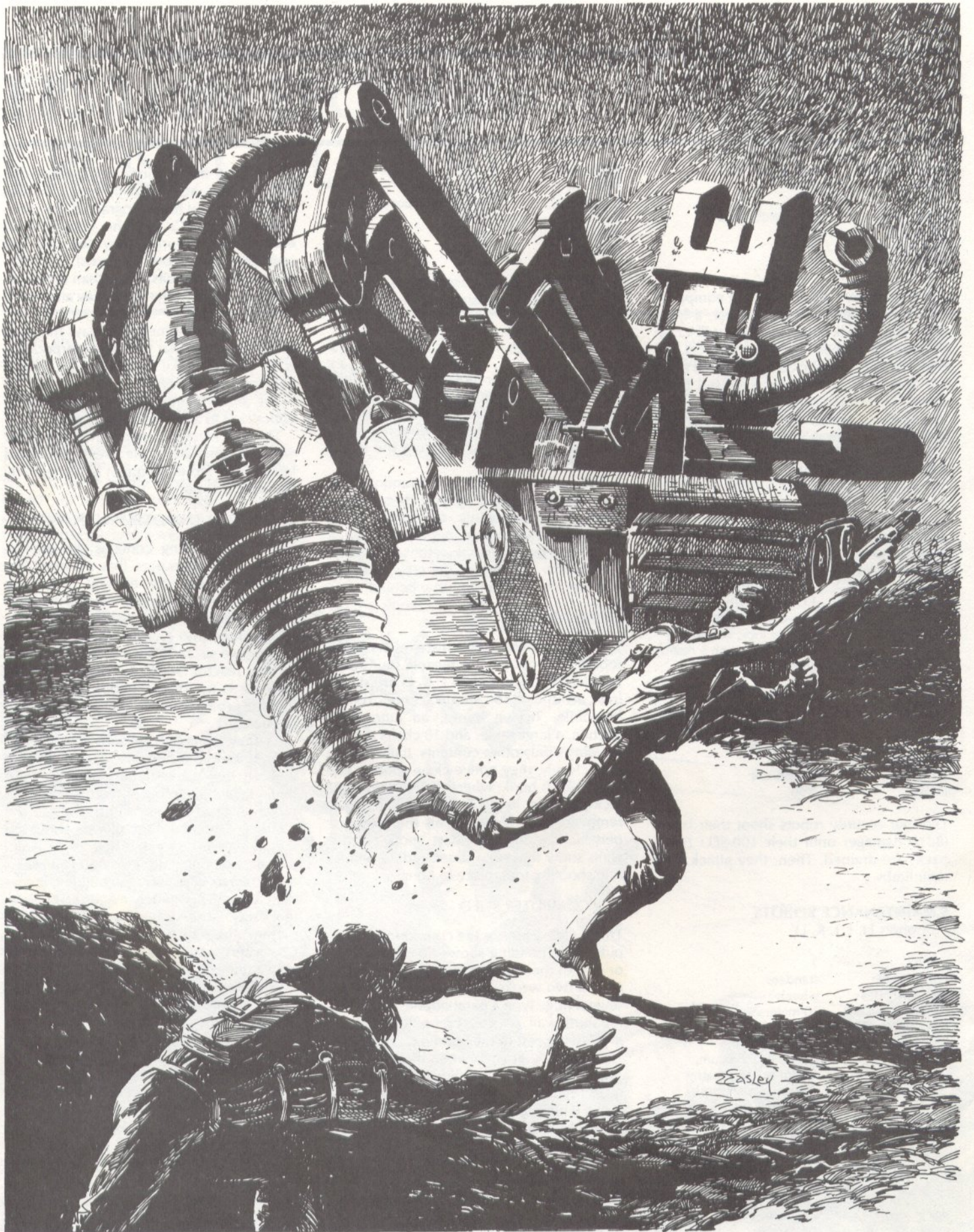
This large building contains the nuclear reactor and generators that powered the compound, and the mineral processing machinery that consumed most of the reactor's power. The Streel attackers fused the reactor core into a useless lump of highly radioactive garbage, then cracked the protective reactor shell. Consequently, this building is full of dangerous radioactivity that will prove deadly to characters who linger here.

As they approach or pass through the open door to this building, characters who look at their gauges notice that they are blinking blue, warning of radioactivity. The radiation level is less intense outside the building. Do not tell the players about the radiation unless they state that their characters are examining their toxyrad gauges!

Characters who enter the building immediately take 5 points of damage and begin to feel dizzy. If they leave the building immediately, they suffer no further damage. Characters who do not leave immediately take another 5 points of damage.

Characters still inside the building should notice a yellow glow coming from a crack in the reactor shell at the far end of the building. If they leave immediately, they take no further damage; but if they don't head for the door right after seeing the glow (even if they pause just to look at their toxyrad gauges) they take another 5 points of damage before escaping from the building.

Characters who still do not leave continue to take 5 points of damage per turn. After they lose 25 Stamina points, they become horribly nauseated. If they leave then, they take 5 more points of damage before escaping. If they do not leave, damage



SYSTEM BRIEF

SYSTEM NAME: Rhianna

STAR COLOR: Yellow

HABITABLE PLANETS: 1, Alcazzar

PLANET BRIEF

PLANET NAME:	Alcazzar
MOONS:	7
CLIMATE RANGE:	Seasonal: winter and summer both move east at 3 km/hour continuously, but on opposite sides of the planet.
DIAMETER:	9,832 km
ATMOSPHERE:	75% nitrogen, 20% oxygen, 5% inert elements
LENGTH OF YEAR (ONE ORBIT AROUND RHIANNA):	10,000 hours GST
LENGTH OF DAY (SUMMER):	4,000 hours GST
LENGTH OF NIGHT (WINTER):	4,000 hours GST
LENGTH OF TRANSITION INTO WINTER:	1,000 hours GST
LENGTH OF TRANSITION INTO SUMMER:	1,000 hours GST
GRAVITY:	0.81
SURFACE TEMP:	-30 to 40 Celsius

COLONIZATION

Unsettled. Discovered 12/21/61 by the Casidine Development Corporation Twilight Moon expedition. The planet's existence and mineral wealth were kept secret. A mining operation began immediately.

CLIMATE AND SEASONAL CHANGES

Alcazzar's climate and seasonal changes are very unusual because the planet barely rotates as it orbits its star, Rhianna. At any one time, 40% of the planet is in summer, another 40% is in winter, 10% is changing from summer to winter, and 10% is changing from winter to summer.

The entire summer is daytime, and the whole winter is nighttime. For approximately 200 days GST days of the year, each hemisphere is either blessed with eternal daylight and warm, pleasant conditions, or plunged into an equally long night with frigid temperatures and snow reaching depths of several dozen meters. A 100-day GST period occurs between each extreme when each region passes through a twilight transition.

The winter area is blanketed by a heavy layer of clouds or blizzards approximately 50% of the time. During transition, the "beltline" region is cloudy 90% of the time, and suffers violent rain or snowstorms 33% of the time. The summer region is 90% sunny, but when clouds drift in from a transition zone, violent thunderstorms, tornadoes, and hurricanes are possible.

TERRAIN

Only one third of Alcazzar's surface is land, but it's covered with a wide variety of terrain. Mudflats, wet lowlands with little plant or animal life, cover 58% of the land. These areas are most noted for clouds of insects thick enough to make breathing difficult, but otherwise harmless.

Several ranges of craggy mountains cut across the land. While not large by most standards—the highest peak is 3,230 meters above sea level—constant glaciation, rock

slides, and wind and water erosion have carved them into rugged cliffs and crags. The higher valleys in these ranges are choked with ice fields all year around. The lower reaches are filled with rushing streams of icy water. Mountains cover 12% of the land area.

The plains and forest appear strikingly green from orbit. These fertile areas are made up of flowing grasslands and towering karakah trees. Glaciers rolled much of these areas flat, but often piled the gravelly soil into rolling moraines along the sides of common glacial paths.

NATIVE LIFE

The karakah trees, reaching more than 100 meters in height, are common to all of the planet's forests. The trunks are often 10 meters wide at the base. These trees have long, thick flexible needles that remain on the branch throughout the year. Thick, porous bark insulates them during the winter. Karakah trees have developed a sap that does not thicken appreciably or freeze during the severe cold season.

Karakah trees produce a rich fruit in great numbers. These fruit seem to be the base of the herbivorous food chain. The fruit falls throughout the summer.

Many forms of animal life inhabit the planet, but they have not been researched, so very little is known about them. All animal life must deal with the extended winters. Many animals migrate, resulting in masses of creatures moving around the planet's surface as the year goes by. All of these creatures travel a complete circle around the planet each year. Other animals hibernate. The mammals live off of stored body fat; the insects lay eggs, then die off to be replaced the next summer.

ECONOMIC VALUE

Alcazzar contains tremendous amounts of fairly accessible heavy metals, including gold, silver, lead, iron, and uranium. These minerals are located in rich veins in mountain bedrock, as well as in many riverbeds.

ALIEN CREATURES UPDATE FILE

This file contains information about the known animal life of Alcazzar.

GWERRAH



TYPE: Giant Omnivore
NUMBER: 1
MOVE: Medium
IM/RS: 4/40
STAMINA: 800
ATTACK: 40
DAMAGE: 20d10
SPECIAL ATTACK: None
SPECIAL DEFENSE: Immune to doze and needler effects
NATIVE HABITAT: Alcazzar—plains, forests moraines; summer season only

The gwerrah is a quadruped that roams freely about the plains, forests, and moraines. No creatures native to Alcazzar are capable of threatening it. Its legs are short and its body is quite stocky. Averaging 10 meters long, 4 meters high, and 3 meters wide, the gwerrah towers over all other animals on Alcazzar. It is covered with coarse black hair, except for its eyes and nose. The eyes of a gwerrah are incredibly keen, and mounted on the top of its head, so it can see for great distances. The gwerrah possess almost no sense of hearing, and a very limited sense of smell, however.

The gwerrah has adapted to Alcazzar's severe winters by going into deep hibernation, usually in a cave or niche in some rocks. During the time it is active, the gwerrah is incredibly voracious, eating any form of meat available, as well as tons of karakah fruit. The gwerrah preys upon any creatures that do not get out of its path in time.

SKY-SHRIKE



TYPE: Medium Carnivore, flying
NUMBER: 1d10 usually, 1d100 in whole pack
MOVE: Very Fast
IM/RS: 8/75
STAMINA: 30
ATTACK: 50
DAMAGE: 2d10
SPECIAL ATTACK: None
SPECIAL DEFENSE: None
NATIVE HABITAT: Alcazzar—skies over plains, moraines; summer half only

Sky-shrikes are among the most vicious carnivores in the known galaxy. Wheeling through the skies of Alcazza in great, hungry packs, they are always alert for movement on the ground. Resembling large, savage dogs with wings, they eat any kind of meat or carrion. Their leathery wings often span 3 meters.

