

SECOND EDITION

HEAVY GEAR™



CHAMPIONS AND DAREDEVILS



DUELIST'S HANDBOOK

WORLD INFORMATION & DUELING RULES

HANDBOOK OVERVIEW • ANATOMY OF A DUEL • LONE WARRIORS • THE BASICS • TYPICAL DUEL TYPES • SKIRMISH MATCH • SHOOT-OUT • CLOSE
FIGHTING • STALKER-PREY DUELS • DEATH MATCH • MILITARY DUELS • KNOWING WHEN TO FIGHT • BATTLE CONDITIONS • HONOR MATCHES •
PIER DUEL • SNIPER WAR • SPORTING DUELS • COMBAT CONDITIONS • TEAM SKIRMISH • GLADIATORIAL DUELS • CHAIN DUEL • ROCKET
DUELING • ROLEPLAYING DUELS • REGIMENTAL DUELING • BECOMING A DUELIST • THE WORLD OF PRO DUELING • LEAGUE CIRCUITS •
GLADIATORIAL DUELING • THE LAW OF THE ARENA • KHAYR AD-DIN • CITY TOUR • TRANSRAIL COMPOUND • KHAYR AD-DIN ARMY • DUELISTS OF
THE FUTURE • CAPRICE CORPORATE DUELING • TACTICAL COMBAT DUELING RULES • SKIRMISH SCALE • WEAPON FIRE MODIFICATIONS • THE DUELING
FIELD • MACROMOVES • DUELING FIELD GUIDE • DESIGN TIPS • DUELING WEAPONS • DUELING PERKS • ANATOMY OF A DUEL • DUELING GEARS



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The noise in the arena was deafening, but Sebastian could barely hear it under the massive armor of his Gear. The King Cobra was moving at top speed, weaving back and forth between the blocks of ferroconcrete that dotted the arena floor. A rhythmic noise could be heard as bits of shrapnel from the near-misses of the Mad Dog's missiles bounced on the Cobra's tough alloy skin.

His opponent was moving uncharacteristically slowly, launching rockets after rockets in his direction like a death-crazed fountain. Sebastian's trained reflexes immediately saw an opening. He skidded the huge King Cobra sideways on its treads, suddenly bringing it around to present its most heavily armored face toward the foe. Incidentally, the motion brought its heavy main gun to bear in that direction as well.

The Mad Dog's pilot had obviously not expected the heavy machine to pull such a daring move. It began firing all its weapons wildly, autocannon and machinegun rounds impacting all around the blue and orange Cobra but doing little damage.

Sebastian allowed himself a thin smile before he pressed the trigger.

The Duelist's Handbook brings Heavy Gear players into the ritualized and violent world of mechanized dueling. The guardians of regimental honor, the stars of professional sports teams or the vicious gladiators of the underground, Duelists exemplify all the best and worst qualities of the Heavy Gear world. The Handbook examines the duties and lives of military, professional and underground duelists, and features new Gear and Mount models, dueling weapons, Perks and detailed rules for small scale tactical combat. Several prominent Duelists are also profiled, and details are provided on the Badlands city-state of Khayr ad-Din and its army — an ideal roleplaying setting for Duelists.

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CHAMPIONS AND DAREDEVILS

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S E C O N D E D I T I O N

HEAVY GEAR[®]

Duelist's Handbook — Behind the Scenes

The Heavy Gear Duelist's Handbook is the result of a concept that wanted its own day in the sun. Like all the best ideas, dueling refused to share the spotlight with anything else. As all dedicated Gearheads know, the first Heavy Gear project to hit the shelves was Heavy Gear Fighter, a fast-paced mechanized combat card game featuring eight daring "Duelists" in their Gears. A year later, the Heavy Gear rulebook was released and a section was dedicated to HGF duels and on integrating these Card Fighter combats into Heavy Gear roleplaying campaigns. This section first defined the concept of the Duelist as the defender of regimental honor; it was an idea that would stick.

Life on Terra Nova, the first Heavy Gear sourcebook, gave a detailed view of the setting of Heavy Gear. Although Duelists themselves were not a featured attraction of the sourcebook, the Terranovan outlook on honor was. Virtually all Terranovans take their personal and collective honor very seriously and are ready to defend it in battle if necessary.

Gear Duelists were to have their moment in the spotlight with the release of Into the Badlands. The equatorial deserts are at the center of underground dueling and honor matches between North and South, so it seemed most appropriate to discuss them in the sourcebook; however, there just was not enough space in the sourcebook to examine the implications of dueling and being a Duelist. Into the Badlands did feature a look at regimental and gladiatorial Duelists in the region as well as some details of what made them tick, but the idea needed more space.

In the following pages, Heavy Gear fans finally get a detailed look at the history and traditions of dueling, the differences between different types of Duelists and those who are currently reshaping the field. Khayr ad-Din, the Badlands city featuring the top underground dueling circuit, is also revealed in full detail, providing Gamemasters with a ready-to-play setting.

So steel yourself and turn the page. Welcome to the arena.



CHAMPIONS AND DAREDEVILS



DREAM POD 9

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Destiny's Price



The theater was mostly empty, the shadows and reflections playing on the faded walls the only sign of life in the audience. A seat was occupied here and there, the few viewers sitting far from one another, like gas molecules trying to occupy as much of a volume as possible. One of them was asleep, snoring loudly enough to be heard above the soundtrack and powerful explosions that were doing their best to demolish the ancient sound system.

On the screen, Cherubim Haart had just freed his girlfriend Lucy from the clutches of vile Northern agents, just like he had done a thousand times before. The vidfilm had faded a bit, random pixels blinking on and off on the giant screen.

One of the viewers stirred. This used to be his favorite part of the whole story, when he and his best friend came to the theater in between matches of *Gear War* to pick up new moves and stare at the buxom chest of the lead actress. Now he was back in the same place, only this time wearing faded KADA freelancer fatigues.

Was it only eight cycles ago? he mused. *Seems a lot longer than that now.*

His companion noticed his sudden change of posture. "Something wrong?" He didn't bother to whisper — the ambient sound was loud enough to cover all but a shout.

"No. The vid's just bringing back memories, that's all." The freelancer paused, his eyes distant. "We were young and carefree then. Even a Northern Jaguar landing literally on top of us during one of the local skirmishes hadn't been enough to faze us, even though we had to run for cover and spend nearly one season waiting for the local game parlor to be rebuilt."

"Lemme guess — *Gear Wars*, right?"

"Yes. When the war came to the Badlands, we both enlisted, lying about our age in order to be assigned to one of the mechanized piloting schools. Our skills at *Gear War* ensured a quick training and an even faster assignment to the front line. It had been easy at first, battling mostly untrained militias and civil defense yokels. We didn't realize it wasn't all fun and games until we lost nearly half the squad in a disastrous strike against a lonely Northern outpost."

"Sounds bad." The companion didn't need to add that he had heard the story before, from many different people.

"It was. I mustered out then, only to come back and find our homes gone, our families refusing to meet my eyes." He made a dry chuckle, barely audible. "Tainted by the war."

"I drifted through the countryside, working odd jobs to support myself. I eventually ended up in the Trash City itself. Spent some time there, got into some skirmish as a freelancer with the Khayr ad-Din Army, met some big name Duelists." He pointed a finger to the screen. "Even met Mr. Staar himself once. Not a bad pilot. Too much attitude. Dunno what happened to him."

On screen, the electronic phantom of Cherubim Haart was looking dramatically to the horizon. "I have to. It's my destiny. Remember that I'll —"

Standing up, the freelancer left just as the villainous pilots interrupted Lucy's effort to provoke a last minute tryst with Cherubim. The two sets of dog tags — "Yannick" and "Karl" — he wore around his neck barely made a sound above the racket.

The price of destiny was a lot higher when you had to pay it yourself.



HANDBOOK OVERVIEW - 1.1

The Interpolar War has come and gone. The North and South fought countless battles, and maps have been redrawn. From the sidelines, war is an impersonal monster, laying waste to whatever happens to be in its way. On the front, however, nothing is more personal. Men and women live from minute to minute by the skill, the luck and even the grace of their comrades and their enemies, individual people who had been strangers mere moments before. Just as in the War of the Alliance, Gears played a major role during the Interpolar War, and it seems likely they will continue to play major roles in the wars still to come. At the front of every Gear regiment stands a single pilot who bears on his shoulders the history and reputation of his unit. This is the Duelist, for whom the personal nature of war is the strongest, and in his person are reflected all the contradictions of Terra Nova.

Champions and diplomats for their regiments, Duelists know better than most that the divisions between North and South exist along with a shared heritage of honor, struggle and survival. They were the first onto the battlefield when war returned to the Terranovan landscape, and they felt most acutely the shattering of the trust built after the War of the Alliance. They know it will happen again.

Outside of the military, others also take the mantle of Duelist. They represent their cities in regulated sporting duels or their gangs in bloody underground fights, but they too can sense the tide of battle still on the horizon. They too understand the difference between a duel of honor and the indiscriminate carnage of the battlefield.

Duelists lead a lonely life, their duties separating them from their fellows. Military pilots are expected to lead perfect lives, to always think of the regiment first and forget about any personal considerations. Professional sports Duelists are constantly surrounded by packs of scandal-conscious reporters and dazzled fans, rarely finding time to establish any real friendships. Underground pilots live on the edge, regularly risking their lives for the entertainment of wealthy gamblers and bloodthirsty crowds. The scarcity of meaningful human contact makes what friendships a Duelist does establish very strong. The pilots, ingrained with traditions of honor and respect, are uncommonly loyal, ready and willing to stand by their companions in the direst of situations. When these obligations — as a friend and as a Duelist — come into conflict, the results are rarely pleasant. The pilot must choose between becoming a pariah and letting a friend suffer.

1.1.1 - Content

The **Second Edition Duelist's Handbook** takes Players and Gamemasters into the world of these lone warriors and guardians of honor. Many different people take the mantle of Duelist, but they are all tied together by the types of battles they fight and the code of honor that binds them — sometimes strongly and boldly, other times weakly, but it is always there.

Chapter 1 presents an overview of dueling, examining the various styles and conditions of battle within the military, sporting and underground worlds. *Chapter 2* then explores each of these domains in turn and examines the similarities and differences between dueling on Terra Nova and dueling on Caprice.

Chapter 3 details the Badlands community of Khayr ad-Din, a den of crime that features Terra Nova's top underground dueling ring and a web of intrigue — and from which an unexpected source of common sense arose during the Interpolar War. Gamemasters will find everything they need to set their campaigns or adventures in the City of Trash, including adventure seeds and typical residents. Although the city's dueling circuit attracts gladiatorial pilots most of all, its fame and strategic location also make it attractive to military and professional Duelists.

Chapter 4 presents complete rules for staging duels in the Skirmish Scale for tactical combat. A new skill to reflect the advanced combat style of Duelists is also included. *Chapter 5* lists several prominent Duelists and their personalized vehicles, many of which find their way into Khayr ad-Din. It presents the Perks and weapons specially designed for dueling, and it includes three new Gear models and two new Caprician Mounts designed exclusively for dueling. Finally, *Chapter 6* presents Duelists through the eyes of the popular media.



INTRODUCTION



1

1.2 - The Basics of Dueling



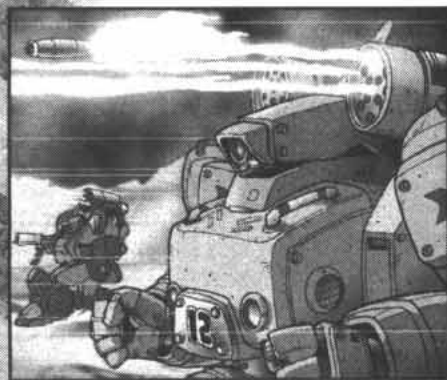
On the surface of things, a duel between Heavy Gears may appear simple. Two Gears meet on the battlefield and fight until one falls down. While combats of a nature this simple do occur, they can hardly be called duels. Dueling is a long proud tradition on Terra Nova that refers to a certain type of personal combat — and a few specific types of group combat. Only those who understand and respect the protocols established over the centuries can properly be called Duelists.

Virtually every aspect of a duel is regulated by the protocols. Allowable machines, weapons, victory conditions, terrain and duration are strictly controlled and any deviation from the agreed setup once a duel has begun is considered not only an automatic defeat, but a critical loss of honor. Each type of dueling, be it military, sporting or gladiatorial, has different traditions, but certain rules remain consistent. Most importantly, duels may end only when the proper victory conditions have been met, or by mutual consent of the Duelists. In military circles soldiers occasionally tell stories of Duelists who refused to leave the field as one regiment was forced to retreat under artillery fire. Just as those not on the battlefield cannot stop a duel, they also are never allowed to interfere. Medical support, reloading weapons, or distracting an enemy are all forbidden unless agreed upon at the beginning.

1.3 - TYPICAL DUEL TYPES

Beyond the concept of truly single combat, a Gear duel may take an infinite variety of forms. In military and private circles, the Duelists themselves choose battle conditions, whereas professional and gladiatorial duels are normally organized according to league rules and the whim of their backers. There are, however, several standard combinations of conditions that make up the majority of one-on-one Gear duels fought on Terra Nova.

1.3.1 - Skirmish Match



Participants:	two (or two teams)
Time:	10 minutes
Weapons Load:	standard
Victory Conditions:	set number of hits (usually five)
Terrain:	varied

The most archetypal of all duels, a skirmish match pits two pilots against each other in a delimited battlefield. The Gears start at opposing sides of the battlefield and try to land five weapon strikes against each other. These hits need not do any damage, so faster machines bearing light arms are often at an advantage. Some Duelists handicap such machines, setting their victory conditions at seven or eight hits, but both combatants must agree to this handicap for the duel to occur. Skirmishes are most often used to resolve minor conflicts or determine bragging rights, with minimal risk of serious damage to pilots or equipment.

1.3.2 - Shoot-Out



Participants:	two or more
Time:	15 minutes
Weapons Load:	autocannons or rifles
Victory Conditions:	predetermined number of hits (usually five)
Terrain:	urban or other terrain with plenty of solid cover

Shoot-outs are duels in which Gears act like gunslingers, trying to pick each other off as they walk through abandoned streets or rock fields. Without the use of indirect fire weapons, visual line of sight becomes the all-important factor in these matches. Those pilots who can move stealthily and pick the correct sniper's den stand the best chance of victory. Like skirmishes, shoot-outs are usually fought over minor points or for bragging rights.



INTRODUCTION

1

Close Sparring - 1.3.3

Participants:	two or more
Time:	10 minutes
Weapons Load:	close-combat only
Victory Conditions:	disabling the enemy
Terrain:	flat open fighting ring (30 m diameter)

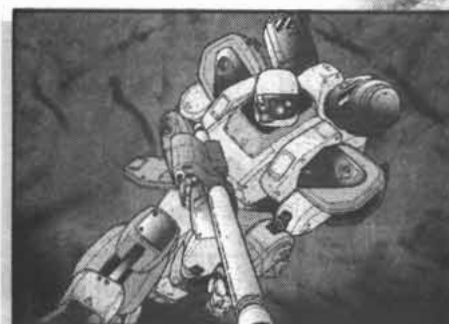
Among the most spectacular of the basic duel types, sparring involves two Gears in intense close combat. Extraneous elements like terrain and cover are eliminated so that pilot skill and mechanical quality remain the only determining factors. Sparring matches can be quite dangerous, because of the lack of control and ease of contact. As such these matches are usually fought over important breaches of reputation or as part of serious rivalries.



Stalker-Prey Duels - 1.3.4

Participants:	two (multiple stalkers are possible)
Time:	20 minutes
Weapons Load:	one armed, another unarmed
Victory Conditions:	damaging the opponent, or surviving undamaged
Terrain:	complex and broken (forests, jungles, etc.)

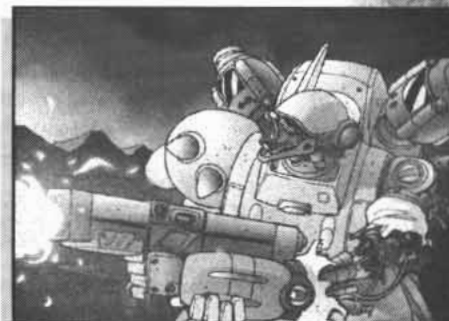
Stalker-Prey duels are unusual in that the combatants do not share the same victory conditions. One Gear (the stalker) must find and damage the other (the prey) while the other must avoid detection and damage. Traditionally this duel type is used when a light scout Gear faces a heavier fire-support machine. In this way, both machines demonstrate their strengths. Prey vehicles may gain extra bragging rights by harassing their stalkers during the duel.



Death Match - 1.3.5

Participants:	two
Time:	unlimited
Weapons Load:	varies (often limited to a single weapon for each Gear)
Victory Conditions:	death of the opponent
Terrain:	varied

The most serious of duels, the Death Match is a mortal struggle between two combatants during which no surrender or quarter is possible. Once engaged in such a battle, neither opponent may pull out. Even if both Duelists wanted to end the struggle, the loss of face and honor involved would be unbearable. These battles are extremely rare and only held in cases of accusations of treason and other capital crimes.



□ Mirror Duel (21 Summer TN 1899)

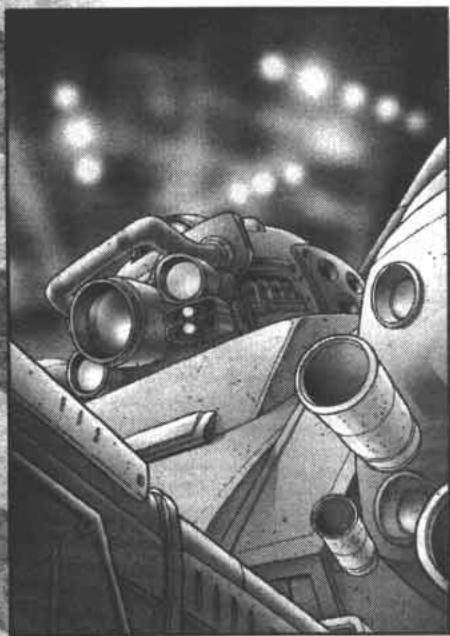
Throughout the TN 1890s, one of the greatest rivalries between Northern Guard regiments was fueled by differences in technology. Sergeant Malachy Gold of the 33rd HG Regiment — Roving Guns — and Lieutenant Ferah Mendez of the 55th HG Regiment — Scorpio Stingers — fought a series of indecisive duels, each time utilizing new experimental weaponry and failing to resolve the Stingers' accusation of cowardice. Finally, the commanders of both regiments agreed on a final match in which piloting skill would be the only deciding factor. Both pilots were equipped with newly delivered HACS-02MG-MPS Jaguars that had been stripped of armament, and were then sent into close combat. The battle was fast and furious, and while Gold technically won by disabling Mendez's Gear, his own machine shut down almost immediately thereafter. Many Scorpions veterans maintain that Mendez's Gear had been sabotaged, and mild rivalry still colors the regiments' relationship.



7



1.4 - Military Duels



Military duels involve combat between the representatives of two Gear regiments. These battles are highly structured and involve the defense of the unit's honor and prestige. Most take place between otherwise friendly forces for the entertainment of the troops, with stakes consisting of simple bragging rights. Duels over minor points of pride — such as which regiment has the bravest commander — are also quite common and rarely lead to fatalities.

Some military duels are fought for much more important stakes, however. In military stand-offs over strategically minor points, enemy Duelists may do battle to avoid large scale confrontations. The loser's forces are honor bound to withdraw in these cases, and few regiments would risk the disgrace of refusing. These duels are significantly more dangerous than casual sparring matches, and often lead to serious injury and even death. Accusations of cowardice, treason or dishonorable behavior can also lead to deadly duels between pilots of the same league. Most armies officially discourage such battles, but the tradition of regimental honor leads most commanders to overlook the regulations in this case. For most pilots and commanders, a duel is the only way to resolve serious accusations leveled against the unit as a whole.

Regimental duels form the model for all other types and are considered the most "pure." In matters of honor, even non-military pilots will follow the military rules of engagement, confident that doing so will ensure a clear victory that will settle the dispute. These rules have been established over the life of the military Heavy Gear and are taken very seriously across Terra Nova. Each regiment nominates a Duelist and expects him to follow military protocol to the letter, embodying his unit's honor and defending it to the death.

1.4.1 - Knowing When to Fight

Unlike the predetermined battles of the sport and underground worlds, regimental duels are fought only under certain conditions. While these combats are often staged as friendly competitions between forces stationed together or to entertain the troops, the honor of the regiments involved is always at stake and challenges are thus highly ritualized.

The only people entitled to issue a challenge to another regiment or to accept such a challenge are the Duelist, the regimental commander or the regimental NCO. When the challenge is made, the stakes must also be clearly stated, indicating what the consequences of the battle will be. If no such consequences are stated the duel is assumed to be fought for bragging rights only. The challenged party then has the right to set a single battle condition (the victory conditions, the terrain, the duration, or appropriate weapons). The challenger and challenged then alternate, each setting a condition one at a time until the duel is clearly defined. Both parties must then agree to the duel for it to go forward.

1.4.2 - Battle Conditions

Regimental dueling usually takes the form of one of the standard duel types, but great care is taken to ensure the battle is a contest of skill rather than brute force. Weapon loads are often quite light — especially in friendly duels — since the military can ill afford to sacrifice its best pilots and machines in a time of war. Military duels remain closed to those outside of the armed forces and often to all those outside the regiments involved as well. These battles are matters of honor rather than entertainment.

In grave cases — when accusations of treason or cowardice on the battlefield have been levied — regimental dueling can be as deadly as the most vicious gladiatorial dueling pit, but it remains ritualized and formal. Honor can only be regained by following the protocols and the DeLyon Code (see The DeLyon Code, p. 20). Those who fail to do so are ostracized by their own regiment and — if the offense is great enough — hunted down by other Duelists.

1.4.3 - Honor Matches

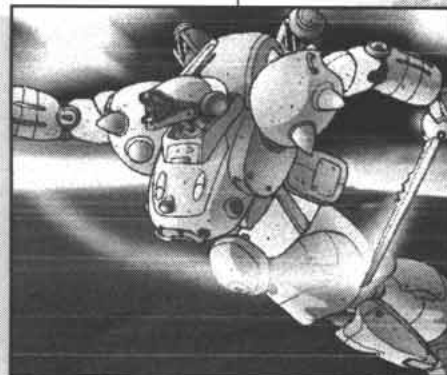
While military Duelists practice most of the basic duel types, they have also developed a few combat styles which are all their own. These emphasize skill and discipline over firepower, and honor above all else. These unique types of duel are not very popular in the more media-conscious arenas of professional sport and gladiatorial dueling, because they tend not to be crowd-pleasing. Gladiatorial organizers often think of regimental Duelists as haughty and self-absorbed as a result, but true dueling enthusiasts understand that honor always comes before the pleasure of the audience.



□ Rapier Duel

Participants:	two
Time:	unlimited
Weapons Load:	vibrorapier and shield
Victory Conditions:	death
Terrain:	open terrain

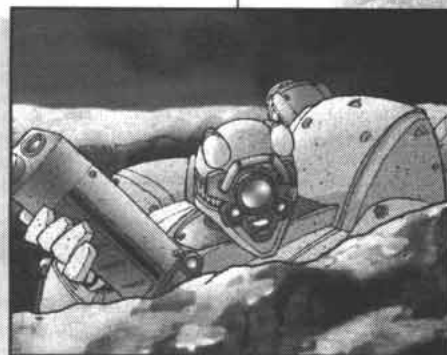
The classic Southern battle of honor, the rapier duel pits two high-performance machines armed with vibrorapiers and shields against each other. Adapted from the human fencing duels practiced in the Southern Republic, these duels are only called on life and death matters; surrender and the granting of quarter are the rarest of events. These are entirely private affairs, attended only by the Duelists, the regimental commanders and chief NCOs. Those who have seen these battles tell tales of speed and grace rarely associated with heavy battle machines like Gears.



□ Sniper War

Participants:	two
Time:	one hour
Weapons Load:	sniper weapons
Victory Conditions:	varies
Terrain:	varies

Traditional among elite Northern units, the sniper war is a game of nerves and skill. Played in terrain with plenty of cover and elevation, the duel involves both parties trying to pick each other off from a great distance. Neither machine may stray from its half of the battlefield, and each must pick its opponent off amongst cover. In many ways the sniper war is a patience game in which the first pilot to get frustrated enough to surrender a good position to search for the enemy will be picked off.

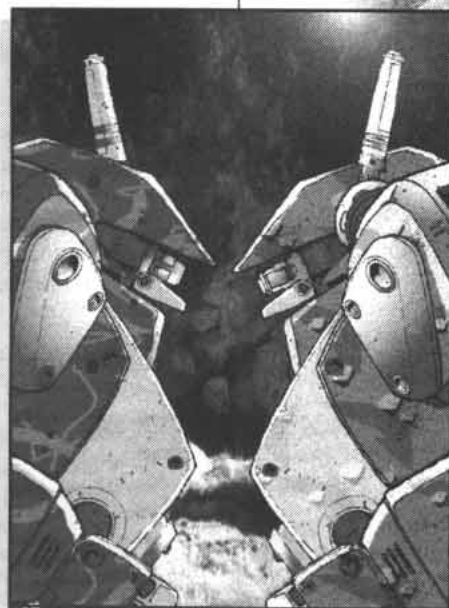


□ The Duel of Days (32-38 Autumn TN 1724)

The hatred and recrimination that fired the destructive St. Vincent's War made duels between allied units all too common. Each regiment had more than its fair share of soldiers who had seen their children killed or maimed by St. Vincent's Plague and tempers ran high. Duels were fought over minor points of honor and the right to lead attacks on enemy emplacements with a frightening regularity.

Perhaps most famous was the "duel of days" which featured the Duelists from the 52nd Heavy Gear Regiment of the Northern Guard — the Fire Dragons — and the 14th Heavy Gear Regiment — the Big Machine — of the United Mercantile Federation Army. The two regiments were disputing the right to join a combined forces assault on Azov and decided to duel until either machine shut down. The two elite pilots began darting through a large battlefield picking off shots at each other, but rarely connecting. Each carried only light armament and, after a few hours of cat and mouse, their weapons were empty. Over the next two days, each Gear stalked the other, trying to set up an ambush and stealing fuel and ammunition from the nearby UMFA base. The duel was finally declared over by the regimental commanders when the two Gears were found facing each other, both severely damaged and with empty fuel tanks, and the Duelists fighting exhaustion and dehydration.

The duel of days has left two very distinct legacies. Young pilots often remembered it as a true testament to the Duelist's pledge never to surrender, looking on the two pilots as heroes to be emulated. Veterans and most Duelists see the famous battle as a prime example of the danger of dueling for no good reason. The attack on Azov was carried out long before the duel ended, and both regiments were forced to watch from the sidelines. In these circles, the two pilots are remembered merely as over-emotional hotshots.

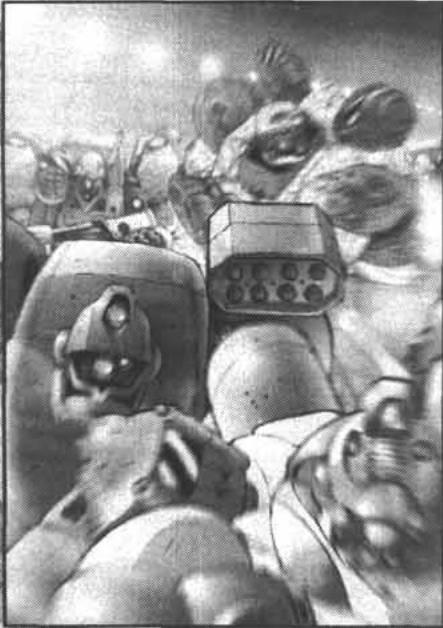


INTRODUCTION

1



1.5 - SPORTING DUELS



Professional sport duels are the legitimate cousins of regimental combat. Taking advantage of the popularity of dueling, most leagues — and several smaller groups — have established professional dueling circuits in which highly paid civilian pilots compete. These battles are not fought for honor in the same sense as regimental duels are, but each city-state and league takes great pride in its professional Duelists and their performance is often seen as a reflection on the community as a whole. A city-state with a championship team gains tremendous prestige and will often attract businesses and tourists as never before, simply because of the massive media coverage that comes with winning. Many city governments sink significant parts of their public revenues into local teams, building massive arenas, practice fields and maintenance facilities to attract the top pilots.

Massive crowds of rabid fans and intense media scrutiny are commonplace at the most prestigious of professional duels. During a league's championship tournament it becomes nearly impossible to escape the match, as game footage, commentary, analysis and retrospectives fill most trideo broadcasts and billboards plaster the streets. Public security forces in cities with winning teams have learned to dread this time of year; a crowd of jubilant fans of a victorious team or their angry defeated counterparts can easily turn into a rioting mob.

Unlike military duels, professional sport duels are often team affairs. Whole squadrons of Gears confront each other in a large arenas, often using simulated "sporting" weapons to score points. One-on-one duels are still possible in professional circuits, but nothing is quite so spectacular as two dozen war machines darting around a complex playing field. Impressive arenas accommodate these games are often one of the major landmarks in a city-state.

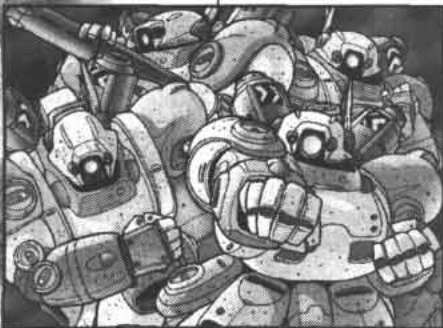
1.5.1 - Combat Conditions

With rare exceptions, professional dueling is not a deadly sport and Gears prepared for this purpose feature ample protection for the pilots. Weapon loads are often reduced to nominal levels, or replaced with harmless "scoring guns" — a modification of a laser target designator. Even in the safest of circuits, however, pilots have been known to perish due to mechanical failure or the dangers of close combat. Norlight duel champion Ethan Hartz was killed in TN 1902 when the cockpit safety cage of his Tiger Gear crumpled after a bad fall. The Hartz Trophy is now awarded to the best Duelist in the NLC, as voted upon by professional sport writers.

1.5.2 - Duel Sports

Professional Duelists partake in a wide variety of combats, each designed to be more challenging and more entertaining than the last. The traditional duel formats are still followed, although within the confines of the large sporting arenas that house the professional duels. Unlike military Duelists, professionals are grouped into teams. Very rarely will the whole team be on the field for a single match; rather, each member will specialize in certain types of games. As the season progresses, the wins and losses of each member count toward the team's standing. Some circuits feature solo-circuits that allow lone Duelists to compete, but team play is usually the most popular form. As such, a variety of unique "team duels" have developed across the professional circuits.

Block and Run



Participants:	one runner, five blockers
Time:	three 10-minute rounds
Weapons Load:	none
Victory Conditions:	points scored
Terrain:	rectangular arena with simple obstacles

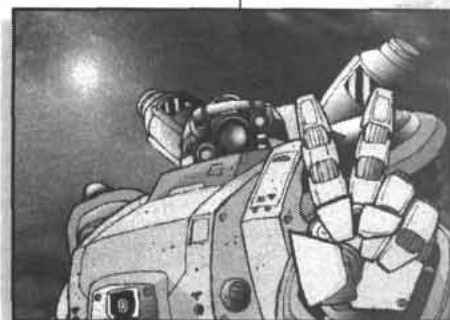
Originally developed by underground dueling kingpin Saddik Jahmoon, Block and Run is far removed from the honor field battles of the military. Staged in a small arena with limited cover, the game pits a single light machine against a team of heavier Gears. The object is not to damage the opponent; rather the lighter runner Gear attempts to get from one end of the field to the other to score points. The blockers try to stop it, scoring each time the runner is immobilized.



☐ Last One Standing

Participants:	three or more
Time:	three 15-minute rounds
Weapons Load:	sporting weapons
Victory Conditions:	disabling of all other opponents
Terrain:	varied

Perhaps the simplest variation of the one-on-one duel, Last One Standing pits a series of machines in a free-for-all battle. Most circuits allow only the use of sporting weapons in these battles (see section 5.4 *Dueling Perks*, on p. 111), but almost all forms of sneaky tactics are considered acceptable. An open communications channel also links all participants, allowing alliances and betrayals to happen in a heartbeat.



☐ Lone Wolf

Participants:	one wolf, two or more stalkers
Time:	variable number of three-minute rounds
Weapons Load:	sporting weapons
Victory Conditions:	disabling of the wolf, or declared end of match
Terrain:	varied

Lone Wolf is a game of machismo and pride, and attracts those pilots who seek out glory and popular adulation. During the game one pilot is designated as the wolf, and becomes the target for the game. The wolf faces a group of stalkers — whose number is set before the match begins — who try to disable his machine as quickly as possible. The wolf receives points at the end of every round he survives and can choose to end the game after any round. Of course the temptation is always to fight on for another round to gain more points, but if the wolf is disabled, then all points are lost. The stalkers' Gears are refurbished (or their game sensors are reset to full efficiency) between rounds while the wolf's receives no repairs. The record for most rounds fought is held by Lussian Salban, who piloted his Iguana through an amazing 52 rounds, disabling each of his eight hunters at least twice in the process.



☐ Team Skirmish

Participants:	two teams of five
Time:	three 10-minute rounds
Weapons Load:	sporting weapons
Victory Conditions:	disabling of the opponent
Terrain:	varied

Not so much a duel as a mock battlefield encounter, team skirmishes pit two opposing squadrons against one another. The use of terrain, fire support and teamwork make the game popular with military enthusiasts who enjoy the "realism" it brings to the otherwise wild world of professional dueling. In fact, team skirmish is taken directly from the wargame training exercises of the military, and team champions are quite often military reserve pilots. Although most team games are of the "engage and destroy" variety, other objectives are possible and several arenas provide mock forts to defend and capture.



☐ The Gropius Cup (18 Winter TN 1870)

Many sport dueling enthusiasts look back at the final competition for the Coupe DeLyon, the Republican Federation of Duelists championship, in 1870 as one of the most exciting matches of sport dueling. In TN 1870, the Gropius Dreamers made the final round of competition with the full support of their city-state and their entire league. Republican dueling fans were less than pleased to have a Humanist team rise to the top of their professional circuit, though Humanist fans responded only with characteristic stoicism. Finally this tension exploded when the Dreamers won the DeLyon Cup with a stunning victory in a decisive one-on-one duel. In Gropius, crowds streamed into the streets for a party that lasted a full day. In Port Oasis, an angry riot exploded in the center of town, which was suppressed only by the massive firepower used by the urban defense forces.



1.6 - GLADIATORIAL DUELS



In the darkest corner of the dueling world lies the underground gladiatorial duel. Banking on the mystique of military duels and the popularity of professional sport Gear battles, criminal kingpins and opportunistic promoters across the Badlands and the poles establish illegal arenas where anything goes. Immensely popular in the huge fringe out of sight of polar law, underground dueling pits pilots against each other in dangerous and often deadly combats for the pleasure of gamblers and combat fans, and for the profit of underworld organizers.

Like professional dueling, gladiatorial combat is often quite distant in form from the traditional battles of the military, but the sense of pride and the deadly dangers tie the two traditions together. Obviously rigged duels are commonplace in the ruthless world of the underground, but the top circuits keep it to a well-regulated minimum. The kingpins make most of their money off of gambling, and high-stakes gamblers quickly learn to avoid circuits in which they stand no chance of winning big. Gladiatorial Duelists of the highest order also rarely stand for extensive duel fixing. These men and women consider themselves to be part of the same tradition as their military counterparts, and value their honor on the battlefield. It is mainly because of this common attitude that even the most brutal of underground arena fights can still claim the status of duel.

The modicum of honesty in the major arenas attracts large numbers of fans, who come to the Badlands or other areas to see Gear combat at its most visceral. While most organizers understand the value of keeping their best pilots alive, rare is the illegal arena that has not seen its fair share of spilled blood. Unlike sport dueling, underground weapons are live and audience members can and do get hurt by ricochets and wild fire. The few truly large underground arenas — such as the Web Arena in Khayr ad-Din (see *The Web Arena*, page 52) — take precautions to avoid fatalities, but occasional accidents are unavoidable. The most important of these arenas are located in the Badlands, where polar legal codes are meaningless, but smaller dueling circuits exist at both poles, often deep in the countryside, but sometimes just under the noses of law enforcement authorities.

1.6.1 - Battle Conditions

Very little can be taken for granted in the world of gladiatorial dueling. Kingpins and match organizers usually set the battle conditions, forming a series of recognized games, but the tension of the military challenge is also prized. As such, individual Duelists are also given the opportunity to set conditions when challenging each other, especially in the case of long-standing rivalries which are likely to attract large audiences.

Death is an ever-present possibility in underground duels. The sporting weapons used in professional circuits are completely absent and the reduced armaments often featured in military circuits are used only to increase skill and tension. It is an unfortunate fact that audiences enjoy blood and firepower, and many young pilots have sacrificed their lives to sate the crowd's desire for extreme entertainment.

Almost all gladiatorial duels happen in tight arenas, ensuring both proximity to the on-site audience and quick and dirty battles. It is not uncommon for uneven gladiatorial duels to be timed in the seconds, rather than minutes. The best arenas also feature nasty surprises for the participants, such as camouflaged smoke machines, ECM generators and weapon pods. The most observant duel watchers have come to realize that it is these systems which are used for subtle battle manipulation by organizers. The hidden obstacles will favor one pilot over another on the controller's whim. Duelists themselves seem to put up with this manipulation as long as it is done subtly to increase entertainment value, rather than to ensure a result on the battlefield.

1.6.2 - Games of Blood

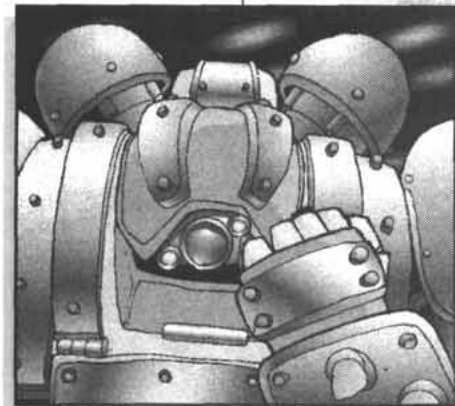
Kingpins of underground dueling rings are more than willing to use any and all types of combat that provide betting opportunities and plenty of entertainment value. Most of the military and professional battle types find their place in the gladiatorial arena, but always with nastier additions. The classic close-combat duel is amplified by ram-plates, chassis reinforcements, spike guns and huge vibroaxes, for example. Similarly the shoot-out is often played in a version where each Gear is armed only with a heavy grenade launcher. Some exotic and outrageously violent games, however, have been developed to deal particularly with the needs of the underground circuits.



Chain Duel

Participants:	two
Time:	10 minutes
Weapons Load:	a single close combat weapon
Victory Conditions:	disabling of the enemy Gear
Terrain:	enclosed 30 meter wide arena

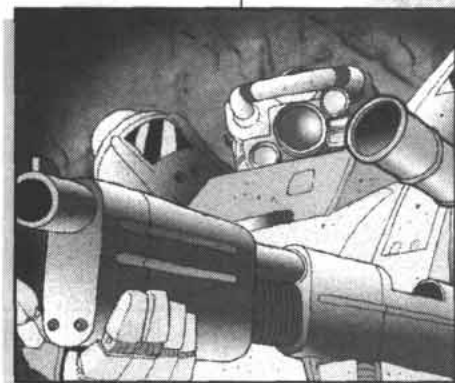
Now a classic of underground circuits, chain duels were established in the semi-legal gladiatorial arenas of Marabou in the Southern Republic, from whence they have spread across Terra Nova. In these intense close-combat duels, two machines are tied together with a heavy twenty meter long chain linked to the left arms of the Gears. The opponents are given only a single close combat weapon to fight with. Deliberately cutting the chain is considered an immediate defeat, but the chain is often snapped incidentally and the battle then continues. If both opponents are left standing after the set time has elapsed, the audience is allowed to choose the victor.



Pendulum

Participants:	two or more
Time:	15 minutes
Weapons Load:	close combat and cannons
Victory Conditions:	knocking all other opponents to the ground
Terrain:	special

Among the most unique duel types, pendulum games involve Gears braced on small platforms suspended by chains from the arena ceiling. Swinging 10 to 20 meters above the hard ground, the platforms are made to swing past each other by a system of powerful motors on the ceiling. Each Duelist tries his best to knock his opponents off their platforms, either with cannon fire or close combat attacks. An empty platform remains inactive unless one of the Gears jumps to it, in which case it begins to swing and move like the others. Casualties from falls are extremely common and equally spectacular.



Rocket Jousting

Participants:	two per joust
Time:	five passes
Weapons Load:	Gear lances
Victory Conditions:	disabling of enemy Gear
Terrain:	special

Inspired by the Gear Jousting tourneys of Smyrna, rocket jousting is among the most destructive gladiator games. Opposing gears mount simple rocket sleds along parallel tracks and are armed with lances. The sleds make up to five passes, each pilot trying to disable or destroy his opponent. As if the sight of a punctured V-engine exploding were not spectacular enough, certain rocket jousting organizers link the sled controls to the Heavy Gear, allowing the pilot to control speed and acceleration. Some have experimented with the use of high-speed trucks instead of sleds, allowing the pilots to steer as well. Most Smyrna Jousters, and even other underground Duelists, see this game not as a game of skill, but as an entertaining form of suicide.



Blood Match (6 Winter TN 1932)

The most recent "duel of the century" was staged in the Web Arena of Khayr ad-Din, featuring the children of two rivals from the Judas Syndrome. Lynn Sparas and Luc Voness grew up in the shadows of their fathers, both respected military Duelists in the TN 1890s. Both men were implicated in an espionage ring and blamed each other for their exposure. Neither was ever allowed to settle the match, as they faced execution for high treason. Lynn and Luc fought a vicious chain duel to the death, broadcast on an independent Hermes 72 network. Luc won, though rumors abound that Lynn survived and escaped to the Badlands.



1.7 - Roleplaying Duels



Dueling is one peculiar situation where the regular “quick and nasty” Heavy Gear tactical game is not altogether appropriate. Indeed, with movement measured in 50-meter hexes and 30-second rounds, the tension and drama of the battle of honor can often be lost. *Chapter 4* presents complete modification to the **Heavy Gear Rulebook**'s tactical scale combat system to better suit one-on-one struggles. Those not interested in stepping outside of the roleplaying environment for the duration of the duel should use a very freeform style of roleplaying. Duels are most often intense and prolonged single combats. With so few variables to control, the Gamemaster need not rely so heavily on the rules system for consistency and may use a looser structure.

Instead of viewing the combat from above in a tactical manner, Gamemasters should concentrate on what the Player Characters see and hear. Movement and exact position should not be as important as strategy and roleplaying. Dice can be discarded completely if the Player and Gamemaster wish them to be, while others may prefer to use a few well placed Tactics or Piloting skill roles as the Duelists try to gain an advantage over each other. A serious duel is probably the tensest experience a Gear pilot can undergo, and it is that tension that should be reproduced, rather than a tactical map of the dueling field.

The duel should be a moody experience, with both Player and character on edge. Gamemasters might want to lower the lighting and speak in a low voice, forcing the duelist to listen carefully. Duels involving cover or concealment (such as Shoot Outs or Stalker-Prey duels) will feature long moments of quiet as the opponents try to locate one another. Sudden bursts of action, accompanied by louder descriptions and sound effects from the Gamemaster, can create authentic shock and surprise. Gamemasters should ask Players to make snap decisions in these instants, forcing them to rely on their instincts and emotions rather than cold game analysis. The Player should be provided with some tactical information, but not so much as to reduce the duel's level of tension.

