

Seeing the Warp

By Graham McNeill

For over twenty thousand years, the unique breed of mutant humans known as Navigators have guided Mankind's vessels through the Warp. The early history of the Navigators has long been forgotten, save perhaps by the most venerable ancients of the Navigator Houses, though it is doubtful that even they remember everything accurately. Many theories abound regarding the sinister secrets they hide; of power, wealth, greed and manipulation that have been the hallmark of their organisation since the dawn of time. But which are true, none can say. Graham McNeill looks into this shadowy organisation to reveal much that has previously been hidden...

FIRST STEPS

When Mankind first began colonisation of the stars using conventional sub-light



spacecraft, progress was painfully slow. Colonies were separated from Terra by generations, and without guidance and protection, the colonies were vulnerable to alien domination or worse. The discovery of warp drives, which allowed much faster travel through the fluid medium of the Immaterium, accelerated the colonisation of new worlds and allowed the distant systems to become part of a more unified whole. But warp drives alone were not enough to allow rapid, long distance journeys across the galaxy. The Immaterium is the place where the most terrible of spirits and emotions find substance. A nightmare realm where insanity is a living thing and dreams walk clothed in flesh, full of torment and madness. It is an echo of the material universe, with every thought, desire and lust given shape in its fluid, haunted depths. Ships were forced to use short, dangerous and blind warp jumps, risking the ship and her crew with each jump. Without a reliable means of guiding the ship, it was at the mercy of the fickle tides of the Warp, and many of those early voyages ended in disaster. To travel through this realm blindly is the most dangerous of journeys and only the stabilised Navigator-gene (all Navigators have a characteristic 'Warp Eye' on their foreheads) allows the ships of the Emperor to travel in relative safety from one side of the galaxy to the other. The Navigator gene

allows a Navigator, with the aid of the Astronomican, to use his warp sight to guide spaceships through the Warp's unpredictable tides.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE NAVIGATOR FAMILIES

Quite how the Navigator-gene came to exist at all is a mystery that none of the ancient Navigator Houses will reveal. Perhaps they themselves have forgotten or the truth is too terrible to countenance. Many tales are told of genetic engineering conducted in the distant past, during the earliest history of Humanity. Their unique position in Human society gave them great power and leverage, allowing them to establish almost absolute control over trading and mercantile affairs throughout the galaxy, building an enormous power bloc which, though its strength has waxed and waned over the millennia, has never been broken. Today, the Navis Nobilite (as it is now known) thrives as a vital part of the Imperium and, through time, the Navigators have come to control the vast majority of commerce across the Imperium, ruthlessly exploiting their monopoly on long distance interstellar travel to make the largest families inconceivably wealthy. Supported by a complex network of fealties, oaths, tithes and contracts, the great families controlled the movement of almost all goods across the Imperium.

These powerful families divided into many individual



Houses or Great Families. Each House is a large related family, but is also a literal house, a fortified mansion where the House leader, or Novator, lives together with his immediate kin and retainers. This mansion is regarded as the seat of the entire Great Family, even though it is only the hereditary ruling family that lives there. This centralisation of power serves two purposes; it provides a focus for the material power and wealth of the Great Family, but also serves to control the breeding and progression of the family genome. The Navigator-gene can only be preserved by intermarriage, as it is lost when a Navigator breeds with an ordinary human.

Then, as now, most people shunned Navigators. With their strange three-eyed appearance, few would have dealings with them, and many in positions of power were jealous of their privileged status. Superstition and fear surrounds them, as it does all other mutants.

THE NAVIGATOR HOUSES

The most powerful of the Navigator houses have their Family House on Terra, in a vast district known as the Navigator's Quarter, a byzantine labyrinth of ornate buildings, decorated beyond any measure of taste. Every palace is huge and decorated with mighty murals and elaborately painted ceilings, the Navigator Lords competing with each other to create the most beautiful

palaces, adorned with the greatest works of art in the galaxy. They have libraries containing millions of books, data crystals and scrolls, and own collections of sacred relics to match anything possessed by the Ecclesiarchy. They own menageries of rare beasts, and wine cellars replete with the products of a million worlds and live in obscene luxury and splendour.