Packs range up to 100 creatures in size, but they do not all fly together. Generally, half the pack circles in one central group while the other half is dispersed over a radius of 10 - 15 kilometers, searching for food. When one of the scouts spots potential prey, it reverses the direction of its soaring from clockwise to counterclockwise (as viewed from the ground). The others race to the scene, and when the whole pack is assembled they drop to attack. Only if the potential prey is about to reach the cover of trees or rocks do the sky-shrikes on the scene attack early. Usually, their patience is extraordinary.

Sky-shrikes attack by diving at their prey, slashing with their razor-sharp teeth, and quickly climbing away. Thus, trees and jutting rocks provide good protection from their attacks. Pity the poor creature discovered on the open plains or mudflats by a pack of sky-shrikes!

FISH (harmless)

TYPES: Small and medium carnivore; small to giant herbivores
NUMBERS: 1 - 10,000
MOVE: Medium to very fast
IM/RS: 4/40 - 9/90
STAMINA: 5 - 1000
ATTACK: nil
SPECIAL DEFENSE: Varies, includes speed, camouflage, "ink" secretion, sea-shrike resemblance
HABITAT: Alcazzar—oceans, rivers, streams, lakes

Fish are common in all fresh and saltwater bodies on Alcazzar, except the highest glacial streams. They can usually be caught with a hook or net; but only about 50% of the types are palatable by human standards. None of the types included here are dangerous, but remember that sea-shrikes are found in all of these bodies of water too!

Alien Creatures file continues on p. 19

JANNISS ROBBEUR

RACE: Yazirian

STR/STA	70/60	PS	4
DEX/RS	50/50	IM	5
INT/LOG	45/45	RW	25
PER/LDR	50/40	M	35

Special Abilities:

Gliding, Battle Rage 25%, Night Vision

Skills: (Biosocial PSA)

Medical 5

Activate Freeze Field	80%
Administer Drugs	100%
Control Infection	100%
Cure Disease	90%
Diagnosis	100%
First Aid	100%
Major Surgery	70%
Minor Surgery	90%
Neutralize Toxin	80%

Psycho-social 3

Communication	70%
Empathy	40%
Hypnosis	45%
Persuasion	40%
Psycho-Pathology	60%

Technician 2

Deactivate Alarms/Def.
60% - 10 X alarm level

Detect Alarms/Def.
80% - 10 X alarm level

Open Locks
70% - 10 X lock level

Operate Machinery 70%

Repair Machinery 60%

Beam Weapons	4	65% to hit
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MEEBER ZLOOT

RACE: Dralasite

STR/STA	60/80	PS	3
DEX/RS	55/45	IM	5
INT/LOG	40/50	RW	28
PER/LDR	40/40	M	30

Special Abilities:

Form Change, Perception (10%)

Skills: (Military PSA)

Melee Weapons	4	70% to hit
Projectile Weapons	6	88% to hit
Thrown Weapons	3	58% to hit

Demolitions 4

Set Charge	70%
Defuse Charge	90% - 10 X skill level

Medical 2

Activate Freeze Field	50%
Administer Drugs	100%
Control Infection	70%
Cure Disease	60%
Diagnosis	80%
First Aid	100%
Major Surgery	40%
Minor Surgery	60%
Neutralize Toxin	50%

HORRADD WULLUBBER

RACE: Yazirian

STR/STA	45/55	PS	3
DEX/RS	60/50	IM	5
INT/LOG	55/45	RW	30
PER/LDR	40/40	M	30

Special Abilities:

Gliding, Battle Rage 15%, Night Vision

Skills: (Military PSA)

Projectile Weapons	5	80% to hit
Beam Weapons	5	80% to hit
Thrown Weapons	3	60% to hit
Melee Weapons	4	70% to hit

Technician 2

Deactivate Alarms/Def.
60% - 10 X alarm level

Detect Alarms/Def.
80% - 10 X alarm level

Open Locks
70% - 10 X lock level

Operate Machinery 70%

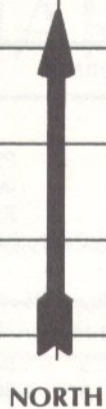
Repair Machinery 60%

Repair Comp. 70%

Manipulate prog.
80% - program level.

MAP 3. CDC COMPOUND

SCALE: 1 HEX = 2 METERS



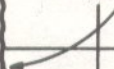
MAINTENANCE GARAGE

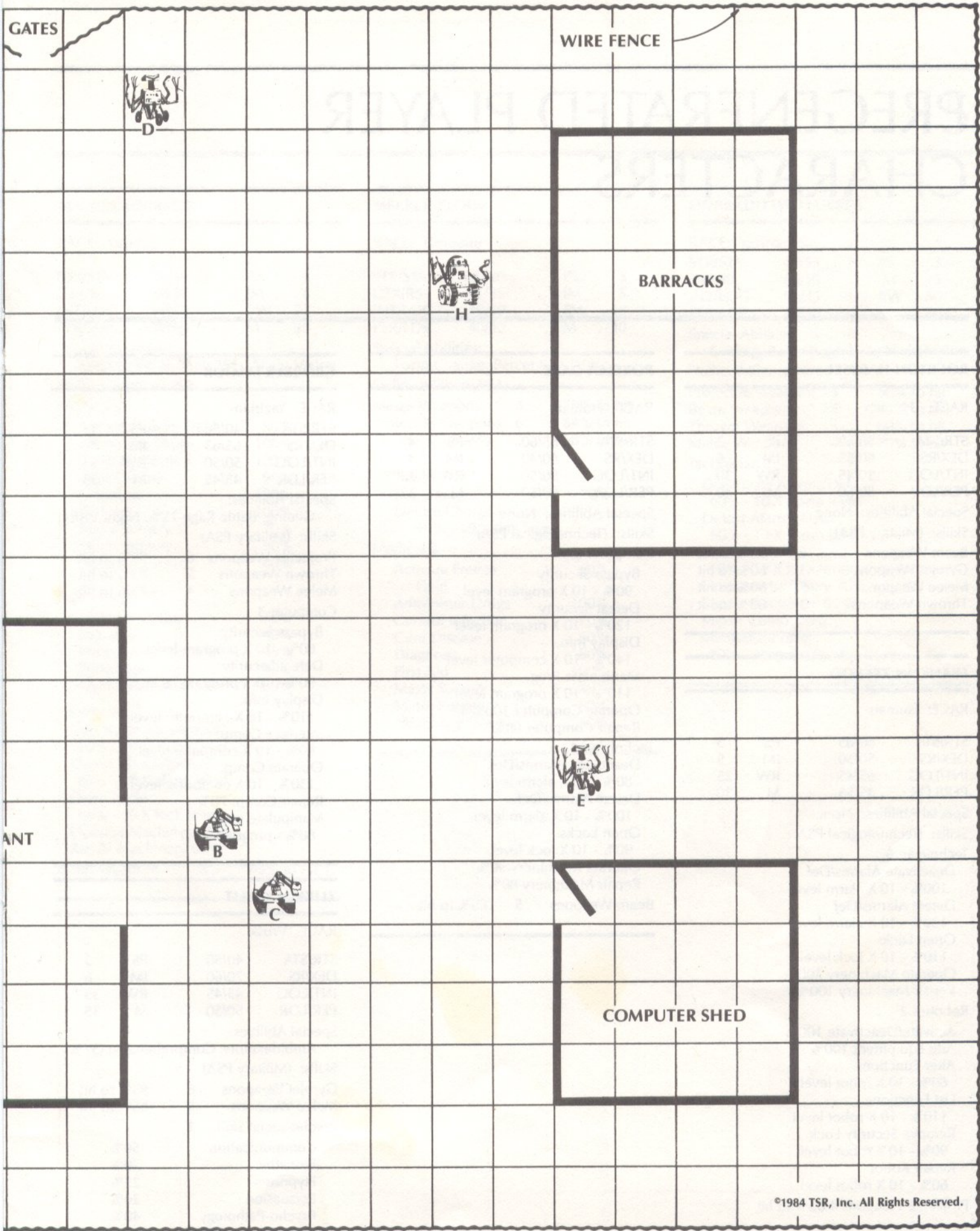


REACTOR

REACTOR AND PROCESSING PL

WIRE FENCE





PREGENERATED PLAYER CHARACTERS

ROCKTON HARTSEL

RACE: Human

STR/STA	50/60	PS	3
DEX/RS	60/55	IM	6
INT/LOG	50/45	RW	30
PER/LDR	50/60	M	30

Special Abilities: None

Skills: (Military PSA)

Beam Weapons	6	90% to hit
Gyrojet Weapons	3	60% to hit
Melee Weapons	5	80% to hit
Thrown Weapons	3	60% to hit

FRANKLIN ZEEROD

RACE: Human

STR/STA	60/65	PS	3
DEX/RS	50/50	IM	5
INT/LOG	55/45	RW	25
PER/LDR	45/55	M	30

Special Abilities: None

Skills: (Technological PSA)

Technician 6

- Deactivate Alarms/Def
100% - 10 X alarm level
- Detect Alarms/Def
120% - 10 X alarm level
- Open Locks
110% - 10 X lock level
- Operate Machinery 100%
- Repair Machinery 100%

Robotics 2

- Activate/Deactivate 100%
- Add Equipment 100%
- Alter Functions
80% - 10 X robot level
- List Functions
110% - 10 X robot level
- Remove Security Lock
90% - 10 X robot level
- Repair Robot
60% - 10 X robot level

Projectile Weapons 4 65% to hit

ROXELLA DARE

RACE: Human

STR/STA	65/60	PS	4
DEX/RS	50/40	IM	4
INT/LOG	50/50	RW	25
PER/LDR	60/50	M	33

Special Abilities: None

Skills: (Technological PSA)

Computer 6

- Bypass Security
90% - 10 X program level
- Defeat Security
120% - 10 X program level
- Display Info.
140% - 10 X computer level
- Manipulate Prog.
110% - 10 X program level
- Operate Computer 100%
- Repair Computer 00%

Technician 4

- Deactivate Alarms/Def.
80% - 10 X alarm level
- Detect Alarms/Def.
100% - 10 X alarm level
- Open Locks
90% - 10 X lock level
- Operate Machinery 90%
- Repair Machinery 80%

Beam Weapons 5 75% to hit

GROBBER JALOUB

RACE: Yazirian

STR/STA	40/50	PS	3
DEX/RS	65/65	IM	7
INT/LOG	50/50	RW	33
PER/LDR	45/45	M	33

Special Abilities:

Gliding, Battle Rage 25%, Night Vision

Skills: (Military PSA)

Projectile Weapons	6	93% to hit
Thrown Weapons	5	83% to hit
Melee Weapons	4	73% to hit

Computer 3

- Bypass Security
60% - 10 X program level
- Defeat Security
90% - 10 X program level
- Display Info.
110% - 10 X computer level
- Interface Comp.
60% - 10 X computer level
- Operate Comp.
130% - 10 X computer level
- Repair Comp. 70%
- Manipulate prog.
80% - program level

ZLIKK'N KTALT

RACE: Vrusk

STR/STA	40/50	PS	3
DEX/RS	70/60	IM	6
INT/LOG	45/45	RW	35
PER/LDR	50/50	M	35

Special Abilities:

Ambidexterity, Comprehension (37%)

Skills: (Military PSA)

Gyrojet Weapons	6	95% to hit
Melee Weapons	5	85% to hit

Psycho-social Skill 1

Communication	50%
Empathy	20%
Hypnosis	25%
Persuasion	20%
Psycho-Pathology	40%

FIRE LOCUST



TYPE: Tiny Herbivores (Insects)
 NUMBER: 1,000, Slow
 IM/RS: Not applicable
 STAMINA: 1
 ATTACK: 90
 DAMAGE: 4d10
 SPECIAL ATTACK: Acid burn
 SPECIAL DEFENSE: Large numbers
 NATIVE: Alcazzar—plains, mudflats,
 HABITAT: forests, moraines; summer season only

Fire locusts are large, hopping insects that secrete an extremely destructive acid. They travel over Alcazzar in huge chittering packs, clearing a swath up to 1 kilometer wide. Although they eat plants, any animals in their path face certain death unless somehow protected from the ravaging horde.

The acid secreted by Fire Locusts is so caustic that it burns any non-metallic material it contacts. Although the damage from one locust's burn equals only a fraction of a stamina point, the number of locusts in a swarm cause the listed damage to any creature not protected against the acid.

There are only two to three hordes of fire locusts swarming across Alcazzar at any one time. Despite their relative infrequency, the destructive potential of these bugs makes them a threat to all animals and most activities on the planet.

SEA-SHRIKE



TYPE: Giant Aquatic Carnivore
 NUMBER: 1
 MOVE: Fast
 IM/RS: 7/70
 STAMINA: 400
 ATTACK: 50
 DAMAGE: 15d10
 SPECIAL ATTACK: Tail flip
 SPECIAL DEFENSE: Soft cover while in water
 NATIVE: Alcazzar—lakes, major
 HABITAT: rivers, and oceans

Breeds of this monstrous fish thrive in both fresh and salt water. The adult ranges in length from 5 to more than 10 meters. This carnivorous beast is not a scavenger, but eats nearly anything that moves through the water. Small fish are the staple of the sea-shrikes's diet, but any unfortunate mammals that happen to enter the water may also be eaten.

The sea-shrike attacks a creature (or vehicle) on the surface of the water by jumping upward from the depths. In the first round, it bites. In the next round, it tries to hit its victim with its tail as it turns to dive again. If the tail hits a creature, that creature must make a successful Stamina check or be stunned for 1-10 turns. If a vehicle is struck, roll on the Vehicle Damage Table (Expanded Game Rules, p. 32).

After the first two-round attack, the sea-shrike dives and circles, coming up and repeating its attack 5-10 rounds later. Any creature (not vehicle) bitten by a sea-shrike, with an attack roll of 10 or less, is caught in the sea-shrike's mouth and carried to the bottom. The sea-shrike does not attack as long as it holds a victim in its mouth. To escape, the captured creature must break a wrestling hold with a -30 modifier.

SNOW SLOTH



TYPE: Large Carnivore
 NUMBERS: 1
 MOVE: Medium
 IM/RS: 3/30
 STA: 80
 ATTACK: 70
 DAMAGE: 5d10
 SPECIAL ATTACK: Squeeze
 SPECIAL DEFENSE: Camouflage/silent movement
 HABITAT: Alcazzar—western fringe of winter region

The snow sloth is the only animal known to prowl the snow fields during Alcazzar's winter. Growing up to 5 meters long, the sloth resembles a huge weasel with coarse white hair and stocky legs. Although not a fast runner, the sloth can lope for days at a time across snow, supported by its huge padded feet.

If the snow sloth strikes a victim with an attack roll lower than 20, the victim is held and squeezed. Each successive round the character takes 5d10 points of damage automatically until killed, or until the character successfully breaks a wrestling hold.

The snow sloth lives primarily by eating hibernating lokukku. It finds a tree where a tribe is spending the winter, breaks through an air hole and slithers down for a feast. In their lethargic state, the lokukku can rarely arouse themselves to fight, but if they do, the Snow Sloth is usually driven off.

LOKKUKU



TYPE:	Medium Omnivore
NUMBER:	5 -50
MOVE:	Fast
IM/RS:	6/55
STAMINA:	30
ATTACK:	30
DAMAGE:	2d10
SPECIAL ATTACK:	Trap
SPECIAL DEFENSE:	None
NATIVE	Alcazzar—forests,
HABITAT:	moraines; summer season only

These clever primates are the most intelligent natives of Alcazzar. They are found throughout the planet's fertile belt. Their appearance varies depending on the season. In spring, they emerge from a long hibernation with loose baggy skin and hair falling off in great patches. By autumn, their hair has grown back to full, bristly coats, and their bodies have become plump in preparation for hibernation. Lökkuku have flat, monkey-like faces, but no tails. The color of their fur varies from individual to individual, but is usually some shade of brown.

Lökkuku live in tribes of up to 50 individuals, always ruled by a dominant male. They have learned to use clubs and vines as weapons, and work together to hunt. Tribes live in the hollowed bases of karakah trees. Air holes, 20 or 30 meters up, let in fresh air during their winter hibernation.

Lökkuku resolve disputes over territory and food supplies with a system of warfare. Even though their weapons are primitive spears, lökkuku fight with great skill and savagery; many die in their wars.

Lökkuku are very curious. They do not attack new animals on sight, preferring to watch and see what develops. If treated to a display of "magic" (i.e. flashy technology),

they may even adopt an attitude of reverence toward the strangers. Of course, if any lökkuku are harmed, their vengeance is swift and merciless.

Perhaps the most bizarre aspect of lökkuku life is the ceremony of the "Kag-Gakka," a ritual party centered around highly fermented karakah fruit. The primates have found that when they harvest the fruit and store it in a dark place, it ferments into alcohol. To them, the fruit takes on "magical" properties. During the Kag-Gakka, an entire tribe gathers around the overripe fruit, pulling out and eating great fist fulls of pulp, until the situation is totally out of control. Lökkuku are capable of extreme violence or extreme affection at these times. Characters who try the fruit become violently ill for 1d10 hours.

GNAWHARE

TYPE:	Small Herbivore
NUMBER:	1 - 10
MOVE:	Fast
IM/RS:	6/60
STAMINA:	10
ATTACK:	None
DAMAGE:	None
NATIVE	Alcazzar—forests, plains,
HABITAT:	mudflats, moraines; summer season only

This speedy little rodent is covered with soft, brown fur. Its gleaming tiny eyes are set above a pair of huge teeth. Scurrying about on four legs, the gnawhare always seems in a hurry.

Subsisting on leaves and grasses, the gnawhare is no threat to animals, but its large teeth make it dangerous to inanimate objects that it might line its nest with. The gnawhare is possessed with an overwhelming curiosity, and is always looking for something new and unusual to carry off. It will chew off a piece of anything that is too big to carry, and haul the piece back to its burrow.

Rubber, fabrics, and soft plastics are all materials the gnawhare will use to coat its nest. If the PCs encounter these creatures, the gnawhares attempt to chew up a piece of equipment made of rubber, fabric, or soft plastic.

PCs will not encounter gnawhares while traveling. However, given enough time, gnawhares are fully capable of disabling a stopped vehicle.

HERBIVORES (harmless)

TYPES:	Small to large mammals
NUMBERS:	1 - 1,000
MOVEMENT:	Medium to very fast
IM/RS:	4/40 to 9/90
STAMINA:	10 - 400
ATTACKS:	nil
SPECIAL DEFENSE	Camouflage, odor secretion, flight, numbers
HABITAT:	Alcazzar—migratory paths cover all terrain; summer half only

Alcazzar is the home of a wide variety of grazing animals that are no threat to other animals. These range from large herds of bison-like creatures to small flying animals that resemble a cross between a rabbit and a bat.

These animals either migrate (the most common technique) or hibernate to survive the winter. Great herds have worn regular paths around the planet by following the same route each year. Naturally, the planet's carnivores follow these paths for the plentiful food they offer.

Many of Alcazzar's herbivores are edible by the four races. Those that are not edible are not poisonous, simply bad tasting.

INSECTS (harmless)

TYPES:	Tiny herbivores or carnivore
NUMBERS:	millions
MOVE:	slow to very fast
IM/RS:	1/10 - 9/90
STA:	1 - 4
ATTACKS SPECIAL	
DEFENSES:	flight, camouflage
HABITAT:	Alcazzar—all terrain; summer season only

Insects of virtually every shape, size, and color range the planet, often rising in clouds thick enough to cause temporary darkness and make breathing difficult. Some types are very noisy, and others are large (30 centimeters long), for insects. None of the insects, except the Fire Locusts, present a threat to large creatures. Insects are nearly always present in all terrain types during the summer season.

Many insects look grotesque by most standards, with bulging eyes and thick, furry bodies. None would be considered edible except under the most dire circumstances.

continues to accumulate until they die.

Radiation damage cannot be healed during this adventure. Thus, points lost in this encounter have the effect of permanently lowering the Staminas of the characters involved. Note that all characters in the building take damage equally.

There is nothing of value to characters in this building. If they look around, describe masses of heavily wired machinery, huge vats for melting rock, and large crushing and separating machines. There are a few tools lying about. The tools have become radioactive. Characters who pick one up suffer one additional point of damage every turn they hold it or store it on their persons.

After the radiation is discovered, technicians outside the building can tell that the reactor has been fused.

If the characters decide to build an atom bomb, or otherwise use the radioactive wastes in the building, inform them that contamination puts any such attempt out of the question. (Also, the UPF charter calls for severe sanctions against any group using nuclear weapons!)

A small room to the left of the main door houses the subspace radio and radar apparatus of the compound. Both devices are smashed beyond repair.