1.7.1 - Roleplaying Military Duels

The key in military honor matches is to emphasize the ceremonial nature of combat. Duelists have the weight of regimental pride to bear and almost all engage in pre-duel rituals. The preparation of the Gear is the center point of many traditions, with special objects and symbols used to bring luck to the pilot. The actual duel itself should be infused with a sense of importance and tradition, with regimental flags and decorated soldiers dotting the visual landscape. If the duel is over a serious issue, a deadly air should hang over the battlefield. In Southern Rapier Duels, the audience is limited to chief NCOs and commanders and the death of one of the opponents is assured. “Fudging” of dice rolls should be kept to a strict minimum.

1.7.2 - Roleplaying Sporting Duels

Professional sport matches are completely different from military duels. The media frenzy of the arena should play a large part in these duels, with heavy lights glaring on the field and trideo camera drones zipping across the playing area. Unlike the slow predatory style of regimental combat, professional games such as Block and Run, Last One Standing and Team Skirmish are played with frenetic speed. Gamemasters should speak quickly, switching between scene descriptions and comments from teammates over the comm channel. Players should be encouraged to take risks and perform spectacular actions, darting through enemy blockers and jumping over obstacles. “Fudging” dice rolls for the sake of entertainment value is perfectly in the spirit of pro dueling, and deaths and critical injuries should be few and far between.

1.7.3 - Roleplaying Gladiatorial Duels

Underground battles feature a combination of deadly brutality and manic frenzy. In illegal arenas, the audience is nearby and their screams should be a constant reminder of the gladiator's role. Weapons are live and the Gamemaster should not hesitate to remind Players of this fact with liberal explosions and injuries. As in sport dueling, spectacular moves should be encouraged, but in illegal arenas these have a very destructive edge. Simply leaping over an opponent is not enough; gladiators should plant a hand grenade on their opponent's torso and leap through the resultant explosion. Limited “fudging” is acceptable in illegal arenas, but there should always be real danger for the Player Characters.



INTRODUCTION

1

OTHER FORMS OF DUELING - 1.8

Although the **Second Edition Duelist's Handbook** focuses exclusively on mechanized combat dueling, especially in the form of Heavy Gear duels, it is hardly the only kind of dueling that takes place on Terra Nova or Caprice. Other, more personal forms of duel exist. Some are lethal, fought for honor or out of anger. Others are much more tame and may involve skills and talents not normally considered typical of duels.

Participants:	two
Time:	unlimited
Weapons:	unarmed or swords
Victory Conditions:	first solid blow or first blood
Venue:	an open area

The Riposte personal duel is common only among soldiers and officers of the Southern Republic Army. If any member of the army can prove conclusively that another member of the army has sullied his reputation, he may appeal for the right of Riposte. The Riposte duel is a quick engagement fought either to the first solid blow in the case of an unarmed duel or first blood when swords are used. The loser is immediately declared a liar and is demoted one rank. Only rarely do duelists fight to the death; it is a very serious matter not undertaken lightly by any member of the Southern Republic Army.

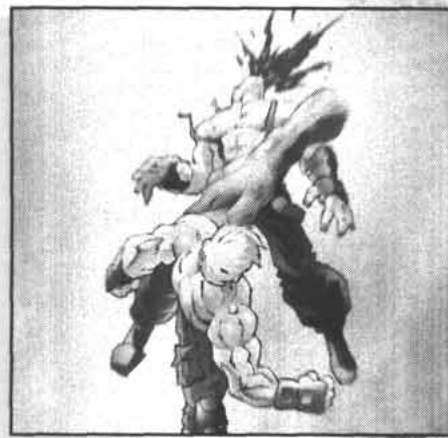
Riposte - 1.8.1



The Challenge Ring - 1.8.2

Participants:	two individuals or two teams
Time:	five minutes
Weapons:	unarmed
Victory Conditions:	knockout
Venue:	challenge ring

The Right of Consent in Caprician Trench society leads to a number of violent, impromptu "sports." As long as all parties involved give their consent, anything goes. The challenge ring is one of the most frequently used Caprician venues for spur-of-the-moment duels, and nearly every bar and nightclub in Gommorrah has one in a corner or in a basement. When two parties find themselves unable or unwilling to settle their differences any other way, they enter the challenge ring. Given the nearby presence of alcohol, this situation arises quite often. Challenge ring duels are always fought unarmed, and they are usually only fought to the first knockout. If all participants give "fulcon" (full consent), however, the match may be fought to the death.



The Steel Skillet - 1.8.3

Participants:	two chefs plus two assistants each
Time:	one hour
Equipment:	any kitchen utensil or apparatus
Victory Conditions:	points scored
Venue:	Krellen Foods Kitchen Arena, Mekong City, Mekong Dominion

The Steel Skillet is one of the most unique duels on Terra Nova. The participants are not combatants fighting with weapons; they are master chefs using their creativity and talents to outdo each other in a test of culinary mettle. Sponsored by Krellen Foods, the Steel Skillet competition is a weekly trideo program broadcast even in the North. Each "battle" pits a challenger versus one of Krellen's top chefs in a contest based on cultural style and a particular ingredient. A panel of four celebrities judges the competitions, and they award points based on creativity, flavor and originality. Whichever chef scores the most points wins. The prize is fame and honor, although even the loser will find increased patronage at his restaurant.





Path of the Warrior



The arena was empty at this early hour. The only sounds came from a small group of janitorial drones active in the stands and the echoes of repairs in the distant underground hangars, reverberating off the access corridor's walls. The sounds were rapidly muffled in the large sunken area that served as the main battle floor. Some of the wrecks from yesterday's events had not been towed out yet, left in place to serve as targets for this morning's practice.

The bright red Kodiak stood at attention on one of the entry ramps. A technician had brought it out of the hangar area and parked it there for its pilot. Powerful lights overhead cast harsh shadows on the ground, highlighting the massive war machine in a brilliant halo.

Its polished upper surface gleamed, each gleaming bolt throwing off bright sparks. The pit crew had spent nearly an hour shining the polyceramic paint, erasing the scuff marks and light impacts caused by yesterday's encounter.

They did a good job, thought the Red Baron, standing at the foot of his Gear. *Professional cosmetic specialists were a luxury I didn't have when I was regimental duelist. Back then, he had to take care of the machine's appearance himself — question of honor. The regiment could not be represented by a mud-splattered hero, after all.*

His well-worn helmet under the arm, he began the walk-around, looking for flaws and problems with the machine. The armor plates looked pristine, the various access panels were secure, the treads' tension correctly adjusted, the sensor pickups clean. He nodded appreciatively. The crew, as usual, had done a perfect job, but old habits die hard.

Using the Gear's armored hide as a ladder, he climbed up to the cockpit and powered up the systems. The engine came alive with a growl, eliciting a small smile from the pilot. Glory was once again his.

• • •

The promoter lowered his binoculars. The Red Baron looked in great shape as he ran laps around the arena, practicing his moves for the next fight.

"Great pilot. Where'd you get him?" Dana Pelle asked. She was seated in one of the loge's plush leather chairs, sipping an elaborate cocktail.

Haynes put the binoculars down and went to the mini-bar. "War veteran. When his service time was over he found he couldn't leave the duelist lifestyle behind, so he came here. It was relatively easy to hook up with him. It's been a while, but I still have contacts back home in Lyonesse." He smirked, thinking of how furious Lady Flare must have been when she heard that another prospect had escaped her clutches.

He raised his glass in triumph. "Just a matter of knowing in advance. And now his trademark red Gear is a staple of the arena, and he's all mine."

"Ours. Don't forget my 20% participation, my dear."

"Of course." He turned to the window again. The Kodiak had just blown a hulk in half, the concussion of the explosion making the transparent duraplast rattle.

Pelle sighted. "If only the business was better. Arenas are shadows of their former glory, it sometimes seems."

"Business'll pick up. It always does. People like blood."

And if it doesn't, there's always the underground fights, he thought.



Military Duels - 2.1

Duelists on Terra Nova owe their existence to the military tradition. While the excitement and glamour of dueling has spawned the growth of many professional and underground competitions — as well as countless trideo shows — the practice started in military circles. Despite the public face of professional dueling, the regimental version continues to be the heart and driving force of the practice. Without the example set by the defenders of regimental honor, other forms of dueling would be nothing but glorified combats and demolition derbies.

The development of regimental dueling can be traced to several important phenomena on Terra Nova. The first is, of course, the social tradition of dueling. In the rough and tumble days of the reconstruction after Earth's abandonment of its colony, Terranovans developed a system of frontier honor and justice that favored personal justice. Over the years, their system was formalized into the practice of dueling — be it with pistols, swords, or race-cars — hence keeping wars of retribution to a minimum. Victory on the field of honor became the ultimate recourse.

As the city-states and Leagues grew, rebuilding a truly organized society for Terra Nova, the practices of dueling changed. Most urban Terranovans now have never participated in a duel, but they all know the recourse is there. Governmental laws often supersede personal combat, but recourse to the field of honor still remains the preferred alternative for resolving serious personal matters in many circles. The further one strays from the peaceful civilian life of the major city-states, the more prevalent dueling becomes. Among the armed forces, or on the rural frontier, duels are still taken extremely seriously.

The transition from dueling with personal weapons to dueling with Gears was a fairly natural one, once the Hunter was introduced to the Federation Army in TN 1678 and the Jäger soon thereafter to the Republican Army. In the early stages, however, there was no formal position of Duelist within a military regiment. Instead, pilots used their machines to settle personal scores, much to the frustration of commanders watching the waste of precious equipment.

◆ Honor and Pride

The concept of a single Duelist representing the honor of the regiment as a whole grew around two parallel developments. In the early days of Northern utilization of the Hunter, a single Gear was often deployed to support infantry companies or to act as forward scouts for armored regiments. When the Hunter spread to the Northern Lights Confederacy and the Western Frontier Protectorate in the TN 1680's, they adopted a similar strategy, leading to a situation where one-on-one Gear encounters during border skirmishes were not uncommon. Regimental personnel began to look to the initial Gear-on-Gear engagement as the cornerstone of these skirmishes, and Gear pilots became the center of regimental pride.

In the South a different tactic was adopted. Dedicated Gear squadrons and regiments were developed as soon as possible, making rapid armored assaults possible. To train pilots in the intricacies of these blitzkrieg tactics, the Republican high command created a training school in the Alps near Ankara. This school — run by the legendary "first Duelist" R.C. DeLyon — put Gear pilots through intensive training exercises, teaching them to use their machines not a simple "walking tanks," but as extension of themselves. DeLyon divided his students according to their regiments and drilled them with the tenets of unit pride. Soon the training exercises — especially one-on-one combats — became a measure for the reputation of the new Gear regiments and commanders began to stage informal duels outside of the school to settle matters of honor.

As strategists at both poles adopted the Southern Gear regiment formation, habits learnt in the early years meshed to create the position of Duelist. Single combat between elite pilots remained the benchmark of regimental pride and commanders quickly realized that not only could they not stop their pilots from partaking in the practice, but that they did not want to stop them. The benefits to unit morale and discipline from having a recognized Duelist were far too great to overlook. Over the centuries the practice has spread in a limited manner to other military units, with tank commanders sponsoring inter-regimental war games and infantry battalions staging boxing or shooting matches; but the concept of a dedicated Duelist acting as the representative for the regiment remains unique to Gear regiments.





2.1.1 - Guardians of Honor



The Duelists of Heavy Gear regiments are far more than simply the best pilots; they are the guardians of the honor of their fellows. On call 36 hours a day, the Duelist must never forget that he is under constant scrutiny. Every action he takes will be seen as representing the regiment as a whole. If he gets drunk, the whole regiment gets drunk; if he wins at cards, the whole regiment wins at cards. While the Duelist's most important duty is to win on the field of honor, he spends most of his time acting as a standard-bearer for all his fellow soldiers.

As the Duelist stands as a symbol of the regiment, he is expected to guide his fellows both directly and by example. The pilot must be ready to listen to all the grievances of his fellows, struggling to keep the peace in the regiment and ensure that the unit's behavior and honor do not suffer. Interactions with other regiments must also be overseen to prevent casual bragging from turning into insults and challenges. It is the Duelist who must live and die by the words and behavior of his unit, and so he must constantly be overseeing them and providing an ideal to emulate.

These responsibilities force military Duelists to largely surrender their individuality. Their personal beliefs and attitudes become completely secondary to the regiment as a whole, and they must be extremely careful not to say anything that will reflect badly on their unit lest they be stripped of their position and disgraced. These requirements often take a very important toll on the pilot, and many Duelists discover that they cannot take the strain. Relations with friends and family, in particular, become difficult as the Duelist must live by standards set by others and place his personal life almost entirely on hold.

◆ Becoming a Duelist

The process of selecting a Duelist varies from regiment to regiment, but a general pattern was established in the TN 1730's when the military establishments of both poles were rebuilt after the devastation of St. Vincent's War. The mode for Duelist selection came from the 53rd Heavy Gear regiment of the Southern Republican Army — the Bloodhawks — who had a long-standing tradition of standard bearers. The Bloodhawks' system involves electing the Duelist from a group of candidates once every cycle. Each cycle of service gives a soldier a vote, a system which favors enlisted personnel and non-commissioned officers over the smaller and often less experienced officer corps. As such, the Duelist is often an NCO or junior officer. Elections are usually held after the various candidates engage in some light dueling and displays of their skills.

Elections are held every cycle, but unless the pilot fails in some way to uphold the reputation of the regiment, re-election is usually easy. Commanders frown severely on a divided regiment and usually allow only one contested re-election before asking a Duelist to stand down for the sake of regimental unity. Unfortunately there have been several instances when powerful rivalries have festered within a regiment, using the position of Duelist as a weapon to settle old scores. In the worst case the 83rd HG regiment of the Western Frontier Protectorate Army — the Tigersharks — was disbanded and split into two new regiments in TN 1899. The two regiments remain rivals to this day.



R. C. DeLyon



Known across both poles as the father of dueling, Commandant R.C. DeLyon was responsible for producing trained pilots for the new Jägers of the Republican army. DeLyon obtained funds to establish a training facility near Ankara and trained his students in the arts of war and the intricacies of the Gear, surrounding himself with the best drill instructors and technical experts the army could provide. Many of those who studied under DeLyon went on to stellar military careers as the Republic extended its iron influence across the Antarctic region. This first generation of Duelists is remembered as a group of idealized heroes in Southern circles.

DeLyon himself left military service as a Sous-Prefect in TN 1707, leaving the school to his daughter Miranda and retiring to a peaceful life in an Alpine retreat. Unfortunately, Miranda got caught in a political settling of scores in TN 1720, and the Sous-Prefect was forced to return to Port Oasis to testify at her court-martial. His speech, made between raspy breaths, defending his daughter's honor and condemning her accusers for their back-stabbing political power-mongering, is remembered with pride and chagrin by most Southern Duelists and career officers. The Sous-Prefect was found dead in his bed the same day that Miranda was sentenced to a life of hard labor in a military prison. Official reports list "natural causes" as the cause of death.



Alternate Election Systems ◆

The Bloodhawks' Duelist election system, described on the previous page, is followed with only minor variations throughout most of the Northern Guard, Southern MILICIA, Nortlight Army and Republican Army. Among the other armed forces of Terra Nova, however, slightly different ways of selecting a Duelist are followed.

◆ Western Frontier Protectorate Army

Like most things in the West, the position of Duelist in the WFPA is intimately linked to clan. Although there is no official requirement, the position of Duelist is held almost exclusively by members of major clans, who bring a societal prestige to the position. Some regiments have established a tradition where only members of a certain clan can fill the post of Duelist, though most Western commanders fear this encourages the formation of de facto clan militias. Only graduation from the famed Gunslinger Gear piloting school regularly supersedes clan consideration when choosing a Duelist.

◆ United Mercantile Front Army

The election system in the UMFA is essentially the same as in other militaries, except that officers are given additional votes. This rewards executive leadership and places the emphasis on the public-relations position of the Duelist.

◆ Mekong Peacekeepers

Members of other Terranovan armed forces often assume that the position of Duelists is purchased in the Mekong national guard, but the Peacekeepers are surprisingly free of corruption. Duelists are usually selected during a meeting of regimental officers and senior NCOs, where the emphasis is on honor and reputation.

◆ Humanist Protectors

Duelists are not an important part of the Humanist perspective, in which the regiment as a whole is viewed as the greatest concern. Duelists are nominated, however, because of their symbolic power and recognition across Terra Nova. Duelists are selected by the ranking protector in consultation with the local preceptor.

◆ Emirate Guards

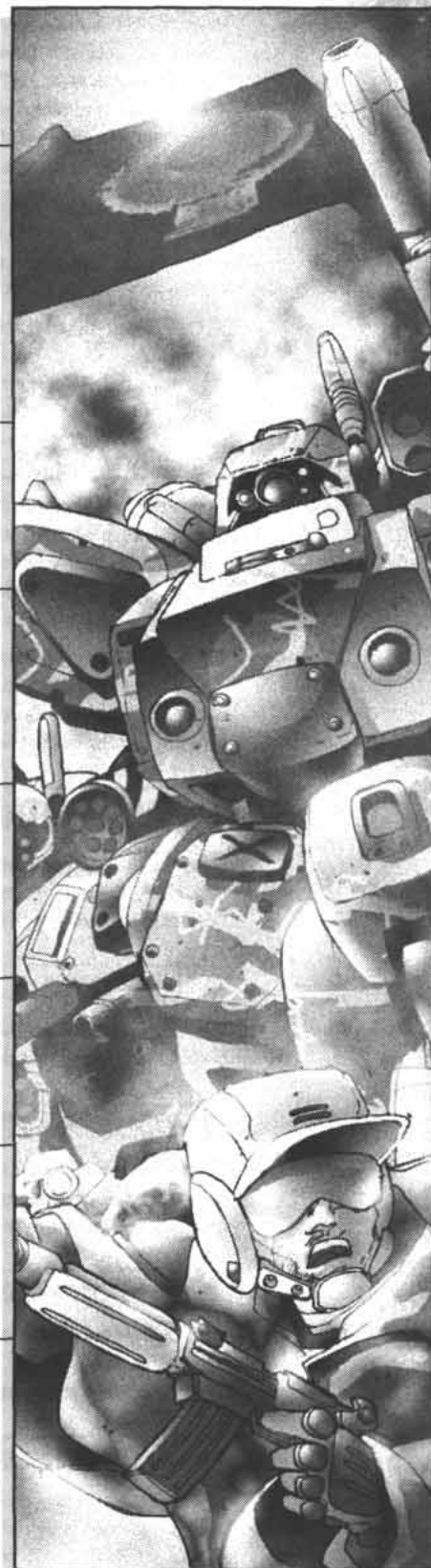
The various personal armies of the Eastern Sun Emirs each have their own ways of selecting Duelists. Most commonly, these champions are chosen by the Emir for personal reasons, be it piloting skill or personal favor.

◆ Peace River Defense Force

Paxton Arms does not share the great dueling tradition of Terra Nova, but since the War of the Alliance the Peace River Defense Force has emulated polar forces and elected Duelists. They have proven popular with the soldiers and have greatly facilitated interaction with the polar forces.

◆ Arthurian Korps

Arthurian tacticians do not recognize the value of the Duelist. As their force is made of genetically engineered super-soldiers, there is little sense in electing one of them as the representative of them all.





2.1.2 - Role of a Duelist

Duelists serve several important functions within a Heavy Gear regiment, both as symbols and as part of the chain of command. The most obvious such service is to defend the honor of the regiment on the battlefield. The morale of a regiment is closely tied to the success of their Duelist in the series of friendly and not so friendly duels which occur when two regiments are stationed together. In the current times of tension, when regiments are often sent into unfamiliar territory with units not of their brigade or legion, these duels are all the more common. Duelists who cannot satisfactorily uphold the prestige of the regiment in such situations not only damage their own reputations, but create a less effective battle unit due to low morale.

Less common, but more grave, is the battlefield duty to uphold regimental honor against more serious challenges. Accusations of cowardice, lack of skill or immorality against members of the regiment must be met by the Duelist. While the chain of command can help diffuse or rectify such situations on the brigade and legion level, most soldiers will only respect decisions made on the field of honor.

Outside of their Gears, Duelists continue to serve as symbols of the regiment as a whole. Many skilled pilots could never become regimental Duelists because of this aspect of their duty. The pilot must walk a fine line between military codes of behavior and the actual lifestyle of the regiment. Engaging in disgraceful behavior is unacceptable, but so is being excessively proper and alienating the common soldiers. In all things, solidarity with the regiment is the highest priority and so units with dubious reputations — such as the 44th Renegade Roughnecks of the Southern MILICIA — will have hard-drinking Duelists as well.

Within the regimental structure the Duelist has been integrated as a special member of the chain of command. Elected by and representing every soldier of the regiment, the Duelist is expected to act as their voice in command circles. In some ways the Duelist's role overlaps that of the regimental NCO, but while the Adjutant-Chef or Sergeant Major is concerned more with organizing for their soldiers, the Duelist is expected to act as their spokesperson. There is no obligation placed on command staff to listen to the Duelist's concerns and all pilots understand that victory is built on soldiers' backs, but a tradition of respect binds the command officers and the Duelist together.

The Duelist is also the pilots' voice in the support units of the regiment. His Gear is the pride and joy of regiment techies and a close bond between Duelist and support personnel is common. The Duelist is expected to make sure that pilots and soldiers can count on the supplies they need to attain their objectives. Some look down on support personnel, but such attitudes can be crippling. The dueling Gear is the support team's only real chance to shine and they take that task very seriously.

2.1.3 The DeLyon Code

When R.C. DeLyon opened his Gear training camp he was determined to inject a sense of pride and honor in the pilots of the new Jägers. Since that time, the code of honor he taught has spread throughout the various Terranovan armed forces. All Duelists must adhere to the four tenets of the DeLyon Code, and any infractions are taken extremely seriously.

◆ Honor before All

The first tenet is the most widely known and in many way defines the Duelist's role. Above all, the pilot's duty is to defend the honor of his fellows, and challenges to it are the most important matter of the Duelist's life.

◆ Regiment before Self

DeLyon's second tenet places the position of the Duelist in relation to his unit. In all things, the regiment's position must come first. This tenet is interpreted in many different ways, ranging from regiments that enforce a strict separation between personal and regimental honor to those who expect the Duelist to defend the reputation of each and every soldier.

◆ Thought before Action

Many Duelists have not abided by DeLyon's third tenet and found themselves in lethal duels over completely trivial matters. The true Duelist does not enter any conflict without first reflecting on the options available to him. On the battlefield and off, the Duelist must be a strategist as well as a pilot.

◆ Justice before Reconciliation

While other tenets encourage caution, the fourth encourages intransigence. Regimental honor is not seen as a fluid thing that can be regained through bargaining and forgiveness. Lost honor must be vindicated on the battlefield. This tenet often leads to long-standing rivalries between regiments and Duelists. In extreme cases the Duelists may become Nemesis.



Beyond the Regiment - 2.1.4

Duelists are a special breed of Gear pilot, having absorbed regimental pride to an extraordinary level. While they are still patriots, their primary identification is always to the regiment and its reputation. Politics and religion may remain part of their lives, but are always subordinate to the positions of their unit. This intense sense of belonging, and the culture of honor associated with it, affects the way they look at those outside of the regiment.

Although some Duelists are flamboyant and outgoing, most are quite restrained and almost cold. Those familiar with only the media stereotype of the dashing hero tend to come away from their first face to face contact with regimental Duelists thinking of them as unemotional and even stuck-up. In fact, the Duelist is largely unable to let his guard down and relax, always aware that he is representing his fellows and must serve as an example of honorable behavior. They are almost always playing a role.

Those who manage to pierce this exterior mask are rare, but quite precious as far as Duelists are concerned. Usually meeting in private, it is only with these close friends that the elite pilots can be themselves. These fleeting moments of freedom from responsibility can lead to very strong relationships and passionate feelings. However, the strictures of duty usually pull the Duelist away eventually, often turning friendship into resentment.



Allied Military Personnel ◆

Members of other regiments are always somewhat of a risk for Duelists. Indeed, one wrong move could result in a breach of honor that might lead to a serious conflict. The culture of honor, however, is so ingrained that most people realize that this tension exists and try to get past it. Friendships and romances with members of other regiments are quite common. Indeed, the life of a Duelist is rarely completely comprehensible to someone who is not in the military.

Relationships with other Duelists are a double-edged sword. While two Duelists may well have much in common, they are also constantly "on duty." Friendships and — more seriously — romances between Duelists are taken as a sign of profound attachment between two regiments. If conflicts arise between the two units, the relationship is sure to suffer, as are the reputations of both Duelists. These romances are more common than most think, however. Those involved quickly learn to be discreet and to leave their regimental "colors" behind when they are together.

Enemy Personnel ◆

In times of full-scale war, the Duelists role vis-a-vis enemy troops is relatively minor. Duels between warring forces are extremely rare, and on the true battlefield Duelists become just another pilot, although their behavior and success can have serious effects on unit morale. In times of peace or serious tension, the Duelist becomes much more important. Northern and Southern units march across the Badlands harassing each other, and duels become more and more common. Unit commanders rarely want — or have the authority — to engage in all-out combat in these times and so rely on their Duelists to attain their objectives.

Duelists themselves often find kindred spirits across enemy lines. National stereotypes occasionally fall by the wayside and elite pilots are able to recognize the skill and honor of their opponents. In times of outright peace — as in the cycles just after the Treaty of Westphalia — fast friendships can develop. In times of tension, like today, these relationships are often put by the wayside as politicians call for conflict and war machines are prepared for battle. Many a Duelist is now faced with the prospect of killing not just an enemy, but a friend.

Not all duels lead to the final resolution of conflicts. Draws are very possible when equally skilled pilots face each other, and a single duel will usually not lay a deep seated rivalry to rest. Such Duelists can become caught in a spiral of rivalry and hatred that lasts years. Their regiments can become extremely antagonistic, leading to more and more excuses for duels. These problems can easily reduce military efficiency in joint operations and a final duel is often imposed by the chain of command. Unfortunately, this rarely resolves the rivalry for long.

Personal rivalries between Duelists of similar skill often operate on a different level. These become less and less matters of regimental honor and more matters of the pilots' desire to prove themselves the better once and for all. Duelists call pilots who fall into this pattern of behavior Nemeses. Although it seems to go against the DeLyon Code, besting one's Nemesis is generally accepted as a legitimate reason to engage in a duel, even if no regimental issues are at hand. Most often the regiments will join in the rivalry and support their Duelists.



▣ Jarak Twins



(SNS Datanews; 56 Spring 1940, Khayr ad-Din) — It is a decidedly strange day today, here in Khayr ad-Din, as thousands of the city's residents celebrate the news that the Western Desert has finally been purged of hostile forces. Rarely have the streets of this city been so packed with jubilant people.

In the middle of it all, of course, is the Khayr ad-Din Army, the ragtag militia made up of the city's finest Duelists and mercenaries. Heroes and legends of mythic proportions were forged in their ranks. Take, for example, the Jarak twins: elite pilots for the Northern Guard, Danghen Jarak, Duelist for the 17th Regiment, and Maena, a pilot in the legendary Nova Redriders, went AWOL in the middle of Winter 33, reportedly stealing prototype military technology in the process. Many had feared the pair had turned their allegiances towards the South.

In reality, they came here, to Khayr ad-Din, where they were instrumental in forming the KADA with their one-time mentor, Katryne Sanz. As officers in the outfit, they fought against all odds to defend their city from the aggression of the GREL madman, Colonel Proust, and his so-called New Human Republic. And what of their future? If rumors are to be believed, Sanz is preparing to hand the twins control of the Army and go into retirement...

● The Civilian World

Civilian life is in many ways an alien world to regimental Duelists. Career military personnel, these pilots have so integrated the DeLyon Code and the pride of their regiment into their lives, that the existence of a world in which honor is secondary and identification is not made with comrades-in-arms is frightening to them. To survive the rigors placed on them, many Duelists must learn to suppress their individuality, taking on the characteristics of the unit as a whole. In civilian life this proves a very serious handicap and many Duelists have difficulty reasserting their own identities out of uniform.

Like all soldiers, Duelists look forward to leaves for rest and relaxation, but mostly as a counterpoint to the "real" world of the regiment. Even on R&R, Duelists are constantly on duty representing the regiment; they can never truly let their guard down. Civilians have a very difficult time accepting this fact, and although the glamour of the position ensures a Duelist many companions, few relationships are possible.

When a former Duelist leaves the service, these problems become all the more serious. Many never seem able to let go of the code of behavior and communal thinking that defined their military service; civilian life seems dull and petty by comparison. Destructive habits are an all too common occurrence, although the military does its best to suppress this information. Alcoholism and drug addiction plague many retired Duelists, while others seek out ever increasing amounts of danger to satisfy their need for excitement. Police SWAT units, mercenary outfits, a few honorable rover bands, and Badlands marshal's bureaus all count former Duelists among their most daring — or even suicidal — members.

◆ The Popular Media

Regimental Duelists share a long and checkered history with the Terranovan media. In the days after St. Vincent's War, when dueling was integrated into the formal structure of the polar militaries, commanders encouraged extensive media coverage of Duelists and dueling. Each victory or act of nobility brought additional prestige to the regiment and built a bond between the civilian and military world. Popular interest was huge and duels quickly became events followed by the whole populace.

The "honeymoon" between the military and the media came to a crashing end in the TN 1800's. In TN 1807 the whole Northern hemisphere was glued to their vidscreens for the broadcast of the duel between Peters Hans of the WFP Army and Barton Reginald of the Mercantile Army. Wagers on the combat were estimated in the billions and national pride was on the line. Ten days after Reginald's stunning victory, a Norlight reporter broke the news that the fight had been fixed. Both Duelists — and many of their fellows — had been staging rivalries to build media attention and then taking huge sums to fix an outcome. Smug Southern attitudes at Northern "corruption" were shattered when a similar scandal hit the Republican Army in TN 1809.

Because of these scandals, military duels have become private affairs. Live media feeds are banned and only military reporters are allowed on the premises — and even they are banned during serious duels of honor. In general Duelists are very happy with this arrangement. Their duty is to their regiment, not to act as mascots for the whole armed forces. They appreciate the degree of privacy they are granted by these measures.

Of course, dueling remains a fascinating topic for the media. While professional dueling satisfies the need for live Gear combat, the honor-codes and secrecy of the regimental Duelist draw media attention. The results of duels are reported after-the-fact and wagering still occurs, but it is the Duelists themselves who are the focus of the most attention. These are the elite warriors and guardians of honor and are a constant topic of trideo dramas and underground fiction.



Destiny Gear

(VidScene Magazine; 8 Summer TN 1933) — With the dinars still being counted, it is clear that the hit of the Spring Vid season has been *Destiny Gear*. The tale of Cherubim Haart, a MILICIA Duelist who has to prove the honor of his regiment against overwhelming odds, the film's stunning action sequences seem to have drawn in every kid in the Republic. The final battle against Northern arch villain Garysson Stone is the topic on most young lips these days.

At a recent studio party *Destiny Gear* leading man Dayvid Starr spoke of the appeal of his film:

"Of course the action is great. Maury (director Maurisse Blindo) did an amazing job with the effects. But I think the reason *Destiny Gear* connects with all the kids out there is because of the realism at its core. You know that I actually duelled in the Badlands to research this part, so you'll understand that Cherubim Haart isn't just a part for me. He's an extension of myself. I think that the audience knows this, and understands that Cherubim's code of honor is my own."

Starr was unavailable for further comments as he was swamped by over a dozen young fans, most of them female. *Second Destiny*, a sequel to *Destiny Gear*, will begin shooting later this cycle.



Other Duelists

The stereotype is that regimental Duelists look down upon professional sport Duelists and underground gladiators, seeing them as pale reflections of their honored post. This view is not all together false. Indeed, many regimental Duelists are exceptionally haughty and refuse to have anything to do with their "bastard cousins." Similarly, many professional and underground Duelists earn this scorn by ignoring the DeLyon code altogether and downplaying the debt they owe to the military. Particularly disreputable are those civilian Duelists who harass and challenge their military counterparts, looking for a quick road to a reputation. They are most often ignored, but occasionally end up soundly defeated before they can react.

Despite these conflicts, most regimental Duelists look upon their civilian counterparts with surprising empathy. Indeed, many professionals and gladiators hold to their honor with as much pride as a military pilot. This common bond creates the groundwork for understanding and friendship. Most admired are professionals who remain loyal to their teams and gladiators who preserve their personal honor. These pilots are respected because they have overcome the temptations of their situations and remained true to their calling — they are true Duelists.

Bonds of friendship are common when military units are stationed near centers of civilian dueling. Military pilots often try to encourage their civilian counterparts to sign up, but most resist the offer.

The Best One Yet

"The popular imagination wants a single Duelist who is the greatest on all of Terra Nova. This is just not possible. Who is better? The skilled gladiator, the glamorous professional star, or the stern military fighter? We can't make any judgment based on origins. I've trained some of the best in the Northern Guard and fought some of the best in Khayr ad-Din and all my illusions that the military produces 'better' people have been shattered. I have seen elite officers with a bigger vicious streak than the nastiest Gear gladiator. I have also seen gladiators with a stronger sense of personal honor than most regimental Duelists. The team spirit in the top professional teams rivals the regimental unity so lauded in military circles.

"In the end, it is the character and skill of the pilot that counts, and not preconceptions about her origins."

— Extract from *Field of Honor* by Katryne Sanz





2.1.5 - Military Duelist Creation Tips



Regimental Duelists can be extremely intriguing roleplaying characters. In action oriented campaigns they are interesting because of their skill at the controls of a Gear. They are among the best pilots the military has to offer, and will fight in the most critical battles. Duelists are more than simple ace pilots, however. They also serve as walking examples of the regiment's pride. This role provides ample opportunities for roleplaying, as Duelists must struggle not only to represent their fellow soldiers, but also to find their place in the world.

Friendships on which Duelists can depend are few and far between and they value these relationships more than anything save their regiment's honor. These bonds can easily form the basis for a party of Player Characters, either hailing from the same regiment or made up of a mix of civilian and military characters. In military campaigns, group dynamics may often center around the Duelist, as he will be expected to lead the way for the others and to defend their honor with his life, if necessary. In mixed campaigns, civilians may not fully understand his commitment to the regiment.

A personal dedication to honor and the regiment should form a part of any Duelist character. When roleplaying a Duelist, Players and Gamemasters must always strive to keep this aura of tradition and respect about them. While some Duelists seem undisciplined and wild, they should stand out as exceptions. Most Duelists appear reserved and almost cold, concerned with duty above all else.

Although surface impressions are sufficient for minor Non-Player Characters, in the case of Player Characters and major NPCs it becomes necessary to go deeper. Instead of playing the code of honor as a rigid force in these cases, Players and Gamemasters should look at it as a dynamic tradition. Each Duelist must find their own interpretation of the Delyon Code, based on their personal views and the outlook of their fellow soldiers.

◆ Conceptualization

Before spending Character and Skill Points, both Player and Gamemaster should have a good idea of the character they wish to build. This is particularly important with regimental Duelists, who — in military campaigns — will be the center of a lot of roleplaying and action. Why is this person a Duelist? The post is extremely demanding and suitable only for a limited number of pilots. What makes this character qualified, beyond simple piloting skill?

Many answers are possible and Players should feel free to forge their own path, but a few possible solutions could prove helpful. The character may be tied to the regiment by history. If her father was the Duelist during the War of the Alliance, her rise to the post may have been preordained. She is now faced with filling very big shoes. Alternately, the character may be out to prove something. Perhaps his honor was challenged in civilian life and he is trying to redeem himself on the field of honor. If so, past infractions will surely catch up with him. Another option is that the pilot has been chosen by her fellows for her piloting skill alone. She may be totally unprepared for the full role of Duelist and could jeopardize the honor of her regiment.

◆ Attributes and Skills

When choosing Attributes and Skills for a Duelist, some choices are obvious. AGI and PER are critical, as are Combat Sense, Heavy Gear Piloting, HG Dueling and Gunnery: Heavy Gear. Duelists often specialize in their model of Gear, a machine with which they become intimately familiar. Secondary piloting skills such as Electronic Warfare and Communications are also required and Tactics is a must. But the Duelists also plays a social role in the regiment; skills like Leadership, Etiquette, History (regimental) are also common. Pride in one's Gear is also very common among Duelists, implying skills such as Mechanics and Electronics.

◆ Connections with other Characters

No character is an island. In a roleplaying game a troupe of Players need to be bonded by mutual connections and a supporting cast. When creating a Duelist it is important not to isolate the character from the others. If everyone is playing Duelists this is rarely a problem, but in more general military or mixed campaigns personal connections are critical in overcoming the isolation of the Duelists. Perhaps one of the other Player Characters is the Duelist's long-time friend or lover, with whom he may let down his guard. The role of Duelist will likely get in the way of personal friendships, so his bonds with other characters must be strong.



Creating Regimental Traditions - 2.1.6

A critical part of running a campaign involving a military Duelist is the creation of regimental traditions. While this chapter examines many of the general aspects of military dueling, each regiment is unique and has its own litany of rituals revolving around honor matches, their elite pilots and the Gears they use.

When establishing traditions, Gamemasters may wish to involve the Players. Together the whole roleplaying party can create the history and outlook of the regiment and the resulting rites and practices. This shared creation will help build a sense of attachment to the regiment among the Players that easily translates to their characters' sense of belonging.

Most regiments have extremely long and detailed traditions covering almost every aspect of military life, from an insistence on a certain tattoo to the necessity of carrying a playing card into battle. Gamemasters need not forge every last ritual. Rather, they should concentrate on the key elements and the traditions linked to dueling; other small practices can be introduced later. As a helpful tool for Gamemasters, the following sidebars present the important dueling traditions of four of the regiments of note on Terra Nova. These regiments can be used as is, or serve as examples for the Gamemaster's own creations.



74th Northern Guard HG Regiment — Nova Redriders ◆

The Nova Redriders see Duelist selection as among the most sacred of their duties. Ever since much of the regiment was destroyed during the War of the Alliance, the Duelist has served as a living embodiment of their spirit of sacrifice and determination. He is elected by the regiment from a panel of candidates elected by veterans of the War of the Alliance (including those no longer in the service). He always pilots the same machine, a crimson Grizzly, affectionately called "Big Red," and wears a ruby blood drop marker on his uniform. The desertion of Duelist Meana Jarak in TN 1933 dealt a powerful blow to the regiment, but some take heart from the fact that she didn't steal "Big Red." For more information see the **Northern Guard Army List**, p. 54.



99th Northern Guard HG Regiment (Auxiliary) — Blue Angels ◆

The 18th HG regiment of the Norlight Armed Forces, the Blue Angels, are among the most religious military units in the North. Duelists are expected to serve as both spiritual advisors to the regiment and as elite pilots, and at least one tour in the NAF's chaplain service is considered *de rigeur*. Duelists are elected by the Angels but they must also be approved by the commander of the regiment and the chaplain corps of the NAF, making military loyalty and religious orthodoxy deciding factors. They pilot the machine of their choice and wear small azure wings on their uniform collar. For each duel won, their Gear is painted with a small golden halo victory marker. For more information see **Into the Badlands**, p. 42.



11th Southern MILICIA HG Regiment — Rapiers ◆

The Rapiers are a traditional home for those who have served a tour in the Légion Noire auxiliary and so take their dueling very seriously. Duelists are elected only after a grueling series of tests, involving Gear skirmishes and physical trials designed to prove the deadly skill of the pilot, followed by lengthy questioning on regimental history and tradition. The regiment rarely tolerates defeat and Duelists who do not have a perfect record can expect to be challenged for their position. Duelists pilot the Gear of their choice and wear a symbol known as the "tête de mort" (death's head) consisting of the MILICIA's Order of Charon kill marker overlaid on a pair of crossed rapiers. For more information see **Into the Badlands**, p. 47



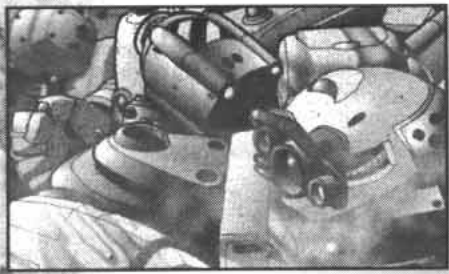
49th Southern MILICIA HG Regiment — Silver Vipers ◆

The "Silver 49th" is renowned for the technical and artistic skill of its support crews, who constantly modify the unit's Gears and paint them with decorative serpents. The pilot is seen as only one part of the dueling equation. The chief technician who modifies and decorates the pilot's Gear is given equal status and separate competitions are held for each position. Once chosen, both soldiers receive identical viper tattoos and silver viper-head pins, and then cooperate to create the unit's new dueling machine. This Gear is usually heavily modified and features an elaborate rendering of a viper on its hull. For more information see the **Southern MILICIA Army List**, p. 60.





2.2 - The World of Pro Dueling



The popular appeal of Gear combat and the glamor of dueling have combined in most areas of Terra Nova to foster leagues of professional Duelists who participate in organized games. As in other professional sports, each dueling league has its own fixed rules and regulatory committees and exists to provide entertainment for a wide and diverse audience.

Pro Duelists themselves are highly paid professional Gear pilots, but feel tied to the codes and traditions of their regimental "cousins." Although they perform for an audience, for the most part they respect their sport and themselves enough to concentrate on the duels. Glory-hounds are far from unheard of, however. The top stars are swamped by the media and their fans, and this can easily go to their heads.

2.2.1 - Pro Dueling Circuit

The world of a pro Duelist is in large part defined by the circuit in which he competes. The different leagues of Terra Nova each have their circuits, and even larger circuits place leagues in competition against each other. The bigger the circuit, of course, the bigger the stars of the circuit. Fans of one team or another take their performance very seriously and Duelists are rarely left to wonder whether or not they are appreciated. Huge contracts are commonplace for top stars, and endorsement deals plaster their faces on trideo screens.

◆ League Circuits

The most important pro circuits are without a doubt the league-wide ones. These place teams from almost every city-state in competition with each other. Only the Humanist Alliance has no professional circuit of its own, while the ESE's Patriarch's League is violent and chaotic enough to most often be considered a gladiatorial dueling circuit. The dueling season traditionally lasts from Autumn to the end of Winter, with the playoffs coming in the Spring. Each league has its own style of competition, but they all love their stars.

◆ Northern Dueling League

The largest dueling circuit in the Arctic, the Northern Dueling League (NDL) includes at least one team from each Norlight city-state. Valeria fields three teams — the Capitals, the Port Aurora Champions and the White Lions, the pro dueling team with the best overall record on Terra Nova. Livingstone has two teams as well. The 17 teams are divided into four divisions for playoff purposes, but every team will meet every other at least once during the regular season.

NDL games are usually divided into one team-play round and two single-play rounds, with the winner of two-out-of-three taking the game. The single duels tend toward very traditional forms of dueling borrowed from the military, reflecting the Norlight bond to the armed forces. In team-play more extravagant games are possible. The specifics of each match are decided by the two teams facing each other just before the battle, in emulation of a military challenge by the visiting team.

The Prophet's Cup — the NDL championship — is the most coveted trophy in the NLC, and a victory is a license for wild celebration in the team's home city. These victory bashes can rapidly become violent if too much alcohol is present, and police forces are often out in force during championship games.

◆ Mercantile Dueling Circuit

The United Mercantile Front's professional dueling circuit is by far the slickest on the planet. Each city-state fields two small teams, supported by local conglomerates as part of their "civic pride" campaigns. The Mercantile Dueling Circuit (MDC) as a whole is sponsored by Northco, which also supports both the Rapid City Jaguars and Tigers. MDC arenas are among the most modern on the planet, featuring huge trideo screens and personal viewers to help follow the action.

