

ACTION CHECK

Marginal

☐

DIE

SCORE

Ordinary

☐

ACTIONS PER ROUND

ACTION CHECK

Marginal

☐

ACTIONS PER ROUND

SCORE

Amazing

☐

ACTIONS PER ROUND

ACTION CHECK

ONLINE • MAGAZINE



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STAFF

Publisher/Design: Jeff Ibach
Editing: Jim Sharkey

HOW TO SUBSCRIBE

E-Mail: actioncheck@hotmail.com

Web Site:

Chris West's Alternity GM
Resource Center
<http://home.earthlink.net/~westwinds/>

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Role Playing Games and the Internet: Perfect Together

If you're getting *Action Check*, there's a darn good chance that you're as familiar with the Internet as you are with any other tool. In fact, I'm sure that there are many tools in your toolbox that you use less than the Internet.

Like any tool, though, it has its limitations, regardless of what the over-hyped dot com companies would have you believe. If you're like me, you may even be a little sick of hearing about the Internet everywhere you go. Enough already, we know it's out there, and we know how to get to it. Thanks!

However, the Internet shines in a way that really matters to folks like you, reading this editorial: it allows people of similar interests but vastly disparate geographical locations to share ideas and information. Time was, if a company decided to end its support of an RPG, that was it, put the books away. Even the most creative group of players can't sustain an unsupported game forever.

But now, if you're a GM trying to come up with a game to run on Sunday, and your mind is drawing a blank, there are dozens of fan websites out there with their creators' ideas posted free for the taking. Game companies support fan participation, even for games they themselves will no longer support directly. The Internet is a boon for Alternity; as long as there are folks out there who are interested in playing, and are willing to share their ideas, the game will live on.

The Internet makes things possible that would have been at best unlikely as recently as five years ago. Right after playing Alternity for the first time, I read David Brin's *Uplift* books. They frankly blew my socks right off, and I thought that the *Uplift* universe would be a great science fiction milieu for Alternity. Still, it wouldn't have made sense to start a project involving creating all the races and rules and everything else for a small handful of people.

Then Jeff told me he wanted to create an e-zine for Alternity. I saw my chance, right there. I could do *Uplift* articles for *Action Check*. There are so many fine ideas contained in those six books that even if a GM wasn't interested in the whole universe, he still might be interested in a new PC race for players, or a new NPC race, or the technology, or whatever.

The problem was, did I need permission? As a big fan of Dr. Brin's work, I felt like I should ask for it, even if I didn't need it. The question was how to get in touch with Dr. Brin. Enter the Internet. After some searching, I found a website that seemed like it was created by someone who actually knew the man personally. I wrote to the webmaster, telling him what I wished to do, and he was able to get me Dr. Brin's e-mail address.

The author turned out to be gracious and easy-going regarding fans playing around in his universe, and gave me permission to start this Herculean task. His only requirement was that we add a disclaimer asserting his rights to his work. If you've never read the books, you should. *Startide Rising* and *The Uplift War* will be my major resources. If any of you are fans, and want to make suggestions, mail your thoughts to actioncheck@hotmail.com.

Without the Internet, I could never have talked to the author. Without the Internet, there would be no *Action Check*, and quite possibly one day, no Alternity. But with the Internet, Alternity will continue to thrive, because fans from New Jersey to California and beyond can share their ideas, and keep the best science fiction RPG out there alive and kicking.

Action Check Submissions

To submit an article to Action Check magazine:

actioncheck@hotmail.com

And we'll be in contact as to the particulars.

Regular Features:

Transmissions: adventure hooks, along the lines of those previously found in Dragon Magazine for the various campaign settings.

Gridsites: Alternity Web sites that deserve recognition and serve a specific purpose.

Creature Feature: Aliens, Creatures, Xenofoms, etc. for the Alternity game campaign settings.

Futuretech: gear, equipment, vehicles, weapons, armor and other hardware for the Alternity game.

Supporting Cast: NPC stats for insertion in your own games.

System of the Month: a fully detailed star system.

Reviews: of Alternity or related-use product.

Skills/FX/Psi/Mutations

Plus cartoons, details of campaign ideas, etc. Anything that you feel is worthy to share with a wide Alternity audience!



Creature Conversions

By Jeff Ibach

Continuing my work from last month's issue, here I pick up even more of my favorite 3rd edition critters and convert them to work with GW5.

HOPPERS

(Also called Jackalopes), Hoppers are abysmally stupid herd animals sometimes used as mounts.



Description: Each hopper stands 2.5 meters at the shoulder and is generally large enough to carry one man-sized rider.

Encounter: These mutated jackrabbits have such a rough gait that first-time riders must make an Animal Handling—riding check with a +3 penalty or be thrown for damage as approximated by the Game-master (see page 56 in the Alternity Gamma World book). Hoppers employ their horns against that which they see as a threat. Trying to mount one isn't necessarily considered a threat, though they are jittery around sasquatch. An unencumbered hopper can jump three times the normally calculated distance for the beast (page 51, Gamma World).

Habitat/Society: Not at all jumpy like their normal, small cousins, hoppers group together for safety.

Game Data

STR 18 (d6+14) INT 2
DEX 6 (d4+3) WIL 6 (d6+2)
CON 12 (2d6+5) PER 5 (d6+1)
Durability: 12/12/6/6 Action Check: 10+/9/4/2
Move: sprint 32, run 33, walk 8, easy swim 4, swim 8

Actions: 1

Reaction Score: Ordinary / 1

Mutations: Natural Attack (horns), Chameleon Flesh

Attacks

Horns 13/7/3 d6+4s / d4+2w / d4+1m LI/O

Defenses

+3 resistance modifier vs. melee attacks

Skills

Athletics [16] - jump [18]; Stamina [12] - endurance [13]; Movement [12] - race [13]

JAGETS

These mutated jaguars prowl the vast grasslands of what was once the Midwest.

Description:

Graceful and quick, jagets are not much larger than their parent animal in size and strength.



Encounter:

Neutral by nature, jagets don't usually react violently upon first contact. They use their front paws to manipulate and examine objects, but don't normally carry equipment. Their weapons are their claws and teeth.

Habitat/Society: Jagets have substantial mental powers and can be found both in small family groups and alone. They will often be found as followers or hirelings of other species.

Game Data

STR 6 (d4+3) INT 4 (d6)
DEX 9 (2d6+2) WIL 12 (d6+8)
CON 6 (d4+3) PER 6 (d4+3)
Durability: 8/8/4/4 Action Check: 13+/12/6/3
Move: sprint 26, run 16, walk 6 easy swim 3, swim 6
Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Ordinary / 2
Mutations: Attraction Odor, Toxin Intolerance, Induce Phobia, Levitation, Precognition, Telekinesis, Contact

Attacks

Claws (2) 9/4/2 d4+1s / d4w / d4+2w LI/O
Bite 9/4/2 d6s / d4w / d4+1w LI/O

Defenses

+1 resistance modifier vs. ranged attacks

Skills

Stamina [6] - endurance [9]; Awareness [12] - perception [14]; Movement [6] - race [8]; Stealth [9] - hide [12], shadow [13], sneak [12]; Investigate [12] - track [14], search [14]

LIL

Description: The grace and beauty of these 20-centimeter-tall humanoids hides an incredible toughness.

Encounter: Lil often possess artifacts of great sophistication, though their ability to use these items is limited because of their size. Other equipment will be Gamma Age. Lil are nocturnal in nature and their bodies give off light sufficient to illuminate a 90-centimeter area around them. They are much like fireflies in that this effect is involuntary and only happens when the lil are in darkness or very deep shadow.

Habitat/Society: Lil live only in jungles and forests where they build mazes of brambles to hide and protect their dwellings. In addition to species mutations, each lil will have one randomly selected mental mutation.

Game Data

STR 6 (d4+2) INT 11 (d6+7)
DEX 14 (d4+12) WIL 12 (2d6+5)
CON 8 (d6+4) PER 12 (2d6+5)
Durability: 8/8/4/4 Action Check: 13+/12/6/3
Move: sprint 10, run 6, walk 2, easy swim 1, swim 2, glide 10, fly 20
Actions: 2

Reaction Score: Ordinary / 2

Mutations: Environmental Adaptation (light generation), Energy Absorption, Telepathic Shield (vs. life leech only), Kinetic Shield, Illusion Generation, Contact, Hyper Healing

Attacks

Lil' Spear 9/4/2 d4-1s / d4-1w / d4w LI/O
Lil' Cross Bow 12/6/3 d4+2s / d4w / d4+1w LI/O

Defenses

+2 resistance modifier vs. ranged attacks
Leather Armor: d6-2 (LI), d6-4 (HI), d6-4 (EN)

Skills

Stealth [14] - hide [16], sneak [15]; Awareness [12] - perception [14]; Resolve [12] - physical [13], mental [13]; Interaction [12] - taunt [13], Security [11] - set/disarm traps [14]; Knowledge [11]; Ranged Weapons [14] - crossbow [15]; Melee Weapons [6] - blade [9]



KEESHIN

Approaching a small watering hole for a drink is much trickier with these varmints about.

Description: Keeshin, or "water weirds" as they are sometimes called, are one-meter long, white mutated amphibians.

Encounter: Surprise is the Keeshin's greatest ally. There are those that would hunt Keeshin for their lairs hoping that some valuables line their homes. It is these hunters that put Keeshin on such an edge when dealing with any humanoid creature.

Habitat/Society: Keeshin live in small bodies of water. They are greedy and solitary creatures who line their partially submerged stone dwellings with shiny objects of varying worth. They can stay submerged for up to an hour. If they are out of the water for more than 24 hours they die. Keeshin live in small family groups, and have developed their own language. If their home is threatened, all family members attack at once, flying about and causing havoc. If there is more than one colony, others may join the fray.

Game Data

STR 10 (2d6+16) INT 6 (Animal 12 or 2d4+7)
DEX 10 (d4+2) WIL 15 (2d4+10)
CON 10 (d6+6) PER 4 (Animal 11 d6+7)
Durability: 10/10/5/5 Action Check: 13+/12/6/3
Move: sprint 20, run 12, walk 4 easy swim 4, swim 8
Actions: 2

Reaction Score: Ordinary / 2

Mutations: Cryokinesis, Kinetic Shield, Life Leech, Telepathic Blast, Energy Reflection, Telekinetic Hand, Flight

Attacks

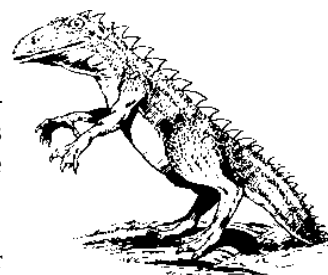
Bite 11/5/2 d4s / d4w / d4+2w LI/O

Defenses

+1 resistance modifier vs. ranged attacks
+2 resistance vs. encounter skills

Skills

Acrobatics [10] - flight [11]; Stealth [10] - hide [14]; Movement [10] - swim [12]; Awareness [13] - intuition [14], perception [15]



MANTIS

Start praying if you meet one of these bugs in a dark alley in a city of the ancients.