MAINTENANCE GARAGE

The doors to this large single room are open, revealing three parked explorers and the remains of a blown-up aircar. The explorers do not appear damaged. In addition to the hole in the wall that the characters could see from outside the compound, this building has a number of blast holes in the roof. The metal sheeting around these holes points downward, indicating to a thoughtful character that the attack came from above. One of these holes is directly above an undamaged explorer. The vehicles were outside the compound during the Streel attack and were moved into the garage later.

The explorers are typical examples of this type of vehicle. Each can carry six passengers (including human-sized robots), and has three entry/exit points. A small door at the right front of the vehicle leads to the driver's seat; a large, double door at the back, allows large items to be loaded and unloaded; and a small hatchway in the center of the roof allows one character to ride with the upper part of his body outside the vehicle. The explorers can carry two extra passengers on top, if necessary.

The Streel attackers booby-trapped the middle explorer with a 200 gram-charge of

Tornadium D-19 and a detonator. The charge is inside the vehicle, but the detonator is attached underneath the explorer's body, connected to the parabattery in the rear. The trap is level 3.

If the explorer is started before the trap is deactivated, the charge explodes, causing 100 points of damage to characters inside the vehicle. Everyone outside the explorer within 4 meters takes 2d10 points of damage from the explosion. Inertia screens and skein suits halve this damage; characters with both suffer only quarter damage.

The trapped explorer is parked directly over the hidden weapons cache at the center of the garage. That explorer must be moved before the PCs can reach the cache. The other two explorers are parked on each side of the middle one. The blown-up aircar rests against the north wall.

If a technician tries to deactivate the booby-trap, but fails his deactivation roll by 10% or less, he realizes that he failed, but does not set off the explosive. In this case, another technician can try to deactivate the trap. If any deactivation attempt fails by more than 10% (or rolls "00") the explosive detonates. Technicians must deactivate the trap from outside the vehicle.

A demolitions expert may attempt to defuse the charge from inside the vehicle. The charge was set by a character with 3rd level demolition skill.

If the explosive detonates in the explorer, the vehicle is damaged beyond repair. Even then, another explorer can tow it out of the way to allow the characters access to the weapons cache.

The weapons are hidden beneath a plasticrete slab that matches the rest of the floor. Any technician can automatically locate the switch that moves the slab. Beneath it, still in their transportation crates, are the items listed in table 4.

**TABLE 4. CDC COMPOUND
WEAPONS CACHE**

Players should note on their character record sheets all additional items their characters carry from this cache.

- 20 power beltpacks (50 SEU)
- 10 power backpacks (100 SEU)
- 2 heavy lasers
- 2 recoilless rifles
- 25 recoilless shells
- 2 rocket launchers
- 20 rockets (for rocket launcher)
- 3 heavy weapon swivel mounts*
- 20 bulletclips for each PC's rifle and pistol
- 20 jetclips for each PC's rifle and pistol

*The swivel mounts fit easily around the roof hatch of any explorer. A technician needs one hour to install a swivel mount and one heavy weapon on an explorer. No more than one heavy weapon can be mounted on one of these vehicles.

Delta .4 PREPARING TO LEAVE

If the players do not figure out that their next objective is to shut down the Streel operation on Alcazzar, you do not need to clue them in. The PCs may occupy time around the CDC compound in whatever manner they wish, but they will not achieve their second objective that way.

STREEL AIRCAR ATTACK

If the PCs decide to leave the CDC compound, a Streel aircar attacks them as soon as they are ready to leave. If the PCs are on foot, or in explorers with their upper hatches open, determine initiative normally. Use the aircar pilot's initiative modifier. If this encounter occurs at night or when the characters are all inside vehicles, the aircar gains surprise.

The Streel aircar is armed with a recoilless rifle, and carries 10 rounds of ammunition. The attack continues until the aircar is shot down or runs out of ammunition and returns to the Streel compound. The Streel insignia is clearly visible on the side of the aircar.

The aircar approaches at 400 kilometers per hour (kph) and 50 meters altitude. As it races past the compound, the gunner fires one shot at an explorer. Then the aircar circles the compound at 100 kph, firing at the PCs and their vehicles.

When firing at a flying vehicle, players need not combine the "target is in vehicle" and "target is flying" modifiers; they should use only the "target is flying" modifier (-10).

Streel Aircar Pilot, Human
IM/RS 4/40

Streel Aircar Gunner, Human
DEX 50; 4th level projectile weapons
skill (base 65% to hit)

Use the Vehicle Damage Table (Expanded Game Rules, p. 32) to calculate the effects of hits on an explorer. Use the Aerial Combat Table (p. 33) to determine the effects of hits on the aircar. If the aircar is shot down, the two humans aboard are automatically killed, and the aircar is destroyed.

EPSILON SECTION: CROSS-COUNTRY

These are planned encounters the PCs should have while traveling to the Strel compound. Refer to Beta .1 for terrain effects as necessary. Also use the random encounter tables on p. 32 to determine random encounters.

The PCs must decide whether to travel on foot or in explorers. If they travel in explorers, find out if all the characters are "buttoned up" inside the vehicles or if characters are standing in the hatchways, ready to use the heavy weapon that may be mounted there.

Epsilon .1 THE GWERRAH

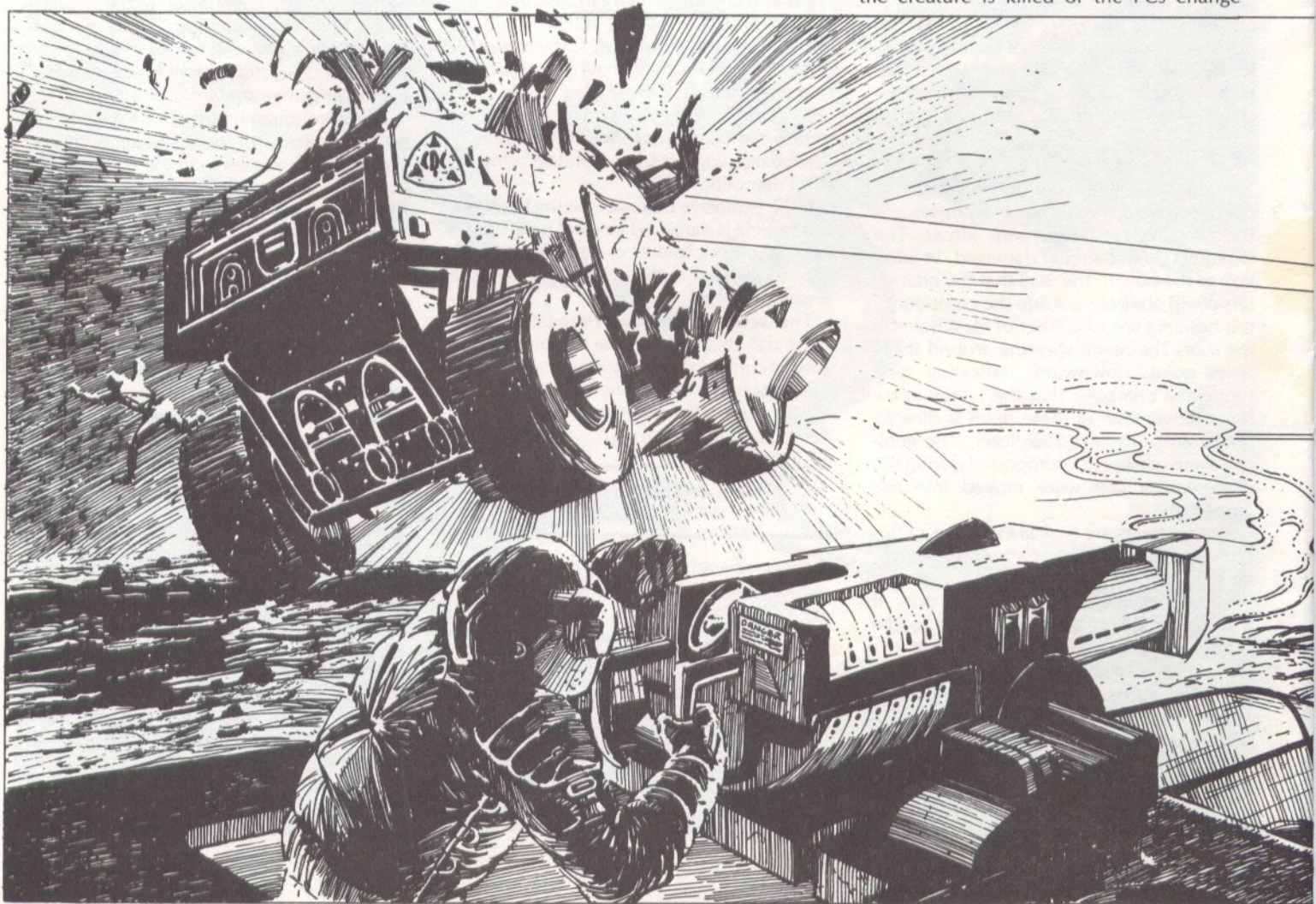
This encounter should occur in the first moraine hex the characters enter. They meet a gwerrah there, regardless of whether they travel on foot or by explorer.

Gwerrah

MV medium; IM/RS 4/40; STA 800; ATT 40; DM 20d10 to individuals, use the Vehicle Damage Table (Expanded Game Rules, p.32) if attack is made against an explorer; SA none; SD none

The gwerrah lumbers around a hill in front of the characters. The first character that sights it must make an immediate surprise check. If vehicles are traveling side-by-side instead of single file, all drivers must check.

The gwerrah utters an earth-shaking bellow, and charges toward the party, making its first attack one turn after it is sighted. The explorers require one turn to turn around and two turns to outrun the creature. Thus, the gwerrah attacks at least three times. If the PCs are surprised, the gwerrah can attack four times. If the PCs choose to fight instead of retreat, the fight continues until the creature is killed or the PCs change



their minds and retreat. Once the characters decide to retreat, their explorers still need two turns to outrun the gwerrah.

If the characters do not kill the gwerrah, they may not leave the hex where they encountered it in the direction they originally intended to go; they must choose an alternate route around that hex. If the PCs kill the gwerrah, they may cross two more moraine hexes with no encounters. When they enter the third moraine hex, however, another gwerrah confronts them. They continue to encounter a gwerrah in every third hex, as long as they remain in (or re-enter) moraines.

Epsilon .2 THE SKY-SHRIKES

Sky-shrikes never attack characters in explorers. If the characters travel on foot in the plains (day or night), sky-shrikes

attack them frequently, and in steadily increasing numbers. The sky-shrikes swoop down to land on characters' heads, slashing with their razor sharp front claws and biting with powerful jaws.