The twenty-two teams are divided into two leagues which compete against each other only during the championship matches. In this way city loyalties are rarely seriously split, although quite often different corporations — and their employees — support the two teams. In the case of a "shuttle trophy," in which the championship is disputed between two local teams, the city-state in question is gripped with acute dueling frenzy and divided along corporate and neighborhood lines. Souvenir merchants think of these times as the golden cycles. The MDC champions receive the Yanders Trophy.



Cat Fight ◆

Perhaps the greatest of all UMF pro dueling matches occurred in TN 1921 when the Rapid City Jaguars met their corporate brothers, the Tigers, for the Yanders Trophy. The city and Northco itself were split by battle-lines of team pride and the corporation gave a leave to all of its employees to attend the game. The Tigers were most strongly supported by the assembly line workers, while the Jaguars had huge fans in research and development.

That championship game is burned into the memories of most Rapid City citizens. By the final period of the deciding team skirmish part of the match, the Tigers had seen three of their machines paralyzed on the field, while the Jaguars had suffered only slight damage. In the final ten minutes, the two remaining Tigers — Jaymz Monro and Karla Aubryan — mounted a stunning comeback. Benefiting from Jaguar overconfidence, they were able to lure their opponents into the “urban” section of the field and used speed to even the odds. Aubryan downed the captain of the Jaguars in the closing seconds of the period to win the cup.

Northco’s production line was shut for a full week as the city exploded in celebration. Downtown merchants reported some looting, but local bars made record sales. Police officers remember the week of jubilation as long days of around-the-clock crowd control.



Western Dueling Conference ◆

Unlike most other league dueling circuits, the teams of the Western Dueling Conference (WDC) are not based on city-states. Rather, almost every major clan sponsors a small team, creating a very large circuit for such a small League. The ranks of the WDC are helped by the fact that top pilots from the WFPA are routinely placed on reserve status to allow them to compete.

WDC duels are mostly one-on-one affairs, usually variations on traditional military duels. Team matches occur, but are given very little importance in the overall standings leading to the playoffs. As such, it is possible for a team of only a few pilots to win the championship as long as they are not injured during the season. Such was the case in TN 1924 when three Peters Freerunners defeated all comers and took the Gunslinger Crest, the WDC championship.

The Republican Federation of Duelists ◆

The Republican Federation of Duelists (RFD) is the largest dueling circuit on Terra Nova. Teams from across the Southern Republic take part — often two to a city-state — as well as a few teams from the Humanist Alliance, where the dueling tradition is not ingrained to the same extent. The RFD operates under much the same rules as the NDC, with changes made to increase entertainment value. The formats of the matches are decided on the battlefield, but in all cases operate with point systems. As such, no team can be sure of a victory before the end of all duels. Point bonuses given for “kills” — simulated shutdowns — make attempts at all out, flamboyant attacks much more common. A unique feature in RFD team skirmishes is the ability of two opposing Duelists to enter into one-on-one combat free of external interference. Both Duelists must agree to this special “sub-duel” and the winner gains an impressive point bonus.

The RFD championship is known as La Coupe DeLyon.

Dominion Dueling Division ◆

The Mekong pro-dueling circuit — often called “3D” — makes up for the Peacekeepers’ reputation for honesty with a degree of corruption and greed that astonishes even Dominion citizens. Practically every cycle a new division overseer arrives and announces a crackdown on the millions of dinars poured into the coffers of players, coaches, referees, arena managers and trainers by various interested parties; every cycle things get worse. 3D Duelists regularly accept bribes to swing matches one way or another, and most often the true “dueling” occurs between competing bidders before the match opens. The Mekong Cup, the 3D championship trophy, is often called the “millionaire’s mantlepiece” by critics of the division and its backers.

The efforts at reforming the Dominion as a whole undertaken by Speaker Miyako Sogabe have had their effect in the 3D, however. A growing sentiment among division pilots that they should live up to the reputation of true Duelists has led to several pointed demands for reforms. This movement is centered around the Loyang Redjackets and their young captain Tojiro Leung, a grandson of the fabled Peacekeeper sous-commandant Akira Leung.



◆ The Karaq Bandits



The Karaq Bandits is a bizarre grouping of the diverse elements of the Badlands. Theoretically centered in Elayu, the Bandits bring together pilots from across the Wastes, including town militia pilots, miners, rovers and smugglers. The team was organized by Elayu business woman Federika Holagan as part of an effort to encourage trade throughout the zone patrolled by the PRDF. It was Holagan's belief that the Wastes, protected by Paxton's Protectorate, could become a viable political block. The Bandits were a way to create pride in the region.

The team certainly created a sense of pride amongst many residents of the Karaq Wastes. The rugged homesteaders, traders and rovers all cheered when their team won. The Bandits became a symbol of the rugged individualism of the Badlands, of the ability of people from the fringe to play in the big leagues. The team was long plagued by problems, however: the matches with Paxton teams often took the form of serious rivalries, spurred on by the resentment of living under the umbrella of the arms conglomerate. The situation only worsened when the Bandits were the subject of the popular Mekong holofilm *Desert Dogs* in TN 1929.

After the Peace River incident, the Bandits drifted through the region, helping where they could. They would eventually end up in Khayr ad-Din and became one of the first outside teams to join the KADA.

◆ Pro Circuit Qualifications

Like all professional sports, dueling requires cycles of hard work and perseverance — it doesn't hurt to have contacts inside the promotion industry, either. The first, most basic requirement is an appropriate Gear operations certificate. The most basic operation of a Gear, sufficient for most industrial work, is covered under the Class C certificate (Heavy Gear Pilot Skill level 1). More advanced certificates include Class B (Skill level 2), Class A (Skill level 3) and Class AA (Skill level 4 and higher). Gear operations certificates may be augmented by one of two notations of merit: "with Mention" (AGI of +1) and "with Distinction" (AGI of +2). To join a team, the prospective pilot must possess a Class A or better Gear operations certificate with Mention. Minor league teams and the Desert Dueling League will sometimes accept pilots who possess only Class B certificates, however.

Merely possessing a Class A certificate with Mention does not guarantee a place on a team, though. Assuming the team has an opening available (and most do, if only for a backup or "bench" position), the candidate must pass an interview in which his ability to work with others is measured; loners are rarely welcome in the pro circuit. The prospective Duelist must then pass a test of skill, which is typically a one-on-one standard skirmish duel (with simulated weapons) versus a member of the team he is attempting to join. Some teams require their Duelists to supply their own Gears; others are lucky enough to have corporate sponsors provide the equipment. In the latter case, the prospective Duelist is assigned a Gear from the team pool.

2.2.2 - Confederate and Global Competitions

Sport dueling beyond the league level is much rarer. Identification is strongest with teams representing a single community rather than a whole league, creating a situation where interest is far reduced in confederate competitions. In addition, the increased tensions between North and South have made the possibility of truly global competitions almost nil.

◆ Northern Confederate Dueling Championship

The NCDC is the ultimate goal of most Northern pro-Duelists. At the end of the league circuit seasons, each league elects teams to represent them at the Confederate championships. The number of teams is renegotiated every five cycles and was most recently set in TN 1930 at four Norlight teams, three UMF teams and one Western team. Each league selects its championship teams differently, but those who make it to the finals are usually a shoo-in. In the West, the top Clan teams are often integrated into a larger team for the purposes of the NCD Championship. The Championship is traditionally held in the Valeria arena over a two week period. The matches are team encounters with simple elimination.

◆ Southern Cup

The Southern Cup, held in Ashanti every Summer, brings together sixteen teams of Southern Duelists to face each other. These teams are selected by a panel of judges and are made up of individual pilots chosen for their skill and style. The judges are infamous for their Republican bias, but they make sure each team contains at least one pilot from an allied league. The Cup is seen more as an entertaining distraction than as serious business by Southern dueling fans, as the teams cut across city-state and league lines, lessening fan identification and teamwork.



□ The Annual Innsbruck Death Track 1000

Primary Sponsor:	Arctic Bierhäus
Length of Track:	5.6 km
Number of Laps:	20
Casualty Rate:	45%
Piloting Requirement:	Class A Gear Operations Certificate with Mention
Vehicle Requirement:	Any Heavy Gear or Work Gear
Registration Fee:	5000 Marks per participant
Maximum Number of Participants:	100
Legal Weaponry:	Anything goes
Obstacles:	Deadman's Spikes (Threshold: Declared MP/2 + 1): This 150-meter length of bumpy dirt road is covered with 45° spikes pointed at the oncoming Gears (MoF x8 Damage to Movement Systems). Kallahan's Loop (Threshold: Declared MP/2 + 1 per MP below 10 MP): The 20-meter diameter Kallahan's Loop requires a minimum speed of 60 kph all the way through to clear it safely and allows for only one Gear at a time (MoF x10 Damage). Roller Coaster (Threshold: Declared MP/2 + 1): Over 200 meters long, this section of track consists of a series of 20-meter high hills spaced at 30-meter intervals (MoF x8 Damage). Speeds greater than 55 kph result in the Gear flying off the track and crashing heavily into the ground (see <i>Climbing and Falling</i>, page 81). Doom Maze Tube (Threshold: Declared MP/2, +2 if the Gear has no lights): Over a kilometer in length, this pitch black tunnel splits and joins in three to five branches (depending on the direction taken). Piloting roll failures result in a collision with another Gear (MoF 1-2) or a wall (MoF 3+). Piloting checks required every 100 meters. Slalom (Threshold: Declared MP/2): For a span of 250 meters, posts are set into the track, around which Gears must weave (MoF x5 Damage). Oil Slicks (Threshold: Declared MP/2 + 1): These are scattered throughout the course — including within the Doom Maze Tube. Failure results in a loss of control (see section 7.5.5 of the Second Edition Heavy Gear Rulebook, page 133 — treat as a failed 180° turn). Water Slicks (Threshold: Declared MP/2 — 1): Similar to oil slicks, water slicks consist of several centimeters of standing water. Failure results in a loss of control.

The most famous of all of Terra Nova's professional sports Gear competitions, the annual Innsbruck Death Track 1000 pits some of the newest Heavy Gears on the market against older, more tested models. Sponsored by Innsbruck's Arctic Bierhäus brewery and held in the Northern Lights Confederacy city-state of Innsbruck, the event offers a first prize of 500,000 Marks, a second prize of 250,000 Marks and a third prize of 150,000 Marks. Consisting of roughly equal parts high speed race, obstacle course and gladiatorial dueling, the event is held every year in the middle of Autumn and attracts anywhere between 50,000 and 200,000 tourists. Many Gear-design companies take advantage of the event to publicly showcase their newest models, sometimes without sufficient testing. The event is marked by a weeklong series of festivals and celebrations, including several minor competitions between sports Duelists and even one or two exhibitions of military dueling. It culminates with the Death Track 1000 event itself.

Despite its name, the Death Track 1000 race is not often fatal. It does, however, involve the use of live ammunition and casualties do occur. Throughout the cycles, numerous organizations of concerned citizens have attempted to ban the use of live ammo and to force the implementation of simulated weapons. These efforts have always failed, and clashes between protestors and fans keep Innsbruck's jails filled to capacity during Death Track Week.

● Winning the Death Track 1000

The Death Track 1000 competition ends when the first Gear crosses the finish line. The pilot of this Gear is not necessarily the winner, however. Winning the race is more a matter of putting on an exciting show than crossing the finish line. Each time a pilot completes a lap, he is awarded a Victory Point (VP). Disabling Gears earns 1 VP per Gear. Being disabled or leaving the race results in a 1 VP penalty. Being Overkilled results in a 2 VP penalty, assuming the pilot survives. Fouls include attacking another Gear before the lead Gear has completed its first lap, deliberately leaving the track, deliberately avoiding an obstacle section of the track, attacking a downed Gear, and aiming for a Gear's crew compartment. Each foul results in a 1 VP penalty — assuming the referees catch the pilot committing the foul. The pilot with the most Victory Points wins the race.

Each model of Gear has a Victory Point handicap based on its Threat Value scores, with the Hunter/Jäger as the baseline. For example, the Strike Cheetah has a -4 VP handicap, and the DartJäger has a +1 VP handicap. The meager Groundhog Work Gear would have a +6 VP handicap, should anyone be mad enough to enter one into the competition.

□ Victory Point Adjustment Table

VP Adjustment	QTV	DTV	MTV	VP Adjustment	QTV	DTV	MTV
+2	0-200	0-140	0-150	-2	901-1500	651-900	800-1300
+1	201-400	141-280	151-300	-3	1501-2500	900-1500	1301-2000
+0	401-600	281-420	301-450	-4	2501+	1500+	2000+
-1	600-900	421-650	451-800				



2.2.3 - The Pro Duelist



Pilots who become professional Duelists suffer greatly from the general perception that they are overpaid glory hounds. Although the behavior and salaries of some of the top stars do seem to confirm this impression, many professionals are paragons of civic pride and proper conduct. The aura of honor inherited from military circles still hangs over the sports arenas and keeps most pilots' extravagances to a minimum.

Additionally, most professionals are former military pilots or current reservists and transfer their sense of regimental pride to their teams. The need for Gear piloting skills makes the possibility of recruiting pilots from other realms rather limited, although some private Gear pilots have been known to rise to the top of the sporting world. This relationship with the military led to a glory time in sport dueling in the TN 1920s, as the circuits were filled with demobilized veterans from the War of the Alliance who brought a level of skill and experience unparalleled before or since. With the rise in tensions between North and South, the militaries at both poles have recalled many of their reservists and swollen their ranks, making the professional sport pickings rather slim. Many of the post-War stars are still playing, but without any young guard to take over from them. The dominance of veterans from the War of the Alliance means that the world of professional dueling is home to an unusual lack of nationalistic bravado. While Duelists always want their team and league to win in competitions, many are products of a war that brought Terranovans together and often do not share in the growing enthusiasm for a new war. Professionals rarely speak out on this issue for fear of being black-listed by circuits afraid of a nationalist backlash.

◆ Media Stars

The most noticeable difference between professional Duelists and their military and gladiatorial compatriots is the degree of media attention paid to them. While dueling enthusiasts follow reports of military battles with great interest, nothing can beat the regular and extensive coverage given to professional duels. The top pilots are literally stalked by the press, the minute details of their lives splashed across vidscreens and newsreaders across the city-state and the league. Those who thrive in the spotlight are encouraged by this attention to become all the more flamboyant, and wild antics and drunken escapades are becoming all too common among the younger generation of professionals — often as a way to step out the shadow of their older teammates.

Those who shun the spotlight are seen as a challenge by the media and will find reporters going to astonishing lengths to uncover information about them. The hunt for privacy has become a serious pastime for many of the top professional stars and several odd solutions have popped up over the years. The top Southern star in the early TN 1920s was known only as "Baron," a pseudonym adopted to protect the pilot's identity. For several cycles, the Southern media spent huge amounts of energy and manpower trying to uncover the identity of Baron. Only in TN 1926, when Baron announced his/her retirement, was an interview granted and did Lilianne Longchamps — the youngest child of deceased war hero Arland Longchamps — reveal herself as Baron. Unfortunately, Lilianne's revelation led to just what she had dodged for so long — a massive media feeding frenzy. Her personal life was passed under a fine-toothed comb, often bringing only rumors and accusations to the surface. A relationship with Danyela Majors, a UMF trade representative in Port Oasis became of particular interest as North-South tensions increased. In TN 1929, she was forced to go into seclusion near Ashanti, where, according to rumor, she and Majors live together.

◆ Professionals and other Duelists

The relationship between sport and other Duelists is often a complex one. Mostly former military pilots, professionals often hold mixed feelings toward their regimental cousins. Those who are former regimental Duelists themselves — a very small minority — obviously have no problem with the post, but those who were never able to attain that station sometimes hold a grudge. Over-compensating for their frustration, they see military Duelists as elitists who look down upon the sporting world. These feelings lurk under the surface of what are nominally friendly relations, but occasionally burst to the surface.

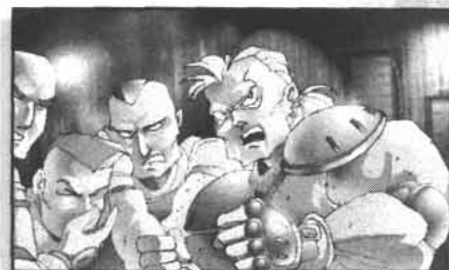
If professionals often feel that regimental Duelists look down upon them, then they have learned this lesson well vis-a-vis gladiatorial pilots. Professionals generally feel that those who fight in the dangerous arenas of the gladiatorial sphere in circuits run by wealthy underworld figures have completely abandoned any sense of honor associated with their sport. Although exceptions do occur, most professionals conveniently ignore any indications of personal honor among underworld Duelists and instead play up instances of extreme cruelty and violence. It is largely thanks to their outlook that the violent Patriarch's League is not recognized as a professional sporting circuit outside the Eastern Sun Emirates.



(Fort Henry Chronicle, 12 Winter TN 1928) — Harris Clan team Duelist Harris Jarred shocked viewers of the Duelist's Hour on the WestSat Hermes 72 network last evening with his angry outbursts. In addition to Harris, guests for the special discussion forum included Peters Jennifer and Richards Lucas from the WFPA. In the middle of a discussion of regimental dueling, Harris began making angry accusations about military Duelists being "wimps who hide behind their banners." Peters and Richards were understandably upset at these remarks and asked that Harris withdraw them, at which point he struck Richards across the jaw.

The Harris Runners have announced that Jarred will be expelled from the team and is now facing assault charges in Fort Henry.

Grudge Match ◆



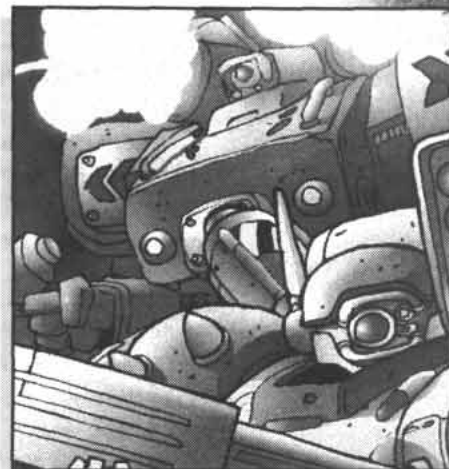
(Marabou Newslane, 30 Summer TN 1919) — The violent nature of the Eastern Sun Emirates Patriarch's League was revealed for all the world to see last evening, during an exhibition match at the Marabou arena. Oliver Masao, the all-powerful leader of the ESE, sponsored this duel between his own Strathclyde Golden Suns and the Skavara Crescent Stars to promote good will in the Allied Southern Territories; in that respect, the match was an abject failure.

The game consisted of a glorified skirmish between the two teams. The Crescent Stars were equipped with Skavara-manufactured Iguanas, while the Golden Suns had been announced to be "generously using simple salvaged machinery." On game day the Skavara team found to their dismay that this "salvage" consisted of three dozen Northern Grizzly fire-support Gears.

Although the Stars were certainly out-gunned, their superior speed served them well in the opening round of light arms combat. Masao then complained loudly that the combat was boring and predictable and worried about the audience not being entertained. After the first round, the Patriarch announced a change of format to one-on-one combat in small arenas.

The Grizzlies decimated the Iguanas in close quarters, killing most of the pilots. The "good will" tour was officially canceled earlier today.

Brutality on Display ◆



(Sport Scene Magazine, 13 Spring TN 1931) — Katia Münsch, leading pilot in the Sand Blazers team at the annual Innsbruck Death Track 1000, announced today that she has accepted a contract with the Northco Tigers, the current division leaders in the Mercantile Dueling Circuit. Some have criticized this crossover between the worlds of racing and sport dueling. Münsch had this to say during the press conference at which she announced her new contract:

"I'm well aware that I'll be at a disadvantage in the arena at first. I certainly don't have the combat experience of Trevin Henneman [the Tigers captain], after all. On the other hand, I've won at Innsbruck more than once, and that race isn't called the Death Track for nothing. We go on with weapons and we don't really pull very many punches in the tight turns, so I'm pretty confident that I can mess it up with the best of them."

Münsch was then asked why she had decided to leave the Sand Blazers.

"I guess it's just the right thing for me. I've loved racing at the track and in other competitions, but I'm looking for a new challenge. The Blazers will always be part of what I am — I mean I wouldn't have achieved any success without my teammates to back me up — but I'm ready for something new. As far as I'm concerned doing something well also means knowing when to move on."

The last question of the press conference concerned Münsch's Gear. She had gained much fame by piloting a particular Hunter, often called "Killer Kate," and the fate of the machine was raised. The question was fielded by Jolaine Flare, manager of the Blazers and Münsch's agent.

"We are currently in negotiation with Northco's professional sports department. I can't give you any details just yet, but we're very optimistic that Katia's fans will be able to see her at the controls of 'Killer Kate' in Rapid City." Northco spokesmen were unavailable for comment.

Death Track Duelist ●





2.2.4 - Dueling Agents



The million dinar salaries paid to some of the top pro Duelists and the additional millions to be made from endorsement contracts have led to a significant sub-industry in pro dueling management agents. These rapacious media kingmakers spend their lives in negotiation, guaranteeing the most freedom and money to their clients. The best agents regularly obtain obscene amounts of money for their stars, while charging equally obscene commissions.

Dueling agents occasionally suffer from the resentment of team owners and sports journalists who blame them for elevating Duelists' salaries to ludicrous levels. Teams affiliated with smaller city-states, clans and corporations argue that agents are forcing them out of business because they can no longer afford the top stars necessary to win a championship and attract a crowd. Agents respond to these accusations by claiming that they are simply defending the interests of their clients. According to them, team owners are greedy entrepreneurs who, if given the chance, would make their fortunes on the backs of underpaid pilots.

◆ The Starwing Agency

While dueling agencies are spread across Terra Nova, none have reached a more legendary status than StarWing. Headquartered in Lyonesse, the agency has offices in most city-states of the UMF as well as in Valeria, Livingstone, Innsbruck, Fort Henry, Peace River and Ashanti. Started as a small sideline by Northco junior executive Andrea Pitman, StarWing is now a major corporation in its own right, rumored to purchase up to 500 electoral vouchers a year.

The secret to StarWing's success is a detailed understanding of both the business and dueling worlds. Many StarWing agents are former Duelists themselves, and those that are not can regularly seek advice from such veterans. As such, they understand the way in which the dueling world works and so can extract the best contracts for their clients. Similarly, agents are recruited from former, or even current, employees of the major corporations and then signed to negotiate with their former employers. The emphasis is always placed on the combination of skill and know-how rather than the slick tactics employed by other agencies.

Some UMF corporations have had reservations about dealing with StarWing, resenting the "theft" of their public relations employees. Most, however, are happier to deal with a single major player who understands the ways of business than with a panoply of small-time agents. StarWing has been able to present corporations with whole team rosters at a shot, simplifying the negotiation process and guaranteeing a consistent team image when dealing with media endorsements. Observers in other Leagues find it ironic that StarWing has transformed itself into the most profitable labor union on record. UMF business leaders just shake their heads at their neighbors' naïveté.

StarWing has had more limited success outside of the UMF. Other leagues and dueling circuits have different traditions and laws, making the StarWing approach somewhat less effective. The agency's strategy of hiring people with the necessary know-how has not changed, however, and very few UMF citizens are employed by the offices outside the Federation. Agents are hired locally, helping to bring the necessary skills into play. The only real snags have proved in overall policy decisions, where Federation offices have much more power. As such, outside the UMF, StarWing remains only one of many other agencies.



Arlene Rusyn ◆



Arlene Rusyn was born to be a dueling agent. Raised at the side of her father Timoti Rusyn, a legal legend in Lyonesse, she was immersed in complexities of business law and contractual disputes from an early age. Arlene's mother Val had also gained fame as the Duelist for the 23rd regiment of the UMFA. Val and Tomoti's divorce during Arlene's childhood was a difficult blow for the young girl, but she remained close to her mother until the latter's death in TN 1926.

Arlene became a StarWing agent upon her graduation from the Marathon School of Law in TN 1922. In TN 1925 she landed the contract for Fransys Morrison, the star Duelist of the Infotech Silverhawks, and negotiated such a good contract that she became the Marathon office director. From there her management skills and understanding of the Duelist mindset — not to mention her extensive contacts — came into play even more. After turning the Marathon office into the agency's most profitable bureau, she rose to the position of CEO in TN 1929.

As StarWing's leader, Arlene's emphasis has been on reorganization and expansion. She has tried to lessen the UMF bias in the upper echelons, most notably promoting Norlight citizen Jonah Hyl to the position of senior vice-president of the agency. She has also overseen the creation of offices in Peace River and Ashanti, trying to break into completely new markets. So far these offices have had only limited success, but Arlene is not known for taking risks.



D. Masmuro Roy ◆

Known across the Mekong Dominion as the most flamboyant man alive, Roy surrounds himself with so much media hype that very little is actually known about him. Dressed in embroidered suits and famous for his "mile high hair" (genetically engineered to be a very special shade of turquoise), Roy is never seen without a cadre of towering bodyguards and fawning showpiece women. Roy represents the most corrupt and wealthy Mekong Duelists and is a master of the bribery rounds that usually serve as a prelude to any match within the Dominion.

Roy makes his home in a spectacular mansion outside Ngorongo, the construction of which was supervised by ESE Patriarch Oliver Masao's personal architect and interior designer. Reporters are often invited to parties at the mansion, but are never allowed into Roy's personal compound. In TN 1930 Loyang News correspondent Patricya Xiang snuck away from a party in search of information for an exclusive on Roy and disappeared for a full cycle. In the Fall of TN 1931, Xiang reappeared as Roy's media assistant, sporting a new and extravagant wardrobe and extensive makeup — a sharp contrast to the no-nonsense style she had been known for.

Lucas, Hartz and Associates ◆

From their offices in Canterbury, the highly paid professionals of Lucas-Hartz represent some of the highest paid entertainment and sport stars of the North. Canterbury's extensive trideo and vidfilm industry is their bread and butter, but they have established profitable sidelines in representing pro Duelists. They specialize in taking dueling stars and transforming them into action vidstars. Their most famous success was taking the UMF top Duelist Regina Beauford and landing her the multimillion mark role as Joe Gear's rival and love interest in Joe Gear Triumphant.

Helena Reece is in charge of overall operations for dueling clients. Under her wise management, Lucas-Hartz has begun to challenge StarWing in Canterbury, taking advantage of the agency's extensive contacts in the entertainment world. Helena is currently trying to get Duelist Artur Roc a trideo sitcom, confident that if she can land a good deal for him she will be offered a partnership in Lucas-Hartz.

Representatifs Regimentaux ●

A specialized agency, Representatifs Regimentaux (or RepReg) is the brainchild of retired Sous-Commandant Marcel Kartier, former second in command of the Republican Army's 12th Heavy Gear Regiment. An enthusiast of dueling in all its form, Kartier encouraged his men to participate in informal matches with local pro-dueling teams. When Gabrielle Montaine, one of his pilots, decided to accept an offer from the Ankara Ferroviare, Kartier helped ensure that the team gave Montaine a fair contract. Six cycles later, when the Sous-Commandant decided to retire to reserve status in the MILICIA, Montaine encouraged him to start representing other former military pilots entering the professional dueling world. Recruiting a few other retired officers and NCOs, Kartier created RepReg and set up offices in Port Oasis. Although still a small agency — holding contracts for only two dozen pilots — RepReg is a favorite of the top military pilots. Six "big name" stars are already clients and Southern market analysts predict a rapid increase in RepReg's profits.

Gabrielle Montaine ◆

The pilot who inspired RepReg, Gabrielle Montaine has always had a special place in Sous-Commandant Kartier's heart. As a young pilot in his regiment she was among the forces sent against the Colonial enclave of Baja at the end of the War of the Alliance. The carnage she saw around her matured the young hotshot and gave her the wisdom to become a skilled cadre leader. In TN 1922, Montaine became the Duelist for the 12th and fulfilled those duties for three cycles. During a stay in Marabou in TN 1925, Gabrielle participated in demonstration matches with local professional teams and was targeted for recruitment. The following Spring she left for Ankara.

As a star cadre-leader for the Ferroviare Gabrielle twice brought home the Coupe DeLyon and gained a large following among the Ankaran youth. Grown fairly wealthy off her product endorsements, Gabrielle retired in TN 1931, becoming a consultant for RepReg and living off of her investments and occasional stints as a dueling commentator.

Gabrielle has managed to buy herself a certain amount of privacy in her retirement. Appearing open and welcoming to the press corps, she grants interviews with ease. She does have her secrets, however. Most importantly, Gabrielle is a supporter of the Pax movement — an informal peace movement centered around Southern universities — to which she makes hidden contributions whenever she can. Gabrielle has twice traveled to Port Arthur to meet with Henriette Vovelle, the exiled leader of Pax. Gabrielle is unaware that her sister and confidant is a member of Les Témoins, the Republican secret police.



2.2.5 - Professional Sports Duelist Creation Tips



Professional sporting Duelists can make for very interesting roleplaying characters, easily integrating themselves into a variety of settings. These pilots are mostly veterans and so can work well in military campaigns, where they might be recalled to service or simply have friends on base. In civilian campaigns, professional Duelists can also interact with almost any other type of character, perhaps bringing a necessary level of combat skill to a group.

As with other Duelists, however, professionals face challenges when establishing long-term relationships. Traveling from city to city during the sporting season, it may be difficult for them to regularly embark on adventuresome sorties. Popular Duelists are also very recognizable and may be swamped by fans or the press at any given moment, making any illegal or questionable undertakings by the Player Character group problematic. These challenges provide ample fodder for roleplaying, as the pilot tries to juggle his personal and professional lives.

◆ Conceptualization

As with all characters it is important to have a good image of the Duelist before choosing Attributes and Skills. In the case of a pro sport Duelist, a few important questions need to be answered. Why is the character a sport Duelist? This is a glamorous and high-paying job: does he do it for the fame and money? Is it a way to do what he loves?

Another important question is whether or not the character has a military background. If so, military skills and a regimental frame of mind may be in order. Civilians may underestimate the seriousness of Gear combat and may be more likely to be showboats.

Fame is also a critical factor. Is the character a national star, a veteran has-been, an up-and-coming rookie, or a media darling? All these options will affect not only the character's position and attitude, but how he relates to other player characters.

◆ Attributes and Skills

The basic dueling Attributes and Skills remain consistent with military Duelists (AGI, PER, Combat Sense, Heavy Gear Piloting, Heavy Gear Dueling, Gunnery: Heavy Gear). Secondary skills are a different story, however. Electronic Warfare and Communications can be important in team skirmishes, but significantly less so than in a military situation. Tactics (often specialized in sport dueling) remains important, but skills such as Leadership and Theatrics may be just as critical in the arena. Media stars might also want a least a passing acquaintance with the Business Skill.

● Connections with other Characters

If the Player group is portraying a pro-dueling team, then the connections between the characters are obvious. In other situations, however, the Duelist's fame and obligations could well get in the way of group interaction. Indeed, she may be the focus of trideo coverage and will surely be traveling extensively for road games. These problems can be overcome by establishing strong personal bonds with the other characters. The members of the group should be good friends rather than passing acquaintances if the Duelist is going to make sacrifices to be with them. Especially compatible other Player Characters include agents, reporters and veterans from the same military unit. Those who don't fit into the dueling world should be tied to the character through their background — perhaps a shared childhood or a mutual experience.

◆ Dueling Agents



Playing a pro dueling agent can be an interesting way to connect to the mechanized world of Heavy Gear. While Gears will be an important part of the character's life, corporate boardrooms and promotional events will be even more critical. Obviously a booking agent is a perfect character to play in a campaign where another character is a professional Duelist.

Important Attributes and Skills include PER, KNO, CRE, Business and Etiquette. Beyond this various agents benefit from less traditional skills, ranging from Gambling, Streetwise and Theatrics to passing knowledge of Heavy Gear Piloting.



The World of Underground Dueling - 2.3

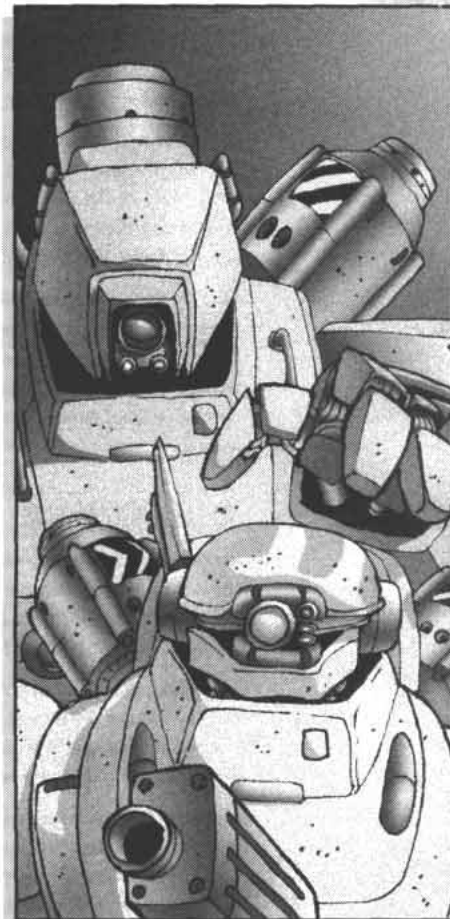
Hidden away from the popular eye are the underground arenas of gladiatorial dueling. These illegal fighting venues feature Gears in vicious combats where weapons are fully loaded and the pilots' lives are often at stake. They are found across Terra Nova, attracting those who seek blood sports at their most raw.

Unlike professional dueling, gladiatorial combat has no safeguards against the injury of pilots, and audiences expect to see blood spilled on a regular basis. Many Terranovans find this practice reprehensible, but arenas free from legal constraints continue to flourish. Underground audiences are drawn from across Terranovan society, from the wealthy gamblers who come to the underground to bet on the lives of pilots, to the desperate wretches who try to sneak into the arenas hoping to find some entertainment that will distract them from their bleak lives. It is only the conformable middle class of the North which is under-represented because of its conservative values, although its children often attend out of a sense of rebellion.

The crime lords and promoters who run the arenas often place little value on the lives of their pilots, and the Duelists live a short and violent existence. Some prominent organizers, however, have recognized the advantages of rewarding success. Saddik "the Spider" Jahmoon is the most notable example of this trend. From his base of operations in Khayr ad-Din, the Spider has built a dueling circuit known across the planet. Top pilots are amply rewarded and lives are not thrown away. The Spider's system has attracted wealthy patrons and very talented pilots, making his city the center of the gladiatorial dueling on Terra Nova. For more information, see *Chapter 3: Khayr ad-Din*.

The arenas may seem to be completely devoid of the honor and tradition that characterize both military and professional dueling (although to different extents), but the traditions do still hold sway. Like sporting Duelists, gladiators are quite often military veterans and are well aware of the role of a Duelist. With no unit to represent, they become concerned with personal honor above all. Although random acts of violence are common in the underworld, these pilots follow a personal code and will defend their actions in the dueling arena.

Despite the honor of many of the pilots, the underworld circuits are still seen with distaste by the mainstream. Although many regimental Duelists feel an affinity with their underground counterparts, the military establishment tends to see them as degenerates. Nevertheless, illegal duels are a very popular form of counter-cultural entertainment.



The Law of the Arena - 2.3.1

Underground dueling forms a large part of the black economy across the Badlands, much of the Allied Southern Territories and some parts of the Confederate Northern City-States. As such, the countless circuits and arenas encompass a wide spectrum of practices and customs, making generalizations difficult. The principal differences, however, between gladiatorial dueling and its military and sporting forms do remain relatively consistent.

Most importantly, gladiatorial circuits do not recognize any authority beyond their own. The laws of the state, the detailed tradition of the DeLyon code and regimental practice, and the power of sport regulatory commissions have no place in the arena of blood. It is for this reason that gladiatorial dueling, even in areas with no discernible laws, can be called "underground." Gladiators themselves often do feel a bond with the tradition of honor and ethics created in military circles, but there is no obligation to follow these sentiments. The underground arenas exist only to entertain and make their kingpins wealthy.

In general the stakes of a gladiatorial duel are materially much greater than in other forms. Indeed, the spectre of death always looms over the arena. Even in matches not explicitly fought to the death, very few precautions are taken to ensure the safety of the Duelists, and "incidental" casualties are quite common. On the other hand, victory or defeat often means much less in the underground. Whereas military Duelists fight for the honor of their regiment and sport stars the pride of their city-state, gladiators fight only to make their patrons wealthy.

The best underground kingpins understand that the principle of honor is a key element in dueling and try to add a veneer of pride to the battles they sponsor. The top kingpins encourage local communities and criminal organizations to sponsor Duelists, recreating the drive of military Duelists while maintaining the deadly entertainment that is their bread and butter. The best pilots also tend to be those who have integrated a personal code of honor, allowing them to survive — and even thrive — in their cutthroat world.



2.3.2 - Background

The history of underground dueling goes back almost as far as its regimental "cousin." Indeed, as soon as pilots were equipped with the earliest Hunters and Jägers, some ambitious souls began staging fights for their own profit, rather than the honor of their unit. Military police ensured that this remained only a small problem and, as the tradition of the Duelist grew into an almost sacred practice, the number of military personnel ready to stage these underground matches dwindled.

It took several centuries before the availability and demand for underground battles grew to the extent at which underworld fortunes and empires could be built upon them. The possibility of staging underworld battles depended first upon widespread availability of the Gears themselves. While they remained a limited commodity monopolized by league militaries, they were largely inaccessible to the criminal world. However, as Gears became more widely available and spread to civil militias, private security forces and into civilian distribution, it became possible to stage battles without military resources.

Gears remain expensive, however, especially if one is to pay for the modifications that give dueling machines panache. As such, widespread underground dueling could not develop until there was a sufficient demand from gamblers and spectators to justify the expense. The demand was born in the TN 1800s when both poles were racked by scandals from prominent military Duelists fixing results for a cut of the gambling receipts. As the military cracked down on gambling and media coverage of regimental dueling, a great demand for a new venue was created. While pro-sport dueling would help fill this gap, the unlimited gambling and blood sport of "real battle" could only be recreated in the dark arenas of the underworld.

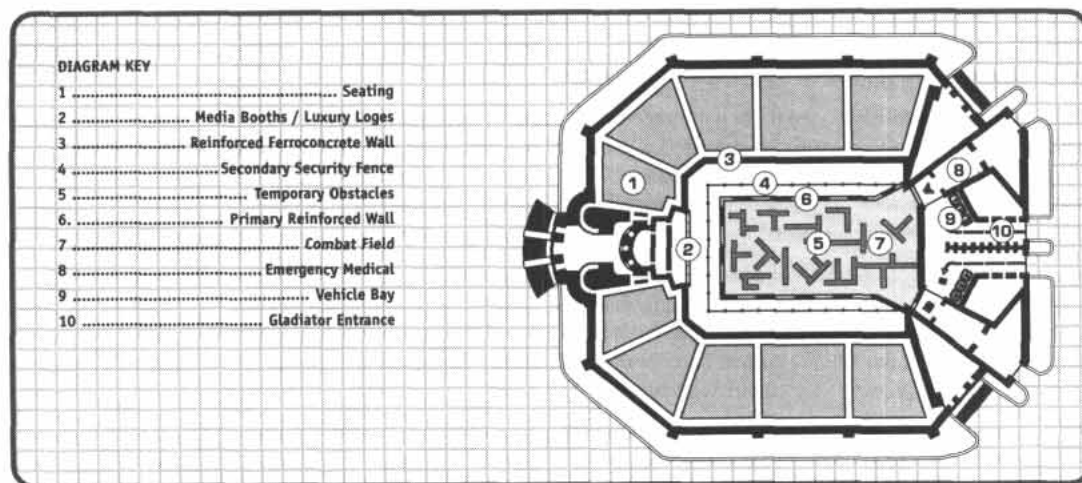
◆ Gladiatorial Arenas

Underground arenas vary considerably from place to place because of the different conditions prevalent in each circuit. While some sites benefit from the attention of a wealthy patron and feature elaborate seating arrangements, others are simply open fields established for quick and dirty combats between gangs. Arenas that wish to attract gamblers and large audiences do have to install at least minimal facilities, and so many dueling pits share certain characteristics.

In general, underground arenas are smaller than their sporting counterparts. While professional matches often involve dozens of Gears on the field, most blood matches are between two pilots only, or involve only small numbers of machines. Roughly circular playing spaces with a diameter of approximately 100 meters are the most common. Repair and medical facilities are also included in most arenas.

A unique concern in gladiatorial arenas is the protection of the audience. Indeed, live weapons are used by Duelists and there is always a real risk that a wild shot or ricochet will tear through the stands. The simplest solution to this problem is to limit Gears to close-combat weaponry, but the lack of explosive firepower limits audience appeal. In most cases, the arena's battle-field is sunk roughly five meters into the ground, with the resulting pit's walls being reinforced and sloped to avoid obstructing the view from the surrounding stands.

□ Typical Gladiatorial Arena Map



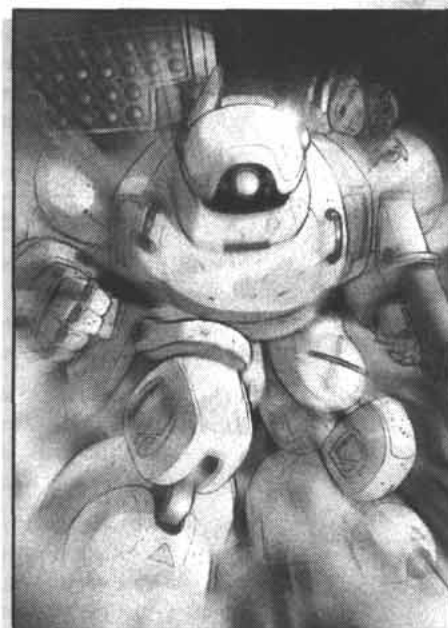


Underground Circuits - 2.3.3

Ever since "Black Bart" Reginald was thrown out of the United Mercantile Front Army for fixing duels, media coverage has been banned from military honor matches. The demand for blood sport among audiences and gamblers never went away, however, and from the TN 1810s onward a multiplicity of underground venues and circuits have popped up across Terra Nova to fill the gap. These dueling rings run the gamut from small informal affairs to multi-million mark empires, all catering to the blood lust of the Terranovan fringe.

In the early cycles, all the circuits were local and quite small. Even today countless small-scale arenas still dot the globe, providing a venue for rivalries between rover gangs and mercenary units to be resolved as well as serving as small time entertainment. These arenas often require Duelists to bring their own Gears, or provide only a few outdated machines, such as Rattlesnakes and Wildcats.

As profits rose, however, so did the impetus for integration of the smaller arenas into large circuits. Various crime-lords and duel promoters have carved out large parts of the underground market for themselves. This integration led to many bloody underworld battles, most notoriously in the TN 1860's, when a settling of scores among Western bandits led to unprecedented bloodshed. Criminologists expect another round of underworld violence sometime in the next few cycles. The influx of veteran pilots and surplus equipment after the War of the Alliance created an opportunity for many new promoters to start their own circuits; with the current drive toward war, many of these kingpins have suffered as human and mechanical resources are dominated by the military. These weaknesses will likely lead to hostile take-overs in the near future.



The Patriarch's League ♦

The largest and most well-known gladiatorial dueling circuit gains its "underground" status not from any illegalities, but from its extreme violence. The so-called Patriarch's League pits dueling champions chosen by the various Emirs of the Eastern Sun Emirates against each other in bloody matches every cycle. There are few limits to the number of champions each Emir can field, and so countless battles occur in the various Emirates over the course of the season. Those who survive the deadly schedule meet for a grand finale before the Patriarch himself in late Summer.