An estate surrounds each palace, containing sculpted gardens and ornamental pleasure lakes filled with scented water. Beneath the palaces is a far darker world; the Vaults. These vast labyrinths stretch downwards towards the planetary core and are the sometime home to the strange mutated ancients of the Houses.

The most powerful Houses vie for the position of Paternova, the overall ruler of the Navigator House's, whose powerful influence extends even to the High Lords of Terra. It is every Navigator House's ambition to one day reach the position of Paternova, and take control of the great Navigator Palace on Terra. Lesser Navigator families owe fealty to larger houses, which in turn have their own alliances. These alliances form trading cartels, which compete for lucrative contracts with other trading cartels. The Merchant Fleets of the Imperium must constantly deal with these powerful cartels for the services of the Navigators. It is a strained relationship at

best, and while open conflict is rare, it is not unknown.

More covert methods are often employed. An assassin's bullet to remove a troublesome Novator or his envoys, to be replaced by a more amenable family member, is an oft-used recourse. So high are the financial rewards and influence to be gained that assassination attempts are a common transaction between rival Navigator Houses. Open warfare, in a controlled fashion, is not unknown between the feuding houses, since all control vast wealth, large professional mercenary forces are paid huge amounts to serve the Navigator Houses. Some of these mercenary contracts date back thousands of years. The Navigators, paranoid of their rivals, are afraid to be seen as militarily weak, and thus they pay well for loyal service, and failing this, they trade in slaves or penitents and train their own soldiery within their huge private estates. Slave trading is a lucrative business and so long as taxes and tithes are paid, the Administratum turns a blind eye.

THE HEIRS APPARENT

The most powerful Navigators in each of the Great Families are called Heirs Apparent, which signifies that they may one-day contend for the position of Paternova, the ruler of all the Navis Nobilite. The Paternova may come from any of the Great Families and from any social level within



them. The Heirs Apparent are usually the oldest Navigators, although not all develop in this way and some Navigators live out their entire lives without undergoing major physical changes.

The Heirs Apparent are frequently bitter rivals who will sometimes go as far as to try to eliminate each other if they get the chance. This sometimes leads to protracted personal vendettas or bitter feuds between two Navigator Houses. The Adeptus Terra is fairly tolerant of minor skirmishing of this kind, though open hostilities between Houses are discouraged as much as possible, with the exception of Tradewars.

TRADEWAR

A Tradewar is a limited and strictly regimented form of warfare, formally declared between rival trading factions, which is permitted by the Administratum under the Navigator Conventions. The aim of the Convention is to reduce the overall damage to shipping and mercantile interests, as well as prevent rival factions from simply destroying one another. The rules of a Tradewar prescribe formal declarations of intent and restrict permissible targets. The Great Navigator Houses see Tradewar more as an extension of the customary means of competition between competing commercial interests, than as open warfare. During a Tradewar, forces directly under the control of the warring

factions are allowed to raid each others' shipping, attack important mercantile operations or destroy equipment owned by the opposition. Employees and declared members of rival houses become fair game for assassination attempts or direct attack, but violence cannot extend beyond the direct opposition, so subsidiaries and lesser Houses allied to the warring factions are theoretically immune to the effects of a Tradewar, though they are often dragged into direct conflict. In practice, Tradewars rarely last very long as they are expensive in money and manpower, and the profits to be gained by wresting control of commercial contracts of a specific market or shipping routes does not often justify the expenditure. They also tend to produce bitter enmities between the rivals, as the fighting is invariably of a tawdry nature, leaving many scores to be settled at a later date.

THE PATERNOVA

The Paternova is the leader of all the Navigators and the most powerful of his kind. The Paternova may live for up to a thousand years, and when he dies, all the existing Heirs Apparent begin to change. They grow larger and stronger, and their mutations become even more pronounced, becoming able to survive in hard vacuum as well as underwater or in poisonous environments. Most importantly, they start

to fight. They are drawn into combat with each other; building up to a pitch of aggression that eventually overrides all other considerations. As Heirs Apparent are killed, those who survive change even more until only one remains alive. It is this vastly changed and extremely powerful individual who becomes the new Paternova.