Description: These mutated praying mantises stand three meters at the shoulder and are voracious carnivores. No noticeable mutations, save size, distinguish them from their normal counterparts.

Encounter: Usually hungry and aggressive, Mantises will attack a large variety of creatures for food. They will not attack or keep fighting a group that is clearly stronger, however. They are very quick and agile for such large beasts, and can easily position themselves to gain 5 claw attacks while facing opponents if need be.

Habitat/Society: Mantises have adapted to all places of Gamma Terra. They can occasionally be found in small groups, but are otherwise solitary. Some folks refer to them as Green Renders. Though not very bright, they can sometimes be convinced to perform short tasks through the use of mental communication and offers of food. These deals usually break down soon after, but the Mantis can be generally counted on to do its part.

Game Data

STR 16 (d4+12) INT 4 (d6)
 DEX 11 (2d4+6) WIL 6 (d4+3)
 CON 14 (d6+8) PER 4 (d6)
 Durability: 15/15/8/8 Action Check: 14+/13/6/3
 Move: sprint 30, run 20, walk 8, easy swim 4, swim 8
 # Actions: 2
 Reaction Score: Good / 2
 Mutations: Increased Speed

Attacks

Bite 13/6/3 d4+1w / d6w / d6+1w LI/O
 Claws (5) 11/5/2 d4s / d4+1w / d4+2w LI/O

Defenses

+1 resistance modifier vs. melee attacks
 +1 resistance modifier vs. ranged attacks

Carapace Armor: d4-1 (LI), d4-2 (HI), d4-3 (EN)

Skills

Athletics [16] - climb [17], jump [17]; Stealth [11] - shadow [12]; Movement [14]; Stamina [14] - endurance [15]; Investigate [6] - search [10]



OBBS

Like some mythological beast out of a nightmare, these creatures offer nothing but death and pain.

Description: Obbs are mutated fungus, nearly immobile on the ground, but deadly swift when in the air. Their bodies can grow to about half a meter long, while their bat-like wings can give a span of 2 meters.

Encounter: Each Obbs has a single black eye from which it emits blasts of radiation and d6 claw-like appendages with which it can attack. They hunt almost exclusively at night, and only on full moons can they be detected successfully. As though due to some instinctual behavior, they glide over their victims slowly at first to gauge the fight. Survivors have said that even a couple of obbs will attack a larger group if they think they can maneuver their prey into a good position. They seem to have more of a battle plan than a "pack mentality" which makes them all the more feared.

Habitat/Society: Obbs are carnivores, but eat only half of their victims. They leave spores in the uneaten portions of their victims that grow into d6 young obbs (minimum characteristics) within 24 hours. They are rarely found alone, but are instead usually found in groups of up to 2d4 in size.

Game Data

STR 9 (2d6+2) INT 6 (Animal 7 or 2d4+2)
 DEX 9 (2d6+2) WIL 10 (2d4+5)
 CON 8 (d4+5) PER 4 (Animal 6 or d4+2)
 Durability: 8/8/4/4 Action Check: 10+/9/4/2
 Move: glide 18, fly 36
 # Actions: 2
 Reaction Score: Ordinary / 2
 Mutations: Radiating Eyes, Energy Absorption

Attacks

Claws (1d6) 11/5/2 d4w / d4+1w / d4+2w LI/O

Defenses

None

Skills

Acrobatics [9] - flight [12], fall [10]; Stealth [9] - shadow [10]; Tactics [6] - infantry [8]; Awareness [10] - intuition [11], perception [11]



PARNS

Sometimes called sword beetles, these insectoids are among the most feared by lone travelers without some decent firepower and protection.



Description: This three-meter-long mutated beetle is a ruthless carnivore, killing with the four sword-like appendages attached to each of its two antennae. They are repulsive to behold (those with a Severe Phobia drawback mutation of "insects" suffer a +2 penalty to their checks when confronting such a beast).

Encounter: Each antenna gets a -1 bonus when the parn tries to hit anything with it. The parn may attack once with each of its two antennae per turn. Attempting to sever a parn's antennae or disable them somehow requires a called shot with a +4 modifier (see page 45, Alternity Gamma World) and a Good success or better. If the Gamemaster does not usually use the Damage to Armor rule (sidebar on page 99 of Alternity Gamma World) it's suggested he do so at least for a parn encounter. In addition, the parn may cast up to two of its spines a distance of 60 meters each turn.

Habitat/Society: Solitary creatures by nature, they come together only to mate.

Game Data

STR 13 (2d4+8) INT 4 (Animal 8 or d4+5)
DEX 9 (d8+4) WIL 4 (d6)
CON 11 (2d4+6) PER 2 (Animal 7 or 2d6)
Durability: 11/11/6/6 Action Check: 10+/9/4/2
Move: sprint 18, run 12, walk 4, easy swim 2, swim 4
Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Ordinary / 2
Mutations: Natural Attack, New Body Parts

Attacks

Antennae (2) 12/6/3 d4w / d6w / d6+2w HI/G
Spines 10/5/2 d4w / d4+2w / d4m LI/O
(range: 15/30/60)

Defenses

+1 resistance modifier vs. melee attacks
Armor: d4-1 (LI), d4-2 (HI), d4-2 (EN)

Skills

Athletics [13] - climb [14]; Stamina [11] - endurance [13]; Survival [8]

SEPS

Description:

Sometimes called a Land Shark, these beasts resemble normal sharks in nearly every way, and come in the same variety, but adults are rarely smaller than 2 meters.



Encounter: An organ in the brain of both types of Sep (see below) allows them to telekinetically push sand, snow, and loose earth out of their path. They use this ability to "swim" beneath the surface of the earth or snow, leaping into the air to snatch prey in their strong jaws and then pulling the victim beneath the surface when the prey is dead. Typically, seps attack while moving, snapping at their victim as they rush by and diving under the surface again when the attack is finished. In this way, they will attack from a different direction every other turn. Seps sense sound and motion up to 60 meters away (even when submerged).

Habitat/Society: The sep is a mutated shark, fully adapted to life on land (and no longer suited to ocean living). Seps come in two varieties: the sand sep (found only in deserts) and its less common Arctic cousin, the snow sep, which migrates south into the Great Lakes area with the winter snowpack.

Game Data

STR 16 (d4+13) INT 2 (Animal 5 or d4+3)
DEX 13 (2d4+8) WIL 9 (d4+7)
CON 15 (2d4+10) PER 1 (Animal 4 or d4+2)
Durability: 15/15/8/8 Action Check: 15+/14/7/3
Move: "swim" 30
Actions: 3
Reaction Score: Good / 3
Mutations: Special (see Encounter, above), Environmental Adaptation

Attacks

Bite 16/8/4 d6+2w / d8+3w / d4+2m LI/O

Defenses

+4 resistance modifier vs. melee attacks
Armor: d4+1 (LI), d4 (HI), d4+1 (EN)

Skills

Movement [15]; Stamina [15] - endurance [16]; Awareness [9] - perception [12]; Resolve [9] - physical resolve [10]



GRIDSITES

By Jeff Ibach

A wealth of Alternity game aids that won't break your budget.

<http://www.microtactix.com>

Each month Action Check features Gridsites, an in-depth look at a few of the more useful Alternity (or related) sites out there. This month's feature concentrates on one that our particular group has found to be most useful, Microtactix Games.

What they offer is cardboard foldup buildings, terrain, and figures. What this means to the average gamer is that an entire Alternity scene can be assembled and reused in dozens of situations, all without spending an arm and a leg on metal or plastic store-sold sets.

At this moment, they have series to fit all types of genres, including old west, fantasy, and modern day. But the one we get a kick out of is **Starbase Omega 3**. This is a set that ranges from a spaceport bar and hotel, to a shuttle pad (complete with shuttle), hovercraft, machine shops, standup aliens, heroes and robots, command centers, and more!

The beauty of these items is that they are downloadable immediately, no shipping and waiting time. They come as individual PDF files you can keep and print as many times as you like. Printing the different Starbase modular buildings many times and configuring them in new ways means you could build an entire city with a single set.

For our Dark*Matter and Supers games, we use the modern-era foldups. There's an entire town (even a mall) and sidewalk layouts and figures. The best part? Full-scale 25mm cars, vans and trucks!

As mentioned above, all these are in 25mm scale and easily mesh with metal figures of comparable size.

There are sample FREE downloads on their site,

and they've even been kind enough to offer Action Check readers a sample not available on their web site included with this issue!

I spent some time talking with designer Gary M. Williams about the cardboard cutouts modeling work they do...

Action Check: Do you design these on a computer? Is a professional program used?

Gary Williams: Yes, 99% of it is computer designed. Every once in a while I'll hand draw an odd thing like a gun resting on a table or something like that. Of course the stand-ups are hand drawn. I'm not *that* good. Most people think that I use PhotoShop or Illustrator or a combination of the two, but I'm using a wonderful little \$20 program called Draw2 with some help from another program called Paint Box Windows that I picked up around 8 or 9 years ago for little or nothing. These seem to do just fine and I don't see much point in changing over.

AC: I heard a post-apocalyptic set will be coming soon, like **Gamma World**. Just buildings or lots of stand up figures as well?

GW: Buildings, stand-ups (done by Cheap Folks artist Rick Hershey), cars, trucks and what ever else I can come up with.

AC: Nearly every role-playing genre will soon be filled by Microtactix cardboard standups. At that point, will you continue to produce more under the same banners (Vyllage on the Cheap, Vulture Gulch, Starbase Omega 3, etc.)?

GW: There will be more for each of the lines, I guess, as there's a lot I haven't covered yet. I've got a couple of really huge starships and troop transports for Omega sitting around, Vulture Gulch needs a church and a schoolhouse...and a train, which I'm working on. The Fantasy pieces will probably be very specific sets, like caves or ruins. Something along those lines.

Check out the free Starbase Omega 3 set 'The Forgotten Outpost' in this issue of Action Check!



MUTANT ANIMALS

By John William Grigsby IV

MUTANT ANIMALS OF THE VAST SWAMP

The Vast Swamp is my personal GAMMA WORLD campaign setting, nestled deep in the region of what was once the Gulf Coast area of the southeastern US. Time has rendered the vast majority of this region one huge swampland, thick with mires, marshes, and mutants, but a few communities do survive and even thrive here.

The June 2000 issue of *Dragon* magazine (#272) provides a wealth of information on playing mutant animals in the new GAMMA WORLD® campaign setting (*Gamma Squirrel and Mutant Moose* by Andy Collins). These rules will be employed for the Vast Swamp campaign, with the following exception: all mutations listed under an animal genotype are entirely optional and may be exchanged for mutation points. For example, an alligator may choose to lose his tail in exchange for two extra mutation points.

As comprehensive as the article is, however, the list of animals provided from which to draw upon is tailored for the Pacific Northwest, and not the Deep South. Therefore, a brief list has been compiled of creatures native to the campaign setting and some new ones provided.