The duels in the Patriarch's League are among the bloodiest on Terra Nova. Part of the Emirs' overall plan to entertain their oppressed citizenry with blood games, the duels are often to the death and feature the most graphic displays of violence possible. A favorite is melee combat, which allows the audience to watch very dramatic combats from up close. The rival Emirs of Cimmaro are infamous for trying to outdo each other in graphic violence and regularly display the Gears of defeated pilots with open cockpits — leaving the splattered remains of the Duelists for all to see.

The League as a whole is overseen by Aisha Alfaz, a member of Patriarch Oliver Masao's extensive "entertainment division." Having firmly internalized the ESE's social system, Alfaz looks upon the champions she recruits as resources to be expended. She frown on needless waste of pilots, not because of any sense of empathy, but because she wishes to see a maximum number of skilled pilots arrive at the final competition in Strathclyde.

♦ Lussian Salban

Legendary among the pilots of the Patriarch's League is Lussian Salban. Recruited as a champion for the emir of his native Skavara he was given a modified version of the locally produced Iguana Heavy Gear. Salban participated in a full cycle of duels with amazing results. Utterly daring, Salban would bring battles into the midst of his opponents, lashing out at multiple targets with unerring accuracy. His reported quest for "information overload" in the arena made him a crowd favorite bound for the championship in Strathclyde.

Few realized, however, that Salban was also a pensive soul.

The bloodshed and cruelty of the Duelist's life increasingly wore him down. In TN 1924, Lussian and three fellow Duelists broke out of the North Javari arena and made a break for the Badlands. Two of the escapees were captured and publicly executed in Javari, but Salban and Gavyn Fujido escaped. The two reappeared as Duelists in the Badlands for several cycles, but rumor has it that Salban now works as a secret elite pilot for the Khayr ad-Din Army.





◆ Khayr ad-Din Circuit

Before the War of the Alliance, Khayr ad-Din was the venue for several competing small-scale dueling rings. In its aftermath, the crime-lord Saddik “the Spider” Jahmoon integrated and expanded all these circuits into the Badlands’ largest underground venue. At its center is the fabled Web Arena, a sophisticated dueling venue allowing for a variety of combat types and welcoming a large audience. Taking advantage of the local maglev station, the Spider has attracted many wealthy polar gamblers and has even arranged Hermes 72 trideo broadcast of some of his duels. For more details on the Khayr ad-Din circuit, see *Chapter 3: Khayr ad-Din*.

◆ Mekong Bandit Matches

The endless jungles of the Mekong Dominion hide a legion of bandits and pirates that some say number in the hundreds of thousands. These smugglers, kidnappers and warriors are divided into countless bands ranging in size from a handful to several hundred. Those with enough raw fire-power to do so carve out exclusive territories, but skirmishes and meetings occur quite often. Dueling is used as one way to resolve minor conflicts and entertain the troops at the same time.

Bandit Duelists in Mekong are much closer to their military cousins than most other underground pilots. While their combats are more deadly and less formalized than regimental duels, the tradition of defending the reputation of a unit (or gang) is the same. There is also honor, of a sort: while back stabbing tactics are always present, Duelists and gang leaders take the fights very seriously and do their best to keep the fights at least equally dirty, if not clean.

Mekong bandit duels occur in a variety of mostly improvised locations. Cleared areas of jungle, abandoned market places and even small inhabited hamlets are commonly used to stage these battles. The only prerequisite is that an audience be able to watch from a distance. As such the Gears are required to remain within a limited viewing area. Beyond this, however, all bets are off. Battles can end in either surrender or in death, and there is no obligation to accept a surrender. It should be noted, however, that killing a pilot who has surrendered is a good way to start a gang war.

◆ Goliath the Mongol



The uncontested champion of the Mekong duels is the Duelist for the large band of bandits known as the Mongols. A huge gang, the Mongols are infamous for their cruelty and power, and Goliath lives up to this reputation. Piloting a huge Python Heavy Gear, Goliath tends to reduce his opponents to a smoking pile of scrap metal and charred flesh. Most of the Mekong bandits think of Goliath as nothing but a hulking mass of muscle, capable behind the controls of his Gear, but unable to string together a simple sentence. Those who look beyond his savagery realize that the Duelist has a keen tactical mind and often wins by ambushing his opponents despite his vehicle’s cumbersome size.

Outside of his Gear, Goliath is an equally intimidating force. Standing over two meters in height, he is covered with tattoos and is rumored to add a new one for each of his kills. Goliath speaks only to those he respects and has little tolerance for those he does not.

Goliath says he was kidnapped by the Mongols as a child from a small fishing village. He claims to have gouged out the eyes of the bandit guarding him and used his knife to kill three others before he was captured and then personally brought into the gang by its legendary leader Kahn. Kahn surrounds himself with mystery and no one has been able to confirm this story; some have even gone so far as to theorize that Goliath may actually be Kahn, adopting a new identity to spy on his men.

◆ Red Sable Arena

The Norlight city of Innsbruck is known to sport dueling enthusiasts for its Death Track 1000 race, held every cycle to great success. Those for whom the sometimes-deadly race is not enough, however, know that the mining capital of the NLC hides another entertainment: the Red Sable Arena. Unregulated and completely illegal, the dueling arena thrives off the interest created by the Death Track 1000. Pilots who arrive for the race are often seduced by the big payoffs into taking part in the violent matches at the arena.

The Arena itself sometimes changes regularly to frustrate law-enforcement efforts to shut it down, installing itself in one of the hundreds of mining camps that surround the city-state. Sponsored by Ramona Silos, a local contraband kingpin, the Red Sable Arena is now among the city-states’ most profitable illegal operations. Pilots have begun to bring their Gears to Innsbruck to compete there exclusively, ignoring the Death Track 1000 altogether. To avoid legal entanglements, Silos pays large sums of money to local “malleable” police officials and politicians.



◆ Maria "Red Sable" Embleton

The Red Sable Arena gets its name from its managing director, former Death Track racer Maria Embleton. Born in a mining camp near Innsbruck in TN 1888, Maria became an orphan in 1904 when a natural gas explosion killed both of her parents and 36 other miners. The Sendercorp mining conglomerate never recovered from the allegations of insufficient safety measures, but they were not forced to compensate those left without a family. Maria found herself alone in Innsbruck's toughest youth-home, running away to the streets of the mining camps whenever she could.

Taken care of by local miners, Maria learned to pilot a Mole mining Gear and in TN 1918 was accepted by a local Gear racing team. Skilled and tough as nails, she became known as "Sable" on the race track, and helped guide her team to the Death Track 1000 in TN 1923. There they faced a team sponsored by Sendercorp — trying to reform its image — and Maria saw red. In the Deadman's Spike section of the race, Maria maneuvered next to the Sendercorp captain and rammed his Gear into the spikes. Trideo sport reporters and anchor-people named her Red Sable that same day and Maria found herself banned from legal competition.

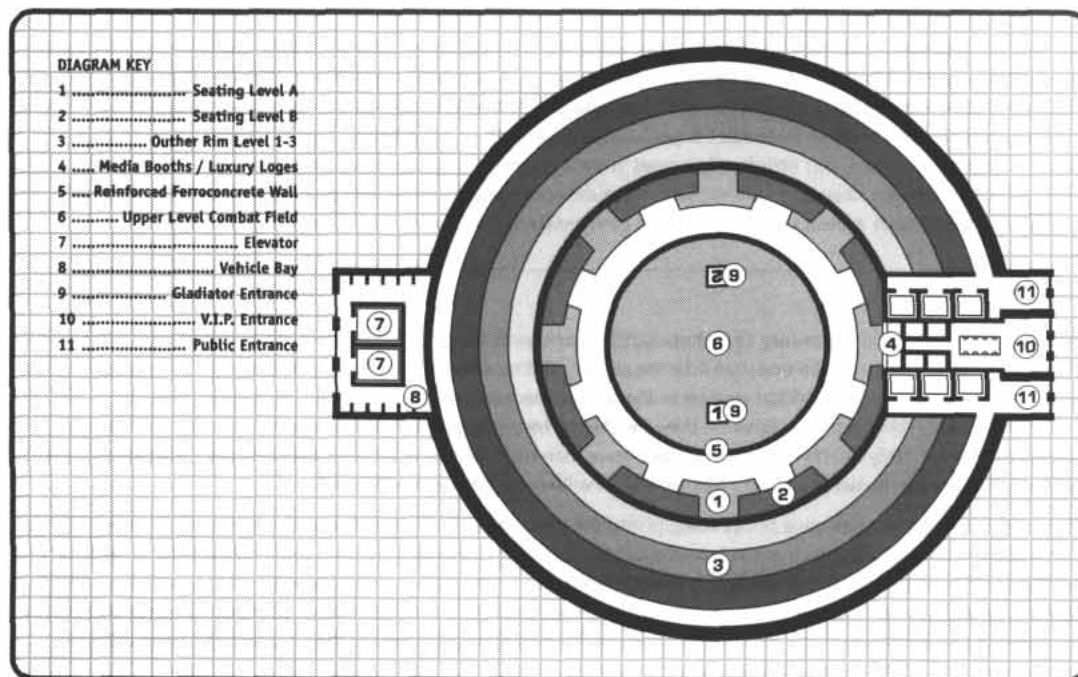
Her notoriety, however, served her well when she decided to profit from the cutthroat world she had been forced into. Setting up illegal duels in the mining camps, she learned to entice racing pilots into "real combat" and began happily raking in the profits. In TN 1925 she made an arrangement with Ramona Silos to create a real underground circuit. The two have worked together well ever since. Maria remains bitter, however, and still awaits her opportunity to take vengeance on the Sendercorp executives.



● Red Sable Arena

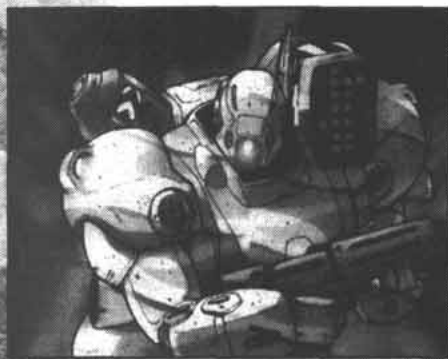
Ramona Silos' bribes have allowed her to create a semi-permanent home for her arena. Housed in a disused mining camp, the arena is actually underground; fights take place at the bottom of a 100 meter deep and 40 meter wide shaft, with rows of electric lighting illuminating the scene. Audience members watch from a series of elevated galleries accessible from various old mining tunnels, while repair facilities and a heavy load elevator are located in a secondary shaft linked to the arena at its base. The top of the shaft is covered by netting and a heavy tarp to avoid aerial detection and to deflect rainfall.

□ Arena Map





2.3.4 - Gladiatorial Duelists



The pilots who face-off in illegal and deadly arenas across Terra Nova are a diverse lot, each entering their dangerous occupation for a different reason. Few pilots enter for simple profit, however. Most seek to satisfy some longing, be it for vengeance, justice or blood. Underground pilots are all outsiders to some extent or another.

Those who risk their lives in bloody combat for the entertainment of others are quite often a desperate lot. They are kept sane only by a deep sense of self and honor. In the underground, each Duelist has his code and will defend it to the death. These codes are rarely formal or straightforward, however. Every pilot makes his own decisions as to what is and is not "honorable." Some Duelists are vicious killers and have only loose codes, while others feel that every action has a consequence and hold themselves to the highest standards. Most gladiators exist somewhere in the middle, generally not concerned with common "morality" but having a clear idea of when it is appropriate to take a life.

◆ The Lost and the Damned

The main difference between underground Duelists and those who fight in regimental or sporting circles is that their roles are not sanctioned by society. Almost no one raises their child to become an underground Duelist, and only in the most cutthroat of societies do these battles represent an outlet for the population as a whole. While military Duelists fight to preserve the honor of their regiments and to serve their fellow soldiers, and professional Duelists serve (at least to some extent) the city they play for, underground gladiators fight almost exclusively for themselves.

Those who end up in these arenas are mostly outsiders, rejected by mainstream society and forced onto the dangerous fringe. Rebellious children of peaceful homesteaders, escaped criminals, political refugees and slaves find themselves fighting for their very lives. Those who survive do so because they are fired by a motivation or obsession that drives them beyond their normal limits. Some do so for simple maniacal bloodlust or thrill, but many struggle for vengeance or freedom.

Relatively few underground Duelists actually fight for simple profit. Some may enter into the arena with riches in mind, but desperation and obsession have likely brought them there as well. Indeed, pilots rarely become wealthy from gladiatorial dueling; many die young and others are kept poor by the kingpins who run the duels. These criminal overlords want to see their pilots stay in the arena to continue bringing in gambling and audience admission revenues, and do their best to keep the pilots in their debt. Many offer promising pilots sponsorship in their dueling circuit, creating a huge debt for the necessary Gear and then charging exorbitant interest rates and fees for damage and repairs. Kingpins then stage a very few "winner takes all" matches for huge winnings, freeing a single pilot from debt but encouraging many others to enter the fray.

Most kingpins, however, make their money from controlling the audience rather than the pilots. Gambling is by far the best place to make a profit and all the dueling masters use their revenues to establish a gambling system based around their fights. They usually allow independent gambling bookers to operate only if they surrender part of their take and accept bets only up to a fixed amount. Any breach of these rules is punished very severely — often fatally. Dueling circuit managers also make a profit by charging admission, but only in a few cases is their revenue enough to cover many expenses. If the circuit's pilots bring their own machines, then costs are minimal and audience revenues can be very profitable. If the circuit provides the machines, then only large audiences who gamble can compensate for purchasing and maintaining the machines.

◆ Honor and Vengeance

Below the surface of blood and money that characterizes gladiatorial Duelists, hidden from the casual observer, is a core of brutal honor. The dueling tradition inherited from the military still runs through the veins of those in the underground arenas. Indeed, their sense of honor is a critical element in the survival mechanism of these Duelists. By having something to fight for — even if it is only their own reputation — they are able to keep going in a cutthroat environment. Very often honor and vengeance are very closely intertwined. Indeed, much more than their military or professional colleagues, gladiatorial Duelists live in world where life is cheap, and are often more than willing to settle scores in blood.

This sense of vendetta is often what brings Duelists into the arena in the first place. Successful dueling rings are usually tied to even larger criminal outfits, such as the powerful bandit clans of the Mekong Dominion. Those with a score to settle or who have been hurt by these underworld syndicates sometimes migrate to the dueling rings, turning a piloting skill into a marketable resource and hoping to gain vengeance from within. Others seek out the ring as a place to express the rage and violence they would like to direct elsewhere. Military deserters and fugitives from polar justice often fall into the latter category.



Gladiators and other Duelists ●

Relations between underground Duelists are often very antagonistic and quite violent. Kingpins tend to encourage profound rivalries between their pilots because of the additional interest it creates. This tension, when added to the web of hatred and vengeance many gladiators bring with them, often results in brutal confrontations outside of the arena. When duels are fought by members of different rover or bandit gangs, inter-clan hatred is added to the mix, creating even more bloodshed.

In circuits where Duelists are defending only their personal stake, however, there is room for real friendship and solidarity to emerge. Pilots in the most brutal of circuits often only have each other to rely on or confide in, creating bonds that can last a lifetime. And yet the same brutal conditions can create truly isolated psyches; Duelists who end up killing their confidants in the arena rarely allow themselves to become close to another pilot. The danger of these ties makes those that last all the more precious, but also accounts for the number of fractured personalities within the underground arenas.

The relationship between those who fight in gladiatorial matches and those who do so in sporting arenas or regimental battlefields is a subtle one, mixed with equal parts of respect and recrimination. Hatred and antagonism are expected because of the media typecasting in the dueling world. In popular eyes, either gladiators are vicious cutthroats who do not deserve to breathe the same air as their military counterparts, or regimental Duelists are effete snobs so lost in tradition and ritual that they could never survive a real fight. Similarly, professionals are often seen as wimps who cannot deal with any real danger and who exist exclusively to make their millions selling diet soft drinks.

Despite this typecasting, gladiators often do feel a bond to their fellows. Hidden behind layers of mutual resentment and media hype lies the understanding that each Duelist seeks their own brand of honor and justice. Not all may admit it, but gladiators know they owe a debt to their military cousins for creating the ritual of honor that they partake in. Much of the bad blood toward professional Duelists is fired by resentment rather than actual disdain. Sporting Duelists are able to perform for an audience without risking their lives or being seen as wretched, and make millions in the process. More than one gladiator has taken the opportunity, when it arose, to enter the professional world.

Away from the media's sharp eye, personal relationships between gladiators and other Duelists are both friendly and antagonistic. Some relationships — particularly the romantic ones — are often the result of professional or military Duelists looking for a taste of danger and scandal by "slumming" with gladiators. Real friendships and bonds of honor have been known to occur, however. Those who recognize the bond that all Duelists share, the common desire to protect their honor and become the best at what they do, can often find the basis for lifelong camaraderie. Gladiators also often use their fellows as ways out of the trap of the arena. Military Duelists make excellent contacts for those looking to jump-start a military or civilian career, and sport stars can become the source of great career opportunities or large amounts of money. Ultimately it is personal understanding that determines the relationships between Duelists, rather than media stereotypes.



Vincent Nguyen ◆

In the streets of Loyang, the most polluted city on Terra Nova, life is cheap. Few people know this as well as Vincent Nguyen, a dueling promoter who serves as vital link between the local underground and the military. Born in TN 1890 into a large family of industrial workers, Vincent was determined not to suffer the fate of his mother Lia, who died of lung cancer in TN 1900. Living on the streets and joining one of the many neighborhood gangs that thrive in the blue-collar parts of the city-state, Vincent discovered both a vicious streak and a head for fight promotion at an early age. By his eighteenth birthday he had killed his first man; by his twenty-second he was promoting street fights for a nice profit.

The War of the Alliance involved cycles of hardship for the industrial city, one of the prime targets for Colonial orbital bombing and ground assaults. Vincent used the time to profit from the hardship, organizing bands of scavengers after bombing raids and supplying contraband to troops stationed in the area. Using these contacts, he began to help organize friendly competitions between the military units of the region, endearing himself even further.

After the War, Vincent brought his expertise back to the underworld. The city's various gangs and organized crime families were busy reshuffling the balance of power, and Vincent provided a vital link to the military. Using his connections he began to stage "duels" between gangland pilots and MILICIA troops. These combats attracted large audiences and created a perfect venue for black market trade between criminal cartels and unscrupulous MILICIA commanders. This exchange has become an important part of Loyang's underground economy.

Without having to support a huge criminal empire, Vincent has become the king-maker of the Loyang underworld. His position is at risk, however, as several MILICIA Duelists are cooperating with Peacekeeper units looking to shut down his operation. The Peacekeeper's covert ally in this operation is Silva Koy, Nguyen's long-time lieutenant. Koy, an ambitious underworld king-maker in her own right, has decided that Nguyen has outlived his usefulness to her.



2.3.5 - Masters of the Underground



The actual Duelists are in fact only half of the gladiatorial equation. The other half is made up of the men and women who rule the various circuits and arenas that host duels. It is these underworld overlords and managers who make the profit from the blood and sweat of the pilots. While there are as many different management styles as there are independent arenas, those who run the duels can largely be divided into the crime lords for whom dueling is but a part of their underworld interests, and the managers who are assigned to directly oversee the arena and pilots.

Duelists themselves tend to categorize the bosses based on their concern for pilots' lives. The most vicious and bloodthirsty of the organizers are sometimes called "Olivers" in honor of ESE Patriarch Oliver Masao, who is infamous for the pleasure he gets from the suffering of the pilots on his circuit. Organizers of this type generally hold great power over their pilots, keeping them chained with debt or bound by slavery. Attempted pilot revolts are common in these arenas, but few Duelists survive long enough to stage an organized uprising; most rebellious pilots are executed by their masters and replaced.

Underground organizers who try to ensure the survival of their pilots are increasingly referred to as "spiders," thanks to Spider Jahmoon, the creator of the largest underground circuit on Terra Nova (see *Chapter 3: Khayr ad-Din* for more details). These kingpins tend to avoid needless deaths, but even in their arenas, bloodshed is a popular part of underground dueling. Most organizers fall somewhere between these two extremes.

● Crime Lords and Kingpins

With every bet taken on a blood match, with every victory of an underground champion, with every illegal match staged, there is a kingpin or entrepreneur making a profit. Unlike the professional sporting leagues where profit is distributed between high-profile pilots, their agents and the owners of the teams, in the gladiatorial world profit rarely spreads beyond the arena's overlord. Some kingpins do share the wealth to a certain extent in order to keep popular and successful pilots in the ring, but rare is the crime lord who is not interested in maximizing his profit.

The term "kingpin" is used for most dueling overlords, but is often somewhat misleading. Relatively few of the criminals who profit from dueling arenas are great criminal overlords with power stretching over whole areas. Most maintain more limited power-bases, ruling over small settlements, a single trade route, or an urban area. These bosses maintain equally small dueling arenas, attracting a limited pool of pilots. Only those who maintain larger underground empires, extending over whole geographic areas or sectors of criminal activity, can afford to maintain a large-scale dueling arena. A few kingpins have found a middle-ground between these two extremes by limiting their activities to the dueling ring they sponsor. In most cases they reach an "understanding" with at least one local crime lord to support their activities, a relationship that has a tendency to lead to an eventual complete takeover by the crime lord.

◆ Managers and Middlemen

Gladiatorial Duelists and gamblers have much less to do with the actual kingpins who profit from their activities than with the managers and middlemen who take care of the daily affairs of the arenas. These criminal managers range from financial consultants to heavy-handed enforcers, depending on the proclivities of their kingpins and the needs of the dueling circuit.

These managers can be either a Duelist's greatest ally or most dangerous enemy. Managers who foster the trust of their pilots, taking a long-term view and helping the Duelists to survive, are usually greatly appreciated by those who fight for them. Those who treat pilots as expendable material tend to put pilots into situations so perilous that their life expectancy is almost nil. Kingpins must often keep a close eye on their managers because they have a tendency to either become so attached to the pilots that they foster a less violent and hence less entertaining atmosphere, or to so antagonize the pilots as to encourage rebellion and desertion. Either result is evidently bad for business.

Those who survive and thrive as managers usually do so by maintaining a distance between themselves and the pilots. They walk a careful line, trying to respect the Duelists and their wishes without becoming attached enough to specific individuals to wish to steer them away from danger. As such, few managers can build any real bond with Duelists, although grudging respect is possible. Only in circuits where the kingpin has some respect for the pilots and does not treat them as slaves can a manager and a Duelist become friends.



Gladiatorial Duelist Creation Tips - 2.3.6

Playing an underground Duelist takes one into a very dangerous world. Not only does every combat risk the character's life, but deadly dangers lurk outside the arena. Gangsters and bandits are rarely known for their restraint and Duelists who cost them money or damage their pride can easily become the victims of attacks outside their Gears. Underground arenas are also rife with many other destructive habits such as hard drug abuse, and Duelist characters must find a way to survive in such an environment.

Both the individual Duelist's motivations and his connection to other Player Characters can play critical roles in this survival. Those who are fired by a strong sense of self have a much better chance to live to tell about their exploits than those without hope. This drive can be expressed as a desire for vengeance, a determination to take over a criminal empire or a strong moral code. All these factors will also give the Gamemaster plenty of roleplaying hooks to base adventures upon.

A few close friends can also help improve survival chances by giving the Duelist a reason to keep going. They can also provide valuable contacts and can help the pilot find the resources he needs to survive the arena. These allies can be other Duelists, of course, but may also be organizers, gamblers or other members of the underworld fringe.

Ultimately, there can be no guarantees of survival in as bloody and violent a setting as an underworld arena. The death of a Player Character is never a casual affair, but it remains a real possibility in campaigns based on gladiatorial dueling. If this occurs, players need not abandon their character to oblivion. Rather they may build a new character in his footsteps. Many Duelists are fueled by a quest for vengeance, and if the death in question was that of the player's previous character, the vendetta becomes all the more powerful.



Conceptualization ◆

The most important question to answer when designing a gladiatorial Duelist is why he risks his life in the arena. Life expectancy is not very long on the underground circuits, so it is usually the desperate and the crazy who end up there. Is the character running from something? Or is he actually looking to end his life on the battlefield? Some come looking for the big score, hoping to make a fortune in prize money. Others come because they are forced to, kidnapped by slavers and sold because of their piloting skills. Many are seeking revenge on the battlefield.

The other important factor is a personal code of honor. Underground Gear pilots do not conform to a single recognized code of behavior, but most abide by an individual set of morals and principles that they value above all else. What is acceptable and out of bounds for your character? Also, why have they chosen this set of beliefs? Not all Duelists have to behave according to a code, but those that do not can expect to have a very hard time. Those who make enemies of all those they meet will find themselves out-gunned very rapidly. The world of underground dueling is a very dangerous one and can quickly fall into uncontrolled bloodshed without some form of understanding between the various pilots.

Attributes and Skills ◆

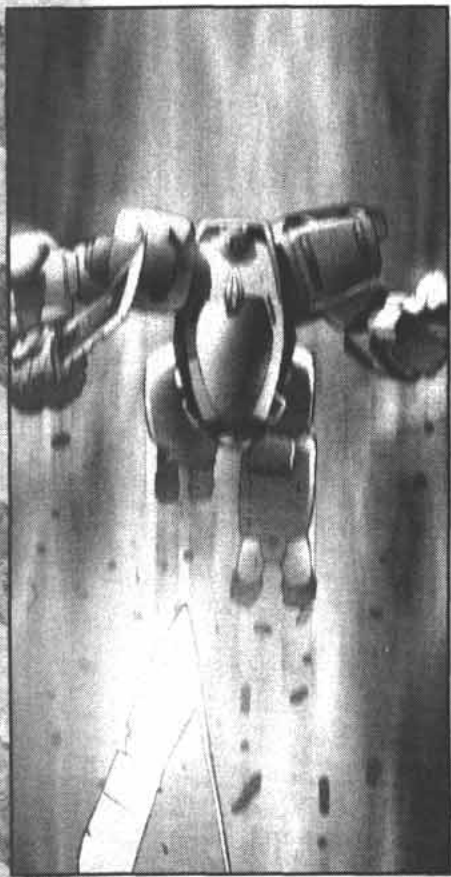
As with other Duelists, the standard suite of AGI, PER, Heavy Gear Piloting, Heavy Gear Dueling, Gunnery: Heavy Gear, Combat Sense and Electronic Warfare are critical. Streetwise and Gambling will also be important to survive in the cutthroat underground without falling victim to the dozens of con-artists and killers that gravitate to the arenas. The violence that is part of a gladiatorial Duelist's everyday life may also require personal combat skills such as Melee, HTH, Dodge and Small Arms. Remember as well that few underground Duelists are terribly happy with their lives, so many have negative PSY ratings.

Connections with other Characters ◆

Underground Duelists can work well in most underworld or fringe campaigns. Many bandit and rover gangs sponsor or attend duels, and dueling kingpins always have their hands in other criminal activities. If the Duelist is bound to the ring by massive financial debt or by slavery, reasons for him to leave will be necessary. In the former case, the opportunity to pay off the debt will surely draw the character out. If a slave, the character may be at the whim of his "owner" or forge powerful ties to those who wish to free him. The tie between those who escape bondage together can easily form the core of a lasting companionship.



2.4 - Caprician Duelist Societies



Throughout human history, men and women have rivaled one another for fame, glory and honor as well as for the material rewards that accompany these intangible prizes. Terra Nova is not unique in its Duelist societies; Caprice, too, maintains groups of elite warriors who are capable of pushing their machines past the theoretical limits of their performance to win the adulation of the masses, and it is not inconceivable that other colonized worlds of the Interstellar Gate Web have done likewise. Little is presently known of the other worlds, but recent covert contact with Caprice has revealed much about its Duelist societies.

Caprice's Combat Mounts form the centerpiece of Caprician dueling in much the same way as Gears do on Terra Nova. Dueling is exclusively limited to civil Urban Combat Mounts (such as the Type 32 "Little Boy") and their variants. The more expensive, Strider-like military Combat Mounts such as the Moab and the Ammon are never used for dueling. Caprician engineers have not adapted fuzzy-logic Neural Networks to their Combat Mounts, since Mounts were never used in large-scale military operations like Gears were on Terra Nova. The vast majority of Mount combat has been against civilian rioters armed with minimal weaponry, with the occasional battle against rebels equipped with armed motorcycles and trucks hardly testing Mount pilots' mettle; the agility afforded by Neural Nets was unnecessary and certainly did not offset the additional costs of mass-producing and training them. Instead, Combat Mounts rely on more traditional computer processors to govern their limb motions. As a result, even the most agile Mounts can barely match the performance of the most lumbering Heavy Gears. This limitation hardly makes Combat Mount duels any less exciting for an audience, however — in many ways, a Mount duel is more intense than a Gear duel, since the decreased agility tends to prolong the engagement.

The Gomorran Right of Consent also dramatically affects Caprician dueling. The Right makes legal any activity to which all participants have agreed. Therefore nearly every Caprician Mount duel has the intensity and visceral excitement of a Terranovan gladiatorial duel, and personal injury — even death — to the pilots often results. The personal consequences of these duels imbue Caprician Duelists with an intense aura rarely seen on Terra Nova.

Caprician dueling society falls into three broad categories, each similar to its Terranovan counterpart, but each quite different due to Caprice's social, legal and political environment.

2.4.1 - Corporate Pride

The corporations of Caprice are roughly analogous to Terra Nova's leagues, and each corporation maintains a team of Duelists to foster corporate spirit, to build morale and to channel inter-corporate rivalries. In this sense, Caprician corporate Duelists are akin to Terranovan sporting Duelists, with all the high-profile public recognition the role affords, and they consist largely of thrill-seeking stars with sportsman-like attitudes. In addition to matters of corporate pride, however, corporate Duelists often resolve conflicts within the Coalition Assembly in much the same way that Terra Nova's military Duelists occasionally resolve stalemates on the battlefield. In this role, they have a more solemn duty than most sports stars. After all, losing a duel might mean losing a profitable contract or losing an influential position in the Coalition.

Corporations choose their Duelists through a wide variety of methods. In some corporations, the chief officer or chairman appoints the team Duelists personally. In others, the decisions are left to the board of directors, to a special Duelist search committee or even to popular vote amongst the employees. Corporate Duelists usually come from within the ranks of the corporation's work force, sometimes specially groomed for the role and sent to elite Mount piloting schools. It is not uncommon, however, for a corporation to hire headhunters to lure talent from a rival corporation. Rarely, a corporate Duelist will be selected from the gladiatorial arenas of Alpha Level.

◆ Drone Battles

In addition to Mount battles, Capricians engage in a second kind of mechanized duel: the drone battle. A drone battle consists of remote-controlled drones, operated by corporate technicians, battling until only one drone is left standing. Although drone battles lack the thrill of direct risk to the pilots, the drones can literally tear each other apart, which increases the excitement; Mount battles rarely result in a completely destroyed Mount. The NEC currently monitors these battles closely, and numerous CID agents have infiltrated the labs and workshops that develop combat drones. The potential for remote-operated combat drones to make life miserable for the CEF is not lost on the NEC Colonial Board.



Corp-Serf Rivalries - 2.4.2

The closest Caprice comes to a standing military force of its own — apart from the hidden Liberati rebels — is the collection of corporate security forces known as Corp-Serfs. Mirroring the corporations, many Corp-Serf precincts employ a Duelist; some of the larger ones employ two or three. Corp-Serf Duelists serve a function analogous to that of the corporate Duelists: they bolster precinct pride and morale. Corp-Serf Duelists sometimes engage in duels to settle jurisdiction disputes between precincts. They also act as a mechanism for improving public relations by staging inter-precinct duels for the entertainment of the local residents. Corp-Serf Duelists almost always use Combat Mounts for their battles, although they have experimented in the past with VTOLs. VTOL battles are unlikely to become common, however, due the enormous expenses involved and the greater probability of collateral damage.

Corp-Serf precincts choose their Duelists from their own ranks, almost always by popular vote. Although they represent precinct pride, the constant, day-to-day requirements of a police force mean that Corp-Serf Duelists are little different from their peers. Maintaining law and order comes first; precinct honor is a distant second duty. Corp-Serf Duelists rarely fight to the death and almost always use simulated weapons. The cost of replacing equipment and personnel is too great to waste on matters of precinct pride.

Alpha Level Gladiatorial Combat - 2.4.3

On the streets of Gommorrah's Alpha Level, life is cheap and bloody and violent gladiatorial duels are commonplace. Caprician gladiatorial dueling is almost identical to Terranovan underground dueling, with the exception that the Right of Consent makes battles to the death largely legal. The poverty that imbues Alpha Level makes Combat Mounts hard to come by, especially since most salvaged combat materiel eventually makes its way into the hands of the Liberati rebels. Because of this situation, most Alpha Level gladiatorial arenas employ their own Duelists and own their equipment. The independent gladiator is rare indeed.

The Liberati rebels make interesting use of the Alpha Level arenas. Several agents exist throughout Gommorrah whose job it is to scout the gladiators, looking for possible recruits for the movement. They generally prefer gladiators with a sense of justice and duty, and rarely recruit outright criminals, however.

Caprician Duelist Creation Tips - 2.4.4

Caprician Duelists offer Players an interesting opportunity for roleplaying on Caprice. Each type of Duelist provides different challenges: Gladiatorial Duelists live by instinct alone, often having to survive not only their duels but life in general on Alpha Level — both tasks difficult on their own but made worse if their employers are dissatisfied with their performance in the arena. Corp-Serf precinct Duelists must balance the rigors of being full-duty police officers in Gommorrah with the demands of honor and pride — often without the explicit support of the local commissioner. Corporate Duelists seem to have life the easiest, but the stress that arises from representing one's corporation in the arena leads too often to hasty and reckless behavior, especially when one's job and welfare is on the line.

Regardless of the particular type, playing a Caprician Duelist can lead to plenty of adventures centered around various factions on Caprice. The Liberati rebels are always in need of good, talented fighters, and Duelists are nothing if not that. Duelists often have access to combat materiel as well, making them all the more enticing as possible allies to the rebels. Although the Liberati nomads rarely engage in dueling, it being a needless waste of resources in their eyes, they are an active part of Trench life and can supply a Duelist with parts, materiel and even whole, functioning vehicles — for a price. The corporations are often on the lookout for new talent from within their ranks and from other sources. Even the CEF sometimes enters a Duelist's life; although the NEC expressly forbids its soldiers from partaking in violent Caprician sports, soldiers in a foreign land are always looking to test their mettle against the locals.

Attributes and Skills ●

Like all Duelists, Caprician Duelists need to be able to handle their equipment better than the average pilot. As such, high AGI and PER are musts, and Mount Piloting, Gunnery: Mount, Combat Sense and Electronics are required Skills. Mount Piloting is a complex AGI-based Skill used to pilot Mounts; the differences between Mounts and Gears are sufficient enough to require separate Skills. There is no Mount-equivalent to the Heavy Gear Dueling Skill, however; the practice of mechanized dueling is not as advanced on Caprice as it is on Terra Nova, and the Mount's lack of a Neural Net makes complex stunts difficult if not impossible. Each type of Duelist has an additional suite of Skills that are important: Corp-Serfs will have law enforcement Skills such as Bureaucracy, Interrogation, Notice, Dodge, Small Arms and Melee. Corporate Duelists often have Bureaucracy, Etiquette and Theatrics. Gladiators (who are likely to have low PSY attributes) will find Streetwise, Gambling, Dodge, Small Arms, Melee and HTH useful.



Comfort



Julius Oxford was back in a comfortable environment, and that suited him just fine. For a Badlander, he had an abnormal distaste for the hot sun and dry air, and he much preferred the cool ambiance and soft seats of the controlled-climate lodge.

"Feeling better?" Dana Pelle looked quite amused.

"Very much, Dana, thank you. This is really the proper environment for an old man like me."

"For a while I thought you were dead. You literally dropped off the face of the planet."

"I had to." He chuckled. "In fact I considered it — it seems they are hiring miners out in the asteroids. Unfortunately, I hate to fly."

"I'm dying to know what happened. Why don't you fill me in? If you can, of course."

The reserve in her voice surprised him. Maybe Pelle was getting softer? "The war made my business good at first, then bad as the depots were attacked. You were right to get out of the import/export biz when you did, Dana. Your North/South axis wouldn't have stood a chance."

"I know. Feminine intuition." She winked at him.

"Or just plain good business sense. I thought I could get away with it, being East/West." He nodded and looked out the window. "They accused me of gouging and insider trading on essential war supplies. It took me nearly three cycles to get at least part of my fortune back, and the effort exhausted me. I decided to retire."

"You? Retire? You're a player, Jule — you'd sooner face an armadillo with your bare hands than go out of business." Her eyes had narrowed in suspicion.

He made a thin smile. "You're right, of course."

"And now you're here. Too convenient. You know, there's not as much dueling going on as there used to be."

"Protecting your turf? Now we're going back to familiar ground."

"It's not that." She put her drink on the table. "Nowadays the arenas are mostly proving and training grounds for KADA recruits. I'm just trying to save you money and time." There was an inhabitual edge of bitterness in her voice.

A loud noise attracted their attention. In the arena below them, a pair of Gears were going through their paces, mock weapons blazing at each others. The movements were somewhat stiff, the attacks uninspired, but there was an unmistakable energy, a youthful devil-may-care attitude in the way the war machines spun and ducked through the maze of moveable walls. Julius' eyes glinted.

"I think you're wrong. I see hope for the future. The war is over now. The conflict is going elsewhere, off-planet, if that bunch of polar politicians is right. Maybe we can start a new local league. With Khayr ad-Din becoming a new powerhouse on the planet, maybe, just maybe..."

"You seems awfully sure of yourself, Julius." She had the cocky smile she always wore when she wasn't 100% sure she could cover her bets. "Care to put a small wager on it? I'll warn you, though, you'll probably lose — again."

Oxford made a broad smile in return. "Oh, I don't know about that. I've been known to surprise you on occasions."



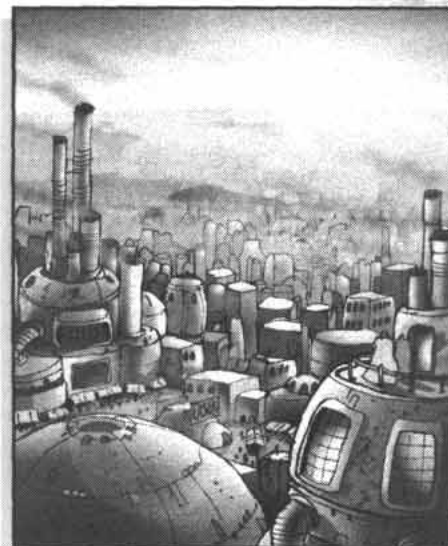


Overview - 3.1

A trash-heap; a den of iniquity; a bad place to die; a golden opportunity. All these terms have been used to describe Khayr ad-Din, the criminal haven and informal city-state of the Western Desert. Although it may seem to be but a glorified shanty-town, the city is in fact the center of many different webs stretching across the Badlands and into the poles. Trade is focused here, as the gamma maglev line provides easy access to the North and South, while a major caravan route brings in other goods as well. In Khayr ad-Din no trade is either black or white, and the smuggling and black market networks of the city stretch far and wide.

The inhabitants of the city of trash range from the destitute to the wealthy. Mendicant children run through the legs of mercenaries and prostitutes, while wealthy gamblers frolic with media stars behind security walls. But of all those who call Khayr ad-Din their home, it is the Duelists who attract the most attention. Backed by the media savvy of the city's overlord, these pilots find their battles projected across Terra Nova, and their losses and victories are the subject of huge wagers. But even they live on the edge, brought into the underground in search of honor in a world gone wrong.

This chapter provides a detailed look at the city of Khayr ad-Din. The city can be used as a setting for an underworld campaign, but it can also be an interesting change of pace for those more used to the refined worlds of the poles. Many people are attracted to the danger of the city; fewer survive it.



Background - 3.1.1

The city that would become Khayr ad-Din started its existence in TN 515 as the Monroe Settlement, built to serve as a supply station along the new gamma maglev line for the mining settlements in the Western Desert. As trade and development in the Badlands grew during the colonial period, so did Monroe; when the last ships left for Earth in TN 1455, it was one of the only desert communities to remain vibrant, because of its position on the maglev line.

All this changed in TN 1520 when the Great Tempest wracked the Badlands. Whipping across the equator, this apocalyptic storm swept through the Great White Desert (west of Khayr ad-Din) in the Autumn, picking up tons of corrosive white sand ash. By the time it hit Monroe, most of the population had been wise enough to flee to the shelter at the poles, allowing them to avoid the sight of their homes being destroyed. Over the course of the season, the deadly storm eroded 250 kilometers of the maglev line and left only a few corroded ruins in Monroe.

It took until the emergence of the leagues at the poles for the gamma maglev to be rebuilt. By this time, urban centers such as Port Oasis, Marabou and Fort James were beginning to experience trash disposal problems and the decision was made to create a massive garbage dump along the new stretch of track. Some historians have pointed out that this decision may have had less to do with the economics of trash, than with a desire to bury any and all evidence of the planet's destructive power.

Despite the tons of refuse and rusted machinery that began to bury the ruins of Monroe, the reopened maglev station grew in importance. The development of the polar leagues had sparked an expansion in the number and size of Badlands communities, and the station became very important for the region. Traders began flocking to the community. The conditions of a trash heap caused most to stay only briefly, however. Only the desperate and the destitute made the community their home, scavenging for discarded supplies, trading with locals and polar citizens and setting up petty criminal organizations. The new community came to be known as Khayr ad-Din.

By the time of the War of the Alliance, Khayr ad-Din was firmly established as the underground heart of the Badlands. Small mercenary units plied their trade, dueling rings competed for traders' dinars, and a series of rival criminal godfathers extracted a profit from it all. During the war, Khayr ad-Din was spared occupation or any major battles, but was cut off from the North by the colonial occupation of the Westridge Mountain area along the gamma maglev line. Trains still ran to the Southern Republic, but few troops entered the area until the last seasons of the War because they were busy defending the league borders. Like Westphalia to the southwest, Khayr ad-Din was largely neutral ground.

In the cycles since, Khayr ad-Din has undergone a transformation. In TN 1919, the powerful crime lord known as the Priest was assassinated and replaced by one of his lieutenants, Saddik "the Spider" Jahmoon. The Spider grew even more powerful than his predecessor, building a veritable empire in and around the city-state. His position was threatened during the early 1930s when a rival, Mother Superior, sought to usurp the Spider to gain revenge for his assassination of the Priest. Taking advantage of the Spider's emotional turmoil over the departure of Katryne Sanz, his lover, Mother Superior nearly toppled the kingpin. The events of the Interpolar War — including Sanz' unexpected return and her formation of the Khayr ad-Din Army — helped reawaken the Spider from his depression and assure his dominance of the city.