The Paternova lives in the Palace of the Navigators, which lies on Terra in the centre of the Navigator's Quarter. Following his ascension, the Paternova never leaves the palace, the existing staff, soldiery and other retainers of the palace replaced by those drawn from the Paternova's own House. The chief amongst his servants is the Paternoal Envoy, who becomes one of the High Lords of Terra and sits on the Senatorum Imperialis. The role of the Paternova is an obscure part of Navigator biology, although no-one doubts its importance. He is sometimes described as the guiding father whose powers transcend the Warp itself. During the interlude between the reign of one Paternova and another, all Navigators other than the Heirs Apparent, suffer a considerable reduction in their powers. Their ability to navigate the Warp is impaired, Warp journeys take longer, ships are unexpectedly lost, and younger Navigators may lose their abilities completely.



As soon as the new Paternova is installed, the Navigators' powers are restored, though not all are restored to the same degree. Navigators belonging to the same House as the Paternova find their abilities enhanced, as though their blood tie were enabling the Paternova to transmit his powers more effectively. Navigators belonging to the House of the old Paternova lose this benefit, and many Navigators suddenly find their powers greatly impaired.

INQUISITORIAL PURGES AND POGROMS

The Navigator Houses hold a unique position within the Imperium; they are not answerable to the authority of the Imperium, but tend to toe the Imperial line because of the mutual benefits each side receives. So powerful a force within the Imperium are the Great Navigator Houses, that they command a place within the Senate Imperialis. The Paternoval Envoy is the current ruler of the Navigator Houses' representative to the High Lords of Terra. Because of this power, the Imperium remains suspicious of the motives of the Great Navigator Houses. Prejudice still lurks against their mutated appearance and some whisper that the Navigators have been tainted by Chaos. All in all, the Navigators are tolerated only as a necessary evil.

The holy agents of the Inquisition keep a close eye on the Navigator Houses,

ready to seize upon any indication that the Navigators have strayed beyond the already widened boundaries of tolerance. Whispers of dissent among the Great Houses are ruthlessly crushed by Inquisitorial purges against the offending Houses; goods and assets are seized, midnight raids on Navigator palaces are followed by arrests and a purging of those seen as tainted, their fate to be burnt as heretics or locked away in Inquisition torture chambers. The Navigators have come to fear the power of the Inquisition, but to offer resistance would bring the iron fist of Imperial justice down upon them and the freedoms they enjoy within the mercantile world would be lost.

FEAR THE MUTANT

As well as their obvious mutation, a single dark eye in their forehead, other, lesser, mutations are not uncommon amongst Navigators. Many of the Navigator Houses have spent a vast amount of time in the Warp and, though they are exceptionally resistant to the powers of Chaos, the corrupting power of the Warp has taken its toll on the physical forms of the Navigators through the generations. Most of the families hide minor mutations, but the problem is accentuated by the intermarrying of the Great Houses to secure political allegiances and gain additional prestige. Over the millennia this stagnating gene-pool has created more



Art by Kenson Low



cosmetic mutations: obesity or anorexia, bulbous facial features, large ears and withered limbs are all common amongst the nobility of the Navigators. More sinister mutations are hidden from view, the worst sufferers hiding within the privacy of the palaces, never to see the light of day, their hideous deformities hidden from the Imperium behind a mask of wealth and luxury. Many Navigator children are killed at birth, mutated beyond recognition, abominations even to their strange race.

NAVIGATORS IN THE 41ST MILLENNIUM

The Navigator houses of the Navis Nobilite are amongst the most important individuals in the Imperium. They lease out their members to various institutions across the galaxy, either for currency or through ancient pacts and debts. These are always honoured and, in this respect, the Navigators are extremely honourable indeed, as to renege on them would be costly in financial terms as well as the accompanying loss of face.

Ships of the Imperial Navy and Merchant Fleets are always accompanied by a member of one of the noble houses of the Navis Nobilite, compelled by ancient and binding oaths to serve with the Tech-Priests for a set duration in return for the Tech-Priests' services. This is invariably seen as a serious chore for the Navigators in question who, unlike their

Adeptus Mechanicus employers, appreciate the finer things in life.