More information on The Vast Swamp campaign will be submitted for future issues of *Action Check* and

can also be found in the ALTERNITY™ section of my website, *WORLDS APART*:

(<http://worldsapart.freesevers.com>).

I can also be contacted via e-mail at:

lil_john@bellsouth.net or whtknt13@hotmail.com.

NEW ANIMAL SPECIES

Alligator (Reptile): Natural Armor. Bonus mutations — Improved Natural Attack (teeth; replaces Natural Attack), New Body Parts (tail; provides extra unarmed attack). Character can swim at full rate using swim or easy swim. Maximum Strength and Constitution are 15. No additional mutations permitted.

Armadillo (Mammal, small): Night Vision. Bonus mutation — Dermal Armor. -2 mutation points.

Badger (Mammal, small): Natural Attack (teeth and claws), Night Vision. Bonus mutation — Improved Reflexes. Character can burrow through earth and sand at the rate of one meter per minute. -1 mutation point.

Bee/hornet/wasp (Bug): Natural Attack (stinger). Bonus mutations — Poison Attack (hemotoxin), Wings. No additional mutations permitted.

Catfish (Fish): Gills, Environmental Sensitivity, moderate (arid). Bonus mutations — Improved Senses (taste), Poison Attack (irritant). -4 mutation points.

Cockroach (Bug): Natural Armor. Bonus mutations — Radiation Tolerance, Wings (but body is poorly designed for flying; no penalties to Strength or Constitution, 5 minutes maximum flight time, then must rest 10 minutes; flight speed is one-half normal). Maximum Constitution is 16. -3 mutation points.

Crab/crayfish (Bug): Natural Attack (pincers). Bonus mutation — Dermal Armor (replaces Natural Armor). Character can breathe water or air and swim at full rate using swim or easy swim. -1 mutation point.

Dragonfly (Bug): Natural Attack (mandibles). Bonus mutation — Wings. -3 mutation points.

Gar (Fish): Gills, Natural Armor. Bonus mutation — Natural Attack. -2 mutation points.

Mosquito/gnat (Bug): Natural Attack (bite). Bonus mutation — Wings. -3 mutation points.

Opossum (Mammal, small): Natural Attack (teeth), Night Vision. Bonus mutation — New Body Part (prehensile tail). Character is capable of appearing convincingly dead for up to two hours (Good complexity skill check versus Knowledge — *first aid*, medical Science, or Awareness — *perception*). -2 mutation points.

Turtle, Snapping (Reptile): Bonus mutations — Dermal Plating (replaces Natural Armor), Improved Natural Attack (beak). Character can hold breath for up to 5 minutes. No additional mutations permitted.

NATIVE ANIMALS FROM DRAGON #272

Ant	Bat
Bear	Beaver
Beetle	Bull
Butterfly	Chipmunk/squirrel
Coyote	Deer
Fox	Frog
Grasshopper/cricket	Gull
Hawk	Horse
Hummingbird	Lizard
Bobcat	Moth
Mountain lion (cougar)	Mouse/shrew/rat
Otter	Owl
Porcupine	Rabbit
Raccoon	Skunk
Snake (both)	Spider
Toad	Turtle
Wolf	



IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN

By John William Grigsby

UPDATED GAMMA WORLD HERO SPECIES

Like many ALTERNITY fans, I was ecstatic when I learned that Wizards of the Coast would be producing a GAMMA WORLD supplement. And, I will admit, I was pleasantly surprised with the result. However, I was sad to see that one of my personal favorites from the old GAMMA WORLD, the Gren, did not make the cut. So I offer them here, not as creatures of Gamma Terra, but as full-fledged hero species.

Grens

Grens, also known as Green Men, are nomadic hunter-gatherers that prefer a simple living in forests and jungles. They are normally peaceful, shy, and reclusive, seldom venturing from the safety of their wooded home. A settlement will tend food plants that grow within their community to supplement what is hunted or foraged.

Grens are also remarkably adept with animals and can train even the most stubborn of creatures. Domesticated creatures are kept solely for the use of the community, never as pets. Grens will never harm the local ecology, preferring to live in harmony with nature.

In appearance, they are almost identical to pure strain humans, save their dark green skin. Hair color ranges from brown to green, though a few rare individuals have blonde hair. They wear a minimum of clothing, usually made from leaves and grass.

Grens get along well with sasquatch and friendly humans, but consider androids to be demons. They treat sleeth and dabbers with respect, but always as lesser beings.

ROLEPLAYING

It is a rare thing indeed for a gren to leave his community to venture into the wilds of Gamma Terra. Such an eventuality may occur following an attack or plague that wipes out his tribe or perhaps he becomes separated from his group and is left behind.

Grens hate and shun Ancient technology and will never learn to use any weapon or wear any armor that is not made from natural materials. They consider technology to be the product of demons that destroyed the world of the Ancients and are determined not to end up the same way.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Improved Durability:** Like their distant cousins, the grens are of hardy and durable stock. Add +2 to a starting gren hero's Stun and Wound ratings. There is no effect on the hero's Mortal or Fatigue ratings.
- **Defensive Coloration:** In their native environment, the grens' dark green skin allows them to blend into the background. Anyone trying to spot or target a gren in a natural setting suffers a +2 step penalty on the attempt.
- **Animal Empathy:** Grens are natural animal handlers and get a -2 step bonus when using the Animal Handling broad skill or either of its specialty skills.
- **Primitive Society:** Grens hate and fear technology. They will never, under any circumstances, use any item that is not made from natural materials.

Free Broad Skills and Ability Score Limits for gren are the same as for humans. Note, however, that gren do not get the five bonus skill points due pure strain humans.



John William Grigsby can be reached at lil_john@bellsouth.net



CREATURE FEATURE

By Derek Holland / John William Grigsby / Neil Spicer

For the new Alternity Gamma World campaign setting, 6 new creatures to inspire adventure.

Large Ant

[by Derek Holland] dmh71@juno.com

Game Data

STR d2 INT 1 (Animal 1)
DEX 1 WIL 2d4+2
CON d2 PER 1 (Animal 1)
Durability: as CON Action Check: 4+/3/1/-
Move: walk 1 # Actions: 1
Reaction Score: Ordinary / 1
Mutations: size change (larger), poison
Defects: Diminished senses, moderate

Attacks

Bite 2/1/- 1s/d2s/- (LI/O)
Sting 3/2/1 1s/d2s/1w (LI/O)

Defenses

+2 vs. melee
+3 vs. ranged
-4 vs. heavy weapons

Skills

Stealth - sneak [10]; Awareness - perception [10]; Investigate - track [8].

Description: These ants are about .3 meters long. There are several dozen different types, with 4 major ones named for their colors: red, black, yellow, and brown. Red are fire ants, black are leaf cutters, yellow are carpenter ants and brown are army ants.

Combat: Each worker can use either its bite or its sting. Reds have a neurotoxin, blacks have an irritant, yellows have a caustic poison, and browns have a paralytic poison. Black and yellow ants only attack aggressors toward their colony. The others attack all animals smaller than 4 meters long for food.

Habitat: Red and brown ants are found in southern portions of the US south to southern Brazil. The others are ubiquitous in the Americas.

Society: All ants are social insects that live in colonies with distinct castes. There is a division of labor in the castes (which can number up to 20) with the major castes being queen, worker, drone, and soldier.

Biome: Black and yellow- forests, red and brown-tropical forests

Encounter chance: Probable

Group size: d2-12d10

Organization: swarm or colony

Niche: low level carnivore or herbivore

IQ: low order animal

Giant Hornet

[by Derek Holland] dmh71@juno.com

Game Data

STR d6+10 INT 3 (animal d6+3)
DEX d8+10 WIL 2d4+8
CON d6+10 PER 1 (animal d3)
Durability: as CON Action Check: 19+/18/9/4
Move: walk 6, fly 56 # Actions: 3
Reaction Score: Good / 3
Mutations: wings, improved dermal armor, electric aura, improved senses
Defects: radiation sensitivity, toxin intolerance, environmental sensitivity - moderate

Attacks

Bite 14/7/3 d6w / d8+2w / d4+1m (LI/G)
Sting 12/6/3 d2w / d3w / d4w (LI/O)

Defenses

+3 vs. melee
+1 vs. ranged
Armor: d8+2 (LI), d6+3 (HI), d6+1 (En)

Skills

Athletics - lift [10]; Acrobatics - flight [6]; Survival; Stamina - endurance [9]; Awareness - perception [8]; Resolve - physical [6]

Description: Giant hornets are 8 meters long. They have yellow and black stripes and a white face. Like all wasps and bees, adult hornets

feed on sugar water (usually in the form of sap) and larvae feed on meat and sugar water. Because of this, adults can not heal wound damage via rest.

Combat: Giant hornets attack from the air. They try to collect animals for their larvae by swooping down on a suitable animal (must be 40 kg+) and biting and shocking it to death. Only when the animal turns out to be dangerous to the hornet does it use its sting (a nasty hemotoxin that incurs a 3 step penalty to the CON resistance check). It then carries the body back to the nest to be pulped into a chunky goo for the young. They can easily be driven off with insecticides.

Habitat: Giant hornets are found all over Gamma Terra in temperate and tropical regions. They prefer to make nests in very large trees (like the giant redwoods near Settle) or in ruins of skyscrapers.

Society: Unlike normal hornets, most of the workers survive the winter along with the queen. A nest is started every year - the old ones are abandoned or destroyed to make room for a new one. A new queen has no workers and must hunt for food for her five to seven larvae. Three to five of the larvae survive to adulthood. After the first brood metamorphoses into adults, they take over the work and the queen begins producing 3-4 eggs per week. It takes 2 weeks for an egg to hatch and 6 weeks before the larva pupates. An adult worker lives 2-3 years and a queen 10-12 years.

Biome: Temperate and Tropical forests
Encounter chance: Slim
Group size: 1 - 3d10
Organization: Swarm
Niche: Herbivore/Top level carnivore
IQ: Low Order animal

Orm

[by Derek Holland] dmh71@juno.com

Game Data

STR	d6+4	INT	1 (animal d4)
DEX	d6+6	WIL	d4+1
CON	d8+10	PER	1 (animal d2)
Durability:	as CON	Action Check:	10 + 9/4/2

Move: walk 1, swim 8

Actions: 2

Reaction Score: Ordinary / 2

Mutations: gills, poison, radiation tolerance, sonar, psychic void, enhanced senses, gas generation

Defects: susceptible to damage (En)

Attacks

Bite	7/3/1	d6s/d4+1w/d3m (LI/O)
Gas cloud	see below	
Poison	see below	
Ram	16/8/4	d6w/d8+2w/d4m (HI/G)

Defenses

+2 vs. melee
+2 vs. ranged

Skills

Stealth - hide [12], sneak [8]; Stamina - endurance [6]; Survival; Awareness - perception [12], intuition [8]; Resolve - physical resolve [8]

Description: Orms are very unusual giant worms. They have a shape somewhat like a plesiosaur, but only have the front flippers. They also have no facial features, and the tail is spade-shaped. They are from 4 to 15 meters long and are usually bluish-gray.