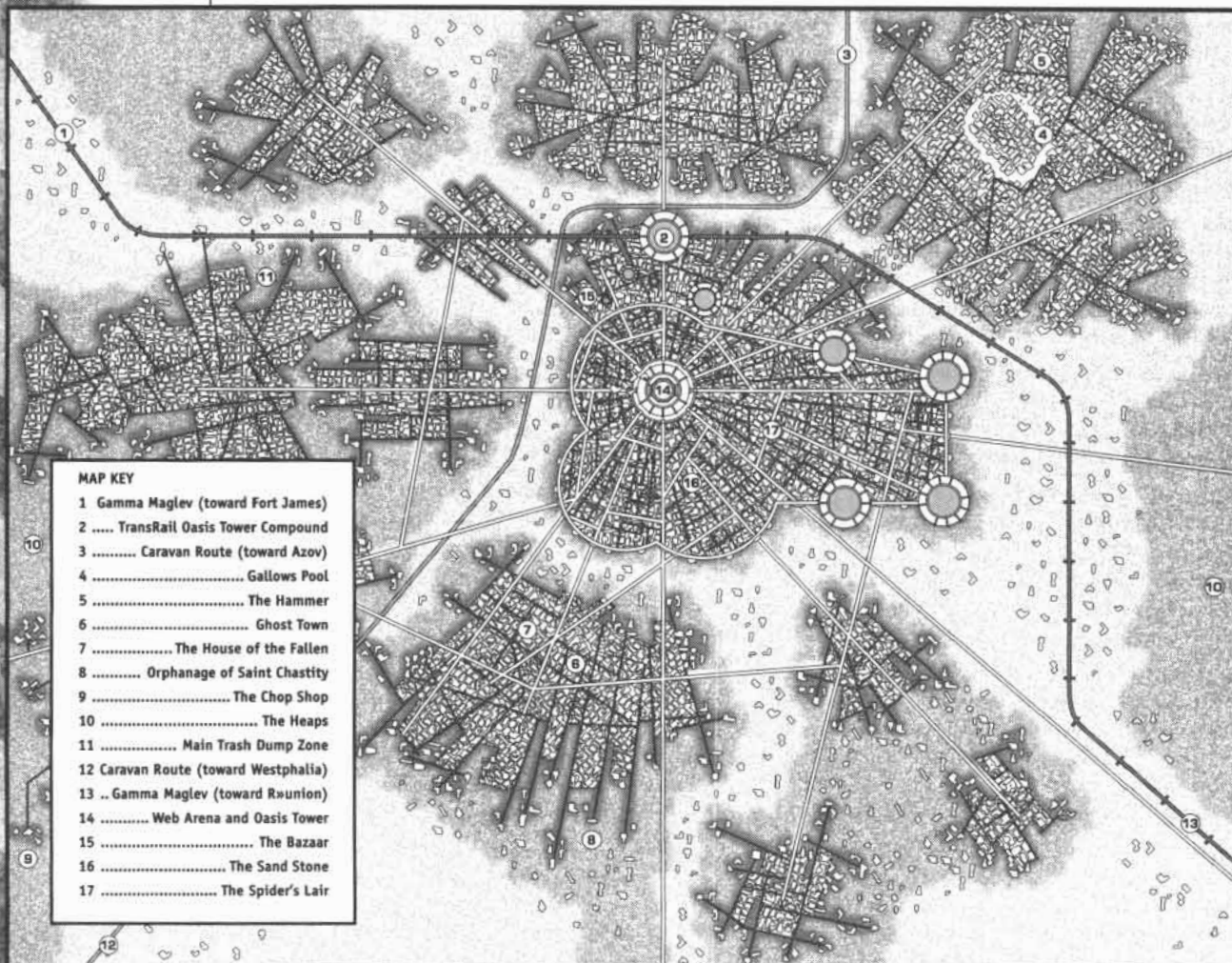
3.2 - City Tour



It would be ludicrous to attempt to create a completely detailed map of the trash heap that is Khayr ad-Din. There are no formal streets, no urban planning, no accurate records. The city is a labyrinth of shanty-homes, underworld villas and hectares of trash fields. It can, however, be divided into a series of sectors, each with their own particular characteristics.

The "neighborhoods" of Khayr ad-Din are the product of the differential impact of the few resources the city can count as its own. The Terranovan TransRail station at the city's heart has developed into a well manicured armed camp in response to the sea of "undesirables" who clamor outside its gates. Most other housing and construction has been completely improvised and haphazard, consisting of shanties or simple ferroconcrete homes built among the ruins of Monroe or the sea of trash created by polar garbage dumping. The Core remains the best organized neighborhood because of its proximity to the TNTR compound and the trade route to Westphalia, and also thanks to the construction of the Web Arena in the TN 1920s. The Pit is the Core's poor cousin, a shanty town that collapsed under its own weight in TN 1851. Ghost Town is the only part of the Monroe ruins that has not been swallowed by the sea of detritus. This expanse of waste is known as the Heaps. It girdles the city and is inhabited by a virtual army of human scavengers known as "trashers."

Khayr Ad-Din map





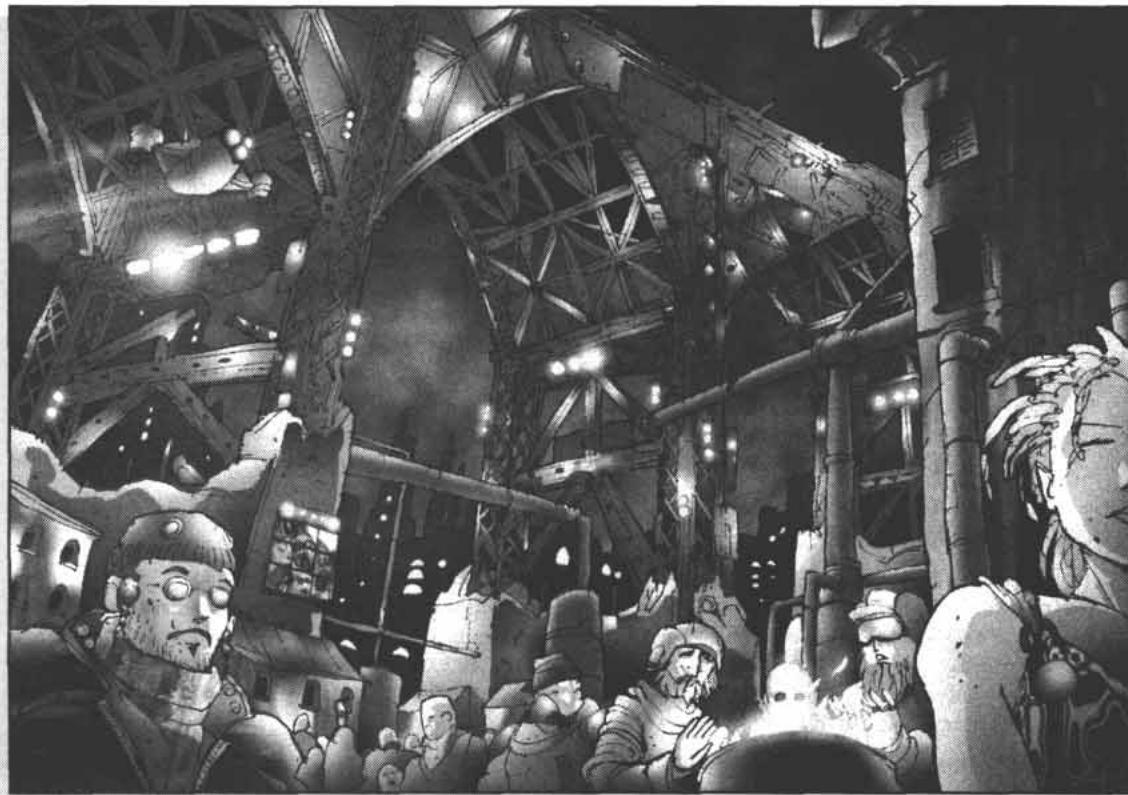
Transrail Compound - 3.2.1

At the geographic center of the vague disc of Khayr ad-Din stands the reason for its existence: the Terranovan TransRail compound. It is here that goods and passengers from North and South disembark, here that Khayr ad-Din finds its great access to the poles. The Compound is also the major stop-off point for the trading caravans arriving from Westphalia or Azov.

A bastion of order in the lawless city, the compound is run like an armed camp. Featuring representatives from TNTR and both polar confederations, as well as accommodations for traders and travelers, the enclave is surrounded by a three-meter wall which conceals much of the ugliness that lurks beyond. Like most TNTR operations, the Khayr ad-Din compound is all business. While a few entertainment centers are provided for TransRail employees, most are forced to venture into the Core or the Pit in search of a good time.

In other maglev stations, TransRail officials have to play a delicate diplomatic game. They are the representatives of a critical resource monopoly that has representatives in both confederations. In these times of increased tension, TNTR has come under increasing pressure to choose sides and threats of nationalization are being made with increasing frequency in both the North and the South. In Khayr ad-Din, however, TNTR calls the shots. There are no laws or regulations to obey, beyond those of the conglomerate. While the representatives of the polar governments are given their due, it is TNTR bureau director Basyl Paleologus who is in charge.

The compound as a whole is split between the two principal occupations of the station: trade and garbage. Trade and civilian transport are arranged through a series of trade and tourism offices. Garbage is transported to the station in specialized cargo cars that are then transferred to a slow maglev train at Khayr ad-Din. This latter train runs along minor tracks parallel to the main line and dumps the detritus along the two dump zones to the west and southeast of the compound. TransRail makes a handsome profit out of this operation, especially as they expend no resources in processing the waste — a task taken care of by the independent “trashers” who inhabit the Heaps.





Born in Westphalia in TN 1875, Basyl Paleologus spent his youth as a member of his mother Irene's trade caravan, plying the routes of the Western Desert. The Khayr ad-Din maglev station and its surrounding exotic bazaars were frequent stops for the traders and Basyl came to know the winding streets of the Core very well. The vices of these streets attracted him as well, and by adolescence he was sneaking into the booster-dens and brothels whenever he could. Ironically it was these bad habits which saved his life in TN 1898 when his mother's caravan was slaughtered by the Blood Rat rover gang during a foray into the city. Basyl returned from a night of hallucinogenic pleasures to find his family slaughtered and his life destroyed. He spent the next ten cycles on the street.

Basyl, however, was a born trader. Through small exchanges and skilled purchases, he was able to slowly build a comfortable life in Khayr ad-Din. His drug addiction was put aside after a year of struggle and, by TN 1907, he was well known in the city as a black marketeer who could get his hands on almost anything. It was in this capacity that he attracted the attention of TNTR official Marshal Janus. Janus, like many trade officials, was in the habit of acquiring exotic goods for friends and family, and Basyl became his main supplier. Basyl used this relationship to move away from the streets and onto the TNTR payroll as Janus' personal assistant. From there, his trading skills and understanding of Khayr ad-Din combined to launch him up the corporate ladder.

Basyl is now satisfied with his position as station chief. Like Janus — now retired — he runs a small "smuggling" operation for his friends. He has also made a habit of promoting people who share his understanding of Khayr ad-Din, helping him forge a profitable understanding with the local crime lord, Saddik the Spider.

◆ Oasis Hotel

The construction of the Web Arena and the growth of the Khayr ad-Din dueling circuit into a global phenomenon has attracted large numbers of gamblers and dueling enthusiasts from both poles. Maglev trains from the North and South, as well as caravans from Westphalia, bring in more and more passengers along with their cargo. Those travelers who were not wealthy enough to merit the Spider's special treatment, but not destitute enough to settle for the dangerous accommodations in the Core, quickly created a demand for a safe and comfortable places to stay.

This demand was answered by Jackie Housa, a local tavern owner who had tired of the cutthroat world of the Core. Using the relationship she had established with the Spider — by paying protection money to his enforcers and using his connections to obtain supplies — she raised the capital to begin construction of the Oasis Hotel in a large lot attached to the maglev passenger station in TN 1925. The hotel opened two cycles later and has been welcoming travelers ever since. Jackie lives in a constant balancing act between the TNTR officials to whom she must pay rent and royalties and the Spider, who has now become her business partner. She is well aware that both of them view her and her enterprise as but a resource to improve their own lots, but she is determined to make a name for herself. The Spider's withdrawal into seclusion has left her dealing with middlemen. Although annoying, these lieutenants are manipulated easily enough into giving her her freedom.

◆ Security Command

Nestled between the massive warehouses that line the maglev cargo station is the bunker of TNTR Security Command (SecCom). The safety of passengers, trains and cargo is of critical importance in a lawless city such as Khayr ad-Din, and SecCom is well staffed and even better armed. Whereas SecCom guards in other stations usually rely on personal weapons alone, those in Khayr ad-Din count two squadrons of Warrior Heavy Gears in their number. All told, approximately fifty SecCom guards patrol the compound and even occasionally venture into the city-state proper. A smaller core of twelve investigators is also present to guard against smuggling and fraud.

Khayr ad-Din SecCom is commanded by Nadia Demeters, a War of the Alliance veteran from Lyonesse who joined SecCom after the war. After ten cycles of rising through the ranks as a guard and investigator on the alpha and gamma trains, she was assigned to head the Khayr ad-Din station in TN 1929. Since then she has managed her position with a combination of blunt power and subtle negotiation. While she has requested — and often received — more troops and equipment, she has also taken upon herself the task of reaching an understanding with the local criminal elements. In TN 1931 she undertook to reach an understanding with the Spider and began a series of discussions with his lieutenant, Andraya Vokolov. The two have cooperated on security matters ever since. Office rumors at SecCom speak of a romance between the two, but it is a photograph of Leonard Garrison, a Northern trade representative, that sits on Demeters' desk.



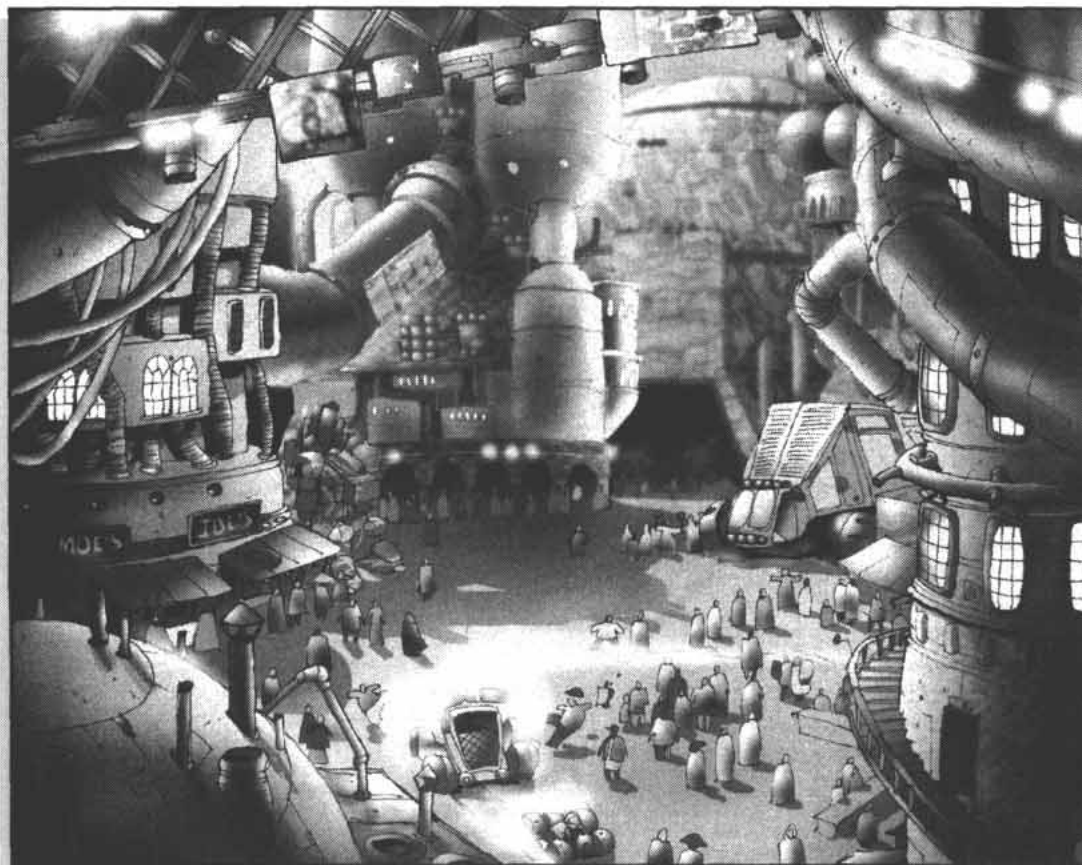
Polar Trade Offices ◆

Among the various buildings of the TNTR compound, none are quite as important to visiting Badlands traders as the row of tan warehouses that shelter the various customs and trade offices. At opposite ends of the row stand the trade offices of the Western Frontier Protectorate (operating under the auspices of the CNCS Desert Trade Commission) and the Southern Republic. Both offices maintain a small security force of their own, but TNTR regulations prevent the installation of a complete military encampment. The buildings between the two offices house a whole series of custom brokers and independent shipping firms with pre-allotted space on the maglev trains. Most traders go through one or more of these firms, moaning about it all the way. The largest of these brokerage houses is Ithaka Trade House, a Mekong-based firm with offices across the southern hemisphere and in several key Badlands city-states.

The Core - 3.2.2

If the TransRail compound is the geographic heart of Khayr ad-Din, then the Core is its soul. Located to the south of the TransRail station, its winding streets and ferroconcrete block buildings shelter the most important underworld activities of the city. Countless bars, saloons and brothels dot the landscape, attracting local mercenaries and thieves as well as polar tourists and caravan traders. Many small shops ply their wares here as well, most purchasing the recuperated material of the Heaps from the local trashers. These goods are then sold to other shops, directly to traders or reprocessed in-house. Spare parts for vehicles, water filtration stations or other key desert equipment is particularly valued.

Those accustomed to the polished streets of the polar capitals have a hard time believing it, but the Core is the most "high class" neighborhood of Khayr ad-Din. Although almost all its streets are unpaved and no sewer or utilities systems have been installed, conditions are generally good. Waste processing and power are managed on a building-by-building basis, and the Spider makes sure that the area is not flooded with trashers or wretches. Those who do not fit into the economy of the Core, such as drinkers, shop owners or even street rats, are forced to live elsewhere. As such, the hopeless and desperate qualities of the rest of Khayr ad-Din are mostly absent from the Core, where dueling enthusiasts, Duelists themselves, tourists and traders all bring energy and capital into the city-state.





♦ The Web Arena

The most recognizable site in the city is undoubtedly the Web Arena. The massive ferroconcrete arena was constructed from TN 1919 to TN 1923 by Saddik "the Spider" Jahmoon to create a permanent home for the dueling circuit he was in the process of forming. The Spider had a vision of capitalizing on the media attention given to the Heavy Gear after the War of the Alliance, and the large number of skilled pilots reentering civilian life, to create a world-class dueling circuit. By bringing together the small-scale and informal circuits that already existed in Khayr ad-Din and elsewhere in the Badlands, he knew he could assemble enough interest to launch his project; but a grand-scale home for the circuit — on par with professional sport arenas — was necessary.

At first the Spider planned his arena as a live venue alone, concentrating on being able to attract wealthy polar gamblers. When the Satellite News Service went on-line as the first commercial Hermes 72 network, however, he knew a new market was opening up. As Hermes 72 networks began popping up across the planet, the Spider approached the SportStar network situated in Lyonesse and OrbiViz out of Ashanti. Both small stations signed mutually beneficial contracts to cover matches at Khayr ad-Din. Most Terranovans with access to a Hermes 72 dish can now choose to see live coverage from the Web Arena.

The Arena itself is a massive structure. The playing field is an 150 meter diameter octagon, the intersecting lines of its floor slabs creating the pattern for which it is named. Rows of seating surround the high wall of the arena, with room for roughly 10,000 people in standing room galleries, another 10,000 in simple seating, and about 500 in a variety of loges. It is the loges which provide the most income, as their luxury accommodations and direct banking links attract wealthy gamblers from Westphalia and the poles. Standing and sitting tickets are sold much more cheaply, allowing the Spider to keep the citizens of Khayr ad-Din entertained and to create the atmosphere of a roaring crowd. Standing tickets sell for 5 marks/dinar, seats for 10, and six-person loges can be reserved for 1000. These prices can and do increase for critical matches, rising to up to 500% of their normal value. Scalping does happen, but the population of Khayr ad-Din is only so big; a truly sold out Arena is rare enough that enthusiasts can get in at the last minute most nights.

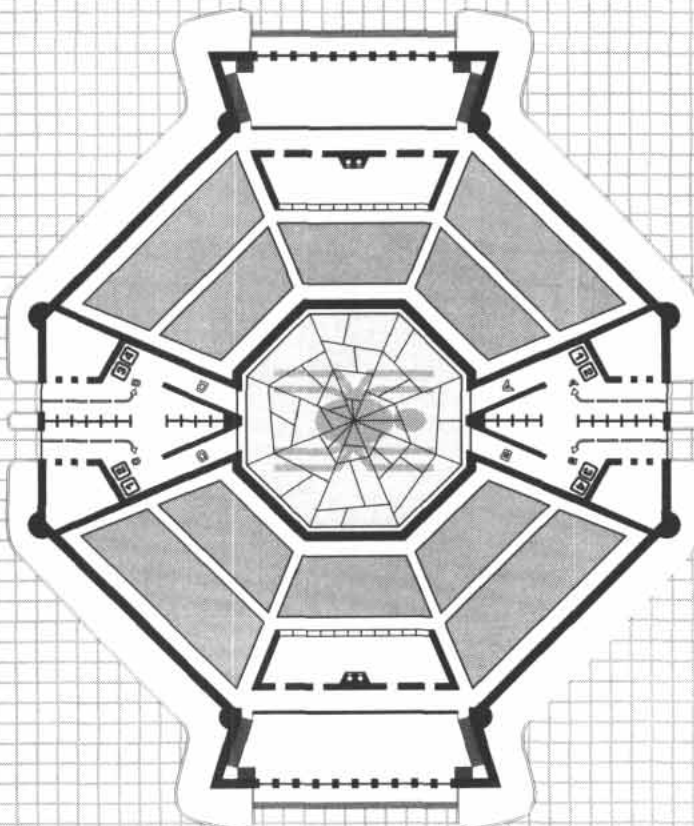
The Web Arena map □

DIAGRAM KEY

- 1 Arena exterior
- 2 Public Entrance
- 3 Reception and Entertainment Hall
- 4 Trideo Satellite Broadcast Booth
- 5 Standard Seating
- 6 Standing Audience
- 7 - Dressing Room and Maintenance
- 8 Vehicle Bay
- 9 Gladiator Entrance
- 10 Access To Combat Arena
- 11 Combat Arena
- 12 Heavy Reinforced Wall
- 13 Gambling Loges

THE WEB ARENA

The pride and joy of Khayr ad-Din, the Web Arena sits in the center of an open oasis tower. Extravagant lodges and inexpensive standing-room seats combine to fill the arena with screaming fans and wealthy gamblers, making it the place to be seen in the city. Duelists themselves appreciate the availability of emergency medical services and the fame that results from live trideo coverage. The Arena is named after the web-like pattern of its combat field and the appellation of its patron, Saddik the Spider.





Duelist Standing ◆

Most underground dueling circuits function with a simple winner-takes-all system of standings. To become champion, one defeats the reigning title-holder. While this system creates great attention for championship matches, it means that few others attract much interest. When he was establishing the Khayr ad-Din circuit, Saddik the Spider knew well that he would have to maintain interest in many matches to bring in the revenue he wanted. Hermes 72 networks could certainly not be expected to sign long-term contracts for regular coverage if there would only be one or two duels of any consequence each season.

To solve this problem, the Spider established a system of official standings. In this system, Duelists on the circuit are scheduled to fight whole series of duels against a variety of opponents. Each victory and loss is counted in their record and it is the record which determines the reigning champion. As such, while matches between the top seeds remain the most critical, other matches do attract attention. To further augment interest, the Spider often schedules duels in meets which feature many duels over a period of a week or two, giving the potential for a rapid reshuffling of the top positions. The Spider occasionally stages these meets outside the city to help cement his ties with rover gangs and smugglers in the Western Desert.

The Spider's Lair ◆

If most of the Core pales in comparison to the city-centers of most polar metropolises, the area to the northwest of the Web Arena would mesh perfectly with many elite suburbs. Behind a large wall and a barbed wire fence hide a series of large mansions separated by paved avenues and enclosed greenhouses. Faint music and laughter can be heard filtering through the halls of these desert palaces, testaments to the wealth accumulated by the Spider.

This enclave of luxury is known as the Spider's Lair. Built after the Web Arena, these mansions serve as a type of ultra-luxury hotel for the wealthiest class of gamblers. Although not as extensive as the facilities available in Westphalia, the interconnected suites, terraces and ballrooms are enough to satisfy several dozen wealthy game players and their entourages. The top Duelists of the circuit are often rewarded by being allowed to stay in one of the dwellings here, living in the lap of luxury for several weeks at a time. The Lair, as its name indicates, was also built as the Spider's home. From the largest of the compound's palaces he oversees his underworld empire, occasionally appearing at the arena and at parties in the other dwellings.

The Bazaar and Trader's Way ◆

The western border of the Core is marked by the beginning of the caravan route to Westphalia. This stretch is known as Trader's Way and features a wide variety of shops and markets. While shops also exist on the other side of the Way, in the western Heaps, those are generally set up by trashers looking to sell recovered goods. Core trader shops present a wider variety of goods and services for the caravan riders, including feed for hoppers and barnabies, clothes, entertainment and other goods. Many of the shops function on barter, taking in many exotic and basic goods from the caravans to be sold to locals or tourists at a later date. The Way is also lined with countless temporary stalls and stands, selling wares created in back rooms or in the trash heaps.

Roughly in the center of Trader's Way, a large open space has been formed where caravans set up to ply their wares on their way to or from the TNTR compound. This area, known as the Bazaar, is crowded with shops and stalls of all sizes that produce a constant drone of bartering and haggling that can be heard throughout much of the Core. These shops lose some of their intensity when no caravan is present, of course, but welcome large numbers of trashers at these times. These scavengers bring in valuable resources salvaged from the Heaps and trade them for a wide variety of goods and services.

The Sand Stone ◆

Very few local bars can boast the reputation of the Sand Stone. Located to the south of the Bazaar, the Stone started as a tavern aimed at attracting traders and merchants, offering meals and drinks. As the dueling circuit expanded, however, the Stone took an innovative approach. Instead of aiming for the dueling audience directly, the bar tried to attract the Duelists themselves. Using contacts with the Spider, providing the pilots with an exclusive section of the bar, and guaranteeing very special service, Marice Fryzel was able to attract many of the top Duelists to her establishment. Her strategy worked extremely well and it was not long before she was turning people away at the door. Even today, the bar remains a hotspot of the Core.

Fryzel has always been very conscious of the need to avoid becoming too elitist. As such, she has undertaken a large expansion of the Sand Stone, creating several different interconnected establishments. The upper floor of the three story establishment features an exclusive Duelists' bar. Relaxed and relatively private, it features fine alcohols and drugs along with special "hosts" and "hostesses," while still maintaining the relaxed feel of a desert bar. Recognized Duelists and VIPs can get in with little trouble, while others must either come with them or know someone. Fryzel still allow a few unconnected people in at random every night, picking those who are less likely to cause a scene. The rest of the Stone is taken up by more open rooms, each with their own character. A hard drinking desert bar is located in the basement, a more general tavern on the ground floor, and a dance bar on the second floor. In all these different locales, rumors and gossip fly like sand on the wind.



3.2.3 - The Pit



The area northeast of the Core, beyond the stretch of the gamma maglev line and straddling the Azov caravan route, represents what Khayr ad-Din was before the rise of Saddik the Spider. Known as the Pit, this area is a jumble of shanty houses and improvised buildings that hide those not resourceful or desperate enough to live in the Heaps, but still not connected enough to move to the Core. The Pit is also the center of mercenary activity and drug refinement and production for Khayr ad-Din. While both industries bring plenty of money to the Spider, they do not mesh entirely well with his dueling circuit. Mercenaries need quiet, out-of-the way places to make their deals, and drug production facilities must remain hidden to stay competitive.

The Pit gets its name from the fact that in TN 1851 the piles of trash upon which the western half of the area was built gave way and subsided, dropping the surface straight down by about fifteen meters. Tangled and worn, the western Pit resembles a bizarre crater. The Pit (and the rest of Khayr ad-Din) still sits on a thick layer of ancient trash, and the subsiding has exposed layers in which toxic chemicals flow between rusted carcasses. Some ambitious trashers have set up processing plants for these poisonous run-offs, but most just stay away from these "dead-zones." The Toxics street gang has taken to ingesting small amounts of the ooze, claiming it gives an incredible high. Several members have died, while others display bizarre skin lesions or the symptoms of severe brain damage.

The Pit is the area where the Spider's control is most actively eroding away. His rival, Mother Superior, has set up several outposts of her fanatical Priesthood in the area and many of the drug plants are under dispute. A war is brewing among the block houses and lean-tos of the crater and the locals are sure to be the first casualties.

♦ The Hammer

While the Sand Stone is the place to be seen and to hear the latest gossip for most people in Khayr ad-Din, those looking for mercenaries and other soldiers-of-fortune go to the Hammer. Much smaller than the Stone, the Hammer is a one story, poorly lit bar which serves only the hardest liquors and drugs. It is somewhat hard to find, the crudely welded scrap iron sign, shaped like a giant hammer, being the only outwardly visible sign of the bar's existence.

The floor of the main room is taken up by sturdy but uncomfortable tables and chairs, many of them bolted to the floor. Johar cigarette and other smokes create a constant haze in the cinder-block rectangle of the place, making the ceilings seem impossibly low. Loud music pounds from some speakers, but many shadowed alcoves and half-rooms provide plenty of space for private negotiations.

The mercenaries and pit-dwellers who make the Hammer their haunt are a very tough lot. All patrons are assumed to be armed and dangerous and more than one fatal brawl has been known to happen. The bouncers hired by Staven Karl, the Hammer's enigmatic owner, are very unforgiving.

♦ Gallows Pool

The lowest point of the Pit, located in its center, is a deadly place called Gallows Pool. Covered by a makeshift dome of plastic, sheet metal and debris, the Pool consists of a deadly toxic soup that bubbles up from the ancient trash under the area. Constantly shifting in color and exuding fumes potent enough to require a filter mask, the Pool has become the premiere site of frontier justice.

A rugged and nasty community, pit-dwellers will support most behaviors. Only casual killers, rapists and other sociopaths attract their ire — or at least the less subtle and less well-connected ones do. Justice is swift and vicious, as a posse can be called together very quickly to hunt down an offender. When they are captured — if they survive the process — they are brought to Gallows Pool. There, before the community Lawgiver and whoever else wishes to attend, they are sentenced, tied with chains and thrown into the "soup." It is traditional that, before sentence is passed, someone may step forward to defend the prisoner and will be listened to. Usually debates are resolved by the votes of those attending, almost always leading to a fatal plunge.

As the chemical composition of the pool is constantly in flux, some sentenced offenders may simply drown while others find themselves slowly consumed and dissolved. No one is quite sure how deep the Pool is now, but there are an awful lot of bodies down there.



Lawgiver Mallers

The Gallows Pool is overseen by an enigmatic old man named Lawgiver Mallers. The residents of the Pit say that Mallers is as old as the trash under their feet, having seemingly always been around. The Lawgiver acts as the final judge when a criminal is to be dropped into the Gallows Pool, listening to the accused's pleas and the condemnations of the posse before making a decision. The Lawgiver usually sides with the crowd, emphasizing the rough and deadly nature of frontier justice. Occasionally Mallers protects an innocent victim from execution, but must always judge the mood of the crowd before doing so. The residents of the Pit will not put up with Mallers saving too many "criminals."

Those saved by Mallers join his assistants, forming a network throughout the Pit and the rest of Khayr ad-Din that watches from the shadows. This network serves as an informal police force for the disenfranchised of the trash city, keeping a check on destructive behavior and providing a recourse for victims. Eventually one of these assistants will take over for Mallers, just as he took over from Lawgiver Marcos in TN 1899, the man who had saved him from the Pool in TN 1875.

Deputies rarely have the power of Mallers himself, but are respected by the trashers and street people of the Heaps, Pit and Core. The followers of Mother Superior's Priesthood, who are currently challenging the rule of Saddik the Spider, reject the Lawgivers' authority and actively challenge them whenever possible. Already three Lawgiver deputies have vanished after witnessing the Priesthood's depraved acts and Mallers has begun gathering allies to strike back. Unfortunately, the Spider seems in no condition to listen to the Lawgiver.



Popular Drugs

The Pit is the center of the Khayr ad-Din narcotics trade and produces a variety of different recreational drugs. It should be remembered that in all cases product quality is often highly variable, as most drugs are synthesized in countless small-scale enterprises.

Strat	
Potency:	7
Effects:	euphoric
Onset Time:	10 minutes
Form:	pills
Other Street Names:	Stratosphere, Sky Juice, Dance
Estimated Street Value:	8 marks/dinar per dose
El Cid	
Potency:	9
Effects:	hallucinogenic
Onset Time:	5 minutes
Form:	injection
Other Street Names:	Mirage
Estimated Street Value:	16 marks/dinars per dose
Booster	
Potency:	8
Effects:	stimulant
Onset Time:	15 minutes
Form:	tabs
Other Street Names:	Boost, Jumpstart
Estimated Street Value:	5 marks/dinars per dose
Dream Ice	
Potency:	15
Effects:	hallucinogenic/sedative
Onset Time:	20 minutes
Form:	inhaled gas
Other Street Names:	Konk
Estimated Street Value:	35 marks/dinars per dose



3.2.4 - Ghost Town

Located to the south of the Core, away from the gamma maglev line, Ghost Town is that part of the Monroe ruins that has escaped being buried by trash or destroyed by time. The old, eroded buildings stand vigil, sheltering countless wretches and orphans. Criminal activity is largely thought to be of a very small scale in this sad part of a sad town, but appearances can be deceiving. It is from Ghost Town that Mother Superior — the Spider's major rival — runs her Priesthood. Recruiting the hundreds of street urchins that infest the area, she has established a powerful hold on the grassroots of Khayr ad-Din. In Ghost Town it is difficult to escape the quasi-religious power of the Priesthood.

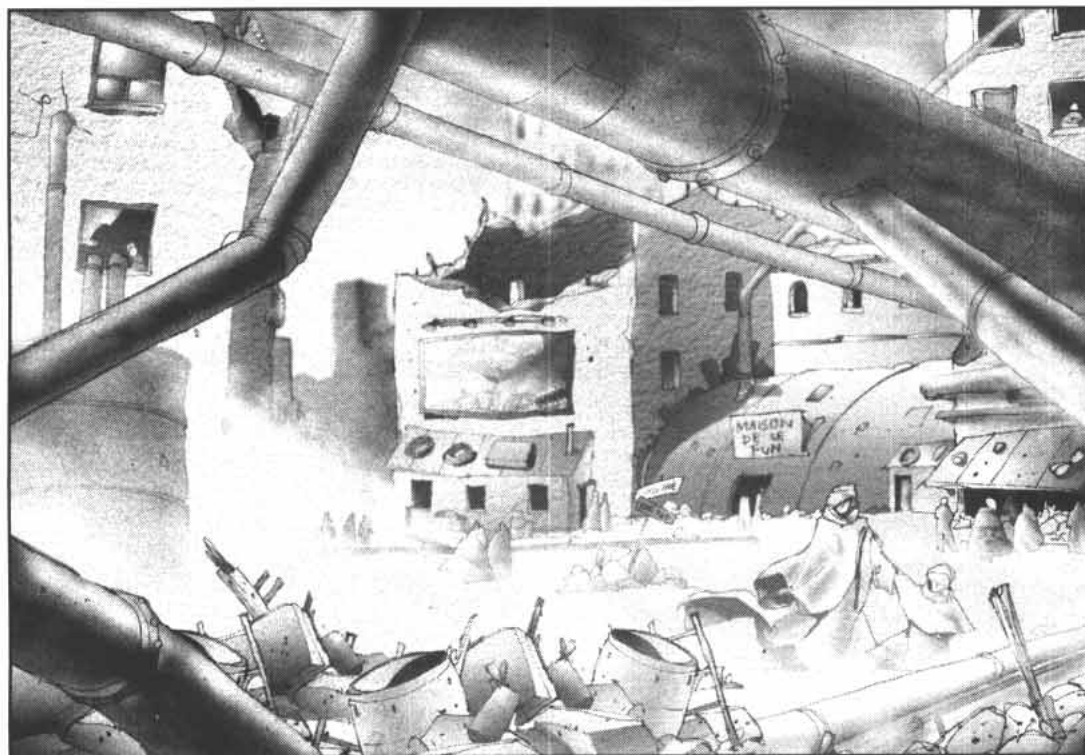
◆ The House of the Fallen

The polar governments may have wanted to bury the memories of Monroe and the Great Tempest under a mountain of trash, but not all Badlanders shared their sentiments. Those born and bred in the deserts refused to participate in this grand act of denial, and instead created a testament to those who had perished. Lost among the ruined buildings and ramshackle shelters of Ghost Town is the House of the Fallen, a seemingly intact (if pockmarked) bunker. By unspoken agreement, no scavenger touched it in all the history of the city-state.

In this shelter, the last inhabitants of Monroe hid behind incredibly thick walls against the storm that raged around them. While the walls — shielded by other buildings — did indeed survive the storm, the seals on the entrances did not and large quantities of white ash entered the bunker's air supply. The corroded bones of the victims still lie as they were found, near a plaque lauding their bravery.

◆ The Orphanage of Saint Chastity

The center of Mother Superior's grip on the streets of Khayr ad-Din is a series of interconnected ruins, all refurbished, known as the Orphanage of Saint Chastity. These structures shelter many of the street urchins of the city under the care of Mother Superior and her various acolytes. In return for services ranging from begging and petty theft to spying and drug distribution, the children are given food, shelter and an education of a sort. While the orphans are a tough lot, most cannot escape the cult of personality that is the Priesthood and end up as devoted acolytes themselves. Those who do escape usually end up in the Heaps and a small colony of these escaped orphans operate from there as a gang called the Heretics (see Coven House, on the next page).





The Heaps - 3.2.5

To the east and west of the strip centered on the Core lie the nigh-infinite trash heaps of Khayr ad-Din. For over 350 cycles, the major metropolises of both poles have been dumping tons of detritus on the region, creating a massive sea of garbage that stretches for several kilometers along the gamma maglev line. This trash is neither processed nor sorted by the poles or TNTR before being dumped beside the tracks. These duties are taken on by the independent trashers.

The trashers of Khayr ad-Din are the human scavengers who make a living by rifling through the tons of polar detritus piled about the city. They call the Heaps their home, coming out to barter their goods with merchants and caravan traders. Many spend money in the bars, brothels and drug dens of the Core and Pit, but their activities are largely outside the control of the local gang-lords. Rather, profit comes from extracting money from the merchants they deal with.

Trashers come in two general categories. The most numerous and the most desperate are these who scavenge by hand or with minimal tools. They scratch out a living by picking out the reusable and recyclable material from a mountain of garbage and bringing it to trade in the city. They can be seen swarming over mountains of freshly dumped or moved trash like army skags swarming over a mound of food. The more successful trashers employ equipment ranging from magnetometers and echo-location guns to bulldozers and Groundhog Gears to go after the most valuable detritus. Scraps of machinery, destroyed computer parts, quantities of precious metal and chemicals can all be found and extracted if one has the proper equipment. These trashers often operate out of makeshift compounds of their own, where they refurbish the equipment they discover in order to sell it at a higher price. Entire piecemeal Gears have been known to emerge from the Heaps in this manner.



The Chop Shop ◆

Located to the west of the city proper, the "Chop shop" is the repair and processing compound of Hanna Dominic, the so-called Trasher Queen (see sidebar on next page). The shop is a large compound protected by walls of surplus materials, and houses Hanna's residence and facilities for her large crew of trashers. Using Groundhog Work Gears and various other all-terrain vehicles, Hanna's crew goes after the most precious polar detritus. This equipment is used to operate one of Khayr ad-Din's best repair bays, patronized by many top Duelists.

The shop also houses living quarters for Hanna Dominic's trasher gang, made up of two dozen of the best scavengers in the Heaps. The compound is also widely used as a neutral meeting ground for rival gangs.

Coven House ◆

Located near Hanna Dominic's chop shop, Coven House is the home of the trasher gang known as the Heretics. The Heretics all fled the "tender mercies" of the Orphanage of Saint Chastity and are now among Mother Superior's most bitter enemies. The Coven House is labyrinthine in nature, made up of a mass of improvised rooms and huts built into a human hive. The Heretics' senior member and leader is a charismatic street fighter who has named himself Judas. He is 20 cycles of age and considered an old man by most Heretics.

The Aerie ◆

The eastern Heaps are ruled by a vicious gang known as the Ravens. Led by a black-haired woman known only as Kora, the gang came to power in the late TN 1920s. All the Ravens wear black cloaks and use a long sharpened hook — known as a "talon" — as their characteristic weapon. Their Aerie is located directly under the maglev line, in a makeshift complex where Kora is said to collect the eyes of her enemies.



Hanna Dominic □



Sometimes called the “Trasher Queen,” Hanna Dominic runs the largest of the Heaps’ garbage recovery enterprises. Her compound is located deep in the Heaps to the west of the city, behind walls of surplus metal and barbed wire. From this compound, she maintains a small fleet of refurbished Groundhog Gears and other service vehicles used to process the most valuable of the polar waste products that have been dumped in the Heaps. Hanna’s compound also contains a small purification plant that allows her to extract precious metals and chemicals from industrial waste products, and a very extensive maintenance and repair facility known as the “chop shop,” which is patronized by several top Duelists.

Hanna was raised in the Heaps, yet another young face among the hundreds swarming across the latest dump, searching for precious aluminum and other metals. She was determined to make more of herself, however, and organized several other children into a trasher gang in the TN 1900s. By the time she was an adult, she was part of a large ring of such trashers that was able to go after more precious goods such as discarded vehicle carcasses and machinery.

During the War of the Alliance a vicious turf war broke out among the trashers and Hanna saw many of her friends killed or maimed in the battles. Yet, she survived and prospered. Having persuaded the local kids to exact vengeance on another trasher ring for an earlier attack, she took over their facilities and from there was able to become a significant force. The end of the War also brought an end to such vicious turf battles, as the Spider insisted on a certain level of peace in the city. Hanna used the gains she had made to secure her position as Trasher Queen.

In the years since, Hanna has reinforced her link to the Spider by recruiting several highly skilled mechanics to work for her. These technicians service several of the Gears used in the dueling arenas, and famous pilots are a common sight in the chop shop. Hanna’s ties to many of the trasher children also allowed her to see the perverse influence of Mother Superior, but her warnings to the Spider went unheard during his depression. She is immensely relieved that the Priesthood is no longer the threat it once was.

3.3 - The Powers that Be

Just as the streets and alleys of Khayr ad-Din are twisting, so are the relations between their masters tangled. While the arrival on the scene of Saddik the Spider after the War of the Alliance lessened the anarchy that the city-state was renowned for, the rivalries and competition still continue. The Spider does not rule all; and even in his dominions, his control is slipping.

The Spider is most directly challenged by Mother Superior, a former acolyte of the Priest who uses a potent combination of drugs and sexual charisma to gain a hold in the streets of Khayr ad-Din. Her power is particularly strong among the children of the city, whom she raises from a young age to be her followers and acolytes. The Spider — isolated in his lair — seems unable to mount a strong defense to her assault.

Neither crime lord truly rules Khayr ad-Din, however. The city of trash is a collection of hundreds of small gangs, rackets and brothels, each independent in their own way. Most pay some sort of protection money to a gang, but this rarely translates into complete control. Indeed, many bars in the Pit are now paying tribute to both Saddik the Spider and Mother Superior.

◆ Military Might

Khayr ad-Din stands both outside and in the heart of the growing conflict between the poles. The TransRail station makes the city tactically important, guaranteeing a military presence in the region, but most of its importance is civilian — trade, tourism and waste disposal — and the city is the most difficult place from which to cut off the gamma maglev line. Its position along the Westphalia-Azov trade route, however, does grant the city a special place in Southern tactics.