SCENARIOS INVOLVING NAVIGATORS IN INQUISITOR

Since Navigators dislike open combat, except when it's being waged on their behalf by their own private armies, it is unusual to find one actively seeking to take to the field of battle. Though, what with being such valuable commodities, they are often the subject of raids, assassinations or kidnap attempts. What follows are a number of scenario hooks you can use to include Navigators in your games of Inquisitor.

Purge

An Inquisitor has reason to believe that a Navigator Household is harbouring Chaos worshippers and mutants, and he has set out to destroy this heresy! The Navigators, their servants and mercenary troops must try to stay alive long enough to escape, while the Inquisitor's forces must kill the heretics and capture the Navigator for interrogation.

Rescue

A Navigator from an important and influential household has become stranded due to an alien attack or local uprising. Imperial forces have been sent to get him and his entourage out. Set up the Navigator and any followers hidden in cover in the centre of the board with his enemies entering the battlefield from

opposite edges. The Navigator's retainers must hold out long enough to be rescued before their enemies capture them.

Tradewar: Sabotage

Tradewar scenarios pit two Navigator Households against each other, so both players must have Navigators on their side. One attacking Navigator Household is sabotaging its rival's installation, and they must destroy valuable cargoes or the installation buildings while the defender's forces must attempt to stop them.

Tradewar: Assassination

The Tradewar must end and both Households are seeking to kill their rival's leaders and force a peace on their terms. Assassination of the rival Navigator is the sole priority.

Other Scenarios

The Navigators' unique position as part of the Imperium, but not ruled by it, gives you a lot of leeway for scenarios. For example, the Navigator and his ship's crew could have become lost in the Warp and emerged in a distant alien system or within the Eye of Terror itself. You can fight inter-household Tradewars, or Navigators against Imperial forces as the Inquisition seek to keep powerful Navigator Houses repressed, or rioting mobs hunting Navigators through the streets. The murky world of politics could lead to innumerable assassination attempts against officials or military commanders. Likewise, the Imperium always seeks to silence



troublesome rivals. On a larger scale, the Imperium, Chaos or alien forces could launch a wholesale invasion of a Navigator ruled system...

USING NAVIGATORS IN INQUISITOR

There are three levels of power regarding Navigators

to represent the age, training and experience of individual Navigators within a single Household. Younger Navigators are likely to be employed on Merchant Fleet vessels, while more experienced Navigators may find positions on more prestigious vessels, in the

Imperial Navy or onboard the dreaded Black Ships. The oldest Navigators, no longer able to expose themselves to the Warp safely, will retire to a position within the family holdings to await their chance to become the Novator.

Navigator Characters

Equipment: Navigators are invariably widely travelled individuals, with access to vast resources of money. This means that many have exotic equipment and wargear, having had contact with alien races from distant star systems. As a result, they may be equipped with almost any equipment you desire, though given their less warlike bent, these would tend to be items of a protective nature rather than weapons. At the very least, Navigators will carry a staff and concealed knife.

Special Abilities:

The Third Eye: Every Navigator possesses the ability to see and even, to a lesser extent, manipulate the Warp. Their special sight gives them many strange abilities, and these mysterious powers are the subject of much superstition amongst the common people of the Imperium. The number of these powers varies with the age and experience of the Navigator, with only the most senior Navigators being able to use them all. All Navigators have The Lidless Stare and a number of other powers depending on their age. A Navigator has one extra power, a Navigator Master has two extra, and a Novator has access to all four powers. The Navigator Powers are:

The Lidless Stare, Warp gaze, Temporal Distortion, Inertia (see over the page for full descriptions of these powers)

"I have stared into the Abyss...": All Navigators have witnessed the horrors of the Warp many times, because of this they count as having the skill Force of Will when confronted by any daemonic creatures. Navigators are also resistant to Chaos, so any psychic powers from the Daemonology list have a reduced effect against Navigators, with the Navigator counting his Willpower as 25% higher than it actually is for the purposes of nullifying or as a negative modifier on the casting player's character.

	WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
Navigator	8D10	5D10	25+3D10	40+2D10	65+3D6	65+2D6	70+D10	55+3D6	55+D10
Navigator Master	8D10	6D10	30+3D10	55+2D10	70+2D6	70+2D6	75+2D6	65+3D6	60+2D6
Novator	10D10	6D10	35+3D10	65+2D10	75+D6	75+2D6	90+3D6	80+3D6	70+D10

Mutations: All Navigators are subject to mutations of one sort or another, the frequency of these growing as they age. Most of these are harmless and go largely unnoticed, but occasionally they surface in disturbing ways. A Navigator has a 10% chance of having D3-1 mutations; a Navigator Master has a 30% chance of having D6-2 mutations, while a Novator has a 60% chance of having D6 mutations. If the dice indicate that your Navigator character has mutations, roll on the Mutations chart in Exterminatus Magazine number 1 for the effects of these mutations.



POWERS OF THE NAVIGATORS

The Lidless Stare (Difficulty 15)

The Navigator can stare deep into the soul of a single character, exposing them to the horrors of the Immaterium and ravaging their mind. This power requires line of sight. The target must pass a Nerve test or be driven insane by torturous visions of the Warp flooding their minds. Affected characters count as being stunned for D3 turns, lose D10 from their Willpower permanently and count all characters as Terrifying for the remainder of the game. This power has no effect against Daemonhosts or followers of Chaos.

Warp Gaze (Difficulty 10)

The Navigator blasts raw Warp energy from his exposed Warp Eye. This power requires line of sight, counts as a shooting attack and has the following profile:

Type	Range	Mode	Acc	Damage	Shots	Reload	Weight
Special	10	Single	+30	2D10	–	–	–

Temporal Distortion (Difficulty 25)

The Navigator can manipulate the tides of the Immaterium to affect time in the temporal universe. The Navigator may only use this power on himself, allowing him to roll for all his actions again, after all his actions have been performed, but before any other character performs theirs (in effect having another turn straight after his actual turn) exactly as if it was his normal turn. The only exception is that he does not get to use additional psychic powers with any additional actions.

Inertia (Difficulty 20)

The Navigator alters the tides of the Warp, making it difficult for enemy psykers to draw their power from the Immaterium. This power does not require line of sight, but can only be used against another character with psychic powers (not Wyrd abilities). If they are affected, then the Difficulty level of all their powers count as 30% higher than normal while the Inertia remains upon them. This power remains in play until nullified.





Navigator Teodor Minodoya, Third Heir Apparent of House Minodoya

Serving on the Naval vessel, *Scalermo's Hammer*, Teodor Minodoya saw his first taste of the horrors of war when the vessel he was guiding towards Cadia was attacked in the Warp by Chaos raiders from the Moutaran Nebula on the fringes of the Eye of Terror. Faced with overwhelming odds, the ship's crew prepared to fight and die as raiders and mutants swarmed aboard, with thousands upon thousands more ready to exploit the breaches. As the hordes of traitors neared the bridge, the bodyguard assigned to Teodor by his family, Aberic Brawden – a bosun press-ganged from the feral world of Heoren – drew his antique naval pistol and planted himself before the entrance to the crystal dome of the Navigator. Furious battle raged throughout the corridors of the ship as the captain of the *Hammer* desperately attempted to outmanoeuvre the attacking vessel, with navigational data being fed to him by Teodor.

In a last ditch attempt to throw their pursuit, Teodor calculated a hugely risky Warp jump that, if successful, would assure their escape, but would, more than likely trap them in the depths of the Warp forever. As the ship prepared to make its jump, the raiders broke onto the bridge and attacked the armsmen defending the captain and his bridge staff. Bloody combat erupted as the Naval officers fought to defend their ship, and in the midst of this battle, Aberic Brawden

shot, stabbed and killed anyone who came near his charge, determined to protect him whatever the cost. He was grievously wounded, but held the raiders at bay long enough for the captain to hurl the ship headlong through the Warp.