Combat: An orm will attack a ship by ramming it, unless the ship is made of metal. If the ship is metal, the orm raises its head out of the water and emits a ball of gas 6 meters in diameter that acts as an irritant and paralytic poison. After incapacitating the crew, it pulls the bodies overboard to feed on them. Its skin is covered with a powerful necrotoxin (3 step penalty to the CON resistance check with an onset time of 5 minutes and a duration of 1 hour).

Habitat:

Orms are found in deep lakes all over the Northern Hemisphere and in the oceans. Those found in fresh water are confined there and the same is true for those in salt water. Occasionally one hunts in Putrid Sound.

Society: The social life of an orm is unknown.

Biome: Lakes and oceans

Encounter chance: Slim
Group size: 1
Organization: Solitary
Niche: Top level carnivore
IQ: Low Order animal

Based on "Monsters of the Deep" by Gregory W. Detwiler in *Dragon* #190.

Nay-Palm Etto Tree

[by Neil Spicer]

purestrain@hotmail.com

The Nay-Palm Etto tree is a fairly large mutated plant found in many locations across Gamma Terra, but especially in warm coastal regions and around natural sources of petroleum. Some species of the plant have adapted to more temperate regions, but in general it does not react well to cold environments. Once a year, at the spring equinox, these trees will reproduce by firing off a few incendiary seeds. This salvo can represent a significant danger to those that are unprepared. These seeds are often harvested by the more intelligent denizens of Gamma Terra because they can be processed to provide carbon-based fuel for many of the Ancient vehicles that still exist. Of course, the harvesters of these seeds have to be extremely careful, and most often do their work at night when the trees go dormant.

Game Data

STR 14 (2d6+8)	INT 10 (2d4+4)
DEX 0	WIL 9 (2d4+3)
CON 16 (2d6+10)	PER 8 (2d4+2)

Durability: 16/16/8/8 Action check: 6+/5/2/1
Move: none
#Actions: 1
Reaction Score: Marginal / 1

Mutations: Energy Metamorphosis, Clairvoyance, Empathic Scan
Defects: Moderate Environmental Sensitivity (Cold), Photodependent

Attacks

Incendiary Grenade 16/8/4
d4w / d4+2w / d4+3w En/G
Fireproof or heat-shielded objects suffer half or

no damage depending on the level of protection. Flammable objects ignite and continue to burn for d6+1 rounds, suffering d4-1 points of wound damage each round or until the fire is extinguished.

Flaming Sap CON feat See text En/O
Victims within 6 meters must make a Constitution feat check to resist effects: Amazing success, d4s; Good, d4-1w; Ordinary, d4w; Failure, d6-1w; Critical Failure, d6w. Those remaining within the area must continue to make Constitution feat checks every round.

Defenses

+2 vs. melee attacks
Armor: d8 (LI), d6+1 (HI), d6+3 (En)

Skills

Heavy Weapons - indirect fire [16]; Stamina - endurance [18]; Awareness - perception [10], Resolve - mental [10], physical [12]

Description: Nay-Palm Etto trees are not an uncommon sight in the warmer regions of Gamma Terra. They look very much like normal palm trees, although they are a bit shorter than the original variety, reaching a maximum of fifteen to eighteen feet. As it grows, large coconut-shaped seeds develop among the leafy fronds high above the ground. The tree can produce from 4 to 10 (2d4+2) of these seeds, depending on its relative size and age. Each of them also come with an organically grown gas sack that builds up to a tremendous pressure which can be released at the tree's discretion. Once a year, during the warmest time of the day, the tree will fire off nearly all of its seeds in order to reproduce, propelling them significant distances away.

A fully-grown tree can hurl seeds just like a grenade launcher (up to 50/200/350 meters for short/medium/long range). The impact of these seeds can be dangerous to anyone nearby. If a seed strikes a hard surface and manages to crack open, it throws out a splash of Nay-Palm juice that bursts into flame immediately upon contact with the atmosphere. These flames serve a major purpose in the reproduction cycle of the plant by burning out an area around the point of im-

pact and destroying any other plants that might compete for survival with the young seedling.

The actual germinated seed lies inside the hard outer shell, and if this shell does not rupture and release its contents, the seed will not sprout. These stray seeds are often picked up and harvested by the people of Gamma Terra, who carefully store them and allow them to ferment. This fermentation process changes the volatility of the Nay-Palm juice into a more stable fuel that can be used to power Ancient vehicles with internal combustion engines. Once the seeds have gone through this process they are safe to open without the contents immediately bursting into flame. This can take at least three months, though longer waiting periods will result in a much more refined and efficient fuel source.

Combat: The Nay-Palm Etto tree is a sentient plant, though it lacks any means of communicating with the world around it. It functions just above animal intelligence, and will use its Empathic Scan mutation to probe the minds of passersby in order to gauge their intentions toward it. If it determines that anything close to it might be hostile, it will release a flammable sap and coat the area around it, then purposefully drop one of its seeds (automatic success in cracking the shell) and ignite the entire vicinity. Typically these flames will drive off most animals and the tree is perfectly shielded from the flames due to its Energy Metamorphosis mutation. In fact, during cold snaps, the sentient tree will often employ this process to keep itself warm and survive. It can also use this process to heal itself by using the energy of the ensuing flames to reknit its plant-tissues.

Should this initial defense mechanism fail to drive away any interlopers, the plant will then use its Clairvoyance mutation in order to locate and target individual opponents. Once it has locked on, a burst of seeds are then fired in that direction to ensure the threat is eliminated. More often than not, this has spelled the doom of many a greedy harvester. Smarter would-be thieves have learned that the plant goes dormant during times of darkness and know that it's then safe to approach it.

The use of these incendiary seeds (even during reproduction) has the potential to start some serious wildfires in a heavily forested region. Most often, the flames burn themselves out fairly quickly, but they have been known to spread, especially during dry spells. Farming communities that live near these trees are constantly on the watch for any flames that could get out of control, but in the true wilderness travelers should beware. The following table represents a quick method for determining the limitations of a Nay-Palm conflagration:

d20 Roll	Woodland/Weather Conditions:		
	Wet	Normal	Dry
1-4	3m	15m	25m
5-8	15m	25m	75m
9-12	25m	75m	150m
13-16	75m	150m	300m
17-19	150m	300m	*
20	300m	*	*

This fire spreads out of control, becoming a major forest fire that can threaten and destroy several square kilometers of land. Normally the people of Gamma Terra lack the tools and manpower to combat such a blaze and only a significant change in the weather patterns that brings a downpour of rain can end such a fire.

Habitat/Society: The Nay-Palm Etto tree is a high order plant, having learned to survive in the harsh environment of Gamma Terra through its physical and mental mutations. There are two kinds of social orders of Nay-Palm Etto plants. The wild variety grows in relatively small groups and although they fire off their seeds once a year, only a few manage to break open and produce a new seedling. The farmed variety usually develops an understanding with a local community of harvesters who work diligently to maintain the area around their special "friends". Sometimes this relationship is achieved by a talented telepath, but more often the people of Gamma Terra are unaware of the plant's sentience and just collect stray seeds and participate in harvests during the nighttime hours. The Nay-Palm Etto trees themselves don't usually mind such arrangements, though some have been known to

become angered if too many seeds are taken from them.

Ecological Data:

Biome: Temperate and Tropical Forests

Encounter chance: Possible

Group size: 1-4 (d4) or 5-20 (5d4)

Organization: Solitary or Farming Community

Niche: Vascular Plant

IQ: High Order Plant

Gelena

[by Derek Holland] dmh71@juno.com

Game Data

STR d4+8 INT 4 (animal d6+4)

DEX d6+6 WIL 3d4

CON d6+8 PER 2 (animal d4)

Durability: as CON Action Check: 12+/11/5/2

Move: sprint 30, run 24, walk 6

Actions: 2

Reaction Score: Ordinary / 2

Mutations: Radiating Eyes, Dermal Plating, Radiation Tolerance, Contact

Defects: environmental sensitivity, extreme (cold)

Attacks

Bite 10/5/2 d4s / d6+2s / d4w (LI/O)

Radiating eyes as mutation

Defenses

Armor: d6+2 (LI), d6+1 (HI), d4+1 (En)

Skills

Athletics - climb [12], jump [8]; Stealth - hide [6];

Tactics - pack [8]; Awareness - perception [9]

Description: The gelena is a species of communal giant spider. Gelena bodies are 1.75 meters in diameter. From the tip of one leg to the opposite it is about 4 meters. An individual gelen looks like a black widow in general shape. It is brown with green stripes and blotches and has an elongated abdomen. They are about as intelligent as a mantid.

Combat: Gelena attack as a pack all animals that travel under their webs. Several irradiate the prey and the others try to bite it to death. They do not attack creatures over 6 meters long or groups they do not outnumber by at least 2-to-1. They use contact to communicate with each

other and coordinate hunting (thus giving them Tactics - pack).

Habitat: Gelena are mostly tropical spiders, but can be found in temperate regions due to hibernation. They only live in deep, dense forest.

Society: Gelena build large webs high up in the trees - at least 8 meters up. They can cover an area of up to one square kilometer. They are always social with each other and share food. Their spiderlings do not hunt, but do eat when the adults kill something. Stats for the spiderlings are as follows (d12): 1-4 - 1/8 adults stats; 5-7 - 1/6 adult stats; 8-9 - 1/4 adult stats; 10-11 - 1/2 adult stats; 12 - 3/4 adult stats.

Biome: Deep forest

Encounter chance: Slim

Group size: 4d10+20 (and 4d10 spiderlings)

Organization: Communal

Niche: Top level carnivore

IQ: High Order animal

By Christopher West



**Reason number 31 why weren
shouldn't play basketball.**

Kudzoom

[by Neil Spicer] purestrain@hotmail.com

Kudzoom (or sometimes called the Creeping Doom) is an incredibly resilient mutated plant found all throughout the southeast of Meriga, as well as other jungle locations across Gamma Terra. Based upon the green-leaf vine known as Kudzu, this species was regarded as a nuisance even in Ancient times, snaking its way across houses, power lines, trees . . . in other words, anything it could wrap itself around. The Gamma Age variety follows closely in its forefather's footsteps, and has become a predator of other plants, wrapping itself around them in order to use its acid touch and slowly dissolve them and feed on their nutrients.

Game Data

STR	8 (2d4+3)	INT	3 (d4)
DEX	14 (2d6+6)	WIL	10 (2d4+2)
CON	8 (2d4+3)	PER	3 (d4)

Durability: 8/8/4/4 Action check: 9+/8/4/2

Move: walk 2 run 4 sprint 6

Actions: 2

Reaction Score: Ordinary/2

Mutations: Acid Touch, Directional Sense, Life Detection, Natural Attack (choke vines), Oversized Limbs (arms).