Southern forces regularly make the journey from the two AST enclaves, but usually avoid Khayr ad-Din to avoid entanglements with rovers and civilians in the area. Recently, however, the Northern Guard has begun moving troops into the area to defend their own interests on the gamma maglev, and the MILICIA has responded in kind. While most of this activity occurs in the desert expanses away from the city, some units have found themselves nearby. Northern Colonel Elissa Rueters commands the 67th Heavy Gear regiment on long-term maneuvers to the west of the city (as part of a larger operation by the 9th Infantry Brigade) and several Southern regiments have set up positions along the trade routes to the north and south of the city as a result. Trade caravans are coming under increased military scrutiny as a result, and military personnel on leave — including Duelists — are becoming a more and more common sight in the Core.



The Spider's Web - 3.3.1

Saddik "the Spider" Jahmoon, recognized overlord of Khayr ad-Din, came to power because of his ability to seize an opportunity. His assassination of the Priest, one of Khayr ad-Din's top kingpins, in TN 1919 set the stage for a dynamic reorganization of the outlaw city. A master at weaving intricate plots — hence his arachnid moniker — Saddik drew together many of the isolated criminal organizations into a wealthy empire. Petty thieves, small drug houses and regional rovers all were brought into the fold and given assistance and connections in return for substantial protection money. At first many local street criminals resented the Spider's presence, but as his Web Arena became more and more successful and it became evident that his were the coattails of choice upon which to ride, few complained when they were drawn into his profitable web.

In the decades since his rise to power, the Spider has extended his influence into much of the Western Desert. He maintains connections with the smuggler rings of Wounded Knee and the gambling lords of Westphalia. His largest success to date has certainly been the Web Arena and Khayr ad-Din dueling circuit. Bringing in top underground Duelists to fight for prize money and standing, he has attracted the attention of gamblers and fans at both poles. Two different networks, each paying huge sums to the Spider, pick up the Hermes 72 feed from the arena.

The Spider's position was severely threatened in 1931 when Saddik withdrew from power. In 1930, former Northern Guard Gear trainer Katryne Sanz fought in the Web Arena and became an instant star. She and Saddik discovered a mutual attraction, and became lovers. When she left Khayr ad-Din in 1931 to become the Northern Guard's top trainer, Saddik sank into a deep depression.

In his weakened condition, the Spider surrendered more and more of the control of his organization to his cadre of lieutenants. The lieutenants' personal quests for power almost ripped the organization apart from within, while on the outside, the psychotic Mother Superior sought to destroy Saddik and everything he had built. During this time, he found refuge in the arms of Lash, his top Duelist, but they ended the admittedly hollow relationship shortly thereafter, remaining close. She did spark him into occasional activity during those dark cycles, however, and it was probably Lash's presence that saved him from complete collapse.

Everything changed in 1933 when Katryne Sanz returned to Khayr ad-Din. Although she kept her distance, her mere presence in the city was enough to reawaken the Spider. He spent the next few cycles regaining control of his organization and reasserting himself as the city's master, driving Mother Superior and the Priesthood to ground. In 1936, Katryne approached him directly for the first time since she had arrived. She outlined the danger she saw on the horizon and laid out her plans to keep the city safe from the coming war. Her plan required his support, however, especially as a financial backer to fund the project. Having already foreseen a similar problem, he cautiously pledged his support to the Khayr ad-Din Army.



Organization ◆

The Spider's organization is shaped — appropriately enough — like a web. A series of five lieutenants oversee different affairs, reporting to the Spider who sits at the center. Each lieutenant runs his or her own department, but also oversees another's, and no part of the Spider's network is completely isolated. The Spider used just such isolation to create his own power-base within the Priest's organization and fears others will do the same thing to him.

Although he would have liked to purge his lieutenants when he regained control of his organization, the Spider recognized that to do so would be to waste time and resources — something he could hardly afford while concentrating on the Priesthood. Thus, Andraya Vokolov, Hektor Tran, Feliz Esteban, Ranna Zurfino and Xavier Kross are all still in power — and thankful for the Spider's attention towards Mother Superior.

Current Concerns ◆

With the war over and the KADA converting to reserve status, the Spider is turning his attentions to other matters. His first goal is to track down the remains of the Priesthood and destroy it once and for all. Once he has achieved that goal, he believes he will be able to retire and turn his organization over to one of his lieutenants, but he fears that such a move would splinter the operation. He must choose his successor very carefully. The only other desire in his life is to win back the heart of Katryne Sanz, and he is at a loss as to how to proceed.



Age:	32 cycle
Height:	2.05 meters
Weight:	120 kg
Hair Color:	None
Eye Color:	Blue-gray
Handedness:	ambidextrous

Finding her way to Khayr ad-Din, Salam joined up with a mercenary unit, hoping to find the action she craved. The missions she undertook were minor and not much of a challenge, but her status as a Morgana GREL established her reputation and better contracts came her way. The Spider employed her several times to eliminate rover gangs who were refusing to join his network. In TN 1929 an adolescent named Kiro shot the Spider at the Sand Stone bar, seriously wounding the crime lord.

[illegible]

From his recovery bed, The Spider called for Salam to act as his bodyguard. Looking for a new challenge, she accepted and has served in the position ever since. Salam is extremely skilled at her job, benefiting from great physical prowess and extensive knowledge of commando techniques. She oversees the crime lord's other guards, but is mainly concerned with her own duties.

[illegible]

Morgana Salam's aggressive streak has only increased in the cycles since she left Jan Mayen. Salam is likely to maim anyone who annoys her, and searches for any excuse for violence that does not threaten the Spider. The residents of Khayr ad-Din have learned to steer well clear of Salam when she accompanies the Spider into town. She will never admit it, but she feels largely out of control — almost addicted to violence. To satisfy her urges, she has even taken to hunting trashers through the Heaps for an additional thrill. She lets most of them live.

[illegible]

Morgana Salam feels truly alive only when she is engaged in combat. Her senses gain a laser-sharp focus and she eliminates threats to her charge with an efficiency terrifying to witness. Unlike the common stereotype of a Morgana GREL, Salam does not become clinical in combat. Rather, her aggression comes to the surface and she has been known to let loose sharp screams as she focuses her strength into devastating blows. These tendencies — along with her extensive tattoos — have gained her the reputation as a very “human” GREL. Salam never hesitates in combat and has twice been seriously wounded by gunfire intended for the Spider.

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AGI	2	APP	2	BLD	3	CRE	0	FIT	3
INF	0	KNO	0	PER	1	PSY	1	WIL	1
STR	3	HEA	1	STA	45	UD	11	AD	9

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Ambush	1	2	Demolitions	1	0	Intimidation	1	3	Stealth	2	2
Athletics	1	3	Dodge	1	2	Melee	2	2	Survival	1	0
Camouflage	1	0	First Aid	1	0	Notice	2	1	Swimming	1	3
Combat Sense	2	1	Hand-to-Hand	2	2	Small Arms	2	2			





Mother Superior and the Priesthood - 3.3.2

The Priesthood is the legacy of the Spider's murder of the Priest. Mother Superior was once a lieutenant of the religiously-inclined crime lord, and for 22 cycles has sought vengeance for Saddik Jahmoon's crime against her superior. She operated from the shadows for most of this time, establishing an insidious hold on the streets of the city. Her principal weapon was the Orphanage of Saint Chastity in Ghost Town (see 3.2.4 *Ghost Town*). By taking in the many homeless street urchins of the City of Trash, Mother Superior was able to instill in them a fanatical belief in her depraved cult.

The principal belief espoused by Mother Superior was that the Priest was somehow divine. Explanations were never terribly clear, but they tended to involve an assertion of his divinity as sexual in nature, sometimes calling him the "consort of the universe." Mother Superior, in turn, presented herself as the successor to his mantle of divinity and sexual enlightenment.

The keys to enlightenment, according to this tenet, were two-fold. The first key was obedience to the pontiff, in this case Mother Superior. The second was the achievement of a supposedly "exalted" frame of existence. This higher consciousness was achieved by following a careful regimen of drugs, sex and other experiences that were overseen by the Mother Superior.

The Priesthood's criminal activities were all seen as part of the faith. The control of Khayr ad-Din was a holy mission to create a blessed enclave where Mother Superior's will could reign supreme. The drug and prostitution businesses were seen as part of the tenets of the faith, and all other criminal activities were understood to victimize only those who had refused to accept the Priesthood.

Saddik the Spider maintained a special place in the Priesthood's theology. As the murderer of the first universal consort, he was seen as having committed the gravest possible sin. As such he was more than simply a wretched man; he was the personification of evil in the physical world. As a consequence, all images of the devil and hell in the Priesthood featured arachnid imagery. Mother Superior believed that an ill-timed assassination of the Spider would do her organization much harm, and she restrained all would-be holy warriors. She decided that before loosing an onslaught of attackers upon Jahmoon, she should attain an iron lock on Khayr ad-Din. It is a decision she has come to regret in recent cycles.

The right time to strike, she decided, was when Jahmoon was in the midst of his depression over the departure of Katryne Sanz. Mother Superior stayed her hand for too long, however, and when Sanz returned and Jahmoon came out of his decline, one of his first actions was to strike at her and the Priesthood. Although she had chipped away at his power base, her depraved, fanatical followers were no match for a determined Spider, and her organization crumbled around her.



Organization ◆

At its peak, Mother Superior's criminal network was organized like a church or a cult. She sat at its top as the "benevolent" pontiff from whom all truth came. Below her stood a variety of priests, fathers, bishops, mothers, sisters, abbots and abbesses named with very little care to the actual hierarchical position of these titles. Indeed, the re-christening of gang-members had much less to do with their specific functions than the affection their Mother felt for them. Many members of the Priesthood did not share their leader's religious fervor upon joining, but her powerful personality and the ample supply of drugs she supplied often led to their conversion. More powerful, however, was the hold the Priesthood had over the children of Khayr ad-Din. Through the Orphanage of Saint Chastity in Ghost Town and several other "halfway houses" scattered about the trash-heaps, Mother influenced a whole generation. Her organization is largely gone now, her followers slain or driven from the city by the Spider's people. All that remains are a handful of her closest followers, Mother Superior herself, and a limitless supply of anger.

Current Concerns ◆

Mother Superior and the surviving members of the Priesthood fled to the desert during Jahmoon's purge. From there, she slowly bided her time, waiting for the right opportunity to strike back. Rage doesn't even begin to describe what she feels whenever she thinks of Jahmoon. She has already begun the long process of re-establishing herself in the City of Trash, and when she finally corners the Spider, she intends to make him suffer.



Mother Superior



Age:	61 cycles
Height:	1.60 meters
Weight:	60 kg
Hair Color:	Black w/ white streak
Eye Color:	Black
Handedness:	left-handed

Background

Before the War of the Alliance, Mother Superior called herself Sister Chastity and was part of the trusted entourage of the Priest. Little is known about the Priest, but he ran his cartel through a quasi-religious cult of personality. Saddik Jahmoon joined his gang, but never integrated the veneration of its leader. Such was not the case with Sister Chastity. Very close to the Priest, she came to see him as a demigod who could do no wrong, a sentiment amplified by the pleasure enhancing drug Strat with which he kept her well supplied.

When Saddik assassinated the Priest and his entourage in TN 1919, Sister Chastity escaped through blind luck and fled into the desert. It was from there that she returned five cycles later under the name of Mother Superior and began spreading her influence. Using the cult-legacy of the Priest, she created a fanatical following among her disciples.

Profession

Mother Superior remained hidden during the early years of her operation, creating a shadowy group of followers. She also began cutting into the Spider's control of many of the street level operations. Beggars, pickpockets, petty thieves, trashers and drug peddlers all joined her faith, either for simple benefits or because they truly believed. By the time Saddik the Spider noticed Mother Superior, her organization seemed too large and too diverse for simple elimination.

Attitudes

Mother Superior is a dark mixture of depravity and fanaticism. She is completely convinced that she is the "consort of the universe." Every partner she beds and drug she takes is another step toward a higher state of enlightenment, and with every passing night she seeks newer and more exotic tools of ascension. She exerts a powerful aura of command and seduction over her followers, leading them into the dark and twisting paths of their own desires. Her followers are much fewer in number now, but those that remain are hers, body and soul.

Combat Reactions

Mother Superior is not trained in any recognized form of combat. She counts on the bodyguards and followers who accompany her to provide physical protection. Many attackers never get a chance to pose a serious threat; a simple look from her dark eyes and a flicker of her tongue have been known to reduce men, women and children to tears.

Attributes

AGI	1	APP	2	BUI	-1	CRE	1	FIT	0
INF	2	KNO	0	PER	0	PSY	-1	WIL	0
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	20	UD	2	AD	3

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Acrobatics	1	1	First Aid	1	0	Psycho. (desire)*	2	0	Survival	2	1
Business	2	0	Leadership	2	2	Seduction (dom.)*	3	2	Theatrics	1	2
Dance	2	1	Melee	1	1	Small Arms	1	1	*(specialization)		
Etiquette	2	2	Notice	2	0	Streetwise	3	2			





Jarlson Freelance - 3.3.3

Over a dozen different mercenary outfits operate out of Khayr ad-Din. Despite the media stereotypes of mercenary armies, none is particularly large. It is well understood that the polar armed forces would not tolerate any force large enough to threaten them or their outposts. Most outfits count their soldiers in the dozen, supported only by a handful of vehicles. The largest group of mercenaries is Jarlson Freelance.

Certainly not powerful enough to be of any great concern to a real army, Jarlson is nonetheless the right size to defend independent communities and oasis towers against rover bandits. The outfit takes most of its contracts from such communities, but has also been known to participate in border raids to the North and to both attack and defend convoys. Jarlson troops are also under a constant retainer from the Spider to serve as the unofficial Khayr ad-Din militia in case of attacks. It was in this capacity that Jarlson Freelance joined the Khayr ad-Din Army in TN 1936.

The initial corps of Jarlson Freelance came to Khayr ad-Din after the War of the Alliance and was composed of the remnants of Colonel Adrian Jarlson's unit in the Peace River Army. Jarlson had been a mercenary before the War and came to the City of Trash to continue in this vein. At first, his outfit was but one of many featuring a few Gears and surplus war supplies, but Jarlson's leadership and the contacts he made in the PRA helped him to establish a better reputation. Jarlson also recognized the rise of the Spider and obtained his patronage.

Other than Jarlson himself, the mercenary unit is commanded by a small cadre of captains, all of whom served with the colonel in the Peace River Army. The most senior of these captains is Marta Goirot, currently in charge of hiring and training mercenaries for Jarlson Freelance. Captain Goirot served for many cycles as the unit's top field commander, but was promoted to her current position by the Colonel in TN 1928. Although she trusts the Colonel's judgment and appreciates the opportunity to shape the future of the unit, she is still most comfortable behind the controls of her Sidewinder Heavy Gear and commonly wears her pilot's uniform. Captain Goirot is thus far unaware that Colonel Jarlson is considering retiring and that he hopes to leave her in charge of the outfit when he does.

Captain Goirot gained many contacts among the rovers and smugglers of the Western Desert and Karaq Wastes during her service in the Peace River Army and has used these to her advantage when recruiting pilots and soldiers. She has a distinct preference for troops with some military training — since it ensures a certain amount of discipline — but has also hired self-trained rovers and marshal's deputies. A significant number of Jarlson troops are also former MILICIA members, and Captain Goirot has proved very skillful at taking advantage of the secondary status awarded to the MILICIA.

The diverse composition of Jarlson's forces has led to some problems, however. In any given situation there may be a pilot or soldier who has a personal reason to dislike the mission profile, be it former marshals raiding a homestead, rovers turned against their own kind or MILICIA veterans raiding a Southern border station.



Organization ♦

Adrian Jarlson serves as overall commander and director of his outfit. Three field commanders and an administrative staff assist him. The outfit is based in a compound to the north of the Pit area of Khayr ad-Din, which is well defended, featuring antipersonnel gun emplacements and heavy ferroconcrete walls, but most contracts are made at the Hammer. The mercenaries themselves are divided between veterans of the War of the Alliance and former rovers or local militia members. Adrian Jarlson's greatest skill is, perhaps, group dynamics, and he has managed to create efficient five-man squads out of his rough and tumble troops.

Current Concerns ♦

Jarlson was once caught in the middle of the gang war between the Spider and Mother Superior, and while he isn't particularly fond of the Spider, he is certainly much happier with him back in charge and the psychotic Mother Superior driven out of the city. The Interpolar War was an interesting diversion for Jarlson Freelance and the unit needed no strong persuasion to defend their home, but the moment the war ended, Jarlson Freelance detached itself from the Khayr ad-Din Army and got back down to the business of being soldiers for hire.



Colonel Adrian Jarlson



Age:	79 cycles
Height:	1.78 meters
Weight:	89 kg
Hair Color:	Gray
Eye Color:	Brown
Handedness:	right-handed

The founder of Jarlson Freelance, Adrian Jarlson has spent much of his life on the bloodiest battlefields of Terra Nova. Born in Peace River in TN 1876, Adrian participated in a radical labor uprising in TN 1901, and he was forced to go underground to escape corporate justice. Adrian then became a rover in the Pacifica Range.

During the development of the Judas Syndrome, he found that there were polar and Paxton officials who would pay him a pretty dollar to undertake specific raiding missions. Using the money from his various "keepers," Jarlson soon transformed his band from a rover gang into a mercenary unit.

In the early cycles of the War of the Alliance, Jarlson joined the informal underground of Badlanders forming a low-level resistance to the invaders. When Paxton joined the fray, Jarlson's unit joined the Peace River Army, gaining precious supplies. As members of the PRA, the mercenaries participated in the battle of Baja and the drive toward what would become Port Arthur. Despite the carnage his team suffered, Adrian ended the war in possession of a significant amount of military equipment.

Profession

Since the War, Adrian has set his unit up as a mercenary force in Khayr ad-Din. Adrian watched the rise of Saddik the Spider and reached an agreement with the crime-lord that has ensured mutual co-existence. Jarlson Freelance has taken contracts from many different employers, including polar officials with missions requiring "plausible deniability." Adrian keeps a precise record of all these missions.

Attitudes

Adrian Jarlson is no longer an idealist. He contents himself with running his own outfit properly and respecting those he meets who have discipline and honor. Jarlson has made several friends among the underground Duelists who flock to Khayr ad-Din; a few of these elite pilots have even taken special contracts with Jarlson Freelance.

Combat Reactions

When in combat, Jarlson is ready to do whatever it takes to accomplish his goals and has spilled more than his share of innocent blood in the process. A skilled commander, he has guided his troops to hell and back on many occasions. This hard life has taken its toll, however, and he is looking to get out of the mercenary game.

Attributes

AGI	1	APP	-1	BUI	1	CRE	0	FIT	0
INF	1	KNO	0	PER	1	PSY	0	WIL	1
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	30	UD	6	AD	5

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Business	2	0	Drive	1	1	Heavy Gear Pilot	1	1	Notice	1	1
Combat Sense	2	1	Electronic Warfare	1	0	Intimidate	1	1	Small Arms	2	1
Communications	1	0	F Lang. (U French)	1	0	Leadership	3	1	Streetwise	1	1
Demolitions	1	0	Gunnery (Ground)	2	1	Melee	1	1	Survival	1	0
Dodge	2	1	Hand-to-Hand	2	1	Navigation	1	0	Tactics	2	0

Organization

Members:	100 infantry, 32 Gear pilots, 16 vehicle crewmen, 23 support staff, 5 command staff
Heavy Gears:	4 Warriors, 5 Basilisks, 5 Hunters, 2 Desert Vipers, 1 Bear, 2 Iguana, 1 Sidewinder
Other Combat Vehicles:	4 Caiman APCs, 3 Rabid Badger APCs, 2 Hun light tank





Khayr ad-Din Army (KADA) - 3.3.4

Katryne Sanz formed the Khayr ad-Din Army (KADA) in 1936 after realizing the coming Interpolar War would exact a terrible toll from her new home in the City of Duelists. During a planetary conflict, Terra Nova's massive transit system, the Maglevs, would become a crucial strategic resource, providing a convenient means to supply the armies on the front. Communities along the three lines, such as Kahyr ad-Din, would be smothered, no matter how neutral they might be. The only way to survive would be to take an active role in the defense of the system.

To accomplish this goal, Sanz needed allies, and she found them in the unlikelyst of places. Saddik the Spider Jahmoon's shady organization supplied her with the capital and resources necessary to maintain the militia, and her former lover's public support for the effort swayed popular opinion sharply in her favor. Adrian Jarlson's Freelancers provided a kernel of organized military effort and helped to shape the structure of the Army. She formed an alliance with the New Coalition and — by extension — Colonel Charles Arthur and the Arthurian Korps to aid in defending the communities along the Badlands segment of the Gamma Maglev. The support of TNTR's Basyl Paleologus legitimized her efforts, and together these groups kept the Badlands segment of Gamma Maglev open and secure during the Interpolar War while simultaneously driving back Colonel Proust's New Human Republic during the White War. Through their efforts, these Badlands communities came through the conflicts relatively unscathed.

Although the Interpolar War that forced its creation is over, the Khayr ad-Din Army is still an active force in the Western Desert. Hostile factions remain at work there, including bands of rovers and the occasional straggling remnant of the New Human Republic's army. The KADA has been acutely successful in tracking down and eliminating these threats, sending most rover gangs into hiding or wiping them out entirely. New gangs are always cropping up, however, especially as the polar powers' throttle back their massive war industries, leaving numerous embittered soldiers without employment.

The success of KADA in its efforts to defend the Badlands has given most of Terra Nova pause to reconsider their perceptions of the people of Khayr ad-Din. Before the war, they seemed little more than petty criminals. Now that they've proven themselves a force to be reckoned with, many politicians are calling for serious, concerted efforts to bring their nations' wayward deserters to justice — while just as many seek full pardons for the honorable warriors that were forced to take extraordinary measures during extraordinary times. The Westphalia Cabinet actively seeks to recruit as many of the Duelists as they can for their Black Talon operation. Many of the Duelists themselves, having found a great source of pride and honor in "going legit," have made noises about trying to clean up Trash City and keep it on the maps as a shining example of Badlands spirit rather than the stained blemish it once was. Meanwhile, on faraway Caprice, tales of the KADA's continued victories only reinforce the widespread Caprician belief that Terra Nova is crawling with rugged and powerful Duelists.



Organization ◆

More a ragtag militia than a traditional army, the KADA consists of roughly three segments: the Duelists, the experienced mercenary groups (especially Jarlson's Freelancers) and the freelance, volunteer irregulars from the City of Trash and its surrounding communities. The Duelists tend to operate alone or in small groups while the mercenaries and volunteers operate more along the lines of conventional forces. During the Interpolar War and the White War, Katryne Sanz and Adrian Jarlson served as co-commanders of the Army, with Jarlson directing the majority of the operations and Sanz working chiefly with the Duelist contingent. In future times of crisis, it is likely that their successors will serve in the same capacity.

Current Concerns ◆

The local economies of Khayr ad-Din and its neighbors cannot support a standing militia, and, like the polar armies they fought, the KADA is slowly disbanding, its soldiers shifting to reserve status. This trend began with the detachment of Jarlson's Freelancers from the Army immediately following the war, returning to their customary occupation as soldiers-for-hire. Much of the Duelist contingent of the Army remains, however, and it seems as though they will remain ever-vigilant defenders of Khayr ad-Din and its surroundings, despite the best efforts of promoters to lure them back to the arenas. Katryne Sanz still sits at the helm of the Army, but she is known to be grooming several of her former students — as well some of her former enemies — for eventual command of the force. Should it ever be needed again, the KADA is prepared to return to full, active duty.



Katryne Sanz



Age:	65 cycles
Height:	1.7 meters
Weight:	68 kg
Hair Color:	Brown
Eye Color:	Brown
Handedness:	Right-Handed

"Babies learn to walk because they WANT to! Gears don't!" It feels like ages to Katryne Sanz since she last shouted her trademark admonishment at a new group of pilots at the Northern Guard's elite Valeria Military Academy. One of the finest Duelists ever to serve the Guard, Sanz was also one of their best trainers, not only of pilots but of NNets as well. Strongly cynical about her role in the lives of her young charges, however, Sanz found herself under NGIS investigation in 1933 for being "a negative influence" on her students. Completely disillusioned with the Revisionist leadership of her homeland, she deserted and fled to Khayr ad-Din, where she had dueled in the Spider's Web Arena several cycles before, to make a new home for herself.

As she watched the North and the South rush headstrong into war, Sanz realized she and her colleagues could take a bold, decisive stand to defend their home from polar aggression. In a series of long and arduous meetings with Saddik the Spider, Adrian Jarlson, Terranovan TransRail's Basyl Paleologus, Colonel Charles Arthur and NuCoal's Chairman Royz Malkom, she laid the foundation for the Khayr ad-Din Army, culminating in her dramatic 1936 speech to the motley assembly of Trash City's finest Duelists and the official formation of the Army.

Profession

Since that day, Sanz has been the de-facto general of the Army. While Jarlson actually commanded the troops and devised most of their strategies, the soldiers — especially the Duelists — looked to Sanz for leadership and moral support. During the war, she also served as the primary liaison between her army and its allies in the New Coalition. Now, however, with the war over and life returned to normal, her role is largely administrative.

Attitudes

Katryne Sanz is an intense and passionate woman, but she is weary from all the fighting she has seen over the cycles and is looking forward to retiring and leaving the Khayr ad-Din Army in the capable hands of her former students. She has, of course, noticed Saddik Jahmoon's unwavering attraction to her, and although she had kept her relationship with her former lover strictly professional during her decade in Khayr ad-Din, she toys more and more each day with the idea of rekindling the old flames.

Combat Reactions

At the controls of a Heavy Gear, Katryne Sanz is an exceptional fighter. Her first goal in any battle is to maneuver her opponents into facing her one-on-one; in such situations, she naturally has a distinct advantage, and it is generally a relatively simple matter to disable her enemy and move on to the next one. Of course, having seen enough killing in lifetime — and having buried enough of her friends — she seeks to avoid battle as much as possible.

Attributes

AGI	+1	APP	+0	BLD	-1	CRE	+1	FIT	0
INF	+2	KNO	+1	PER	+1	PSY	0	WIL	+2
STR	0	HEA	+1	STA	25	UD	3	AD	2

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Athletics	1	0	Etiquette	1	2	Human Perception	2	0	Small Arms	2	1
Bureaucracy	2	1	F. Lang (U.French)	1	1	Intimidate	1	-1	Streetwise	1	2
Combat Sense	1	1	Gunnery: HHG	3	1	Leadership	3	2	Tactics	2	1
Dodge	1	1	HTH	1	1	Notice	2	1	Teaching*	4	1
Drive	1	1	HG Dueling	3	1						
Electronic Warfare	2	1	HG Pilot	3	1				*Gear Pilot Specialization		





Drug Dealer

Life in Khayr ad-Din is at best depressing. Many misfits from polar leagues end up in this city and live off the scraps and leftovers from the maglev lines. This demeaning lifestyle obviously has an adverse effect on people, and few could bear to live this way were it not for the drugs that keep them blissfully oblivious to their surroundings. Not all of them end up as consumers, however. Some shrewd individuals have no qualms about exploiting the weakness of their compatriots, and charge more than the regular price for the drugs they sell.

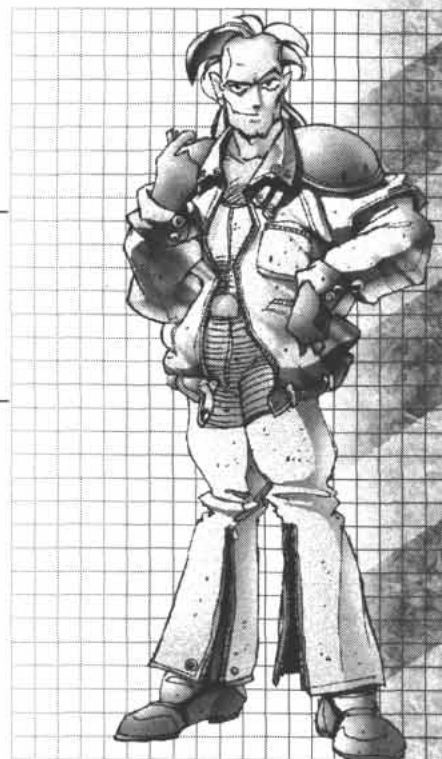
Attributes

AGI	-1	APP	-1	BUI	0	CRE	1	FIT	-1
INF	1	KNO	1	PER	0	PSY	-1	WIL	1
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	25	UD	3	AD	4

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Business	2	1	Law	1	1	Small Arms	1	-1	Survival	1	1
Cooking	1	1	Life Scien. (Drugs)*1	1		Stealth	1	-1	Theatrics	1	1
Dodge	1	-1	Melee	1	-1	Streetwise	3	1	• (specialization)		
Drive	1	-1	Notice	1	0						

Typical equipment: various drugs, placebo drugs (no effect), watch, first aid kit (needles and dermal patches), vibroknife, 6mm pistol (30 ammo), desert goggles.



Lawgiver Deputy

In Khayr ad-Din, Lawgiver deputies are the only police. Acting as judge and jury, they walk the streets and answer any call for help they hear. There are approximately seven hundred such deputies, and only the foolhardy would dare to challenge them. On occasion, when the crime justifies it and there is appropriate proof, Lawgiver deputies may act as executioners and terminate someone. It is said that when one Lawgiver is in trouble, there are five nearby who can come to lend a hand.

Attributes

AGI	0	APP	0	BUI	2	CRE	1	FIT	1
INF	1	KNO	0	PER	1	PSY	0	WIL	1
STR	1	HEA	0	STA	35	UD	6	AD	6

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Acrobatics	1	0	Drive	1	0	HTH	2	0	Notice	2	1
Athletics	2	1	F. Lang.: H. Anglic1	0		Intimidate	1	2	Small Arms	2	0
Combat Sense	2	1	F. Lang.: U. French1	0		Investigation	2	1	Streetwise	2	1
Dodge	2	0	Forgery	1	1	Law	2	0			

Typical equipment: heavy flak vest, baton (treat as staff, includes personal communicator, always on), tear gas grenades (x3), 6mm machine pistol (30 ammo, 1 extra clip, hidden), cloak.





Professional Host

Much of Khayr ad-Din's reputation for being a city of pleasure and loose morals is due to the professional hosts that walk the streets or maintain expensive establishments. The hosts are classy and gracious; from conversation partners to all-out lovers, they provide services themselves or have a retinue of hired help to satisfy the needs of the most demanding connoisseurs. The training of the professional hosts, unlike that of the tramp hosts that sell themselves cheaply at the corner of a garbage heap, is both demanding and effective. They can mingle with high class society and make polite conversation, or organize an effective and clean business.

Attributes

AGI	0	APP	2	BUI	1	CRE	0	FIT	0
INF	1	KNO	0	PER	0	PSY	1	WIL	0
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	30	UD	4	AD	4

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Bureaucracy	1	0	Drive	1	0	F. Lang.: U. French	1	0	Psychology	1	0
Business	2	0	Etiquette	2	1	Gambling	1	0	Streetwise	1	1
Cooking	2	0	F. Lang.: H. Anglic	1	0	Notice	1	0	Theatrics	2	1
Dance	1	0									

Typical equipment: clothes (summer, designer suit), dataglove, portable computer, luxury watch and jewels.



Street Urchin

Street urchins are the bane of Khayr ad-Din. These abandoned children have been left to fend for themselves and live a miserable life as scavengers among the trash heaps of the city. Some urchins also work with travelers and help them (for a price) to find safe streets to walk on to get from one point to the other. While this is a honest enough occupation, many among the street urchins actually use this ploy to lead unsuspecting strangers into traps laid for them. Unscrupulous rogues regularly employ gangs of urchins to this end, giving them only a meager pittance in return for their services. The few orphanages that could host these helpless youths usually treat them with cruelty rather than understanding.

Attributes

AGI	1	APP	0	BLD	-3	CRE	1	FIT	-1
INF	0	KNO	-1	PER	0	PSY	0	WIL	0
STR	-2	HEA	0	STA	10	UD	1	AD	1

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Acrobatics	1	1	Dodge	1	1	Stealth	1	1	Survival	1	1
Athletics	1	-1	Notice	1	0	Streetwise	1	0	*(specialization)		
Camouflage	1	1	Sleight of Hand (Pickpocket)*				2	1			

Typical equipment: rags, stick (AD+1), pocket knife (AD+2).





Trashers live in the Heaps and scavenge the refuse to find items of worth that they can then sell or trade. They usually work in gangs, coordinating with one another and home in on a fresh dumping area. Some of the more organized (and wealthy) gangs use Work Gears, but most use only shovels and traditional muscle power. They are wary of strangers and tend to scatter quickly in the heaps at the first sign of trouble. They know the terrain well and it is very difficult to track them down without a skilled guide (and those are very expensive).

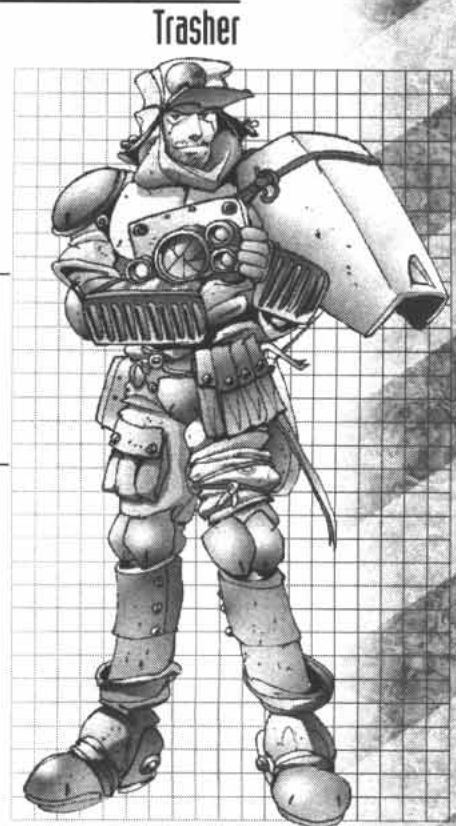
Attributes

AGI	0	APP	0	BUI	0	CRE	1	FIT	0
INF	0	KNO	1	PER	1	PSY	0	WIL	0
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	25	UD	3	AD	4

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Camouflage	1	1	Electronics	1	1	Sleight of Hand	1	0	Streetwise	2	0
Demolitions	1	1	Mechanics	1	1	Small Arms	1	0	Survival	1	1
Dodge	1	0	Melee	1	0	Stealth	1	0	Tinker	1	1
Drive	1	0	Notice	3	1						

Typical equipment: metal detector, dataglove (cheap), light flak armor (one out of ten only), infrared goggles (one out of five only), knife, 6mm pistol (one out of ten only).



Civilian Gear pilots are a dime a dozen in Khayr ad-Din. Lured by the prize money of the various tournaments, hundreds of would-be Duelists come each year to Khayr ad-Din. Military pilots on vacation also come to compete, although under pseudonyms.

Attributes

AGI	2	APP	1	BUI	0	CRE	1	FIT	1
INF	0	KNO	0	PER	1	PSY	0	WIL	0
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	25	UD	3	AD	3

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Athletics	1	1	Heavy Gear Pilot	2	2	Small Arms	1	2	Streetwise	2	0
Combat Sense	1	1	H.Gear Dueling	2	2	Leadership	1	0	Tactics	1	1
Communications	1	0	Electronic Warfare	1	1	Mechanics	1	0	Tinker	1	1
Dodge	1	2	Gunnery	2	1	Melee	1	2			
Drive	1	2	HTH	1	2	Notice	1	1			

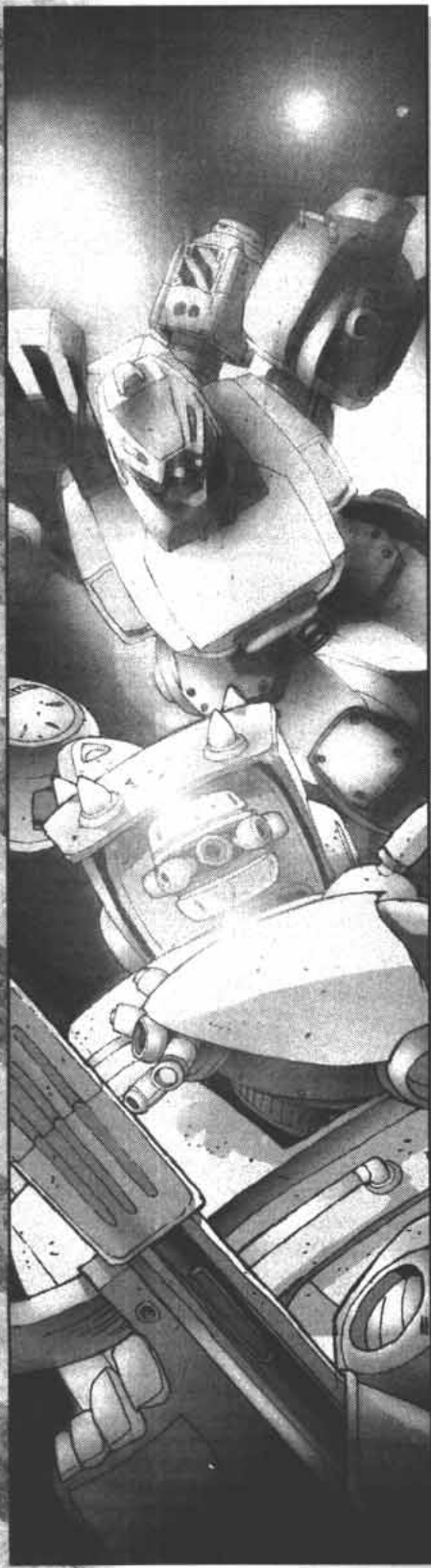
Typical equipment: 6mm pistol (30 ammo), Gear pilot suit, Gear pilot helmet, throat/ear comm set, water gourd, watch, Duelist ID card (w/real name and/or pseudonym).

Young Duelist





GUARDIAN OF THE DEAD



"How dare you!"

Major Elizabeth Bain's Warrior IV stepped from behind a half-melted support beam, its autocannon blazing. The scavengers scattered, throwing themselves behind any scrap of cover they could find. The armor-piercing shells tore into the immobile crane, quickly reducing it to a heap of torn metal.

The section of wall plating the heavy machine held came crashing down, throwing a huge cloud of ash and dust in the air. The beaten-up Jaguar that stood guard at the other end of the clearing used the opportunity to vanish into the maze of broken girders that lined the site.

The pilot of the PRDF Gear surveyed her handiwork before reporting back to the firebase. "Bain here. Caught illegal thrasher crew in the ruins." She barely managed to control the anger in her voice. "I got the bastards pinned down at these coordinates" — her hands flew over the keypad — "and I'm going to hunt the leader down. Get me some back-ups. Over."

She pushed the controls forward, sending her Warrior in pursuit of the enemy Gear. She was mad. Hadn't they suffered enough? Now Peace River was a victim of these vultures, trying to find interesting stuff to sell in its corpse.

Even active sensors will be useless here — too much metal and contaminants around. She slowed down once she reached the girders, for this looked like an excellent ambush spot. And if the pilot was any good, he'd come from...

Behind! The Jaguar burst through an opening, firing its autocannon wildly in her direction. Bain reacted quickly and smoothly, reflexively finding cover before the shells could track her position. Her senses were sharp and she felt alive — and angry.

"Two can play at this game." The scrapper pilot had run and taken shelter behind a series of ruined wind breaking walls. He was obviously waiting for her to come around, but she had no intention of falling into the trap.

"Let's see how aware you are," she said as her Gear reached the first wall and nimbly climbed over it using its arms for support. The Warrior landed with a resounding thump on the ground behind the wall, with a nice view of the enemy's exposed rear flank.

The enemy pilot stupidly turned his Gear to face Bain's instead of seeking additional cover. Her autocannon fired off a burst of rounds, hitting true with at least three shots. Smoke and sparks flew from the Jaguar's engine pack, but it managed to round the wall and disappear behind.

Oh no you don't, she thought. No one walks away from this — no one.

She knew he'd be waiting for her when she followed, and she readied her weapons. Bain and her opponent reacted almost identically: both opened fire as soon as they came within sight of one another.

She was more exposed and several shots ran into her Gear. For a moment, she thought she had lost and failed in her duties, when she realized that most of the shots had simply bounced off the Warrior's thick hide. Then Bain saw that her own attacks had connected twice, leaving the enemy Gear without power and helpless on the ground. She slowly approached and trained her gun on its crew compartment.

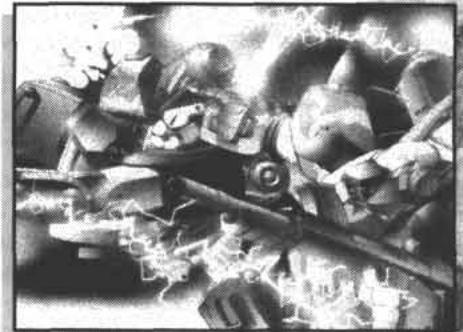
Elizabeth Bain, formerly of the Paxton Tactical Response Group, avenged the desecration of the tomb of her friends and colleagues.



Introduction - 4.1

Staging a duel using the Heavy Gear tactical combat rules can make for an exciting game session. The combat scale introduced in the main rulebook, however, was designed for group combat and is unsuitable for the one-on-one action of a duel. To simulate the micro-scale tactical decisions and precise action necessary to win a duel, a smaller scale is required. As such, we present the rules for Skirmish scale tactical combat. While dueling is among the best scenarios for using the Skirmish scale, the rules are also suitable for simulating any small-scale combats or engagements in restricted quarters with a great deal of detail. The Skirmish scale also uses the same time scale as the roleplaying rules, making integration all the easier.

The following rules are all modifications of the Tactical Combat Rules detailed in the **Second Edition Heavy Gear Rulebook**, starting on page 124. Those rules are only modified as indicated in the following sections.



Skirmish Scale

Time:	Each round lasts 6 seconds
Scale:	Each hex represents 10 meters
Vehicle Movement Points:	Remain identical
Weapons' Rates of Fire:	Remain identical
Actions:	Maximum of one extra Action allowed (with the standard penalty)

Change of Scale - 4.2

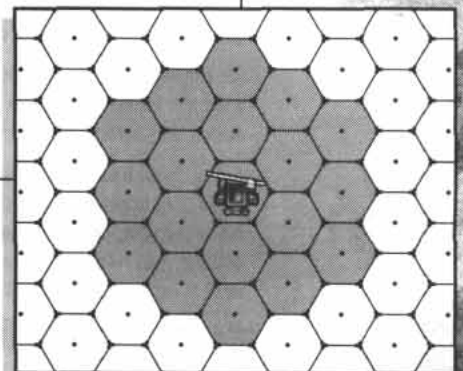
Skirmish scale takes a much closer look at mechanical combat than the normal tactical rules. The standard 50-meter hexes used for the tactical game are fine to represent military actions involving dozens of units on each side, fighting it out over areas many kilometers in each direction. That distance, however, is much too coarse to represent the quick motions and split-second timing of a duel. Therefore, both the distance and time units used to measure combat will be scaled down to a more manageable level -- the Skirmish scale.

Skirmish scale hexes are only 10 meters across, one-fifth the size of a standard tactical scale hex. Likewise, elevation levels now represent only 10 meters of height. Skirmish scale combat turns represent 6 seconds of real time (equal to the Silhouette roleplaying turns). Since all dimensions are divided by a factor of five, the MP scores of the various units do not change: one MP still represents approximately 6 kph of speed.

Weapon ranges remain as they were, but all range bands are multiplied by 5 to take into account the smaller scale of the hexes. For example, a weapon with a base range of 1 will now have a base range of 5. An attacker is at Point Blank range when he is within 2 hexes of his target (about half a normal tactical hex away — see diagram). Obviously, most of the Skirmish scale combats will take place at Point Blank or Short ranges, making them extremely deadly.