Sky-shrikes

MV Very Fast (in air); IM/RS 7/70; STA 35;
ATT 70; DM 2d10; SA none; SD none

In the first encounter, four sky-shrikes attack the PCs as soon as they move farther than 2 kilometers from the CDC compound. The sky-shrikes fight to the death. If the characters advance another kilometer, eight of the flying mammals attack. After another kilometer, 15 sky-shrikes swoop down; and finally 30 attack. Then, 30 sky-shrikes attack each time the party travels 1 kilometer in any direction. The attacks stop when the characters return to within 2 kilometers of the CDC compound, or leave the plains.

Epsilon .3 STREEL MOBILE FORCE

Use this encounter if the the PCs cross a river or lake in explorers. The water where they decide to cross is about 6 meters lower than the land on both sides. The explorers can easily descend and climb the banks. As the explorers climb the bank on the far side (after crossing the water), the battle begins.

The Streel forces attack the PCs with four ground cars and two jetcopters. Each vehicle has a driver and a gunner, and is armed with a heavy weapon, indicated on table 5, below. Table 5 lists each Streel vehicle, its weapon, the base number its gunner needs to hit, and the driver's Reaction Speed. For initiative determination, the Streel side always gets an IM of 6.

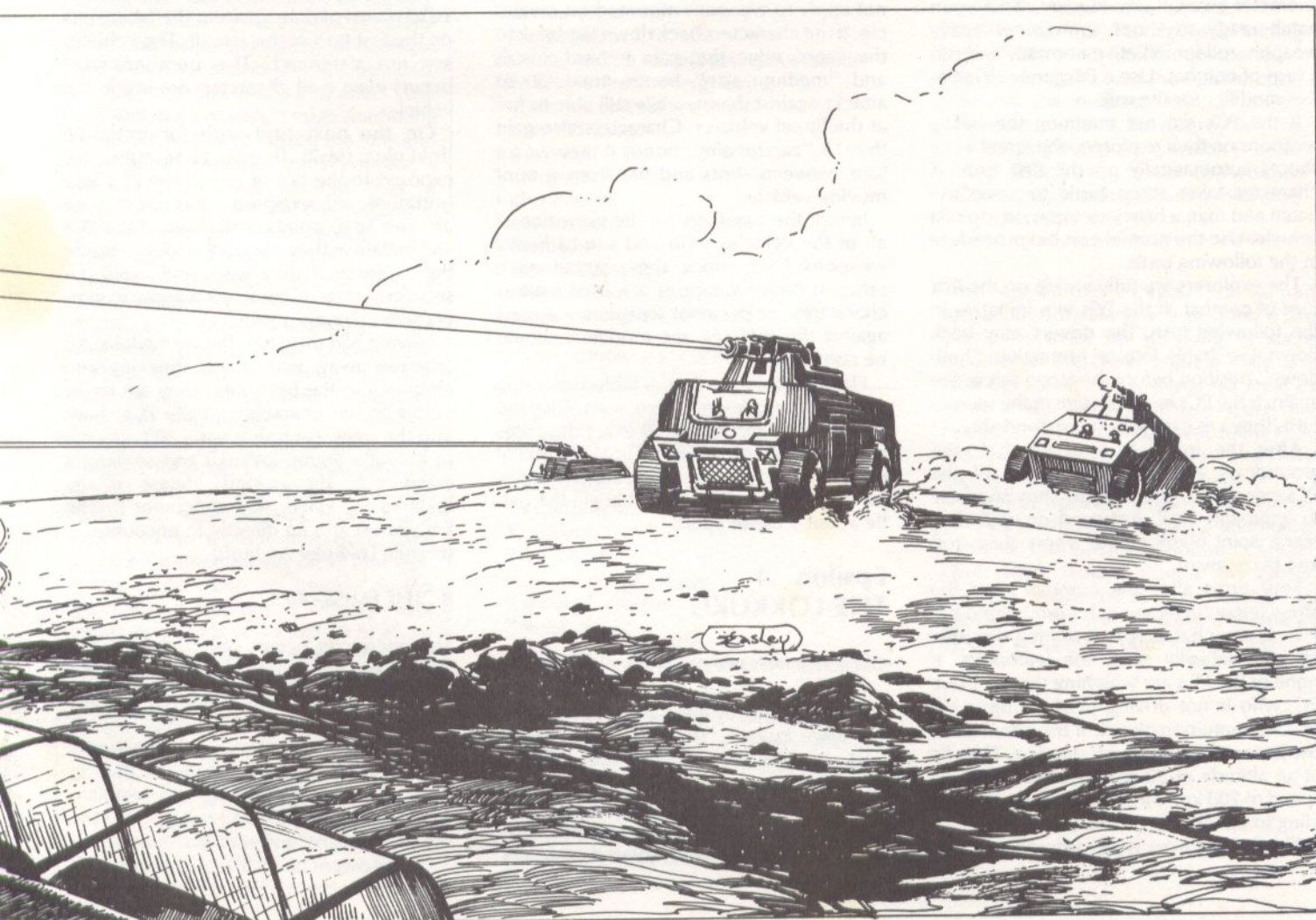


TABLE 5. STREEL MOBILE FORCE

VEHICLE*	WEAPON**	% TO HIT	DAMAGE	DRIVER RS
Groundcar A	Recoilless Rifle	50%	12d10	45
Groundcar B	Recoilless Rifle	65%	12d10	40
Groundcar C	Rocket Launcher	60%	15d10	35
Groundcar D	Heavy Laser	70%	15d10	55
Jetcopter A	Machine Gun	80%***	10d10	50
Jetcopter B	Heavy Laser	65%	15d10	55

*Use only groundcars A, B, & C, if the PCs have fewer than 3 explorers.

**Each weapon has enough ammunition for 10 shots.

***Includes "burst" modifier.

The Streel force fights this battle as a vehicle combat, shooting at the explorers as long as the PCs are in them. Of course, the PCs may leave their vehicles or remain with them as they wish.

When the explorers reach the top of the bank, the Streel groundcars are spotted 1 kilometer away. If any PCs are in an open hatch ready to shoot a mounted heavy weapon, roll for initiative normally and run a turn of combat. Use a PC gunner's initiative modifier for the roll.

If the PCs are not manning the heavy weapons on their explorers, the Streel force shoots automatically on the first turn. A character takes three turns to open the hatch and man a heavy weapon on top of a vehicle. Use the normal combat procedure in the following turns.

The explorers are fully visible on the first turn of combat. If the PCs win initiative in the following turn, the drivers may back down the bank into a protective "hull-down" position before the Streel forces fire again. If the PCs lose initiative in the second turn, they are exposed to a second shot.

After the initial turn of combat, the groundcars advance directly toward the PCs, accelerating to 80 kph. They continue to approach until destroyed or until they reach point blank range, where they stop and blaze away.

Four turns after the combat starts the Streel jetcopters approach from behind the PCs. If any character is watching the rear, he automatically spots the jetcopters. If none of the PCs are watching the rear, one PC, who is not driving or shooting, must make an intuition check. If the check fails, the jetcopters attack with surprise. They fly at an altitude of 50 meters and maintain a speed of 200 kph throughout the battle, circling to attack every three turns.

The Streel forces were ordered to elimi-

nate the CDC party, so the crews of all vehicles will fight to the death. Do not allow the PCs to take any prisoners in this battle—if a Streel vehicle is destroyed, its crew is killed.

Calculate all modifiers for target and attacker movement, range, and cover. The -20 modifier for "Attacker in Vehicle" does not apply to weapons mounted on a vehicle. If the characters back down the bank to the water's edge, they gain a "hard cover" and "medium size" bonus (total -30 to attacks against them), while still able to fire at the Streel vehicles. Characters also gain the +15 "careful aim" bonus if they wait a turn between shots and fire from a non-moving vehicle.

Ignore the modifiers for the giant size of all of the vehicles (+10) and use of heavy weapons (-10), since they cancel each other. If heavy weapons are used against characters, or personal weapons are used against the vehicles, the modifiers should be considered.

Play this encounter on a table top, using counters to represent the vehicles. Give the players distances orally, so exact distances between the counters is not of critical importance. If possible, the counters representing the two sides should begin the battle about 1 meter apart.

Epsilon .4 THE LOKKUKU

GENERAL INFORMATION

Lokkuku are highly intelligent beings with a stone-age culture. The Streel Corporation enslaved over 100 lokkuku—in violation of the UPF charter—and now forces them to work in the mines. A large number of lokkuku live in the woods around the Streel compound, harassing isolated workers.

But, the lokkuku lack the technology to attack the heavy weapons and defenses of the outpost.

If the characters do not overreact to the playful bombardment of young lokkuku (in encounter A, below), and make an attempt to communicate with the tribal leaders (in encounter B, below), the lokkuku will prove an invaluable ally in breaching the Streel defenses. If the characters make enemies of the lokkuku, they have probably doomed their expedition to failure.

A. THE PLAYFUL AMBUSH

Use this encounter as soon as the PCs enter the woods near the Streel compound. Several dozen young lokkuku, completely hidden in the trees above the party, shower the party with hard, heavy karakah fruit pits. These youngsters are acting without the consent or knowledge of the older lokkuku. The PCs are surprised by this attack.

Characters walking, or riding outside an explorer (including in the upper hatch) take 1d10 points of damage from the falling pits on the first turn of the assault. The vehicles are not damaged. The bombardment occurs even if all characters are inside the vehicles.

On the next turn, roll for initiative (lokkuku IM=7) if any characters are exposed to the falling pits. If the PCs lose initiative, all exposed characters take another 1d10 points of damage. If the PCs win initiative, they can duck under or inside the explorers if they wish, and avoid the second barrage. Characters without explorers suffer damage again.

Having had their fun, the young lokkuku scamper away, with much shrieking and chittering in the branches. They are never visible to the characters. If the PCs shoot into the trees, each shot has a 50% chance of hitting a young lokkuku and sending it crashing to the ground, lifeless. If any lokkuku are killed, skip encounter B (The Emissaries) and go directly to encounter C (Hostile Lokkuku Ambush).

B. THE EMISSARIES

This encounter occurs only if the PCs did not kill any young lokkuku in encounter A (The Playful Ambush).

continue on p. 26



Your path through the huge tree trunks is suddenly blocked by a half dozen lokkuku. The furry creatures are easily recognizable from the trivid image you saw in your briefing on Cassidine. Each creature stands about a meter and a half tall, and all six are standing on their hind legs. They are not holding anything in their ape-like hands.

The lokkuku stand perfectly still, staring at you with wide, unblinking eyes. The largest one suddenly makes a harsh sound like grinding ground-truck gears. The shadowy shapes of many other lokkuku are becoming visible in the forest on both sides of you, as well in the trees above.