Drawbacks: Diminished Senses, moderate, Environmental Sensitivity, moderate (cold).

Attacks

Choke Vines	10/5/2	d4s/d4+2s/d4w	LI/O
Digestive Acid	CON feat	d4s/d4w/d4+2w/d6+2w	En/O

Defenses

+2 vs. ranged

Skills

Athletics - Climb[12]; Unarmed Attack - brawl [10]; Stealth - sneak[15]; Stamina - endurance [10]; Awareness - perception[12]; Resolve - physical resolve[12]

Description

Kudzoom is a green, flowerless plant 3 meters in length, though many of its vine-like arms extend and reach ever further than that. Its many

leaves cover and protect its body and change color in the winter to a flat, lifeless gray. It resembles nothing less than a thick blanket of leafy vines draped across everything in sight.

Encounter

Typically, Kudzoom can be found literally blanketing an entire area. They are incredibly slow movers, dragging themselves across the ground in order to cover any existing vegetation, even climbing up into trees and buildings to do so. The plant does this in order to exercise its acid touch, breaking down other plants into a nutritive sludge that it can then digest. These feeding regions are completely laid waste and left bare after a period of 20 to 30 days, depending on the amount of vegetable material that exists. Because of their diminished senses, kudzoom plants sometimes can't tell the difference between trees and the metal structures of the Ancients, and climb everything in their voracious search for food. They seek out anything from fresh plants to manufactured items constructed of plant materials (wood, cloth, etc.).

Most creatures of Gamma Terra can outrun a kudzoom plant easily, but eventually they have to stop and rest. It is during these night-time hours that the plant can be dangerous to travelers, often continuing to move all through the night and sometimes unknowingly surrounding an encampment in order to feed off the surrounding vegetation. Many campers have awakened in the morning to find themselves completely hemmed in by the thick vine-plants.

Normally kudzoom plants will ignore animals and people, as long as they are left unmolested. Anyone trying to cross an area where kudzoom are feeding, however, will be attacked by their choker vines and acid touch. This natural reaction is ingrained in the plants to fend off predators and those that would attempt to steal away their food. In addition, during times of famine, emboldened kudzoom plants will actually drape themselves over sleeping travelers in order to feed off their clothing or any weapons or gear made from cloth, wood, or other natural plant substances. This experience can be a nightmare for victims that are taken by surprise. Kudzoom plants that succeed with such a surprise attack gain a -2 step bonus to hit with unarmed attacks and the resulting acidic touch for the

BEYOND ARES

Compiled by Jeff Ibach

next d4+1 rounds as their victims struggle to remove themselves from among the blanket of vines. Manufactured items, gear, and equipment that are touched by the acid during this feeding frenzy are rendered useless after three rounds of continuous contact.

Kudzoom have a limited intelligence and can be communicated with in simple language by those with the Contact or Translation mutations. Because of their constant travel, kudzoom can sometimes be a source of information about a particular area that they may have visited. Dissuading them from feeding upon a certain area takes a skilled negotiator with unlimited patience, though. All Interaction - bargain skill checks in such an encounter suffer a +3 step penalty unless some particularly fresh or exotic plant can be offered to distract the kudzoom. A successful Deception - bribe skill check with such an item can reduce the bargain penalty as follows: Ordinary success, reduce to +2 steps; Good, reduce to +1 step; Amazing, no penalty to the bargain skill check.

Habitat/Society

Typically, kudzoom travel in herds of 5 to 20 individual plants. They come together for mutual defense, protection, and to reproduce. The male and female plants are indistinguishable from one another, but the younger ones are only one-third the size of a full-grown kudzoom and are incapable of combat. These herd communities also help one another in locating food and raising the younger plants to maturity, always leaving behind some nutritive sludge for their children to feed upon until they have mastered the ability to produce acid on their own. When a herd reaches twenty or more mature plants in number, they will voluntarily divide themselves into two groups and go their separate ways. The plants then move on to the next feeding region, always moving slowly, barely creeping across the ground in complete silence.

Biome: Any except Arid and Arctic
 Encounter chance: Probable
 Group size: 5-20 (5d4)
 Organization: Herd
 Niche: Herbivorous Plant
 IQ: Low Level Sentient

With Dragon Magazine moving to an all D&D format with issue #274, here's the archive of Alternity articles to grace the old Ares column.

Dragon Annual # 3: Star Frontiers Conversion
Dragon Annual #4: A Kindness to Strangers
 Dark*Matter adventure

DRAGON # 246: Omega Variant solo adventure
DRAGON # 249: Sixguns and Sesheyans
DRAGON # 250: World of the Mechalus
DRAGON # 251: AD&D Aliens: The Sesheyans
DRAGON # 253: AD&D Aliens: The Fraal, Sufficiently Advanced Magic
DRAGON # 255: Starship Perks and Flaws, 3 Starship floorplans
DRAGON # 256: World of the Weren
DRAGON # 257: AD&D Aliens: The T'sa, Battlezone computer game conversion
DRAGON # 258: No One Can Hear You Scream: Horror in Alternity
DRAGON # 259: Weapons of Fallout 2 for Alternity, CSS Nomad Starship Deck Plans
DRAGON # 260: Heroes and Villains of Zero Point
DRAGON # 261: World of the Sesheyan
DRAGON # 262: From Dungeons to Drivespace: Converting D&D monsters to Alternity
DRAGON # 263: In the Blink of an Eye: The World of the T'sa
DRAGON # 264: Legacy of the Dragon: Vampire FX in the Alternity Game
DRAGON # 265: The Voice, Dark*Matter solo adventure.
DRAGON # 266: Back to the Future: 1950's role-playing with the Alternity system.
DRAGON # 267: Eye in the Sky: Spy satellites in the Dark*Matter game.
DRAGON # 268: FX Artifacts: New guides on creating them plus lots of examples.
DRAGON # 269: Urban Legends: Adventure hooks for your Dark*Matter campaign.
DRAGON #270: New Frontiers: Conversion notes to use Traveler with Alternity rules.
DRAGON #271: Top Secret: new careers, skills and equipment to play Top Secret Alternity.
DRAGON #272: Gamma Squirrels and Mutant Moose: Mutant Animal PC's for Gamma World
DRAGON #273: Arms Race: new weapons for the Alternity Game.



SUPPORTING CAST

By John William Grigsby

P'Reena

Game Data

STR 13 [+2] INT 10
DEX 13 [+2] WIL 7
CON 9 PER 8
Durability: 9/9/5/5 Action Check: 15+/14/7/3
Last Resort Points: 0 (-d4 bonus)
Move: sprint 26, run 16, walk 6 # Actions: 2
Perks: None

Flaws: Phobia: water +2, Powerful Enemy +4, Temper +2

Special Abilities: Improved Natural Attack (claws, retractable), Improved Reflexes, Improved Senses (hearing and smell), -1 step bonus to Athletics — *climb*; Major Physical Change

Mutations: Oversized Limbs (legs); Light Sensitivity, Radiation Sensitivity

Attacks

Unarmed—brawl 15/7/3 d4w / d4+2w / d4+2m (LI/O)

Melee weapon—spear 16/8/4 -d4
d4+2w / d4+4w / d4+2m (LI/O)

Throw—spear 15/7/3 d4+2w / d4+4w / d4+2m
13/26/52 (LI/O)

Defenses

None

Skills

Athletics [13] — *climb* [14], *jump* [14], *throw* [15]; Melee Weapons [13] — *blade* [16]; Unarmed Attack [13] — *brawl* [15]; Acrobatics [13] — *dodge* [14], *fall* [15]; Stealth [13] — *sneak* [14]; Movement [9] — *race* [10]; Stamina [9]; Knowledge [10]; Awareness [7] — *perception* [8]; Investigate [7] — *track* [8]; Interaction [8]

Gear

Metal spear, leather backpack, bedroll, pouch, blank 3.5 inch computer disks (3)*, cookbook for campers*, 144 gold pieces

- these items have been scavenged during previous adventures, with the GM's permission.

Personal Information

Sex: Female

Motivation: Loose End

Attitude: Anti-authority

Traits: Aggressive, confident
Age: 4 years

Appearance

P'Reena appears as a bipedal cougar standing 2.05 m tall and weighing 166 kg, almost every bit of it muscle. She wears no clothing or armor, only a small leather pouch slung across her torso and a leather backpack containing her bedroll when traveling. She is basically humanoid, though her "knees" (actually her heels) are bent backward rather than forward, causing her to walk with a loping gait. Her long legs more than make up for this disadvantage, however. Her body is covered in a short layer of tawny fur. Her hands are humanoid, with three fingers and an opposable thumb. Each fingertip is equipped with a retractable claw, making her a formidable hand-to-hand combatant. She speaks trade language with no difficulty, though she does have a tendency to trill her R's. She is also quite capable of voicing a roar that would make her ancestors proud and sometimes purrs when contended or sexually excited.

Background

P'Reena (she is named for an Ancient god of felines) was not born into the heroes' village. In fact, she has only come to the village as recently as eight months ago. Before that time, she was a member of a tribe of mutated cats of various types that call themselves The Pride. P'Reena was born into The Pride; her mother

was a member and she was adopted by the tribe at her birth. The Pride inhabits the caves some distance to the north of the heroes' village; a place they call Pride Rock.

The leader of The Pride is a mutated panther by the name of Jagret. Jagret is physically very powerful and rules The Pride by throwing his weight around and through the use of two handpicked enforcers. One afternoon, he sought out P'Reena with the intent to claim her as his mate. The girl was only nine months old, still a child and considered taboo, but Jagret cared not for the laws that he himself had established. He and his henchmen waited until P'Reena's mother had gone on a hunt, then trapped the girl in her cave. As the enforcers stood guard, he advanced on P'Reena.

But her mother had not gone far and returned in time to see the panther try-



ing to force himself on the child. With a roar, she tore into the enforcers. The first fell immediately, his throat ripped out, but the second managed to draw his weapon, a deadly tool of the Ancients. There was a loud crack and a bright flash and P'Reena's mother fell back dead. Livid with rage, the girl leaped on Jagret, clawing and biting. She managed to strike a telling blow across his muzzle, and while he was momentarily distracted, broke for the safety of the cave mouth. Behind her, the guard fired his weapon again and P'Reena could hear the projectile whistle by her ear, but she was gone before he could take another shot. Jagret's evil laughter rang in her ears.

For many months she wandered alone in the mountains, learning the art of the hunt and surviving by her wits. She skillfully avoided hunting parties of The Pride and became adept at remaining unseen even when only a few steps away. As she grew to womanhood, she remembered her mother fondly and swore vengeance on Jagret.

Eight months ago, while following a deer, she came upon the village of the heroes. She managed to sneak by the guard tower and entered the village hoping to steal some food and supplies. Unfortunately, she was caught in the act and taken before the elders. No one could have been more surprised than she was when, instead of doling a punishment, they invited her to join the village.