Point Blank Diagram

The diagram at right is a visual representation of the Point Blank range band in the Skirmish scale game. Any unit within the grey-shaded zone (and within the vehicle's fire arc) is attacked with a +1 modifier to hit. Unlike the regular tactical scale game, where simply being at Point Blank range is enough to attack a unit in close combat, in Skirmish scale melee combat is possible only in the hex (or hexes, for large units) where the target is located.



Integrating Dogfighting with Skirmish

The aircraft-related Dogfighting scale and the Skirmish scale share the same time frame of 6 seconds per round. It is thus possible to have an integrated game featuring both. In general, it is best to limit the integration to VTOLs, lest an enormous map (or two maps at different scales) be required. Aircraft multiply their speeds and turn radiuses by 5 to play in Skirmish scale, but use the ground weapon ranges when firing on ground targets.



4.3 - STACHING

No more than 15 Size points worth of units may occupy a single Skirmish scale hex at any one time. Ten infantrymen now count as a single Size 6 unit. Vehicles larger than Size 15 will occupy multiple hexes (see page 133 of the main rulebook).

If a unit attempts to enter an hex that is already occupied by 15 Size points (or if its entry would bring the total above 15), it is automatically assumed to be ramming the unit(s) present in the hex (ramming Player's choice of target in case of multiple targets).

If the rammed unit is a vehicle and sustains enough damage points in the collision to cause a Light Damage result or more, it is moved one hex directly away from the direction the ram came from. If the rammed unit does not sustain at least Light Damage, the ramming vehicle ends its movement one hex before it enters the disputed hex (but the collision still occurs). If the rammed unit was an infantry squad, it moves one hex (in any direction) away from the disputed hex regardless of the damage received (if any).

4.4 - THE SKIRMISH SCALE COMBAT TURN

Because the Silhouette game engine has been designed to be modular and not dependent on a specific background or time scale, it is possible to vary the latter without affecting the balance of the rest of the elements. Indeed, a Skirmish scale combat encounter follows the same basic turn procedure and rules as a normal tactical scale combat. Unless so mentioned in the following text, all tactical combat rules (starting on page 124 of the **Second Edition Heavy Gear Rulebook**) apply in full.

The text on pages 76 through 81 explains the effects the smaller scale has on the rules. Because the scope of the battle has been reduced by a factor of five, some movements and actions not previously "visible" in the tactical scale become possible (and, indeed, required) and are detailed here. For example, the blast effects of many weapons, which were previously abstracted in the 50-meter wide hex, can now affect more targets.

4.4.1 - Initiative

Initiative proceeds as normal, except when there are only two units on the field. In this case, it is assumed that the vehicle crews are independent as opposed to being part of a coordinated military unit. Therefore, rather than rolling initiative for each side, Players roll initiative for each individual unit separately. Any ties are rerolled. These individual initiative rolls are Piloting Skill rolls, not Leadership Skill rolls. All usual modifiers (Maneuver, crew Attributes, etc.) apply to the Piloting Skill roll.

4.4.2 - Movement

Vehicles move in the same manner as in a normal tactical game with two exceptions: vehicles move individually (not as part of a combat group) and sharp turns now cost one Action to perform in addition to one MP (see *Maneuvering* on next page). Other than these differences, movement works exactly the same as in the normal tactical game.

4.4.3 - Actions

In Skirmish scale combat, Players still get the same number of Actions per round as in tactical combat. They may get one additional Action with a -1 modifier to all their rolls. Because of the short time span involved, it is impossible to get more.

For the same reason, the scope of what an Action includes has been reduced. For example, in the tactical system, maneuvering a vehicle costs zero Actions and firing a weapon costs one Action. In the Skirmish scale, maneuvering a vehicle requires one Action and both aiming and firing a weapon require an Action each (see further).

As a general rule, most "events" in the Skirmish scale require two Actions. The first Action spent represents the preparations made (e.g. acquiring a target, programming active sensors). The second Action represents the actual completion of the act (i.e. firing the weapon at a target, performing the sensor scan). Usually, the second Action can be performed many times in a row without requiring the first act to be repeated. For example, once a vehicle has acquired a target, it can fire upon it repeatedly until it either loses sight of its target or switches to another target (see Target Acquisition below).

The list on next page details the common Actions taken in Skirmish scale combat.





TACTICAL COMBAT DUELING

4

Movement ♦

Maneuvering: In addition to costing 1 MP, any turn of two hex-facings or more (120°+) requires one Action. Moving in a mostly straight line (e.g. no turn of more than one hex-facing, or 60°) does not require an Action.

Shifting into Top Speed/Combat Speed: Instead of simply declaring a change from Combat Speed to Top Speed or vice versa after movement, in Skirmish scale combat this change requires the expenditure of an Action (the change still takes place after movement).

Combat ♦

Target Acquisition: Before attacking an opponent, a unit can use one Action to acquire it as a target (also see Wild Fire Attack below). A target can also be automatically acquired if the attacker moves within ten hexes of the defender and a clear line-of-sight exists between the two for one full turn. This target remains acquired until the unit's line-of-sight with the target is broken. A unit may only acquire a limited number of targets. The maximum number of targets that can be acquired simultaneously is equal to the unit's total number of Actions per round.

It is also possible to acquire a target by "tailing" it during several turns. To tail an opponent, one must end the turn in the target's rear defense arc. An opposed Piloting check is made between the two pilots on the next turn if the attacker is still tailing the defender. If the tailing unit succeeds, the target becomes acquired. For each subsequent turn during which the target is tailed but not acquired, add +1 to the attacker's roll for acquiring the target.

Standard Attack: After performing target acquisition, a unit may attack the target with one weapon or set of linked weapons, as usual. Damage is applied immediately as each weapon hits.

Wild Fire Attack: A Wild Fire attack consists of an attack performed without first acquiring the target. Wild Fire attacks suffer a -2 penalty on their attack rolls. If a unit performs three Wild Fire attacks (successful or not) against a target without ever losing his line of sight, the target automatically becomes acquired.

Changing Weapon Systems: Each crewman can handle a single weapon system, or set of linked weapons, at a time. Using more than one is simply too confusing in the heat of close quarter battles. Switching between weapon systems costs one Action. A set of linked weapons is considered to be one weapon for the purposes of this rule. It is possible to add or remove a linked weapon from the firing control link at the cost of one Action. Such a weapon must have paid the cost for being linked (i.e., non-linked weapons may not be added to a weapon link).

Miscellaneous ♦

Activating Auxiliary Systems: Before using any auxiliary system, such as ECM or active sensors, a vehicle crew must expend one Action preparing the system for use. No rolls are made during this Action; it succeeds automatically. Communication systems and passive sensors are assumed always to be "on" and do not need to be activated prior to being used. However, if either is shut down (to avoid leaving telltale emissions, for example), it takes one Action to activate them as usual.

Using Auxiliary Systems: Once an auxiliary system has been prepared, a vehicle's crew may expend one Action to use the system. If the system requires a roll of some sort, it is performed when the Action is expended. An auxiliary system may be used for multiple combat rounds in a row without additional preparation. If two rounds go by without the system being used, the crew must expend one Action to prepare it again the next time the auxiliary system is to be used.

Preparing to Embark/Disembark: One Action is required for a vehicle crew outside their vehicle to prepare to embark (if at all possible) or for a crew inside their vehicle to prepare to disembark. This Action covers the various ingress preparations such as lining up for orderly entry, opening hatches and access doors, etc. Crew preparing to leave the vehicle must likewise release their security harnesses and move into position by the doors.

Embarking/Disembarking: Once a vehicle's crew has prepared to embark or disembark, up to ten crew members or passengers may enter or exit the vehicle per Action expended, provided the situation allows it. This Action covers various activities such as entering the crew compartment or cockpit, settling down, reaching for straps and belts, etc.

Warm-Up/Shutdown: Starting up a vehicle's engine or shutting it down requires a full Action. In most combat situations, all vehicles will already have their engines started, but a crew could begin outside their inactive vehicle.

In such cases, the crew is treated as an infantry squad with a Skill level one lower than their crew level (e.g. a Veteran vehicle crew becomes a Qualified infantry squad). They will often have fewer members than usual, so the crew is divided into makeshift units of about five people. They are armed with pistols (Accuracy 0, ROF 0, Damage x1, Base Range 1 Skirmish hex). In the case of large crew, one in five crewmen is equipped with a heavier weapon: for simplicity, it is treated as a standard 7 mm infantry rifle (see p. 149 of the **Second Edition Heavy Gear Rulebook**).



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4.4.4 - Weapon Fire Modifications

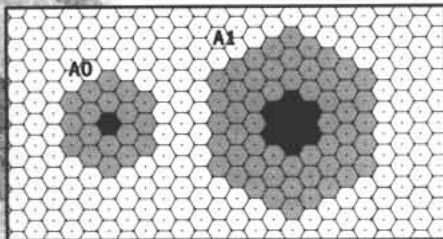
Due to the smaller scale and the increased level of detail it brings about, some modifications and clarification are required for weapon fire.

◆ Area Effect Weapons

All area effect diameters are multiplied by 5; thus a weapon with a tactical AE of 3 would have a Skirmish scale AE of 15 (a weapon with an AE of 0 would have a Skirmish blast radius of 2 and a half hexes — the same zone as the Point Blank zone, above).

Only the area within a zone equal to the tactical AE times two (the “primary” blast zone) is fully affected by the explosion. Targets within the Skirmish AE but outside the primary zone receive only half damage. This represents the fact that the explosion doesn’t cover quite everything in the target zone. In the diagram, the primary blast zone is in black while the secondary one is in gray.

Purists may want to decrease the damage along a more sloping curve — it slows down the game considerably, however, and so the above approximation is best for most games.



Area Effect Diagram

The diagram on the left shows the area effect template of a weapon with a tactical AE of zero. The black hex in the center is the primary blast zone, while the grey-shaded hexes around it represents the secondary blast zone, where the target(s) receives only half damage.

The diagram on the right represents a template for a weapon with an AE of 1. The primary blast zone is the seven black hexes in the middle while the secondary blast zone is the grey-shaded hexes around it.

◆ Blast Result of Area Effect Weapons

The concussion of the blast of an area effect weapon can knock walkers and infantry off their feet. In some cases, it might even overturn light vehicles.

Walker vehicles are automatically pushed back one hex from the center of the blast and knocked to the ground (roll Piloting as per normal falling to avoid damage) if they are in the blast’s primary zone, no matter the damage suffered (if any). Walkers in the secondary zone must make a Piloting Skill roll versus a Threshold equal to the damage total divided by 5, rounded down. If failed or fumbled, the vehicle falls (see the optional rule on page 159 of the **Second Edition Heavy Gear Rulebook**).

Infantry are always thrown to the ground regardless of the blast zone they are in. Like walker vehicles, it costs them one MP to get up. Vehicles may be pushed and/or overturned by the blast. If they are in the primary blast zone, and the damage total is equal to or greater than 3 times the vehicle’s Size, the vehicle is pushed back one hex from the center of the blast. Roll one die and compare the result on the chart below:

Blast Effect

1d6	Result
1-2	The vehicle remains upright
3-4	The vehicle ends up on its side (roll randomly which one)
5-6	The vehicle is overturned

◆ Powerful Weapons and Area Effect

Non-area effect ranged weapons with damage multipliers of x20 or greater are considered to have an area effect in Skirmish scale combat. Weapons with damage multipliers between x20 and x49 have a Skirmish scale AE of 0 (they affect the whole hex where the target is standing). Weapons with damage multipliers greater than x50 have a Skirmish scale AE of 1.

◆ Using ROF

Because ROF fire represents the unit firing multiple times during the tactical 30-second rounds, it costs a lot of ammo. In the Skirmish scale, fewer bursts are fired, diminishing ammunition consumption. For each point of ROF used, only 5 shots of ammo are consumed. Missile ROF ammunition costs are not affected and remain the same.





TACTICAL COMBAT DUELING

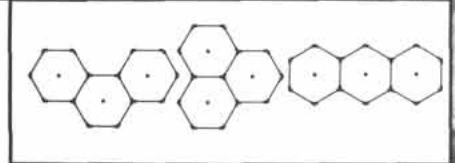
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Saturation Fire ◆

Saturation fire affects 3 Skirmish scale hexes for every tactical scale hex that would normally be affected. The hexes must be touching one another (see diagram for valid fire patterns). Saturation fire is affected by the same changes in ammunition consumption as standard ROF fire: instead of expending 30 rounds per ROF point, the weapon consumes only 15 rounds. Rocket ROF used to saturate remains at 8 rockets per ROF point.

□ Saturation Fire Diagrams

The diagrams at left show three valid fire patterns when laying down saturation fire. As long as the three hexes are touching each other, they may have any orientation. All three hexes must be directly visible to the firing unit. One cannot shoot around Obscurement by “bending” the fire pattern.



TERRAIN - 4.5

Some of the rules about terrain and cover have been slightly modified to fit within the new scale. They mostly concern the Obscurement values and the damage points required to ignite/destroy certain types of hexes. These changes are due to the additional level of detail in the Skirmish Scale. In the standard tactical scale game, a certain amount of abstraction is involved in representing a 50-meter wide section of terrain as a discrete unit. A 50-meter section of forest, for example, is likely to have one or two small clearings; in the Skirmish Scale, such terrain features are represented directly on the map.

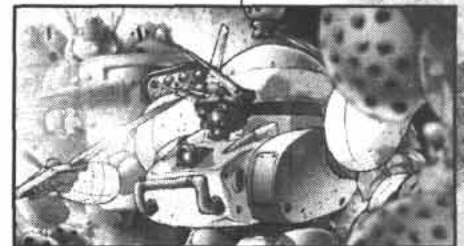
Obscurement - 4.5.1

Each Skirmish scale hex only produces one-fifth the Obscurement of a standard 50-meter wide tactical hex. To simplify things, Obscurement values were recalculated to take this into account. All Obscurement-producing terrain types cause one point of Obscurement per terrain type crossed by the line-of-sight between attacker and target. For example, if there are Jungle hexes in the LOS, the Obscurement modifier is +1. If the LOS also crossed Swamp hexes, the modifier would be +2, and so on.

Additional Obscurement may be caused by a great number of obscuring terrain hexes. The table below lists the minimum number of hexes required to produce one more point of Obscurement for each terrain type.

□ Additional Terrain Obscurement

Terrain Type	Minimum Number of Hexes for +1 Obscurement
Clear	-
Rough	-
Sand	-
Woodland	5
Jungle	3
Swamp	5
Water	*



* Water only produces Obscurement if the defender is in a water hex and is not a hover vehicle. In this case, Water produces 1 point of Obscurement per three hexes.

4.5.2 Urban Terrain

Urban terrain in the Skirmish scale is considered to be a single building about the size of a house (16 damage points). Dense Urban terrain is considered to be a larger, more strongly built building (20 damage points). A large building may be spread over several hexes, but each hex is treated separately for damage purposes.

Infantry may spend one MP to enter either form of building hex. Vehicles may not normally enter a building hex. If the building has lost one half of its damage points or more, vehicles may then enter it at the same movement cost as Rough terrain (it has destroyed sections and gaping holes in it).

The building can lose these damage points as the result of being rammed. Treat house-sized buildings (Urban terrain) as a Size 6 vehicle for this purpose. Larger buildings (Dense Urban terrain) are considered to be Size 12 vehicles. Buildings are considered to have rolled 0 for their defense roll against ramming attacks.



◆ Walls



Walls are a special type of Urban terrain that crosses an entire Skirmish scale hex. In the tactical scale, walls are considered to be part of the Urban terrain located in the hex and are disregarded for simplicity. In the more-detailed Skirmish scale, walls can be both useful (as cover) and downright annoying (as obstacles).

In order to keep the game simple and fast moving, walls have been standardized. A typical wall stands at about three meters tall and is made of a resilient material such as stone or ferroconcrete. Walls made of lighter material, such as wood fences, have little defensive value for vehicles and are disregarded for simplicity. Walls are impassable unless they are damaged, destroyed, climbed or jumped over. Obviously, the vehicle must have the capacity to climb or jump for the latter options to work.

A typical wall segment of one hex has a Damage Capacity of 12 for a standard wall and 16 for a dense wall. If the wall hex loses one half of its damage points or more, vehicles may cross it at the same movement cost as Rough terrain (the wall has gaps in it now).

Most large vehicles are able to fire over walls, gaining the wall's full Obscurement benefit but not being impeded in their own attacks. For simplicity, any unit of Size 4 or more can fire over walls. Units with the Low Profile Perk may not fire over walls when under Size 15, because their hulls are too low to be able to clear the top of the wall.

Infantry units disregard walls for movement and fire. It is assumed they can climb over them using any convenient stairs or walkways or their own climbing equipment. They may also simply go through doors, if any are present. Infantry units gain full Obscurement from the wall when placed in the same hex, regardless of the direction of the attack.

◆ Obscurement from Urban Terrain

Unlike other terrain types, Urban and Dense Urban terrain hexes do not have reduced Obscurement values in the Skirmish scale. Instead, the *Obscurement* of those two types of hexes is doubled. Skirmish scale Urban hexes have an Obscurement value of 2, while Dense Urban hexes have an Obscurement value of 4.

The increased Obscurement effect comes from the fact that Skirmish scale Urban terrain represents actual structures, rather than an abstracted urban landscape with alleys, roads and gaps where a line of sight can be drawn. Structures block line of sight completely (disregarding glass-plated buildings for simplicity) and are hard to shoot through even when sensors provide the location of the target beyond the walls.

4.5.3 - Bridges

Even small bridges can be fully represented at this scale. Movement across bridges still has the same MP cost as clear terrain, unless a road has been built on it. Each bridge hex is rated by the three usual Attributes: Damage Point Capacity, Elevation Level, and Size Capacity. Obviously, each hex will have a lower Damage Point Capacity and Elevation Level to reflect the change in scale: divide the tactical scale's values by a factor of 5, rounding up.

Apply the normal rules for Size Capacity. If converting a tactical scale bridge to Skirmish scale, keep the same overall Size Capacity for each Skirmish scale bridge hex.

4.5.4 - Firestarting, Smoke and Destroying Terrain

The damage points required to ignite or destroy terrain are halved. To ignite a Skirmish Scale hex, a total of 50 points of intensity must be fired into it. No attack roll is necessary. Slow burn incendiaries add their intensity times 2. Once the 10-meter hex is ignited, it is considered to be a fire of intensity 8. At the end of every combat round thereafter, its flame intensity is increased by one until it reaches 20. Once it reaches 20, every adjoining hex ignites as an intensity 8 fire.

As with the standard tactical scale, burning hexes produce smoke in an irregular fashion. Roll one die for each burning hex to determine how much Obscurement that hex's smoke causes: 1-2, thin smoke (no Obscurement); 3-4, moderate smoke (1 Obscurement); 5-6, thick smoke (2 Obscurement). This Obscurement behaves slightly differently from other types of Skirmish Scale Obscurement: moderate smoke causes 1 point of Obscurement for every 5 hexes, and thick smoke causes 2 points. Smoke launchers cover 5 adjacent hexes (in any dispersion) with thick smoke.



TACTICAL COMBAT DUELING

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Climbing and Falling - 4.5.5

Climbing in the Skirmish scale follows the same rules as usual (see page 157 of the **Second Edition Heavy Gear Rulebook**). Falling, however, is a little different.

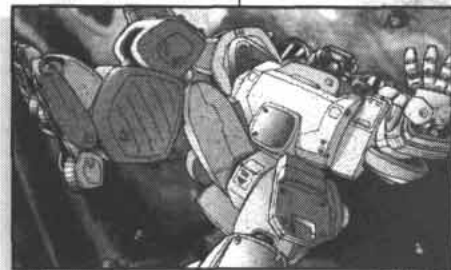
If a vehicle falls an elevation level or more, it takes reduced damage because Skirmish scale elevations are only 10 meters tall. Calculate falling damage normally, but halve the result (rounding up).

Skirmish Scale Falling Damage = (Two Dice x Vehicle Size x Elevation Fallen) ÷ 2

Skirmish Scale Falling Example

A Size 6 Gear with a base Armor rating of 15 falls off a 2-level-tall cliff. A level 2 cliff is equal to twenty meters in the Skirmish scale. Although the falling distance is one-fifth shorter than a tactical level cliff, the fall is still going to hurt a lot since the Gear does not have the benefit of the doubt normally accorded to tactical gaming (i.e., sloping cliff, providential ledges, etc.).

The Heavy Gear lives up to its name and impacts squarely at the foot of the cliff. Two dice are rolled for damage, resulting in a 3 and a 5. The Gear takes 5 (die roll) x 6 (vehicle size) x 2 (elevation fallen) = 60 points of damage, which are then halved, for a total of 30 points of damage. This is equal to Heavy Damage — not too bad for such a fall.



ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR DUELING - 4.6

Duels are non-traditional combat situations. Opponents come to the field prepared and often equipped with specialized weapons. As such a few extra considerations are necessary when setting up a Skirmish Scale duel.

Of course, the Skirmish Scale is not limited to duels. The intense level of detail provided makes for an exciting standard, small-unit engagement as well. In these cases, the following considerations are not generally important. The **Tactical Field Support** book presents a Skirmish Scale tailored more towards regular engagements, including the use of Command Points and a more detailed breakdown of movement point costs.

Sporting Arms - 4.6.1

Before a battle begins, all Players should agree on whether their vehicles are employing sporting arms or not. If they are being used in "virtual" mode, then no adjustments to the tactical rules need be made; the on-board computers will simulate damage normally. Damage suffered as result of ramming, falling and punching, however, should be recorded differently (perhaps by putting an "X" rather than a slash through structure boxes) as these hits are real. At the end of the battle all virtual damage vanishes (including simulated casualties), but real damage remains.

If the sensors are in "shut-down" mode, keep track of damage but do not apply any modifiers or mark off systems as destroyed, unless the damage is real as a result of rams, close combat or falls. The vehicle may no longer participate in combat when it suffers any damage that would destroy it. If the sensors are being used in "scoring" mode, simply record the number of hits each machine takes (attack roll MoS of 1 or more), but do not mark off any damage that is not real.

Killing an Opponent - 4.6.2

Unless duels are being fought to the death, all pilots usually expect to leave the battlefield alive. Gear combat is a dangerous game, however, and many Duelists end up casualties to honor and bravado. In most military and professional duels medical assistance is assumed to be nearby, improving the pilots' chances of survival. In the case of an Overkill or "Crew Killed" result (in real damage) the Player may roll two dice against a Threshold of 6 in an attempt to survive.

It should also be noted that killing an opponent in a non-lethal duel is considered a very serious offense in military and professional circles. Those who employ excessive force can expect to face legal repercussions or vendettas.



4.6.3 - Dueling Tactical Scenarios

Setting up for a duel in Skirmish Scale is usually very simple. The most basic encounters involve two machines facing off against each other in a relatively clear battlefield. Duels that require a slightly more elaborate set-up, however, can also be very exciting. The sections below cover the most common and interesting duel types suitable for Skirmish Scale tactical combat.

Skirmish Matches ◆

These basic duels require no special set-up. Terrain should include several elevation changes and obscuring terrain types to complicate the tactical situation. Most skirmishes are fought until one opponent or the other scores 5 hits.

Any map can be used to represent the terrain. The edges of the maps are the inner walls of the arena and units may not exit the map except at designated entry/exit points (there should be one such door per Player or team).

Shoot-Outs ◆

These duels are usually fought in complex urban terrain. The battlefield should be set up with plenty of walls, Urban and Dense Urban hexes, making line of sight very hard to achieve. Like skirmishes, these duels are usually fought until 5 hits are scored.

Shoot-outs greatly benefit from the use of the more advanced Urban terrain rules found on page 80 of this book. The map should be liberally sprinkled with walls and buildings to make line of sight hard to achieve.

Stalker-Prey Duels ◆

This duel of cat and mouse should be fought on a complex playing surface. Plenty of walls, elevation changes, jungles and woodland hexes and other complications should make the Stalker's job difficult. Some open groups should also be featured, however, so that the Prey may dart across in search of bragging rights. Obviously, firing positions for the Stalker should be available to make the Prey's bravado worth bragging about.

Block and Run ◆

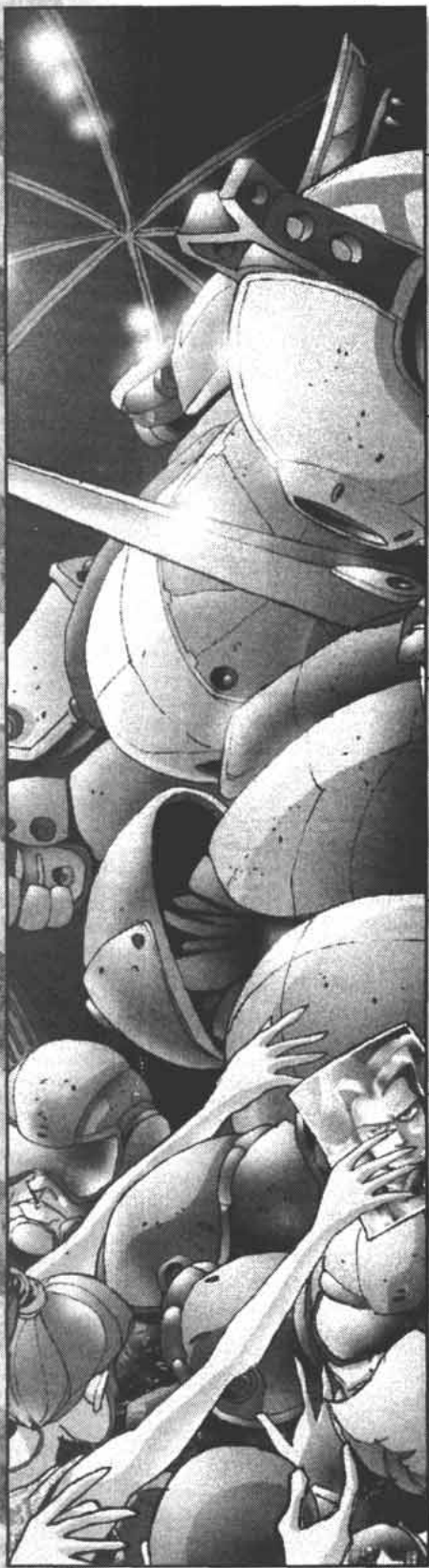
This sporting game can make for an exciting tactical encounter. The playing field should be set up with some limited elevation changes and walls, and with two scoring "end zones." The runner chooses which end zone he will start in and then the blocking machines (up to 5) set up anywhere in the field of play. Play then proceeds normally.

Lone Wolf ◆

Terrain for the Lone Wolf duel type should be set up with limited terrain to allow the wolf to hide, but still allow the stalkers to find him. To heighten tension, the length of time between stalker-repairs can be decreased to only a minute or two (10-20 Skirmish Scale rounds). This is particularly appropriate in a small playing field with limited terrain and Obscurement.

Tag Team ◆

Tag Team skirmishes are fought like the simple battles in a fairly clear field, except that two team bases are designated. In these base zones, the partners wait to be tagged. Tagging counts as an Action for the exiting unit. In scenarios using sporting arms, units in the base zone can recover from damage at the rate recovering one lost MP, Fire Control bonus point, Maneuverability bonus point, destroyed auxiliary system, or destroyed weapon every two rounds. Alternatively they may choose to recover one lost point of armor every round. The pilot chooses the order in which elements are repaired.





The Dueling Skill - 4.7

Duelists are far above the run-of-the-mill Gear pilots. A well-trained Duelist has the knowledge and experience to take his machine to the very edge and extract every last drop of power from its frame. Seeing a skilled Duelist in action has often been compared to witnessing the performance of a particularly lethal mechanical dancer.

Not everyone can learn the various techniques required to become a proper Duelist; it takes dedication, patience, talent and a healthy dose of courage. Dueling is also about more than just being fast — pilots also have to be crafty, cunning, opportunistic, spontaneous and creative in their fighting styles. Otherwise a would-be Duelist is a quick but predictable opponent.

The Heavy Gear Dueling Skill is the art of close combat using Gears. Dueling includes the ability to perform special stunts and maneuvers to increase the agility and lethality of a machine. Because it is mostly a close combat fighting technique the Dueling Skill may only be used within Point Blank Range or a ranged weapon's Short Range. The Dueling Skill may never exceed the pilot's Skill in Pilot: Heavy Gear.

Heavy Gear Dueling (CRE Based)

Complexity:	Complex
Specializations:	specific terrain, specific Gear, specific Macromove
Pre-Requisites:	Piloting 2
Often Possessed By:	Duelists, Elite Pilots, Gear Trainers

Macromoves - 4.7.1

The Dueling Skill allows pilots to perform Dueling Macromoves (not to be confused with the pre-programmed body "Macros" in the **Second Edition Heavy Gear Technical Manual** on page 42) that hereafter will be referred to simply as Macromoves. All Macromoves are essentially an attempt to gain a tactical advantage over an opponent and most (though by no means all) are thus directed at specific opponents. A pilot can perform a number of Macromoves per Turn equal to his Gear's nominal number of Actions. Pilots can defend against an unlimited number of Macromoves, performed against them by other pilots, without penalty. Pilots without the Dueling Skill defend as if Unskilled (roll two dice, take low result) and may not themselves perform any Macromoves.

Attempting to use a Macromove does not itself cost an Action, although failure to perform a Macromove successfully may entail the loss of an Action or other penalty as noted. Dueling Skill Tests are modified by the Acrobatic Handling Perk, but *not* by Maneuver Scores. There are seven kinds of macromoves: combos, combo breaking moves, armor piercing attacks, called shots against specific damage locations, area effect fire with ROF weapons, pushing the envelope, and Duelist's luck.

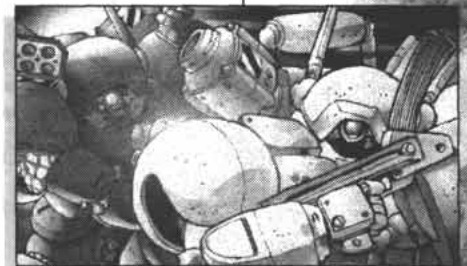
Dueling Examples

A Hunter has one Action per Turn. A Duelist piloting a Hunter may perform one Macromove per Turn.

A Nemesis Jaguar has two Actions per Turn thanks to its Advanced Controls Perk. A Duelist piloting a Nemesis Jaguar may perform two Macromoves per Turn.

A Hunter does not have Acrobatic Handling. Its pilot makes Dueling Skill Tests at +0 (not including Attribute modifiers).

A Nemesis Jaguar has Acrobatic Handling: 1. A Duelist piloting a Nemesis Jaguar makes Dueling Skill Tests at +1 (not including Attribute modifiers).



Combos and Combo Breaking

Combos represent multiple consecutive attacks that flow into one another. The two pilots make an Opposed Dueling Skill Test. If the Pilot performing the Macromove achieves an MoS of 2 or more he gains one additional Free Action against the target of the Macromove. If the Pilot performing the Macromove fails to achieve an MoS of 1 or more then he loses one Action as the defender has successfully anticipated and blocked/defended against the attack. Whatever the result, the pilot performing the Combo Macromove is at -1 to all subsequent Piloting and Dueling skill rolls this Turn.

For the purposes of Skill Specialization, Combos and Combo Breaking (defending against Combos) are considered separate specializations.



◆ Armor Piercing Attacks

The two pilots make an *Opposed Dueling Skill Test*. If the Pilot performing the Macromove achieves an MoS of 2 or more his next attack against the target of the Macromove is considered to be *Armor Piercing*. If the weapon being used is already *Armor Piercing*, the defender only uses one quarter of his normal armor value for determining the damage level. If the weapon is *Armor Crushing*, the armor is halved and the attack removes the normal amount of armor (1 point for *Light Damage* and 2 points for *Heavy Damage*). If the Pilot performing the Macromove fails to achieve an MoS of 2 or more then he suffers no other penalty than a wasted Macromove. The Macromove attempt must be made prior to the attack.

For the purposes of Skill Specialization, *Armor Piercing Attacks* are considered a single specialization.

◆ Called Shots Against Specific Damage Locations

The two pilots make an *Opposed Dueling Skill Test*. If the Pilot performing the Macromove achieves an MoS of 1 or more then he may freely select the *Damage Location* of his next attack (*Fire Control*, *Structure*, *Crew*, *Movement* or *Auxiliary* but *not Roll Twice*) against the target of the Macromove without penalty. If the Pilot performing the Macromove fails to achieve an MoS of 1 or more then he suffers no other penalty than a wasted Macromove. The Macromove attempt must be made prior to an attack at *Point Blank* or *Short Range*.

For the purposes of Skill Specialization, each *Damage Location* is considered a separate specialization.

◆ Area Effect with ROF Weapons

Area Effect fire represents using massed fire to try to knock an opponent down. Successful use of *Area Effect* effectively makes ROF-capable weapons *Area Effect* weapons, with all of the results and *Area Effect* weapon would have. (See 4.4.4 *Weapon Fire Modifications*, *Blast Result of Area Effect Weapons*, p. 78) The two pilots make an *Opposed Dueling Skill Test* and for every two full ROF points spent the attacking Pilot gains a +1 to this roll. If the Pilot performing the Macromove achieves an MoS of 1 his next attack is considered to have AE=0 at half *Damage* if using an ROF weapon. If the Pilot performing the Macromove achieves an MoS of 2 his next attack is considered to have AE=0 at full *Damage* if using an ROF weapon. If the Pilot performing the Macromove achieves an MoS of 3 or more his next attack is considered to have AE=1 at full *Damage* if using an ROF weapon. If the Pilot performing the Macromove fails to achieve an MoS of 1 or then he suffers no other penalty than a wasted Macromove. The Macromove attempt must be made prior to an attack at *Point Blank* or *Short Range* using ROF +1 or more and uses the same amount of ammo that any other ROF attack would use.

For the purposes of Skill Specialization, *Area Effect* is considered to be a single specialization.

◆ Pushing the Envelope

A pilot may, before moving, try to "push the envelope" of performance on his machine. The pilot makes a *Skill Test* against a threshold of 5. With an MoS of 1 or more the pilot may this turn temporarily increase his vehicle's *Combat Speed* (but not *Top Speed*) by +1 per MoS, up to (but not to exceed) the Gear's normal *Top Speed* in that movement mode. If a Pilot trying to *Push the Envelope* fails to achieve an MoS of 1 or more then he suffers no other penalty than a wasted Macromove. On a *Fumble* result, the Gear shifts into *Top Speed* (with all attendant movement restrictions and attack penalties), costing one *Action*. The net result of using this Macromove is that a proficient Duelist can edge his Gear into higher speed brackets than normal without suffering the attendant penalties to *Gunnery* and control.

For the purposes of Skill Specialization, *Pushing the Envelope* is considered a single specialization.

◆ Duelist's Luck

A Pilot may at any time use his *Dueling Skill* to reroll any one *Attack* or *Defense* roll (but not *Macromove* rolls), including (and especially) *Fumbles*, but must take the result of the reroll. This ability may only be used when attacking or defending at *Point Blank Range*, or when attacking with or defending against a ranged weapon within that weapon's *Short Range*. All modifiers from the previous roll are used, except for the *Attribute* modifier, which is replaced with the *Attribute* modifier of the *Duelist* skill. This Macromove represents the *Duelist* reading his opponent's moves and making that last split-second adjustment to move out of the way, to aim a shot better or even to land a physical blow.

For the purposes of Skill Specialization, *Duelist's Luck* is considered a single specialization.



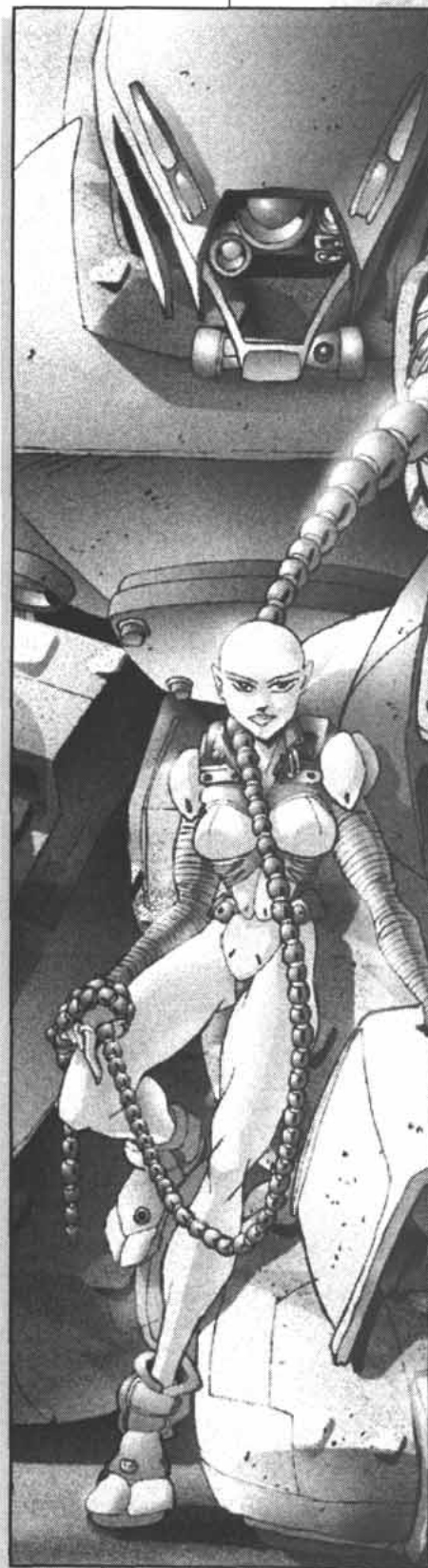


TACTICAL COMBAT DUELING

4

Macromove Conversion Table

First Edition Macromove	Second Edition Macromove
Block	Duelist's Luck
Bump In	Pushing the Envelope
Burst Fire	Area Effect with ROF Weapons
Combo Block	Combo Breaking
Combo	Combo
Critical Hit	Damage Location (Any)
Cross Fire	Area Effect with ROF Weapons
Crush Punch	Duelist's Luck
Fast Punch	Duelist's Luck
Feint	Duelist's Luck
Flip & Slam	Duelist's Luck
Head Drop	Damage Location (Crew or AUX)
High Stab	Damage Location (Crew or AUX)
Jump & Smash	Duelist's Luck
Knee Kick	Damage Location (Movement)
Lethal Fire	Armor Piercing
Lethal Thrust (or Stab)	Armor Piercing
Low Tackle	Damage Location (Movement)
Parry	Duelist's Luck
Piercing Ram	Combo
Power Punch	Armor Piercing
Previous Name	Current Name
Pummel 'Em (Zoom Punch)	Armor Piercing
Punch Engine	Damage Location (Structure)
Punch Through	Armor Piercing
Ram & Run	Pushing the Envelope
Ram Through	Armor Piercing
Rapid Slash	Combo
Retreat Fire	Duelist's Luck
Shooting Star	Area Effect with ROF Weapons
Skid and Crash	Damage Location (Movement)
Spray Fire	Area Effect with ROF Weapons
Strike	Combo
Swing	Duelist's Luck
Throw	Duelist's Luck
Vibrochop	Combo
Vibrokill	Armor Piercing
Vibrostab	Armor Piercing
Weapon Whack	Duelist's Luck





All's Fair in Love and Dueling



Jolaine Flare threw away the arena rosters she was checking with a look of disgust on her face.

"This is hopeless. They're all new names! Unproven records!"

Eric, her secretary, bent down to pick up the discarded datapad. His voice was calm and detached, as usual. "Most of the promising recruits have been enrolled in the armed forces, miss. It may be a few seasons more until the league is back up to full strength."

"And in the meantime, where do we get our revenues?" She pointed to the holos lined up on the walls of the office. "Remember when we could get some very strong contenders? Pilots with moxies and styles, like Polson, Slane or Giles. Now we're lucky to get academy rejects."

"The war..."

"Damn the war and damn the ideological fools who fight in it!" She got up from behind the desk and went to the window. "There's no profit to be made from wanton destruction."

Eric idly browsed the minutes of the last meeting. "How about hiring soldiers, military pilots? Now that the conflict is over, there are bound to be a whole bunch of them mustering out."

Jolaine dismissed the idea with a wave. "I've already considered it — it won't work. Soldiers are too regimented, too disciplined, too..."

"...Preoccupied with self-protection?" Eric added with a smile.

Jolaine felt her irritation wane. His smile always had that calming effect on her, and she liked that in her companions now. Too bad she had a policy of never dating inside the office, she mused. He might be several cycles younger than her, but she still had the old Lady Flare touch . . .

She merely smiled instead and went back to her desk and the business at hand. "Exactly. It works well on a battlefield, but it doesn't look good on trideo. Seeing someone spend half a match hidden behind a support beam is just not interesting enough. And the audience doesn't watch if it isn't flashy."

Eric pondered her words for a moment. "So the problem isn't getting fighters, or even good ones — it's getting flashy ones."

"Yes, pretty much." She knew that expression. Her secretary had something in mind.

"I may have an idea, then." He picked up a datapad and brought something on the screen before handing it to her. The small hand-held unit showed an advertisement for a Southern trideo show about duelists. She had heard of it before, but had never seen it. It was bright, flashy and looked extremely dynamic.

"This might just be what we need..."

She got a faraway look in her eyes. Words from her old days as an artist manager came back to mind. *Real or not, it doesn't matter. What matters is that people get entertained.*

She turned toward the secretary. "See if the foreign distribution rights are still available. Full polar coverage if we can get it, Federation at the minimum. Our little duelist stars don't want to fight, do they? Very well, we'll cut them out of the deal."

The young man smiled and nodded, then headed for the door. She stopped him with a raised hand and a warm smile. "Oh, and Eric — expect a bonus if this works out."





Fame and the Duelist - 5.1

Dueling is an occupation that almost seems designed to create fame and celebrities. In the sporting world, superstar pilots are seen on every trideo player and advert-panel, hawking the latest soft drink, luxury automobile or clothing fad. These stars are mobbed by crowds of ravenous fans everywhere they go and surround themselves with a horde of media advisors and press agents.

Even the media-shy regimental Duelists must always maintain their popularity with the troops of their unit. The subject of bragging among soldiers, Duelists often find their reputations spreading like wildfire from one regiment to another. Both the combat and ceremonial roles of the Duelists are watched with great attention, so mistakes and accomplishments are widely reported through an informal network of military enthusiasts. These pilots live under as much of a spotlight as their sporting colleagues.

Underground pilots can also find themselves with an impressive reputation. Gear circuits like that in Khayr ad-Din attract attention from near and far and those who distinguish themselves in the arena can find many a door opening for them elsewhere. More than one underground pilot has found himself elevated into the "legitimate" world because of his skill. Even in less exposed dueling centers, those who fight with skill and determination can build a strong following among the audience and those who bet on their performance.

Among Duelists themselves, however, the fame of the moment is much less important than a special sense of reputation. Certainly those who perform exceptionally in their machines can gain the respect of their fellows, but the way a Duelist handles himself, the degree to which he understands the concepts of honor — be it personal, regimental or local — and the choices he makes have more to do with a Duelist's standing with others of the same ilk than any simple win/loss ratio. Those who become legends of dueling do so because they understand and advance the role of the Duelist. Those who concentrate solely on victory are remembered as spectacular distractions, only interesting for a moment.



The Best of the Best - 5.1.1

There is no hard and fast way to determine who the best Duelists on Terra Nova are. The selection of pilots in the following pages serves more as a representative sample of the top echelon of military, sporting and gladiatorial Duelists. Two Mount Duelists from Caprice are included as well, to highlight the parallel Duelist societies on the Gateworld.

Cornice Dafnae is one of the young pilots who studied under Katryne Sanz in the TN 1930s and is now a top pilot. She recently retired from the Northern Guard and joined the Khayr ad-Din Army.