Any act by any character that could seem dangerous to the lokkuku (whether or not it actually causes harm) causes all the creatures to flee quickly. If that happens, do not finish this encounter, go immediately to encounter C (Hostile Lokkuku Ambush).

If the characters try to veer around the lokkuku, six more step in front of them. If the party tries to drive over them, the lokkuku wait until the last second before dodging out of the way, then flee. If they flee, go immediately to encounter C.

If a psycho-socialist attempts to empathize with the lokkuku, he determines that their attitude is "cautious" and, somehow, "expectant." If a PC makes a successful communication roll, that PC and the lokkuku may exchange two-word messages. The lokkuku will try to describe the status of their comrades enslaved by Streel, as well as the fact that the lokkuku are the friends of anyone who wish to harm the Streel compound. The lokkuku even invite the characters to their primitive village, which is located nearby in a number of huge, hollowed out tree trunks and stumps.

The trunks of the karakah trees are large enough to hold many lokkuku at once. Many older karakah trees become hollowed out through rotting, not because of work by the lokkuku. One of these trees in each village is used to store karakah fruit for the Kag-Gakka, and smells much like a distillery (see Alien Creatures Update File for more about the Kag-Gakka).

If the characters attempt to program their poly-vox with the lokkuku language, the device can translate after 25 hours of constant exposure to the lokkuku.

If the lokkuku ally with the PCs, do not

use encounter C (Hostile Lokkuku Ambush).

C. HOSTILE LOKKUKU AMBUSH

Use this encounter if the PCs do not establish friendly relations with the lokkuku.

One of the explorers—the last one, if they are traveling single file—is caught in a lokkuku trap. This trap is made of several stout vines, well-camouflaged on the ground across the explorer's path. When the vehicle drives over the vines, huge logs attached to the vines are released from high up in the trees. The weight of the logs pulls the vines over high branches, hoisting the explorer 3 meters into the air and holding it there, quite helpless.

Nearby, 200 lokkuku are gathered in the trees and underbrush. As soon as the explorer is lifted, 50 lokkuku rush out and pile brush and dried wood under the vehicle. Any successful hit by a PC weapon kills one of the creatures.

The other 150 lokkuku wait in the trees around the captured explorer. They are armed with many stone-tipped spears that they throw at characters who show any portion of their bodies outside of the vehicle. In each shower of spears, 1d10 spears hit fully exposed characters, causing 4 points of damage each. Only 1d5 spears hit partially exposed characters.

The spear-bearing lokkuku also attack characters on foot, or exposed while riding in other explorers. The shower of spears is repeated each turn that the lokkuku have a target, until three volleys are thrown. Then, four turns pass while the lokkuku recover their spears. No attacks are made on PCs during these four turns. The attacks begin again as soon as the lokkuku are rearmed and a target presents itself.

If the characters figure out some way to free the explorer, roll 1d10. On a roll of 1-3, the explorer drops to the ground, landing upright; on a roll of 4-7, the explorer lands on its side and cannot move. If the PCs attempt to shoot the vines, give them a straight -30 modifier in addition to range modifiers. Any hit breaks a vine; if two vines are broken, the explorer falls. The PCs automatically hit the vines if they slash at them with blade weapons. The vines break after taking 25 points of damage.

Ten turns after the explorer is hoisted, the brush underneath it is set ablaze. Characters inside the vehicle begin to feel the heat 10 turns later. After 15 turns, each character in the explorer takes 1d10 points of heat

damage per turn.

Eighteen turns after the fire starts, the vines supporting the explorer burn through. The vehicle falls into the fire, landing upright if 1-3 is rolled on 1d10. Characters inside take 1d10 points of damage from the fall, as well as another 1d10 from heat. If the vehicle lands upright, any technician that is still conscious can drive it out of the fire with no further damage. If it lands on its side, however (4-10 on 1d10), characters leaving the vehicle take 3d10 points of damage from the fire before escaping from the flames.

If another explorer is nearby, surviving characters could possibly reach it. If the lokkuku have spears at this point, however, characters emerging from the burning explorer must also contend with 1d10 spear hits per turn until the lokkuku run out of spears or the characters reach the safety of another explorer.

The lokkuku try to repeat this ambush every 2 kilometers, as long as there are explorers left, and the party remains in the forest. After the first attack PCs can avoid further ambushes by taking an unpredictable or zig-zag course through forest. Unless the players state that the PCs take some kind of evasive action, another explorer will be strung up and roasted.

ZETA SECTION: THE STREEL COMPOUND

Unlike the CDC outpost, the Streeel Corporation centered its operation in a large, fortress-like building. The building is surrounded by a heavy chain-link security fence and defended by a number of strategically placed machine guns.

Let the players use the Fort map (from your STAR FRONTIERS® game box) for the Streeel compound. One square equals 5 meters on this map. Map 4 shows you details of the Streeel compound and building that the PCs don't know about yet.

There are 28 armed guards and 20 unarmed workers in the compound. Another 20 unarmed workers are at the mine. Statistics and locations for these NPCs are given in the following descriptions and in Zeta .2.

Zeta .1 OUTSIDE THE STREEL COMPOUND

THE MINE

The mines are operational all the time, so one shift of workers is always on duty, while the other shift rests in the compound.

The mining is conducted on the riverbed several kilometers upstream and downstream from the compound. When the PCs arrive, 20 workers and their equipment are 2 kilometers upstream from the compound.

The workers, including members of all four races, are operating four ground trucks, three heavy duty robots, and a maintenance robot. The workers are not armed, and there are no guards about. If attacked, these workers surrender without a fight. Captured workers will not acknowledge the existence of the tunnel into the compound.

THE PERIMETER

Streeel workers cleared the forest away from their compound to a distance of 100 meters on the north, east, and south sides. To the west, a huge, low hill of tailings covers the ground between the compound and the river. At each corner of the perimeter fence is a 4-meter-tall tower with two ma-

chine guns mounted in it. Two guards man the machine guns in each tower at all times. One guard in each tower wears infra-red goggles. Every approach across the open area—including the tailings—is covered by two of these guns. The machine guns will not run out of ammunition during a PC attack.

The machine guns cannot be swiveled around to fire into the compound without removing them from their mounts and carrying them across the tower. This procedure takes three turns.

*8 machine gunners, 5 Yazirians, 3 Humans
RW 60, M 70, PS 3, IM 5, RS 45, STA 45*

The security fence is 3 meters tall and charged with enough electricity to inflict 5d10 points of damage per turn upon characters touching it, or riding in a vehicle that touches it. An explorer can push through the fence in three turns. Once part of the fence is down, all its electricity shuts off. Characters in gauss screens take no damage from the fence, and can try to climb it. Characters take four turns to climb the fence and are exposed to machine gun fire while climbing.

The PCs can cut the fence with laser fire, but only if they try to. They must destroy 100 hundred structure points to cut a 1-meter slit. The Streeel guards always fire through the fence without damaging it.

The gates in the fence are solid steel, and nothing short of a heavy tank can knock them down. The gate's lock is level 3. Any technician attempting to pick it has a -20 modifier because he is under fire from two machine guns. (Unless the guns are knocked out and no guards are firing at the technician from within the compound.)

A tunnel leads from the river under the tailings and the fence into the compound, west of the reactor room. Several pipes run through this tunnel, supplying water to cool the reactor. There is just enough room in the tunnel for a character to squirm through between the pipes. The tunnel ends and opens into the compound about 7 meters from the reactor room. The pipes continue over ground into the building. The PCs will

not locate the tunnel unless the lokkuku ally with them, in which case the lokkuku point it out to the characters.

Zeta .2 INSIDE THE STREEL COMPOUND

Half the guards in the guard room and all the officers will investigate any explosion in the compound.

Many rooms are described with people in them. Those occupants are inside their rooms at all times (except when guards have been summoned by an alarm).

GUARDROOM

The outer doors to this room are protected by a level 4 lock. Inside the room, unless alerted by a disturbance outside, are 12 guards.

6 guards, Humans

*RW 50, M 60, PS 3, IM 5, RS 50, STA 40;
laser rifles (50 SEU backpacks), electric
swords (20 SEU clip), skein suits, albedo
screens (powered by backpacks)*

6 guards, Yazirian

*RW 60, M 40, PS 2, IM 6, RS 60, STA 35;
automatic rifles (40 rounds), sonic
swords (20 SEU clips), skein suits; gauss
screens (20 SEU clips); battle rage: 20%
each*

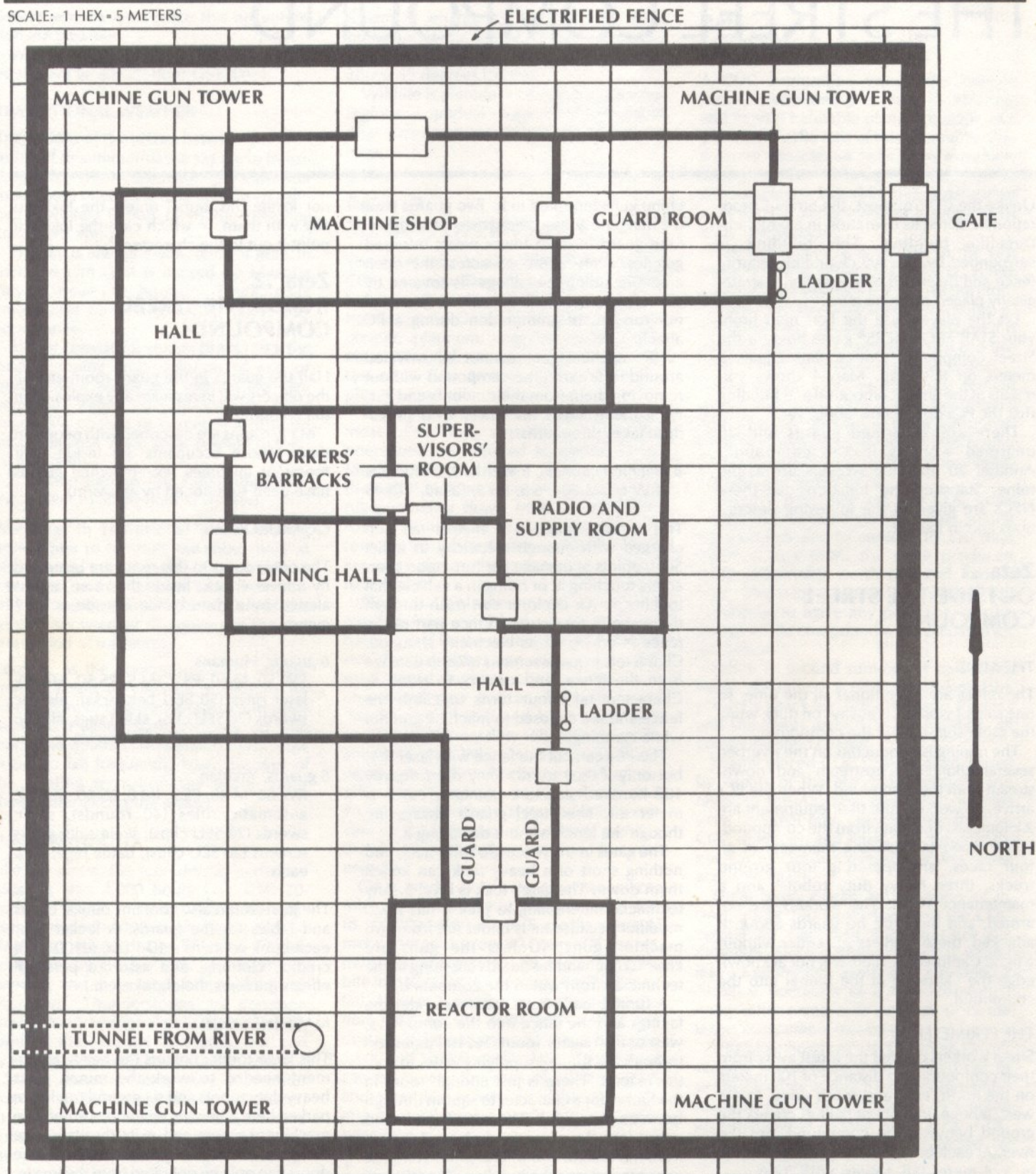
The guardroom also contains bunks, chairs and tables for the guards. A locker near each bunk contains a 10-1,000 (d100 x 10) credits, clothing, and assorted personal effects (pictures, holobooks, etc.)