Left without a home or a family, P'Reena readily accepted and was assigned to the militia. It was not long, however, before her temper and her natural unwillingness to take orders proved to be too disruptive. She took her leave of the militia and instead offered her services as a hunter, the capacity in which she serves to this day. She prefers to hunt under cover of darkness, both because of her superior night vision and her sensitivity to light.

Since that time, she has been a part of the village, doing her piece to support the community by providing meat and occasionally bolstering the defense. She is a respected, if reclusive, member of the community and maintains a modest home on the edge of the village. Though she is happy with her life here, she has never forgotten her promise to avenge her mother's death and sometimes considers leaving to take her revenge.

Personality

Despite her aggressive streak and quick temper, P'Reena is good-natured and loyal to any whom she calls friend. She always keeps her word and would never take advantage of a foe. To her friends, she is a staunch and loyal ally. To her foes, she is a tenacious and deadly opponent. She has never forgotten what Jagret did to her and will not let that happen to another if she can possibly prevent it.

P'Reena hates people that make things more complicated than they have to be and would rather take the direct path than the long way to a goal. She always looks for the simple solution and when she cannot find it, she often loses control of herself, becoming sullen and grouchy. But as quickly as her temper rises, so does her rage subside and within a half-hour, she is her usual self again. When not angered, she has a surprisingly upbeat outlook on life, given her traumatic past.

She does not take orders well, preferring her freedom to go and come as she pleases. She is unafraid of taking risks and leaps into combat with a battle cry on her lips. As she is fond of saying, "The test of the warrior spirit is in the willingness to enter battle." She does, however, have a deep-rooted fear of water any deeper than she can touch bottom, the result of a childhood accident in which she nearly drowned. It is for this reason that she has never learned to swim. She does not like boats and will not willingly enter one.

P'Reena is also a collector of Ancient artifacts. She is always on the lookout for goodies that others consider junk. The Ancients had a great many wonders and while most people consider anything that does not serve an obvious purpose to be garbage, P'Reena sees each trinket as a wonder. She can spend hours staring at an artifact and thinking about what its purpose might have been.

As a hunter, she prefers meat to vegetables and grains, but is not above supplementing her diet when fresh meat or fish are not available. She has also learned to enjoy the taste of cooked meat, though eating it raw does not present her any difficulty or revulsion, and she will happily do so if denied the opportunity to cook it. The one food of which she is particularly fond is fowl, while she intensely dislikes fruit and avoids it whenever possible.

As other races go, she is tolerant of anyone who treats her with a degree of respect, though she appreciates open admiration. She tends to place humans over all others, due to their connections with the Ancients, and she sees fellow mutant felines as rivals, but has no particular hatred of them unless they give her cause. Though she tolerates sleeths and dabbers, she considers the former too pacifistic and the latter to be opportunistic thieves. "Best not to turn your back on a daber," as she often says.

Lastly, her desire for revenge against Jagret is strong. If given the opportunity, she would probably abandon any cause in order to satisfy her desire for vengeance. It is unlikely, however, that she would willingly desert or endanger her friends for this. But should their paths ever cross again, P'Reena will be ready to repay the bullying panther . . . in spades!



Getting the most of Character Creation in Alternity Gamma World

By William E. Herrmann

"There he goes, one of God's own prototypes. A high powered mutant of some kind never even considered for mass production. Too weird to live, and too rare to die."

-Hunter S. Thompson

Last issue, I discussed a few of the quirks of GW5e's character creation system. This time, I'll put a few of the ideas brought up into practice.

Let's create ourselves a mutant, shall we? Unlike the rules presented in the game book, we'll start with the mutations, rather than the character concept. If your GM allows it, I strongly recommend you use the guided randomization method. The primary reason is that only mutant humans can have Amazing mutations. And since you cannot get them later from exposure, get yours now while you can.

With this in mind, I'll go for variety, and select one mutation of each quality, Ordinary, Good, and Amazing. I don't much care if they're physical or mental, so I'll just flip a coin for each. Starting with the Ordinary mutation, the coin comes up tails, mental. A roll of 1 on the d20 (wish I had that more often at the gaming table) gives our mutant Battle Sense (-1 step on action checks). For the Good mutation, the coin comes up heads, and the die 13, Increased Precision (bonus to hit). I'm getting a few character ideas already. And finally, for the Amazing, heads and a 12, Hyper Reflexes (another -3 steps on action checks).

Now for the part that makes players cringe, rolling up the drawbacks. With 4 points to spend, do I want to share the wealth among many weaker drawbacks, or just bite the bullet, and take one big one? I can't decide, so I'll just go fully random, rolling a d6 and consulting the table on p62. I roll a 4, which gives two moderate drawbacks. Switching to p75, I roll a d12 and get a 4 and a 6. That's Hostility Field, and Physical Change, minor. Ouch.

To sum up our new friend's mutations, we have:

Battle Sense, -1 step to action checks.

Increased Precision, -1 step to ranged and melee attacks, range penalties decreased by 1 step.

Hyper Reflexes, -3 steps to action checks.

Minor Physical Change, +2 steps to all Personality based checks

Hostility Field, +3 steps to all Personality based checks made on targets within 30 meters.

Let's maximize his strengths and weaknesses. He has a -4 step bonus to action checks, so he's very cool under fire and reacts without hesitation. He also has a -1 step bonus to ranged and melee attacks, and a reduction to range penalties, so it's reasonable to assume that he's a good shot. Unfortunately, he also has a +5 step penalty to all of his Personality based skills. Needless to say, a career in diplomacy is not an option for this character.

Looking at the above numbers, I'm inclined to think he'd make either a good Combat Spec or a Free Agent. Since I think his personality problems will get him into more than a few scraps, Combat Spec looks like a good choice. Growing up, he was probably the most unpopular kid in his village, so I'll bet he learned to defend himself early. At the same time, he's also learned to keep his distance. I also have a weakness for spaghetti westerns, so I think he'll be a gun for hire, a professional gunslinger.

Now, let's assign his ability scores. In my campaign, Gamma Terra is more than a little dangerous, and 800 years of survival of the fittest has made her inhabitants just a bit tougher than those who dwell in the worlds of Dark Matter and Star Drive. To that end, our Mutant Combat Spec/Gunslinger will have 66, not 60, points to distribute. While we're discussing house rules, I also use the optional rule for skill points, stating that increasing skills cost the list price, not list price plus level that is stated in the GW5e book. If this is not how things are done in your campaign, just adjust the ability scores and skills accordingly.

Since I've decided to create a gunslinger, I'll assign his Combat Spec skill check bonus to the Ranged Weapons Pistol skill. With this in mind, I'll give his Dexterity a score of 14. With his skill check bonus, and the bonus from his Increased Precision mutation bonus, he'll make a formidable opponent in a firefight.

Being a Combat Spec, he should expect to see combat, and make do on his own. So I'll give him a 14 in his Constitution as well.

For Strength, I'll give him an 10. He's no weakling, but he won't be intimidating anyone with his rippling biceps. He should stick to ranged combat whenever possible anyway.

The same holds true for Intelligence and Willpower. He's average; he's nothing to write home about, but there ought not to be any complaints, either.

Finally, there's his Personality. With a +5 step penalty to most of his PER based skill checks, a high score isn't going to help much, so we might as well slight this ability. Growing up with a hostility field doesn't help one become a people person. Being visibly altered couldn't have helped him, either.

For his skills, since he's a gunslinger, he'll need Ranged Weapons, with as many skills and points as can be spared. Crossbow, pistol, and rifle will do very nicely. Next, he'll need something to fall back on when he runs out of ammo, so we'll be cheap, and get Unarmed Combat with the Brawl specialty skill. Throw is a good choice too, for grenades, bolas and spears. We're running low on points by this time, so let's round him out with the endurance specialty skill.

When he goes up a level, it would be wise to buy survival skills, maybe perception and intuition, armor operation, etc. But for now, he ought to survive his first few adventures, especially if he teams up with a skilled diplomat to offset his poor people skills.

ASH HOWZWARES

MUTANT GUNSLINGER FOR HIRE

Level (1) Mutant Combat Spec

STR	11(5)	+1	INT	10(5)	+0
DEX	14(7)	+2	WIL	10(5)	+0
CON	14(7)	+2	PER	8(4)	+0

Durability: 14 Stun, 14 Wound, 7 Mortal, 7 Fatigue

Action Check Score: 16+ / 15 / 7 / 3 **# Actions:** 3

Move: sprint 16, run 10, walk 4

Last Resorts: (Max = 1 / Cost = 3)

Attacks

Unarmed - Brawl	13/6/3	+d0 d4s/d4+1s/d4+2s	LI/O
Medium revolver	17/8/4	-d6 d4w/d4+1w/d4m	HI/O
	6/12/40		
Crossbow	17/8/4	-d4 d4+2w/d6+2w/d4+1m	LI/O
	50/100/250		
Bola	13/6/3	-d4 d4s/d4+1s/d4+2s	LI/O
	6/12/30		

Defenses:

Leather Armor: d6-2 (LI), d6-4 (HI), d6-4 (EN)

Mutations:

Origin: Natural

Advantageous: Battle Sense (-1 step AC), Hyper Reflex (-3 steps AC), Increased Precision (deep red skin, ashen hair) (-1 step to ranged & melee attacks, -1 step to range penalty)

Drawbacks: Hostility Field (+3 penalty to PER checks within 30m), Minor Physical Change (+2 penalty to PER checks),

Skills *Italics indicate specialty skills*

STRENGTH SKILLS (10)

Athletics 11/5/2, *Throw*-2 13/6/3 Unarmed Attack 11/5/2, *Brawl*-2 13/6/3

DEXTERITY SKILLS (14)

Ranged Weapons 14/7/3, *Pistol*-3 17/8/4, *Rifle*-1 15/7/3, *Crossbow*-3 17/8/4

CONSTITUTION SKILLS (14)

Stamina 14/7/3, *Endurance*-2 16/8/4, Survival 14/7/3

INTELLIGENCE SKILLS (10)

Knowledge 10/5/2

WILL SKILLS (10)

Awareness 10/5/2,

PERSONALITY SKILLS (8)

Interaction 8/4/2

Gear:

Medium Pistol, 18 rounds ammunition
Crossbow and quiver, 36 bolts
Leather armor
Backpack

Description:

Race: Human (Mutant)

Sex: Male

Age: 17

Ht: 1.9 m

Wt: 86 kg

Born in the village of Olywater, Ash was a social outcast from the moment of his birth. Not welcomed or accepted into society, he withdrew from his family and fellow villagers. He quickly discovered he had a talent for ranged weapons, and practiced as often as he could. When a merchant caravan came to trade with the villagers, he signed on as a guard, and never returned. His skill with pistols and crossbows has served him and his employers well, and he has risen from a common guard to become the caravan master's trusted bodyguard and confidant.