Raging currents from the Eye threatened to throw the *Hammer* thousands of light years off course, but as Teodor tried in vain to hold true to his original course, great power suddenly flooded him and his ability to navigate the treacherous straits of the Immaterium swelled to unprecedented levels. Every roaring current was as a calm ocean to Teodor and he expertly guided the *Hammer* home to Cadia as the armsmen fought back and defeated the boarders, who, without their reinforcements, were unable to overcome the defenders. Upon docking at Kasr Sonnen in the Cadian system, the reasons behind the unexplained enhancement in Teodor's powers became clear to him. While the ship had been becalmed in the Warp, the Paternova of the Navigator houses had died, in the ensuing power struggle between the Heirs Apparent, the Minodoya Family had emerged triumphant, resulting in its scions having their powers augmented. Part of Teodor rejoiced, for his family was now in a pre-eminent position in the Imperium, with control of all the great Navigator Houses, but he also felt a keen sense of loss,

knowing that any chance he might have had of becoming the Paternova himself was now in ashes.

Denied his chance at ruling, Teodor was instead granted a Free Charter to lease his powers to whomsoever he pleased, and given his family's blessing to operate outwith the oaths, charters and fealties that they operated under. Truly he was a free agent, with the ability to make his fortune amongst the galaxy. It was, therefore, unfortunate that Teodor chose to ply his trade along the routes and amongst the cartels in which his family and their affiliates traded, offering his services at vastly reduced, yet still highly lucrative prices. Together, he and Aberic (whose wounds suffered during the boarding of *Scalermo's Hammer* were now healed – though, having been operated upon by a drunken ship's surgeon, were of a rather more crude nature than might normally have been expected for the retainer of one of the Great Families) took passage on a number of vessels throughout the Segmentum, moving from world to world and securing their transit across the galaxy, all the while amassing a sizable fortune. A thorn in the side of his family, Teodor continues to infuriate them, though – as Paternoval Envoys to the High Lords of Terra – it would be unseemly of them to have him removed (at least openly...) since the loss of face would be considerable.



NAVIGATOR TEODOR MINODOYA

Equipment: Knife, Staff, Conversion Field, Pentagrammic Wards, Hexagrammic Wards (though more resistant than most to daemonic and psychic attack, Navigators see no sense in taking chances...) and a Reflex inhaler (3 doses).

Special Abilities: Leader, "I have stared into the Abyss", The Lidless Stare, Warp Gaze, Temporal Distortion.

	WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
Teodor Minodoya	45	38	53	64	76	78	81	72	69

Mutation – Scales: Beneath Teodor's robes, his skin has hardened in patches to resemble scales. His Base Injury value is increased by 1 (this makes his initial Base Injury value 7).

BOSUN ABERIC BRAWDEN

Equipment: Naval Pistol, Knuckle Dusters, Electro' Nine Tails (see below), Shock Maul, 2 Frag Grenades and 1 Super-frag. Injector Implant with 'Slaughter.

Bionic Implants: Hydraulic Claw (Reach 1, Damage 2D10+5, Parry Penalty -25%), Crude Bionic Leg, Flak Armour on all locations except head, right arm and left leg (both of these locations count as having an Armour value of 6).

Special Abilities: Ambidextrous, Deadeye Shot, Fast Shot, Furious Assault, True Grit, Bodyguard.

	WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
Aberic Brawden	74	65	84	72	54	67	54	87	43

New Weapon - Electro' Nine Tails: A weapon favoured by the harsh disciplinarians of the Imperial Navy for punishment details, this brutal device delivers a powerful electric shock upon impact and burns the skin around it, leaving painful scars. Its profile is as follows:

Reach	Damage	Parry Penalty
4	D10	-50%

Notes: If even a single point of damage is caused (after deductions for armour) an Electro' Nine Tails will stun the victim for a turn unless they can pass a Toughness test. In addition, any attempts to parry an attack from the whip will suffer an additional -20% to the Parry roll.



New Skill – Bodyguard: Adept at putting another's life before their own, a character with this skill can 'take the bullet' for another. Before the battle begins, nominate who the character is protecting and, for the duration of the game, the bodyguard must attempt to stay within 6 yards of their client at all times and if forced further away (due to knockback, psychic powers, etc) they must use as many actions as are necessary to get back to their charge. If their protectee is hit by a shooting attack fired by a character, the bodyguard is Aware of, he may throw himself into the line of fire and take the hit on himself, even if the bodyguard has used all his actions. Place the bodyguard between the firer and the target and resolve the impact against the bodyguard as normal. In close combat, a bodyguard must always fight any foes attacking the character he is protecting, even before fighting those attacking him.