MACHINE SHOP

This large room contains the heavy equipment needed to work the mines. Four heavy duty robots and six ground trucks are parked here when the characters enter. The machinery enters and exits through large doors in the north wall of the room. Those doors can only be operated from the inside.

MAP 4. STREEL COMPOUND

SCALE: 1 HEX = 5 METERS



They have 200 structure points apiece. Tell the players about these doors because they are not on the players' map. Each piece of equipment can be destroyed by a 500 gram charge of Tornadium D-19.

WORKERS' BARRACKS

Twenty technicians and laborers are resting in this room. They are all unarmed and defenseless, and will not join in any combat. If the PCs attack them, give each worker 35 Stamina points.

The room contains the bunks and personal effects that belong to these workers and the other 20 workers currently on duty. None of the personal effects will be of use to the PCs. This room also contains the compound's computer. It is a basic, 2nd level device, used only to run the maintenance and food preparation aspects of the operation.

DINING HALL

This room contains four long tables, each flanked by a pair of benches. An automatic kitchen stands at the far end, along with four maintenance robots. The robots are programmed to take orders and serve food. They politely move forward if PCs enter the room, asking the PCs what they want to eat. These robots are not programmed to take combative action of any sort. A huge storage vault next to the kitchen contains dehydrated foods of all kinds.

SUPERVISORS' ROOM

This room is the quarters of the officers in charge of the Streel operation. Unless they have been called to a disturbance in the compound or reactor room, they are in this room. The room is equipped with a camera that shows the hallway approaching the reactor room. The officers here will be aware of any PCs in that hallway, and will immediately run out and attack them.

This room also contains five bunks, a table, five chairs, and the officers' personal effects (useless to the PCs).

Captain, Yazirian male

RW 80, M 80, PS 3, IM 7, RS 65, STA 55; gyrojet rifle (20 rounds), auto pistol (40 rounds), sonic knife (20 SEU clip), skein-suit, inertia screen (50 SEU beltpack)

1st Lieutenant, Yazirian female

RW 65, M 70, PS 3, IM 5, RS 45, STA 40; laser rifle (100 SEU backpack), sonic sword (20 SEU clip), skeinsuit, albedo screen (same backpack as rifle)

2nd Lieutenant, Vrusk male

RW 60, M 45, PS 2, IM 6, RS 60, STA 40; 4 fragment grenades, auto pistol (40 rounds), vibroknife (20 SEU clip), skein-suit, albedo screen (50 SEU beltpack)

1st Goon, Human male

RW 55, M 80, PS 4, IM 4, RS 40, STA 65; electrostunner (20 SEU clip), 2 tangler grenades, stunstick (20 SEU clip), skein-suit, inertia screen (50 SEU beltpack)

2nd Goon, Dralasite

RW 50, M 75, PS 4, IM 4, RS 35, STA 70; needler pistol (10 shots), sonic sword (20 SEU clip), stunstick (20 SEU clip), skein-suit, inertia screen (50 SEU beltpack)

RADIO AND SUPPLY ROOM

The door to this room is secured with a level 2 lock. Within, a technician is always on duty, monitoring both the subspace radio and radiophone.

technician/radio operator, Human

RW 50; M 40; PS 2; IM 4; RS 40; STA 45; laser pistol, stunstick (2 20 SEU clips), skeinsuit

Most of the space in the room is used for supply storage. The supplies kept here are listed in table 6.

TABLE 6. STREEL SUPPLIES

4 type 4 parabatteries
10 type 3 parabatteries
7 type 2 parabatteries
50 gas masks
10 kilograms of Tornadium D-19*
20 weeks food supplies for entire staff
4 freeze fields
1 grenade launcher
24 grenades of each type
1,000 clips of SEU ammo
1,000 clips of bullet ammo

* Exploding all this Tornadium D-19 at once will destroy the Streel compound, except the reactor building. See REACTOR ROOM, below, for the results of explosions inside the reactor room.

REACTOR ROOM

This large room houses the reactor that powers the Streel operation. The door to this room is protected by a level 4 lock, as is

the door from the hall to the outside. Two guards are on duty in the hall outside the reactor room.

2 guards, Humans

RW 40, M 50, PS 2, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40; laser rifles (50 SEU beltpacks), vibroknives (20 SEU clip), skeinsuits, albedo screens (powered by beltpacks, above)

The walls of this room are steel-reinforced plasticrete with 350 structure points.

Within the room, the reactor core is surrounded by electrical generators and the machinery that controls the mixture of radioactive pellets and coolant. A 6th level technician can manipulate the machinery in 1d10 minutes to fuse the entire reactor core into worthless radioactive slag.

The PCs can also destroy the reactor with 500 grams of Tornadium D-19. However, any attempt to use explosives to damage the reactor or its machinery activates an automatic safety system that shuts the reactor down. *The PCs cannot in any way cause an atomic explosion.* As soon as demolition charges explode on or near the reactor, this room fills with dangerous radioactivity. The radioactivity causes 1d10 points of damage each turn to any character in the room. All this information is common knowledge to technicians.

Zeta .3

ATTACKING THE STREEL COMPOUND

ATTACKING WITHOUT THE LOKKUKU

If the PCs are not allied with the lokkuku, and survived the lokkuku ambushes, they may attack the compound in whatever manner they wish. As soon as the guards in the towers sight a PC—which they must do as soon as any PC leaves the forest and approaches the compound—all the guards and officers in the compound take up positions on the building's roof (4 meters high), facing the direction the PCs are approaching from. They add their firepower to that of the machine guns in the towers. Ladders on the building allow the Streel guards to climb to the roof quickly.

ATTACKING WITH THE LOKKUKU

If the lokkuku ally with the PCs, they gladly tell the PCs about the tunnel that snakes through the tailings and passes under the south end of the fence on the west side of

the compound. If the PCs enter the compound through the tunnel, they can reach the door to the hall outside the reactor room undetected.

This door is secured with a level 4 lock. If the PCs enter here, the guards outside the reactor room attack them immediately; the officers in the supervisors' room join the attack two turns later. The guards in the guard room run down the hall and join the fight six turns after it begins, unless a lokkuku diversion was arranged.

If the PCs ask them, the lokkuku agree to attack the outside of the compound at a set time. Their attack will draw all the guards from the guard room to the roof, but not the

officers and the two guards at the reactor room—the PCs must deal with them.

If the diversionary attack is aided by some PCs with heavy weapons, then the 2nd Lieutenant and the two goons from the supervisors' room also climb to the roof. The Captain and 1st Lieutenant are always in the supervisors' room if any PCs enter the fort through the door near the reactor.

After fusing the reactor (or destroying the machinery), the PCs may safely escape through the tunnel, or they may try to climb the fence or go through the gate and flee to the forest. The Streel guards will fight to the last man, if necessary, and will actively seek out enemies in their compound.

Zeta .4 LEAVING ALCAZZAR

If the PCs call on the Streel subspace radio, the Nighrunner responds. The PCs can report their findings and situation and arrange a pick-up time and place.

If the PCs don't use the subspace radio, the Nighrunner returns 50 days (GST) after it left. When it reaches Alcazzar, its shuttle lands at the CDC compound and searches the area around the CDC compound every 10 hours for three days (GST). Then, with or without the PCs, the Nighrunner returns to Cassidine.



EPILOGUE: THE FUTURE OF ALCAZZAR

Karrall Willthatch, CDC's chairman, takes good care of loyal employees. If the PCs performed their jobs well, he sees that each receives a bonus of several thousand credits (you decide exactly how much).

If you and the PCs wish to pursue the careers they began on Alcazzar—trouble-shooting for CDC—create new adventures for them; Willthatch will see that they get another assignment soon. CDC is active on many planets, so the possibilities of adventure in this line of work are limitless. Missions might include investigating strange occurrences on the deserts of Laco, checking reports of a gold strike in the mountains of Volturnus, or uncovering betrayal in the corporate headquarters building in Triad.

One benefit of working for a progressive corporation such as CDC is the chance for characters who do outstanding work to purchase stock. Owning CDC stock is a chance to earn a lot of credits, and only CDC employees who make contributions above and beyond their normal job requirements can purchase the stock. If you feel they are eligible, allow the PCs to purchase up to 5,000 credits of CDC stock. Each year, the value of CDC stock will go up or down, depending on how well the company does. To earn money, the PCs must sell their stock when it's worth more than when they bought it. Once they sell their stock, they can't earn any more credits from it.

Roll d10 on table 7 (or a table of your own) to determine what happens to CDC stock during 1 year, GST. Roll only once each year; the same results apply to all CDC stock.

TABLE 7. ANNUAL CDC STOCK CHANGE

DIE ROLL	STOCK CHANGE
1	Terrible year; stock value drops to 10% of previous year's value
2	Bad year; stock value drops to 50% of previous year's value
3-4	Below average performance, no change in stock value
5-6	Some good signs; stock doubles in value
7-8	Fine year; stock value multiplies X 5
9	Prosperous year; stock value multiplies X 10
0	Incredible year; stock value multiplies X 50!