Taciturn and aloof, Ash does not mince words, when he chooses to speak at all. He has learned that his presence makes people edgy and hostile, and takes advantage of that fact when he can. He has purposely antagonized foes into duels, to assert his dominance and discourage others from challenging him. He is not bloodthirsty, but will kill without a second thought if he feels it's the most expedient course.

With deep red skin and charcoal and ashen hair, at 1.9m, Ash is an imposing figure. With his medium revolver casually hanging from his hip and a bandolier full of extra ammunition, he seems to exude an aura of aggression and deadly competence.



UPLIFTING THOUGHTS

By James Sharkey

An Overview of the *Uplift* Universe for Alternity

For billions of years, since the time of the Progenitors, there has been a sacred tradition. It is the responsibility of sapient races to find others with Potential, that promise that a race can become sentient, and raise them to the stars. In exchange for a mere 100,000 years of indentured servitude, a race would go from being hunter-gatherers to striding the spaceways using the accumulated knowledge and technology contained in the Library (the store house of billions of years of Galactic data) of the ones who came before. These clients, as they are called, are generally very grateful to their patrons, the ones who brought them to the stars.

Uplift, this way of life, is the biggest way that Galactic civilization “keeps score.” While occasionally a patron abuses or exploits its clients, this is rare. A clan of sapient’s honor and prestige is based on the number and quality of its clients. Abusing clients is considered a great offense to the tradition. And in the history of the Four (or Five, depending on when events take place) galaxies, Uplift is seen as the only way for a race to achieve true sapience.

Or it was, until the humans were discovered. These upstarts, these *wolfings*, claimed not only to have brought themselves into space, but also to have brought chimpanzees and dolphins with them. The fact that these crass, patronless creatures had the nerve to not only to claim this outrageous idea, but were also made instantly into patrons themselves by virtue of Uplifting two other species, infuriated certain senior clans. It offended the fanatical clans’ view of the universe, and mankind, or Earthclan, finds itself emerging into a hostile universe, where it has many enemies, and sadly, few friends.

Fortunately for Earth, there are rules spelled out in Galactic law about what can and can’t be done to a clan’s enemies, and to its worlds. These are spelled out by various institutions, which will be more fully explained later. The key thing is that Galactic law protects Potential. As a result, Galactic law protects the ecology of planets, sets rules for indiscriminate weapons of mass destruction, limits the impact colonization can have on a world, and many other things. And all sapient, or sophonts, as they are also called, have access to the Library. So Earth, while woefully behind in many ways, is slowly catching up.

There are certain general rules governing PCs from Earthclan in Uplift:

Earthclan is poor by Galactic standards. The tech level is PL 8, though Earthclan will often have PL6 or PL7, being unable to afford the most expensive equipment.

While Galactic law and tradition require a certain level of civility outside the battlefield, a PC will suffer a penalty when using Personality skills with a member of any clan that has enmity towards Earthclan. This penalty should vary depending on what race it is.

Psionics are very rare in Earthclan species. There are no Mindwalkers, and few Talents. In addition, members of Earthclan have no offensive Psionic skills of any kind.

Mutations are also uncommon in Earthclan. Nearly all mutations will be engineered. Mutations that actually alter the body in extreme ways, like claws and wings, are very rare. Most mutations will enhance ability scores and the like. The changes are usually subtle. On the plus side, courtesy of advances in genetic engineering, mutant drawback points for humans are reduced by 1d2, to a minimum of zero, and extreme drawbacks are almost unheard of. Neo-chimps and neo-dolphins do not get a reduction in drawback points, and sometimes will have extreme drawbacks.

The use of cybernetics is generally frowned upon in Galactic civilization. Anyone using obvious cybernetics suffers a +1 step penalty to PER tests when dealing with non-Earthclan sapient.

Terrans do not have the same deep-seated faith in the Library that other Galactics do, and can’t afford a very large branch of the Library. As a result, they get a +1 step penalty to access Library data.

On the positive side, humans and their clients are almost always underestimated by Galactics. Their reliance on the Library and tradition gives the *wolfings* an advantage in certain situations. *Awareness* checks made by Galactics against Terrans have a +2 step penalty. In addition, the unconventional tactics used by Earthclan gain them a –1 step bonus on *Tactics* rolls. Finally, during the first round of combat, Earthclan members get a –1 step bonus to their Action Checks.

Over the course of these articles, I hope to supply anyone intrigued by the *Uplift* universe an overview of how and why things are. The various Galactic institutes, Galactic traditions and behavior, and some new PC and NPC races along with a summation of allies and enemies will be among the future topics. And while the Uplift universe is cerebral in some ways, the fact that Earth is surrounded by enemies makes for plenty of danger for a group of Earthclan space explorers. Checking the facts from the Library, battling Galactic enemies on colony worlds, and tense diplomacy following the arcane rituals and traditions of the Galactics are some of the possibilities. So take a look around and enjoy yourselves!



THE NEO-DOLPHIN

By James Sharkey

A New PC Race from *Uplift*

Dolphins have been making fun of humans for as long as the two species have been in contact with one another. Even now, after humans brought them to the stars, dolphins still find people pretty amusing.

Unlike many other Galactic races, most humans don't expect sycophancy from their client races. Which is a good thing for dolphins. Fins have very little real respect for anyone who hasn't earned it. They always seem to be amused by their patrons more than anything else.

Dolphins are an unusual combination of joker, poet, engineer, and warrior. They sometimes have difficulty resolving the disparate aspects of their natural personalities with the Uplift alterations that have allowed them to think more analytically. They strive for logic, but are also free spirits in many ways. Fins are confident and flirtatious, both with their patrons and each other. They enjoy play and games more than most species.

Dolphins have been modified by the Uplift process to be able to speak Anglic, the Terran language. Among themselves, and with humans who can understand it, they often speak Trinary, which is based on Primal Delphin, the language of clicks, squeaks, and whistles that they used before Uplift. Trinary is a poetic language, often spoken in couplets. Trinary haiku is considered an art form, and can deliver a great deal of information in three simple lines. They also have a cybernetic jack that connects to their harnesses (see below). Finally, Terran geneticists have begun altering their front flippers to be more like hands.

One of the technologies made possible by the Library is Oxywater. It's a fizzy, almost misty substance that allows dolphins to stay submerged indefinitely. It is used on dolphin-manned spacecraft to allow them to get the most out of their abilities, rather than trying to operate in their harnesses at all times.

Special Abilities:

Having spent their entire history as a species moving in a 3-D environment, fins are natural pilots. They get a -2 step bonus to any *Vehicle Op.* – *Space, Navigation – Astrogation, drivespace, and Navigation – Astrogation, system.*

They can spot certain physiological changes with their natural sonar. The sonar gives them an additional +2 resistance modifier against *Deception* and similar tests made by Earthclan species, and a +1 resistance modifier against alien races with which they are fairly familiar. In addition, penalties due to darkness are reduced

by 2 steps.

Their Swim and Easy Swim rates are ten times the listed rate.

They cannot move on land without their harnesses.

Dolphins are subject to *stress atavism*. When placed in a stressful situation, a fin must make a WIL feat or *Resolve – Mental* check, or receive a +1 step penalty to all actions until the stressful situation ends. The presence of a leader, for example a responsible human or a ship's captain, grants a -1 step bonus to this check. In the event that a dolphin is placed under constant stress such as evading an enemy for a long time, this check must be made every other week, and the penalties are cumulative. As the penalties get more severe, a fin may stop using Anglic, or even revert to speaking in Primal. A Good success reduces prior penalties by one level, and an Amazing success reduces prior penalties by two levels. Over time, *stress atavism* may cause a fin to revert irrevocably to a primal state.

As a client species, a fin is expected to show proper deference and respect to patron races. While humans are very relaxed about this, Galactic races are usually not. A fin must suppress his rambunctious nature around these races, or cause his clan to lose face.

Ability Scores:

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIL	PER
7/15	8/15	6/14	4/12	4/12	4/14

Free Broad Skills:

STR – Armor Operation (needed for harness)
 DEX – Vehicle Operation
 CON – Stamina
 INT – Knowledge
 WIL – Awareness
 PER – Interaction

Harness

Skill: Powered Armor AP: +3 Type: O
 Armor: 1d4 + 1/1d4/1d4-1 LI/HI/En
 ES: 11 Mass: 10

Dolphins cannot operate on land without these harnesses. The harness has an undercarriage of multiple legs, and a dolphin moves much like a spider when using it. The harness has several manipulator arms that a fin can use to operate tools and equipment, or weaponry if need be. The movement rate for a harness user should equal his normal walk and run rates. Sprinting in a harness is not possible.



POST-APOCALYPTIC CAREERS

By Lord Irish

Lord Irish's Science Fiction RPG Site

http://members.amethyst-alliance.com/lord_irish/

Editor's Note: The costs of these careers are base costs without concern for profession.

Cyberpunk

Cyberpunks are pure strain humans or androids outfitted with conspicuous cyber gear and – more often than not – a bad attitude. They are usually mercenaries for hire and/or enthralled to whomever outfitted them with their hardware. Even “free-willed” cyberpunks tend to latch onto a group, as their high-tech implants often make them the targets of both fearful primitives and envious, technologically advanced cultures.

Mutants and mutated animals are rarely cyberpunks. The knowledge and resources necessary to outfit a humans and androids with cyber gear is rare enough; further modifying this technology to work with beings lacking the requisite DNA “fingerprint” is all but impossible.

- Ø **Signature Equipment:** Body plating or Cyberlimb; Nanocomputer; BattleKlaw or Subdermal weapon mount; Optic screen; Pistol, semiautomatic or needler or tangler (mounted)
- Ø **Skill Package:** Armor operation – *Combat armor*; Melee weapons – *Powered weapon*; Stamina – *Endurance*. Cost: 29 points.

Junkrat

Adopted from the *Reign of Steel* campaign setting by Steve Jackson Games

Junkrats live in or near the ruined sprawls (metropolitan areas) of Gamma Terra. Here they scavenge for food, artifacts, and useful bits and pieces of equipment that they juryrig into something useful.

Junkrats differ from nomads in that they usually maintain one or more permanent residences or hideouts within a given territory. Solitary junkrats won't easily reveal the locations of such hideaways, and it is a taboo punishable by exile or death among junkrat tribes to betray these locations. In any case, junkrat hideaways are generally well-hidden, well-stocked, and well-defended.

- Ø **Signature Equipment:** Bedroll; Toolkit; Lantern; Musket, flintlock
- Ø **Skill Package:** Ranged Weapons – *Rifle*; Technical Science – *Juryrig*; Street Smart – *Ruins knowledge*. Cost: 30 points.

Postals

Postals are a combination of the Pony Express riders from America's Old West and Medieval heralds. Some postals are independents who ferry information across Settle and beyond for money; others are the trusted messengers of a tribe, warlord, or city-state; a few are simply adventurers who enjoy the excitement of constant travel and spreading the latest news and gossip from place-to-place.

Because of the nature of their work, postals – whether traveling alone or in a group – are usually well-armed, well-armored, and prone to shooting first and asking questions later. In fact, the expression “going postal” means the same thing on Gamma Terra that it does today in the real world!