Regardless of the results of the conflict between CDC and the Streel Corporation, news of the wealth on Alcazzar leaks to the rest of the Frontier 1-10 weeks after the end of this adventure. All of the major corporations and many independent ("wildcat") miners will arrive and stake out claims.

If the characters decide to remain on Alcazzar, many different corporations offer them jobs. The PCs are among the only

characters in the galaxy with any knowledge of the planet. That makes them valuable employees for any company intending to operate on Alcazzar.

The future of Alcazzar will be greatly influenced by the planet's mineral wealth. Other considerations also exist, however. Although of little importance to many major corporations of the Frontier, the future of the planet's unique environment and many native species are matters of grave concern to a number of organizations. The Society for the Preservation of Natural Ecosystems will be in the forefront of this movement, and would be happy to hire the PCs to work for the Society's interests. Such work pays only about half of what major corporations pay.

Many of the creatures living on the planet have yet to be discovered and classified. None of the native inhabitants have been studied by ecological specialists. Characters interested in studying any aspect of this planet are offered jobs by organizations and universities interested in learning about Alcazzar and its lifeforms. The planet's unusual climate pattern makes a very likely subject for research.

Remember that winter will arrive before too long. If characters attempt to live through an Alcazzar winter, determine their chances of survival as you see fit.

In any event, Alcazzar is a new, exciting, and potentially wealthy planet. You may work it into your campaign in any manner you wish. Alcazzar can provide settings for a wide variety of adventures for a long time to come.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS TABLES

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Roll 1d10 every time the PCs enter a hexagon on Map 2, or spend an hour in the same hex. Check the result on table 8, the Encounter Frequency Table. If an encounter occurs, roll on table 9 or 10, as indicated, to find the encounter. If a die roll modifier is indicated on table 8, add that number to your roll on table 10. These are summer and transitional season random encounters. You must determine winter encounters if the PCs stay on Alcazzar after this adventure.

TABLE 8. RANDOM ENCOUNTER FREQUENCY

TERRAIN	ENCOUNTER OCCURS ON	USE TABLE	DIE ROLL MODIFIER
Water	5 - 10	9	none
Forest	8 - 10	10	none
Moraines	7 - 10	10	+2
Plains	4 - 10	10	+4
Mountains	6 - 10	10	+10

TABLE 9. WATER RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

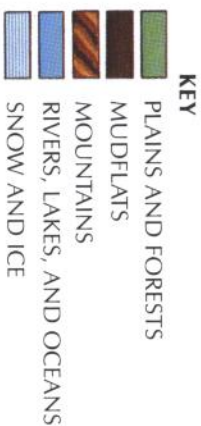
DIE ROLL (1d10)	ENCOUNTER
1 - 7	fish (harmless)
8 - 10	sea-shrike (1) MV very fast; IM/RS 7/70; STA 400; ATT 50; DM 15d10; SA tail flip; SD soft cover in water

TABLE 10. LAND RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

DIE ROLL (1d10)	ENCOUNTER
1	small herbivores (2 - 20): MV very fast; IM/RS 8/75; STA 10; ATT -; SA none; SD running away
2	large herbivore (1); MV medium; IM/RS 4/40; STA 200; ATT -; SA none; SD camouflage
3	lokkuku (12): MV fast; IM/RS 6/55; STA 30; AT 30; DM 2d10; SA none; SD none; The madness of the Kag-Gakka is upon them. They attack madly until all are slain.
4	fire locusts (1 swarm): MV slow; IM/RS not applicable; STA 1 each; AT 90; DM 4d10; SA acid burn; SD large numbers
5	medium herbivores (500): MV fast; IM/RS 7/65; STA 100; AT none; SA none; SD running away
6	gwerrah (1): MV medium; IM/RS 4/40; STA 800; AT 40; DM 20d10; SA none; SD immune to doze and needler effects
7	gnawhares (1 - 10): MV fast; IM/RS 6/60; STA 10; AT nil; SA gnaw any non-metallic objects; SD none
8	lokkuku (6 - 10): MV fast; IM/RS 6/55; STA 30; AT 30; DM 2d10; SA none; SD none; These are youngsters, very playful and mischievous but not threatening.
9	medium herbivore (1): MV slow; IM/RS 3/25; STA 65; AT nil; SA odor gland sprays up to 10 m, victim gags for 1d10 minutes; SD creature is inedible
10	gwerrah (1): MV medium; IM/RS 4/40; STA 800; AT 40; DM 20d10; SA none; SD immune to doze and needler effects

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 11 | sky-shrikes (1 - 10): MV very fast; IM/RS 8/75; AT 50; DM 2d10; SA none; SD none |
| 12 | lokkuku (2 - 20): MV fast; IM/RS 6/55; STA 30; AT 30; DM 2d10; SA none; SD none; adults, curious and friendly unless attacked |
| 13 | sky-shrikes (2 - 20): MV very fast; IM/RS 8/75; AT 50; DM 2d10; SA none; SD none |
| 14 | rock slide — See Beta .1 under "MOUNTAINS" for details |
| 15 | gnawhares (1-10): MV fast; IM/RS 6/60; STA 10; AT nil; SA gnaw any non-metallic objects; SD none |
| 16 | gwerrah (1): MV medium; IM/RS 4/40; STA 800; AT 40; DM 20d10; SA none; SD immune to doze and needler effects |
| 17-19 | rock slide — See Beta .1 under "MOUNTAINS" for details |
| 20 | small herbivore (1): MV very fast; IM/RS 9/85; AT nil; SA none; SD speed, diving under rocks for shelter |





(EASTERN HEMISPHERE NOW IN SUMMER/DAY)



UNIDENTIFIED
SETTLEMENT

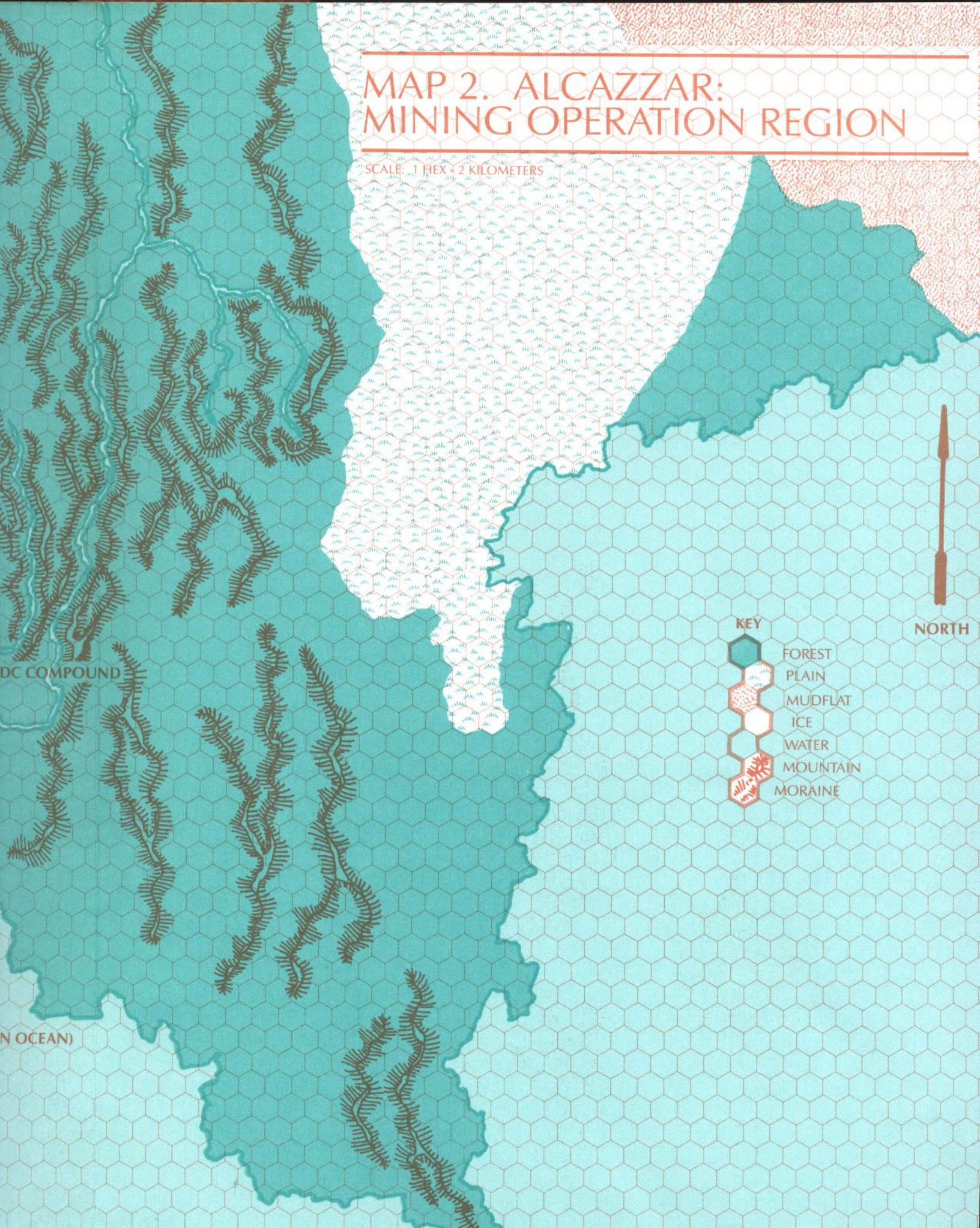


CDC COMPOUND

GREAT SEA (SOUTHERN OCEAN)

MAP 2. ALCAZZAR: MINING OPERATION REGION

SCALE: 1 HEX = 2 KILOMETERS



A STAR FRONTIERS[®]

ALPHA DAWN ADVENTURE

Mission to Alcazzar

by Douglas Niles

You press against the steel hatchway as the explorer bounds up the river bank, out of the water. Over the roar of the engines comes the unmistakable whine of a high-performance groundcar. Quickly, you scan the horizon. At first the plain appears empty. Then you see them.

"Bandits at 11 o'clock. Three of them!" you shout into your chronocom. Instantly, the driver slams the heavy explorer into reverse, backing down the bank for cover. The rear doors burst open as Rocton dashes out to set up a heavy laser. Haraddi, the Yaxirian, follows right behind carrying five power backpacks. Already someone is handing extra ammo up to you.

At 80 kph, those ground cars are closing fast. Targeting the lead car, you squeeze the trigger and a rocket flashes out of the tube. At the same instant a shell streaks past you, exploding in the river and spraying steam into the air.

You came to Alcazzar on a tough mission—it just got a lot tougher.

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