- Ø **Signature Equipment:** Bulletproof vest; Rations, packaged; Rifle, hunting; Water condenser
- Ø **Skill Package:** Animal Handling – *Riding 2*; Movement – *Trailblazing*; Navigation – *Land*; Ranged Weapons – *Rifle*. Cost: 32 points.

Sawbones

Sawbones are usually (but not always) members of the Healers cryptic alliance. They are wandering healers of varying skill and repute. The best and noblest among them are almost mythical figures, welcome in all but the most xenophobic communities and respected by sentients of all genotypes. The worst are feared and hated butchers, often dealing in defective cyber gear and/or illicit organ harvesting.

Sawbones occupy a niche in the post-apocalyptic world not unlike that occupied by the clergy of Medieval Europe; their skills and collective reputation give them a degree of power and influence in post-apocalyptic society that is often more potent than any ancient artifact or mutant power.

- Ø **Signature Equipment:** Bedroll, First Aid Kit, Lantern, Pharmaceuticals – various
- Ø **Skill Package:** Life Science – *Mutations*; Medical Science – *Surgery 2, Treatment 2*. Cost: 30 points.

THE FORGOTTEN OUTPOST

By MicroTactix Games
www.microtactix.com

Tools Required for Assembly:

Sharp bladed hobby knife or scissors, metal ruler or straight-edge, cutting surface, white glue, glue stick, wax stick or double sided tape.

A General Note:

All Grey lines are fold/score lines. Glue tabs are indicated by the letter G.

Figure Stand-Up Assembly:

Cut out and score along the lines. The small bottom flaps fold in and glue on top of one another forming a triangle.

Main Building Assembly:

Cut out and score along all grey lines. Fold down the top and fold in the sides, using the glue tabs to attach the structure into a box. Set aside to dry

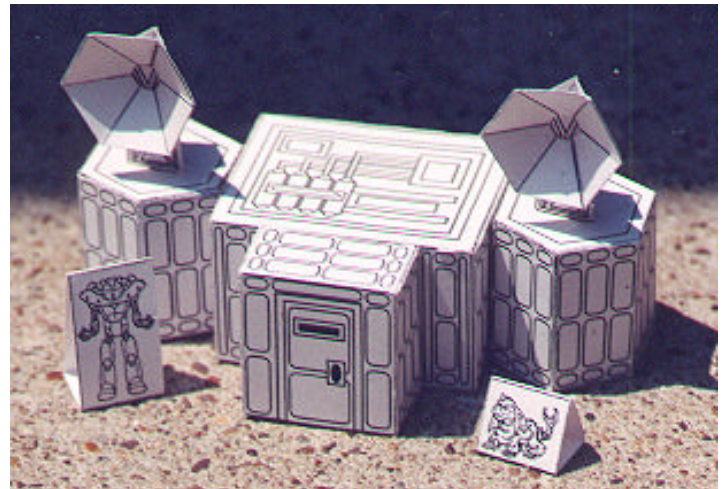
Front Door Assembly: The front door assembles like the building, except that the rear is open as the box only has three sides. Attach the front door section to the front of the main building in the blank area indicated. Once attached, set the entire structure aside to dry.

Pylon Assembly:

Cut out and score along all the grey lines. Fold in all glue tabs around the six-sided top and starting from the left side, (turning it so the unprinted inside is facing you), work your way around the pylon matching each wall to the angle in the top. When you reach the end, attach the last wall to the wall you started on by using the glue tab on the roof and the glue tab on the side of the wall. Set aside to dry and assemble the second pylon the same way. When both pylons are dry, attach to the sides of the main building in the indicated location.

Radar Tower Assembly:

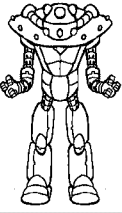
Cut out and score the towers as indicated. The tower folds into a long narrow triangle. Use the glue tab to attach together. The radar dish is cut out and scored along the grey lines. Each section is folded in and the glue tab attaches to the back of the last section to create a dish. Once dry, the dish is attached to the tower on one of the flat sides. Note: For best effect, attach the dish as high as you can on the tower. When the assembled towers are dry they can then be attached to the center of the tops of the pylons. There is no real proper facing for the towers, but it does look pretty cool if they both are facing out towards the front door side. One facing forward and the other back looks pretty good too.

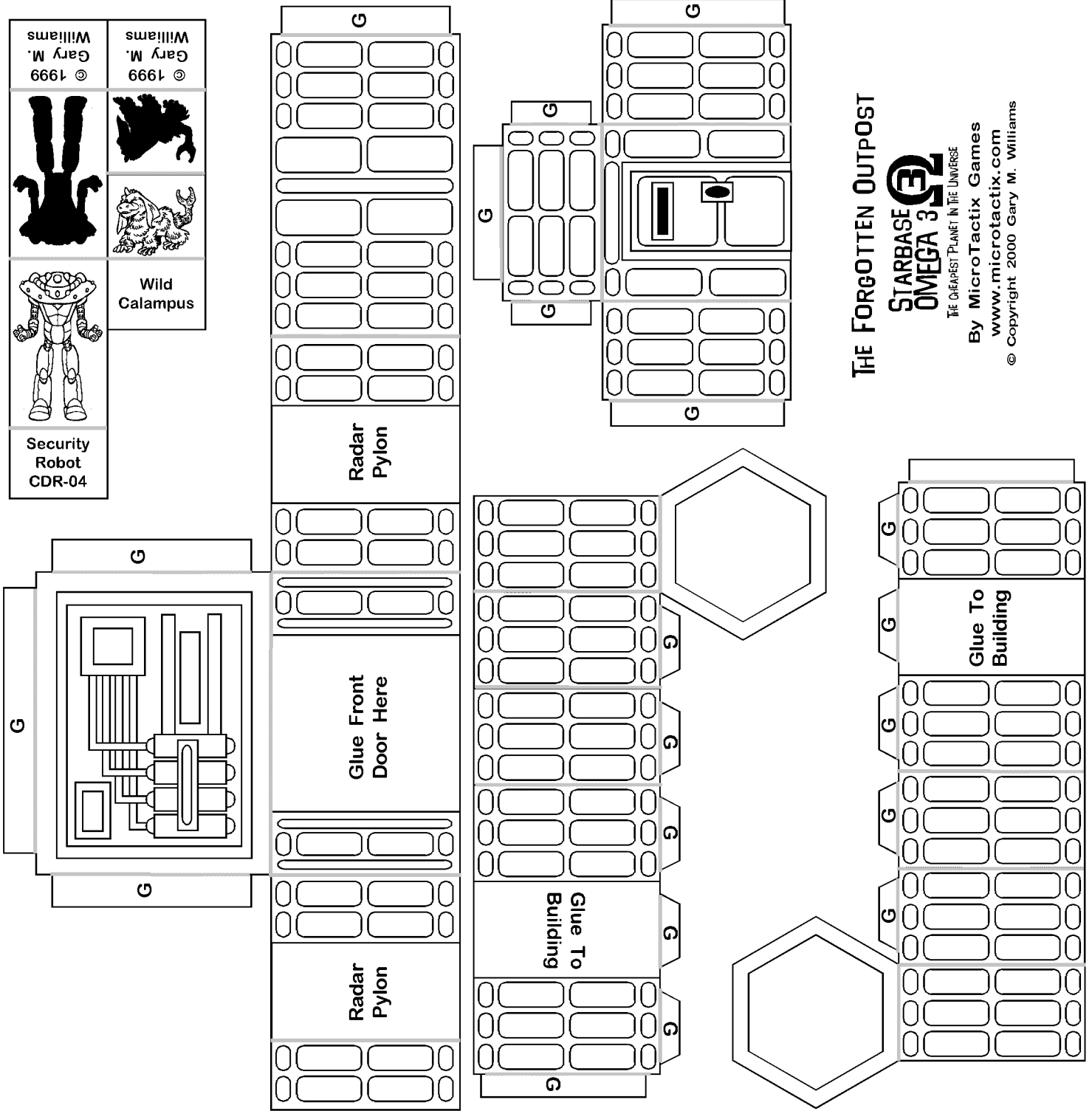
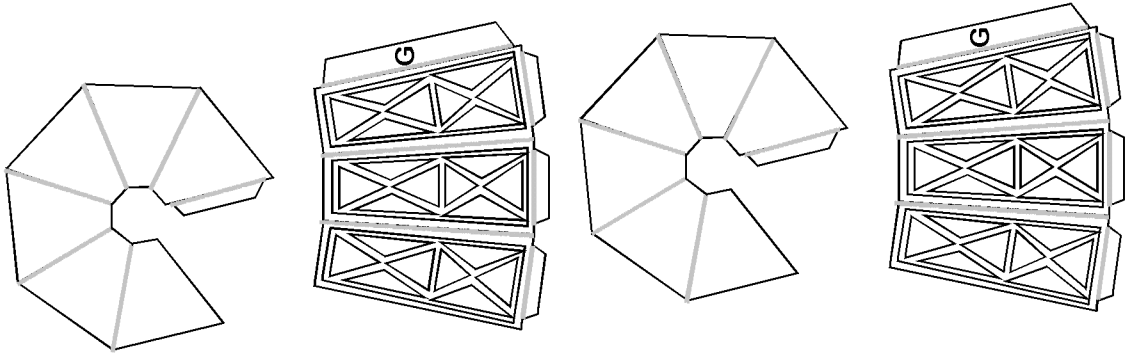


THE FORGOTTEN OUTPOST

Five hundred years ago, the planet now known as Omega 3 was a vitally strategic location during one of the many wars that plagued the Confederation. A planetary government, now long since forgotten, directed their armies to secure the planet and install an early warning system to warn of enemy infractions into their space. Some two hundred stations, all under robot automation, were set up around the planet and put into operation. As it turned out, an enemy force did attack, but so quickly and decisively that half of the stations, some never put into full operation, were left behind as the battle turned to a rout. Those left behind were quickly captured by the invading forces and either turned to their uses or destroyed in their capture. All that is, but one.

Situated at the foot of a rocky bluff on the edge of the Great Western Desert is the lone remaining outpost, still in operation after nearly five centuries, still sending useless data to an empire that no longer exists for leaders that are long since dead. Because secrecy was of the utmost importance, a sophisticated masking system was devised to make all broadcasts from the tracking station read as space static unless the proper decrypting devices were employed. No one knew about the station still transmitting because no one could pick up the signals as the decryption system was obsolete long ago. The single robot still manning the station charges his battery every day using the station's solar collectors and goes about his daily tasks the same way every day, day in and day out. The desolate countryside offers nothing new, never changing, the only break in the routine is the daily chore of shooing away the calampus, small burrowing creatures of the desert, away from the cables and equipment. Never questioning why he has been abandoned, the robot's limited thought processes register only one idea -- always keep transmitting.

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STARBASE OMEGA 3
 THE CHEAPEST PLANET IN THE UNIVERSE
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