Dunkan Polson is the last graduate of Katryne Sanz's Gear training program. Once a pilot for the legendary Busybees, he is a skilled combatant.

Yang Jownz was selected for special training by Aristide Lazarus, the head of the Southern MILICIA's elite Special Intervention Unit. A philosopher and a warrior, Jownz seeks to understand the art of combat in and out of his Gear.

Aleizander Torvas is a fugitive from Southern justice. He was stripped of rank after assaulting an innocent. Set free by his Légion Noire allies, he is now the deadliest combatant in Khayr ad-Din.

Emili Royal was once the top "runner" for the Saragossa Stingers. She managed to escape the civil war that grips her city-state by fleeing to Khayr ad-Din, where suffering of a different sort awaited her.

Adrianne Bils is a pilot for the Peace Officer Corps. A former military pilot, she now represents Paxton's police force in Badlands competitions — when she is not dealing with the aftermath of the destruction of her city-state.

Gaitan "Lash" Alani is once again the current champion of the Khayr ad-Din circuit. A spectacular pilot, Lash maintains an air of mystery about her, leading to many rumors. In fact, she has fled from the WFP in search of glory.

Teresa "Roc" Orlov is a Liberati rebel working as a Duelist in the lowest levels of Caprice's Trench City. She uses her position to recruit new warriors for the cause.

Kyle Seitz is the Principal Duelist for Hakkar, Inc., Caprice's largest corporate conglomerate. Seitz, a showman Duelist by trade, now finds himself in the position of having to fight real duels, a position that terrifies him and has driven him into depression.

DUELISTS AND THEIR MACHINES

5



Cornice Dafnae



Age:	36 cycles
Height:	1.5 meters
Weight:	45 kg
Hair Color:	Red
Eye Color:	Blue
Handedness:	Right-Handed

Born in the Western city of Fort Henry to Cornice Mara and Jyan, Dafnae benefited from life as the daughter of clan leaders. Unfortunately, Dafnae was a child of only 8 cycles when her idyllic life was shattered by the War of the Alliance. Dafnae spent her childhood in bomb shelters and on the move. In TN 1916 Colonel Cornice Jyan was accused of leaking information to the Earth forces; Dafnae's father was quickly sentenced to death and her family stripped of status. Pariahs in their own land, Mara and Dafnae fled to the shelter of friends in Livingstone.

Dafnae grew up quickly in the post-war NLC, her mother telling her that her father had been framed. At the tender age of 20 cycles, Dafnae enrolled in the Northern Guard, hoping to begin the long journey to discovering the truth about her father's supposed treason.

In the late TN 1920's Dafnae, by then the Duelist for the 39th HG regiment, was stationed in the Badlands along with a Norlight Duelist named Danghen Jarak. They became friends and lovers, sharing their dreams for a different and just world. After Danghen and his sister, Maena, deserted the Guard and disappeared into the Badlands, Dafnae received word from them that they were living Khayr ad-Din — and that they had possibly uncovered some information about her father's relationship with the CEF. In TN 1940, Dafnae retired honorably from the Guard and joined the twins in the Khayr ad-Din Army.

Profession

Determined to regain her clan's honor, Dafnae gravitated toward the position of Duelist as soon as she became a Gear pilot. Training religiously, she has perfected the techniques of quick and agile fighting to a science. Her Cheetah Gear responds as if it were an extension of her.

Attitudes

Honor and justice are the most important concepts in Dafnae's life. Despite her quick wit, a cold streak is always running through her — a result of the injustices done to her clan. Trapped by the expectations of her mother and culture, Dafnae has a very hard time making true friends. She feels true loyalty can only come through clan, a barrier that crippled her relationship with Danghen.

Combat Reactions

In a Duel, Cornice prefers to target specific enemy systems with her Gear, focusing on disabling the vehicle before following up with a swift, armor-piercing attack from her autocannon or vibroblade. A favorite tactic of hers is to tackle an opponent, aiming for his legs and bringing him crashing to the ground.

Attributes

AGI	2	APP	1	BUI	-1	CRE	0	FIT	1
INF	0	KNO	0	PER	1	PSY	0	WIL	1
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	20	UD	4	AD	3

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Acrobatics	2	2	Drive	2	2	Heavy Gear Pilot	3	2	Notice	1	1
Athletics	1	1	Electronic Warfare	1	0	Investigation	2	1	Small Arms	2	2
Combat Sense	2	1	Gunnery: HG	2	1	Literature	1	0	Stealth	1	2
Communications	1	0	Hand-to-Hand	2	2	Melee	1	2	Streetwise	1	0
Dodge	2	2	H. Gear Dueling	3	2	Naval Pilot	1	1	Tactics	1	0





"Fast Cat II" — Cornice Dafnae's Cheetah

The Cheetah once used by Cornice Dafnae is among the oldest of the scout Gears in the 39th and has seen more than its fair share of action. Over the 75 cycles that it has been in service, "Fast Cat" has been piloted by some of the best though border conflicts, rover wars and the War of the Alliance. The Gear posses an NNet with the capability to evolve and has picked up a few "habits" from its top pilots. From famed scout pilot Lieutenant Hanna Stone — who died in its cockpit during the War of the Alliance — Fast Cat has learned to always "blow out" the smoking barrel of its autocannon by bringing it up to the sensor pod.

The Gear's ability to learn new habits means that all its pilots must be extremely careful not to instill any bad habits. All those chosen to pilot Fast Cat must first convince the regimental technicians that they are disciplined enough not to teach the Gear anything that will prove dangerous on the battlefield.

After the War, both as a tribute to Hanna Stone's sacrifice in repelling a CEF assault and to ensure that only the best pilots would influence the NNet, Fast Cat was made the regiment's honor Gear and assigned to the Duelist. In the cycles since the War, four Duelists have piloted Fast Cat. These pilots have all been very successful, impressing their regiment with their skill on the battlefield and guiding Fast Cat to victory time after time. Cornice Dafnae has added to this tradition, successfully defending her regiment against accusations of cowardice on two separate occasions. In the last of these battles (in TN 1932), the Fire Jaguar it was fighting against seriously damaged Fast Cat and much of the leg assembly of the Gear had to be replaced.

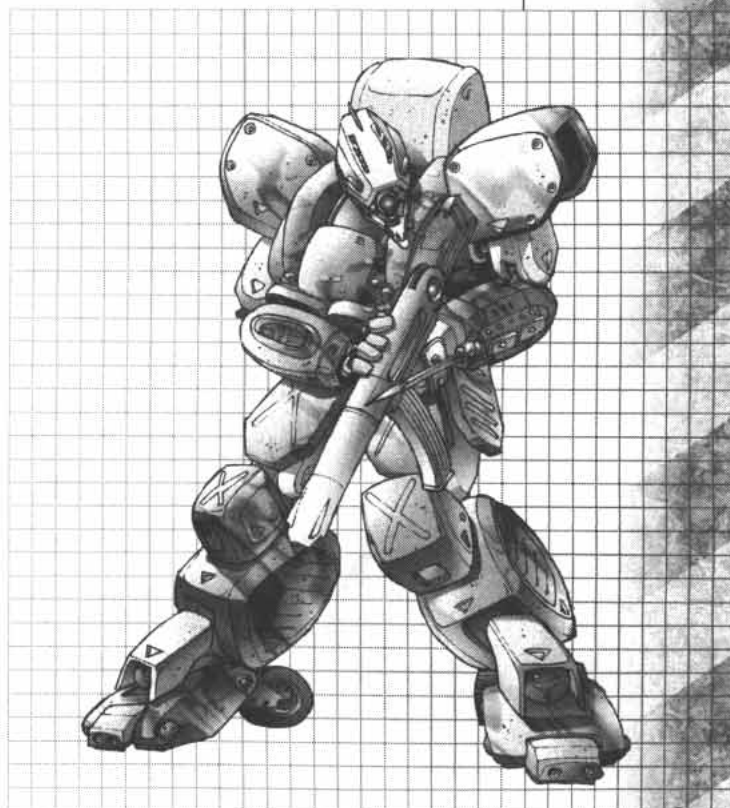
When Dafnae retired from the Guard, she gave up her rights to pilot Fast Cat. Her mentor, Katryne Sanz, managed to obtain a new Cheetah, dubbed "Fast Cat II," for Dafnae's use in the Khayr ad-Din Army, but its NNet lacks the original's personality.

Specifications ◆

Fast Cat II's current complement of weapons is identical to the Fast Cat's and was designed to match Dafnae's dueling style. An expert at high-speed fighting, Dafnae has removed the target designator in exchange for an integrated targeting system tied to the machine's light autocannon. This allows for precise long range attacks at high speed. To aid in close-quarters fighting, the Cheetah has been given an arm-spike that adds to the close-combat punch of the standard vibroblade. The Cheetah's standard rocket pod has been removed to improve stability for the sniper system.

□ Modifications

Add:	LAC (F, 30 rounds), Sniper System (LAC), Reinforced Location Armor (R1, Crew)
Remove:	LRP/24, DPG, 2 x HG, Target Designator
Change:	ECM to R2
Unit Defects:	None
Modified TV:	508
Offensive:	172
Defensive:	803
Miscellaneous:	549



DUELISTS AND THEIR MACHINES



5

Yang Jownz



Age:	38 cycles
Height:	1.78 meters
Weight:	72 kg
Hair Color:	Red
Eye Color:	Brown
Handedness:	Left-Handed

Born to lowly parents in TN 1903 in the worst neighborhood of the industrial hellhole of Loyang, Yang was a street kid with no future when he tried to pick the pocket of Commandant Aristide Lazarus in TN 1918 during a victory parade after the Treaty of Westphalia. Lazarus recognized something in the young bandit and prevented his bodyguard from opening fire. Instead he approached Yang with an offer. Lazarus knew that truly great military minds were shaped when they were young, and dreamed of building a core of such minds. Yang was an early recruit, and he proved an adept student in all aspect of combat and tactics, absorbing his instructor's skills like a sponge. Martial arts, armed combat and Gear piloting came easily to him, but Lazarus most admired his meditative mind. In TN 1928 Lazarus placed Yang among in the MILICIA's 19th HG Regiment — the Scorpions — stationed on the Mekong-Badlands border. Despite some misgivings about the young recruit and his prominent political connections, the regimental commander — Commandant Ramon Sandoval — quickly took to Yang and welcomed the young pilot to the 19th.

Profession

Yang's piloting and combat skills led to a stunningly rapid rise, and he had become the Scorpions' Duelist by TN 1930, gaining the reputation of being among the best warriors in the Dominion. When the Scorpions were transferred to the Western Desert north of Westphalia, Yang came into contact with many underground and Northern Duelists. Lazarus encouraged these relationships and later used Yang's friendships to recruit Miranda Petite and Lussian Salban into the SIU. Yang and his regiment remain stationed in the region to this day.

Attitudes

Yang's military skill belies his calm and poetic soul. War and combat are a fine art to him, and he refuses to give into the rage and hopelessness that were so much part of his youth. Yang now seeks alternatives to combat whenever possible and maintains friendships with many independent and Northern Duelists. National interests are of little concern to Yang; personal honor and bonds of friendship are his guides. Forced to choose between his bond to Lazarus and his friends in the Badlands, Yang chose the latter and deserted to join Miranda and her friend Alia Muna-Habib in the Khayr ad-Din Army.

Combat Reactions

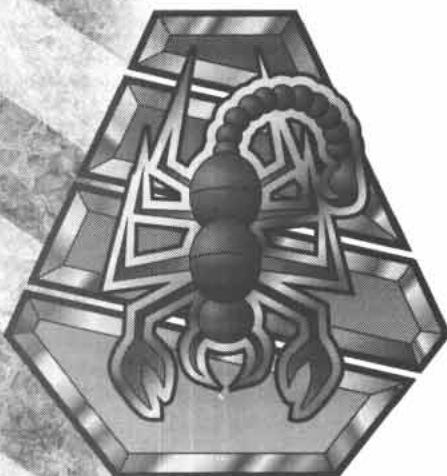
Yang likes to use his vibroblade in close combat, seeking to drive the weapon through the enemy's hull in an armor piercing attack. Another favorite tactic is to use an opponent's momentum against him and actually flip the enemy's vehicle, landing it on its head to do massive damage to its sensors and communications systems — and the pilot's cockpit, if possible. He typically relies on his own luck and instincts in combat.

Attributes

AGI	1	APP	0	BUI	0	CRE	1	FIT	1
INF	0	KNO	2	PER	1	PSY	1	WIL	1
STR	0	HEA	1	STA	30	UD	6	AD	5

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Ambush	1	1	Electronic Warfare	1	1	Heavy Gear Pilot	3	1	Psychology	1	2
Athletics	1	1	Etiquette	1	0	Literature	2	1	Small Arms	1	1
Camouflage	1	1	First Aid	1	2	Melee	2	1	Stealth	1	1
Combat Sense	2	1	Gunnery: HG	2	1	Navigation	1	2	Teaching	1	1
Communications	1	2	Hand to Hand	3	1	Notice	2	1	Throwing	1	1
Dodge	2	1	H. Gear Dueling	3	1						





Yang Jownz's Black Mamba

The modified Black Mamba piloted by Yang Jownz was a gift from the specialized design office of Territorial Arms to the Special Intervention Unit, from which it found its way to Jownz. The Gear is an attempt by the Mamba development office to build on the success of their elite battlefield machine by producing a dueling variant. The project is a direct challenge to the place of the Rapier Iguana as the standard Gear of choice for Duelists in the Southern Republican Army and the favored units of the Southern MILICIA.

To challenge the Rapier, the Mamba office proposed a very simple conversion that kept the Gear battle worthy. By modifying only the weapons load, the Territorial Arms team ensured that the Mamba variant was very easy to retrofit to the standard battlefield model's specifications. Indeed, the Gear's NNet retains the dedicated programming for all the Mamba's weapon options.

To begin creating some interest in the new variant, the customized Mamba was given to the MILICIA's elite SIU. Several members of the Mamba design team have a close relationship with the SIU and its leader, Commandant Aristide Lazarus; from Lazarus, they received assurances that the Gear would find its way to a position that would test its capabilities and begin spreading the word of the new variant. Lazarus arranged for the machine to be transferred to Yang Jownz' regiment so that his student could pilot it, and Jownz stole it, bringing it with him when he defected.

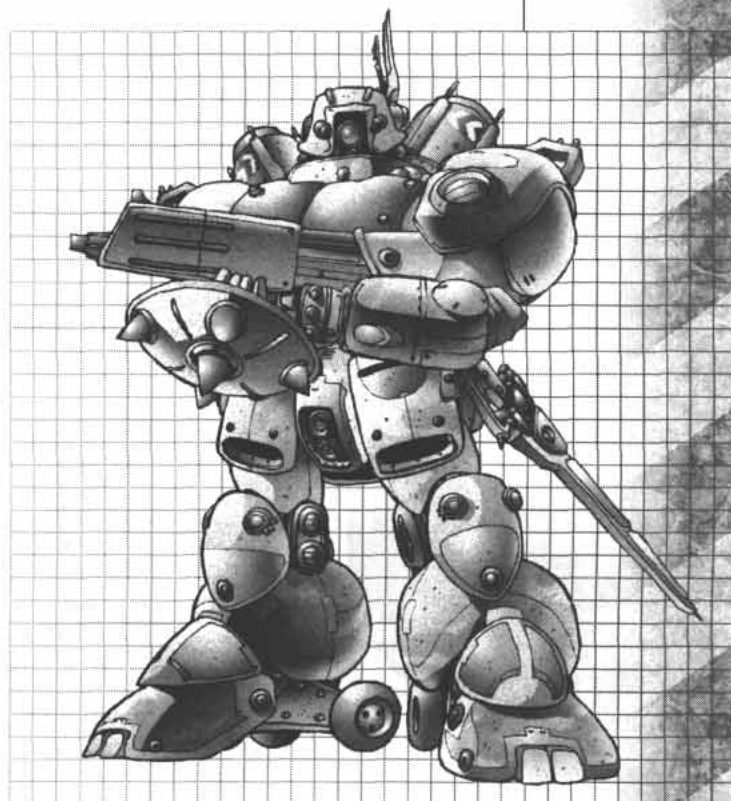
Jownz has appreciated the machine's abilities, using it both in the field of honor and during standard operations. Technicians found the Mamba to be very easy to retrofit and spread the word through the Southern technical community. Before Jownz deserted, he was under pressure to record some of his duels for advertising purposes, but he always refused, feeling such an agreement would cheapen the Duelist tradition. A few private recordings of some his fights remain, however, taken by his crew, and can be obtained if one is well connected.

Specifications ♦

Jownz's Mamba is not far removed from the standard battlefield model. As a military Duelist, it is important for Jownz to pilot a machine that would be combat worthy in an actual military operation. As such, the Mamba retains the standard PR-55 medium autocannon, and relatively few structural modifications have been made. The major changes that have been made exist to answer the Southern preference for vibrorapier dueling. A small dueling buckler has been attached to the left manipulator arm and a vibrorapier added to the standard armament. The Vogel-8 rocket pod standard in most Black Mambas has been removed to make rapier dueling easier. An armored jacket has also been included to give Jownz an extra layer of protection against the armor-piercing qualities of the rapier.

□ Modifications

Add: VR (F), Reinforced Location Armor (R1, Crew), Shield (R4, Front)	
Remove:	LRP/32, HG, VB
Change:	Increase Top Ground Speed to 90 kph, Decrease Deployment Range to 450 km, Base Armor to 16
Unit Defects:	None
Modified TV:	631
Offensive:	529
Defensive:	575
Miscellaneous:	789



DUELISTS AND THEIR MACHINES



5

Aleizander Torvas



Age:	38 cycles
Height:	1.78 meters
Weight:	72 kg
Hair Color:	Red
Eye Color:	Brown
Handedness:	Left-Handed

Born an orphan in Marabou in TN 1881, Torvas lied about his age and joined the Republican Army in TN 1900, discovering a talent for Gear piloting. In TN 1910 Torvas returned to Marabou to compete in the Ironman competition. His performance was impressive enough that he was approached by the Republic's elite L'égion Noire special forces, where he served for the duration of the War of the Alliance. After his L'égion tour was over, Torvas transferred to the MILICIA's 11th HG regiment — the Rapiers — and went on to become its Duelist in TN 1920. In 1927 the 11th was assigned to the MILICIA base in Basal and became caught up in the opening stages of the city-state's revolt. Torvas was accused of sexually assaulting Victorya Hiro, a childhood friend of then heir apparent Nigel Shirow. When Shirow insisted that charges be made, the MILICIA was forced to court-martial Torvas. At his trial, Torvas calmly explained that the military had made him an amoral killer for its own reasons and so had exempted him from the strictures of society. These sentiments are shared by many L'égion members and a convenient "accident" during his transfer to prison allowed Torvas to escape to the Badlands.

Profession

Ever since his escape, Torvas has made his living as a gladiatorial Duelist in Khayr ad-Din. He has been very successful on the tough circuit, benefiting from the aura of death that surrounds him like a shroud. Torvas is known for killing more opponents on the battlefield than any other pilot on the circuit and has ended more than one life in bar brawls as well. Other Duelists often (rightly enough) judge him to be a bloodthirsty killer, but the few who have underestimated his skill have paid for it with their lives. He sees underground dueling as a poor cousin of the regimental combat he once took part in and has little respect for his fellow gladiators.

Attitudes

A deep anger burns inside Torvas. That he was stripped of the rank and duties that gave his life meaning over something as "insignificant" as some Eastern skull is an insult he will never forget. The support of his L'égion comrades has softened the blow somewhat, but being able to take out his anger in the Khayr ad-Din Web Arena is the only thing to keep him sane for nearly a decade. When Katryne Sanz formed the KADA, Torvas all but leapt at the opportunity to join and get involved in real warfare once again.

Combat Reactions

Torvas plays mean and rough in the arena, channeling his rage into a series of deadly combination attacks that typically culminate into a carefully placed blow to a particular system on the enemy's vehicle. The targets vary with his whim, but often involve the cockpit. Another favorite ending move to his combination attacks is a massive blow from his vibroax that cuts clean through the enemy's armor like a hot knife through butter.

Attributes

AGI	1	APP	-1	BUI	1	CRE	0	FIT	1
INF	1	KNO	0	PER	1	PSY	0	WIL	1
STR	1	HEA	0	STA	30	UD	7	AD	7

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Ambush	2	1	Elect. Warfare	2	0	Intimidate	2	1	Notice	1	1
Combat Sense	2	1	Gunnery: HG	2	1	Leadership	1	1	Small Arms	2	1
Communications	2	0	HTH	2	1	Melee	2	1	Stealth	1	1
Demolitions	1	0	H. Gear Dueling	3	1	Navigation	1	0	Streetwise	1	1
Dodge	2	1	Heavy Gear Pilot	4	1						





Aleizander Torvas' Black Adder

When he was forced to leave the 11th HG Regiment, Aleizander Torvas did not leave empty handed. Thanks to his contacts within the Légion Noire, Torvas was able to leave with his Gear, a modified Black Adder. The machine was one of hundreds maintained by the Légion outside of standard Southern records, making it untraceable for all intents and purposes. Smuggling the Gear out of the South was handled through the same channels, more proof of the LÉgion's credo of looking out for its own.

Once in Khayr ad-Din, Torvas piloted the Adder to a quick string of victories, claiming the lives of three inexperienced pilots. Although his thirst for blood repulsed many, others found it very exciting and began to enthusiastically support him in the arena. He found that victory ensured him a plentiful supply of spare parts and resources for modifications, and has altered the Adder to suit his tastes. Those who know him, and those who have fought against him, say that the Gear matches Torvas' personality perfectly. The heavy war machine is armed to the teeth with devastating weaponry and is designed to take no prisoners. Although not all matches in the Web Arena are meant to be deadly, Torvas' weapons load means that he often walks out of the battle with blood on his hands.

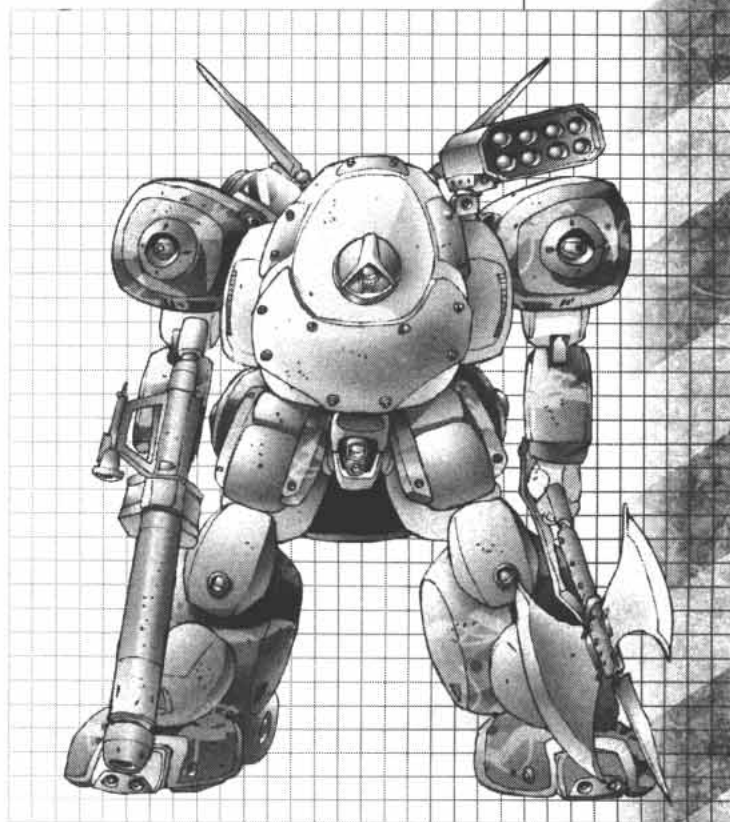
Technicians in the city have come to know Torvas as a pilot who tends to blame his machinery for any failings and downplay its role in his successes. Several techs have paid a heavy price for this tendency, finding themselves alone with an irate Torvas after a new weapon has "failed to perform" in the arena. Others have learned that they can use Torvas' personality against him. By inventing new and interesting technical glitches for him to blame every failure upon, they can make a handsome profit by "repairing" them, but it is a very dangerous game. Torvas does not take well to being cheated and gives no second chances.

Specifications ♦

The standard Black Adder is a frightening machine, but Torvas' modified dueling version is all the more so. His philosophy of always seeking to kill his opponents has attracted the most firepower-obsessed mechanics of Khayr ad-Din, who have turned the arena-fighting machine into a deadly opponent. The standard SRWI 90 mm cannon and FSRP-42N rocket pod have been maintained and augmented by the addition of two deadly panzerfausts and a massive vibroax for close combat. In addition massive armor plates have been added to the already heavy Adder making it very difficult to damage. These changes have reduced the Gear's effective speed and off-road capabilities, somewhat limiting its performance during the Interpolar War, but in the arena this is less of a problem.

▣ Modifications

Add:	2 X MPZ (F), VA (F), Backup Sensors
Remove:	APGL
Change:	Increase Base Armor to 19, Decrease Top Walking Speed to 36 kph and Top Ground Speed to 60 kph
Unit Defects:	Annoyance (Cramped access hatch), Poor Off-Road Capability
Modified TV:	600
Offensive:	1199
Defensive:	411
Miscellaneous:	189



DUELISTS AND THEIR MACHINES



5

Emili Royal



Age:	24
Height:	1.50 meters
Weight:	46 kg
Hair Color:	red
Eye Color:	green
Handedness:	right-handed

Born in Saragossa in TN 1909, Emili Royal was caught up at an early age in the terrorist struggle that has gripped her hometown for so long. In TN 1911, her father, banker Hans Royal, was caught in the middle of an exchange between the Knights of Saragossa and SPFI terrorists. Gunned down in the crossfire, Hans left his wife Sandryne to raise their two children. While she blamed the SPFI for her husband's death, her eldest son DydiË saw the Southern forces as the killers. While these differences remained under the surface for the War of the Alliance, by the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia, DydiË had disappeared from the family home. Left without her brother, Emili was forced to absorb her mother's version of the story, eventually joining the Republican Army to continue the fight. Just as she left her training, however, she began receiving messages from her brother. He had joined the SPFI, he said and begged her not to join "the oppressor." Although she was stationed far from Saragossa, Emili was eventually categorized as a security risk and discharged.

Returning to her hometown, she found the city more chaotic than ever, her brother a wanted man and her mother a pro-Republic organizer. Emili felt she would become mad and searched for anyway to escape. When she heard of trials being held for the Saragossa Stingers Gear team, she jumped at the opportunity.

Profession

The piloting skills Emili learned in the military serve her well as a speed runner for the Stingers. A championship grade player in team games of speed and stealth, Emili has become the darling of the hometown crowd with daring passes by opposing Gears and high-speed runs through obstacle courses. Emili plays a secondary role in other types of duels, usually as a forward scout in team skirmishes.

Attitudes

Emili puts up a good front as the daring sports star, but under the surface she looks for any and all ways to escape the pain of her family life. Her mother has become a bitter and hateful woman, while her brother seems to take innocent lives without a second thought. Emili is happiest when her team is on the road, when she is not surrounded by the SPFI graffiti or the armed patrols in the streets. She is currently trying to get traded to another team, while doing her best to drown her sorrows in a panoply of addictive drugs and alcohol.

Combat Reactions

Emili seems to possess an incredible supply of luck in combat, though it is really her own skill. She uses a series of feints to confuse the enemy, and she isn't above bashing him in over the head while his attention is shifted. She also pushes her Gear to the edge of its performance, riding the engine hot while keeping the controls steady enough to maintain the machine as a useful combat platform.

Attributes

AGI	2	APP	1	BUI	-1	CRE	0	FIT	1
INF	0	KNO	0	PER	1	PSY	-1	WIL	-1
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	20	UD	3	AD	2

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Acrobatics	1	2	Gunnery: HG	2	1	Music	1	0	Stealth	1	2
Athletics	1	1	HTH	1	2	Navigation	1	0	Streetwise	2	0
Combat Sense	2	1	H. Gear Dueling	3	2	Notice	1	1	Tactics	1	0
Communications	1	0	Heavy Gear Pilot	3	2	Psychology	1	0	Theatrics	1	0
Dodge	1	2	Literature	1	0	Small Arms	1	2			
Electronic Warfare	1	0									





Emili Royal's Dartjäger

The Dartjäger piloted so successfully by Emili Royal is the result of a promotional campaign by the Jäger design office at Territorial Arms. Worried that their colleagues at the Black Mamba development office were stealing all the attention from their "old reliable" machine, a concerted effort was made to create specialized high-profile modifications to advertise the benefits of their machine. Professional dueling seemed an obvious market and they began to court various professional teams to advertise their materiel.

When the arena game of "Block and Run" became extremely popular in the TN 1920s, the design team at TA came up with a dedicated version of their Dartjäger. Although many players still choose the Iguana, the Dart is much less expensive to purchase, maintain and upgrade, and hence is highly attractive to team owners.

The Gears are less popular for use in other dueling sports because of their reduced armor and offensive capabilities, but as Block and Run becomes the sport of choice for many teams, the modified Dart is finding its way into most of the professional stables in the South. The project has been successful enough that Territorial Arms has announced long-term plans to create a whole line of dueling variants aimed at the different markets. A "blocker" Gear based on the chassis of the Spitting Cobra is expected to appear in the stables of several top teams by the mid TN 1930s.

The Dartjägers purchased by the Stingers have proven to be crowd pleasers as they zip down the playing field at dizzying speeds. Outtakes from several Stingers matches are featured in many Territorial Arms promotional trideos. Emili's exploits on the field have made her the favorite choice for promotional coverage and her Gear is featured on many of the Stingers' shirts, banners, beverage holders and a wide variety of other merchandise. Especially popular has been a Stingers trideo filmed from Emili's Gear, entitled Run Like Hell. The recording is widely available in Southern sporting good stores.

Specifications ♦

The Dartjäger modification for dueling aims at working on the strengths of the original model. By lightening the weapons load and armor, the designers were able to improve both maneuverability and speed. Speed was further improved by a new engine and an alternative tire system that is more resistant than in the standard Dart. This combination lacks torque, however, and so the modified Dart cannot pull any heavy loads. The Gear also features the standard modifications for the Republican Federation of Duelists professional circuit including sporting weapons and scoring sensors to keep track of score in a variety of different games. The Dart also features a full trideo link-up which allows not only for point-of-view recordings to be edited and sold to the public at a later date, but also for the images to be used during live play-by-play commentary. Emili dislikes the world watching through her eyes, but has little choice in the matter.

☐ Modifications

Add: DPG (F, 30 rounds), Improved Off-Road, Ram Plate (F), Scoring Sensors, Sporting Weapons, Trideo Linkup, Poor Towing Capacity

Remove: LAC, LRP/24, HG, VB

Change: Increase Top Walking Speed to 48 kph, Top Ground Speed to 96 kph, and Maneuver to +1, Decrease Deployment Range to 300 km and Base Armor to 11

Unit Defects: None

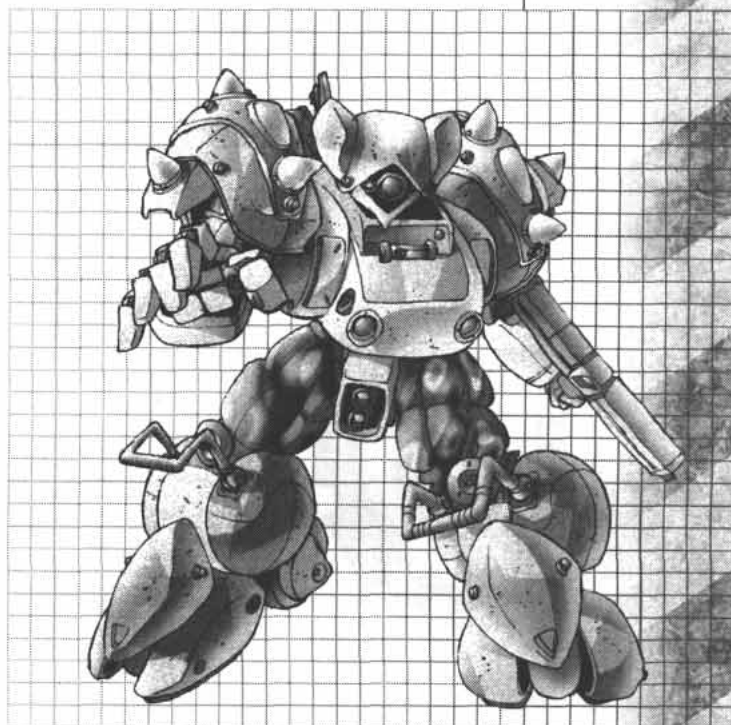
Modified TV: 343

Offensive: 99

Defensive: 362

Miscellaneous: 568

NOTE: For simplification and ease of reference, the above modifications apply to the stats of the standard Jäger Gear shown in the HG Rulebook.



DUELISTS AND THEIR MACHINES



5

Duncan Polson



Born in TN 1903 in Kenema, Duncan always wanted to join his mother as a design engineer at Shaian Mechanics. Revana Polson had helped refine the integrated stabilizer mount that had permitted the deployment of the heavier weaponry on the Cheetah chassis. During the War of the Alliance, Revana's designs helped field the Strike Cheetah, but also showed young Duncan the price of war. Shaian became an orbital target and in TN 1914 Revana was killed along with her whole design team. Even in the peaceful times after the war, Duncan never forgot the price his family had paid and became determined to defend his community. He joined the Norlight Cadets in TN 1923 and the Northern Guard in TN 1927, gaining admission to the 18th HG regiment.

Duncan was assigned to the 18th's fabled B Company — the Busybees — and distinguished himself in operations along the NLC border. The more he fielded his Gear, the more he felt the presence of his mother and became convinced that she was watching over him.

Profession

Duncan's determination to honor the memory of his mother has lead him to master his Strike Cheetah as few others. He was elected Duelist of his regiment in TN 1931. The next cycle, Duncan obtained leave to train under Katryne Sanz, a former Duelist and the Guard's top Gear trainer. Returning to his regiment at the end of TN 1932, Duncan has not only been drilled in all the skills necessary to accomplish his tasks, but understands intimately the sense of honor that comes from his position.

Attitudes

Duncan feels the weight of his mother's death with every breath. To him she died to produce the war machine he pilots, and each victory is another tribute to her sacrifice. In rare moments of calm, his mind floats back to the mechanical engineering that is his first love, but the association with his mother's death is too great. Only in the role of Duelist can Duncan find a way to atone for his mother's death. Regimental psychologists have identified this strain in Duncan, but have judged it controlled enough to allow him to perform his duties.

Combat Reactions

Duncan strikes hard and fast in his Gear, often delivering stunning combinations of attacks that use his signature rapid-fire bazooka to fill a small area with exploding shells. Alternatively, he can use the same weapon to maintain a steady, focused onslaught to punch through an enemy's armor plating. In a pinch, he has even been know to use his disposable backup pack gun for the same effect, a tactic that often surprises his opponents — for a few seconds.

Attributes

AGI	2	APP	1	BUI	0	CRE	0	FIT	1
INF	0	KNO	0	PER	1	PSY	-1	WIL	1
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	25	UD	4	AD	3

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Ambush	2	2	Electronics	1	0	HG P. (Str. Cheetah)*	3	2	Stealth	1	2
Camouflage	1	0	Electronic Warfare	1	0	Mechanics	1	0	Survival	1	0
Combat Sense	2	1	Gunnery: HG	2	1	Navigation	2	0	Tactics	1	0
Communications	1	0	HTH	1	2	Notice	1	1	*(specialization)		
Computer	1	0	HG Architecture	1	0	Small Arms	1	2			
Dodge	2	2	H. Gear Dueling	3	2						

Age:	38 cycles
Height:	1.61 meters
Weight:	78 kg
Hair Color:	Black
Eye Color:	Brown
Handedness:	Right-Handed





Duncan Polson's Strike Cheetah

The Strike Cheetah piloted by Duncan Polson has seen a lot of action. A machine used during the many paratrooper raids on Colonial positions at the end of the War of the Alliance, there are few parts in the machine that have not been damaged and rebuilt. The regiment's technicians take great pride in the history of the machine and the fact that it still serves the regiment with distinction. Pilots from the Busybees consider the machine theirs and sometimes grumble that it shouldn't be used to represent the whole regiment. Most of these comments are in jest, but a few passionate rivalries have been felt between the various companies. The Strike was assigned to Polson when he became Duelist in an attempt to lessen these tensions. A member of the Busybees, his piloting of the machine has satisfied his company-mates, while his role of Duelist involves representing the whole regiment. Duncan keeps the Gear maintained by the techs of B Company, however, and inter-company tension remains a serious concern for the regimental commanders.

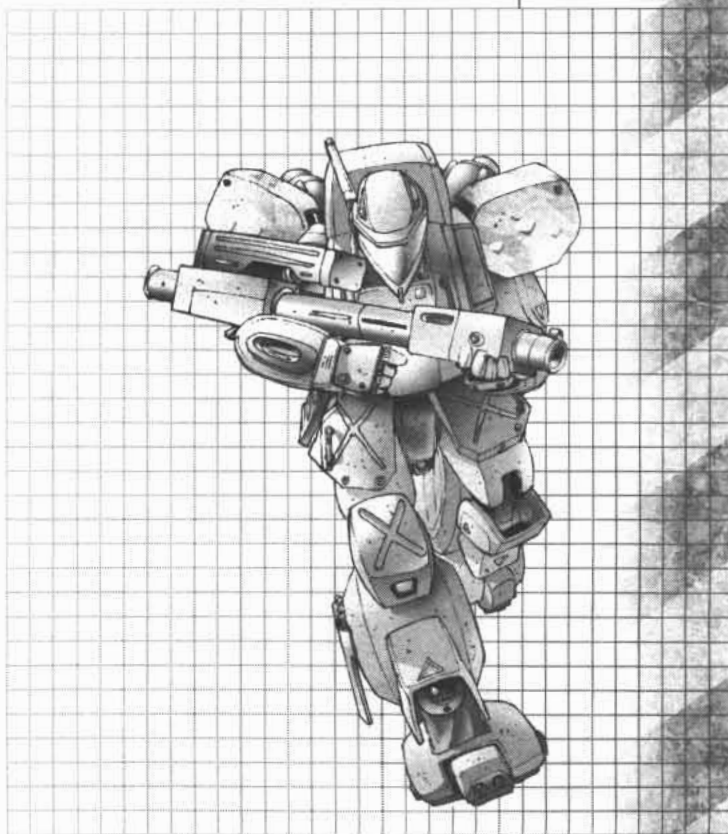
In late TN 1932 the rivalries between the Busybees and the other companies in the 18th HG regiment nearly exploded when the Strike Cheetah was stolen from the regimental vehicle pool. The Busybees quickly accused members of the other companies and several fights broke out among the troops. The Gear, however, was found to have been stolen by a Busybees' pilot. Distraught over the death of his family in a rover raid on their farm on the border of the Badlands, the pilot had gotten drunk and then convinced technicians that he was to take the Gear out into the field. Surrounded by military police, the distraught pilot was confronted with the fact that he had very possibly ruined his military career and seemed ready to do something drastic. Duncan Polson was a squadron-mate of the pilot and it was he who talked him out of it, gaining the respect of the whole regiment. Many of the 18th's pilots still point to that incident as an example of Polson's understanding of the role of a Duelist.

Specifications ♦

While many Duelists pilot heavily modified machines, Polson and his regiment feel that a Duelist must be useful on the battlefield as well. The 18th's technicians take great pride in the fact that the Strike Cheetah piloted by Polson fits the standard military specifications despite its many overhauls. The only true additions have been additional protection added in the form of an armored jacket and a shielded covering over the Gear's sensor head. These can both be shed in short order so as to disguise the dueling machine's identity during standard combat operations.

▣ Modifications

Add:	RFB (F, 60 rounds), Airdroppable, Backup Sensors, Reinforced Location Armor (R1, Crew)
Remove:	LRP/24, HG, Target Designator
Change:	Base Armor to 14, ECM to R2
Unit Defects:	None
Modified TV:	743
Offensive:	422
Defensive:	1088
Miscellaneous:	719
NOTE: For simplification, these modifications apply to the stock Cheetah.	



DUELISTS AND THEIR MACHINES



5

Adrianne Bils



Age:	42 cycles
Height:	1.61 meters
Weight:	59 kg
Hair Color:	Light brown
Eye Color:	Dark brown
Handedness:	Left-Handed

Born in TN 1899 into the Paxton Arms worker caste, Adrianne was a rambunctious child when the Colonial Expeditionary Force attempted its invasion of Terra Nova. Throughout the War of the Alliance, she grew up surrounded by the fear that gripped her community — the terror that Earth forces would assault Peace River. When the Peace River Army was mobilized, young Adrianne worked to prepare it as part of the PRA Youth Corps. After the War, Adrianne signed up to join the Peace River Defense Force and served as part of a rapid reaction force for several cycles.

In TN 1926, Adrianne met Badlander Silas Morose and a romance soon developed. By TN 1928 they were married in Peace River. Wanting to start a family, Adrianne requested a transfer to the Peace Officer Corps, becoming a police officer instead of a soldier. Still craving the excitement of the PRDF, she joined the POC contingent of the Desert Dueling League. Her team was away from Peace River performing an exhibition match when the city was bombed in TN 1939. She thanks god every day that it was one of the rare occasions when her husband and twins sons had accompanied her on the tour.

Profession

With the outlet of dueling games, Adrianne has come to really enjoy her duties as a Peace Officer. Her military experience has put her into the POC's Gear units. Before Peace River was destroyed, she and her team patrolled the industrial sector of the city, occasionally being called in for crowd control. Now she and her unit keep watch over the construction efforts of New Peace River at the base of the Pacifica Range.

Attitudes

As Adrianne settled into married life, she discovered a domestic side to her personality that surprised most of her old PRDF buddies. On the job, she is all business and even at times a hotshot, but off duty she becomes a jovial and relaxed woman. She and Silas spend as much time as the can with their sons, Maxwell and Kelvin, enjoying each moment to its fullest. She once feared that her role as a POC Duelist would interfere with her family life, but she has managed to balance her roles perfectly.

Combat Reactions

Adrianne Bils uses her dual autocannons to dramatic and, were her fights real, lethal effect. Her favorite tactic is literally to spray down an area with autocannon fire, ensuring at least some contact with the enemy. She can also focus her fire into a concentrated, steady burst that rips through armor plating. Although she never fires both weapons simultaneously, she does usually carry them at the same time, if only for effect.

Attributes

AGI	1	APP	0	BUI	0	CRE	0	FIT	0
INF	1	KNO	0	PER	2	PSY	1	WIL	1
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	25	UD	5	AD	5

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	2	2	Electronic Warfare	1	0	Investigation	2	2	Notice	2	2
Communications	2	0	Gunnery: HG	2	2	Law	1	0	Psychology	1	0
Computer	1	0	HTH	2	1	Leadership	1	1	Small Arms	2	1
Dodge	2	1	H. Gear Dueling	3	1	Literature	1	0	Streetwise	2	1
Drive	1	1	Heavy Gear Pilot	3	1	Melee	2	1			
Electronics	1	0	Intimidate	1	0	Navigation	1	0			





DUELISTS AND THEIR MACHINES

5

Adrianne Bils' Gladiator

When the Peace Officer Corps decided to participate in the Desert Dueling League as a way to boost morale and public appreciation of the police force, they purchased a series of Gladiator Heavy Gears. These dedicated dueling machines from Paxton Arms were then modified by POC mechanics to match the style of combat expected of them. In most cases these modifications were aimed at lowering the lethal nature of the Gladiator's weapons load, as the original Gears were designed to be sold to the underground dueling circuits so prevalent in the Badlands. Peace Officer Corps technicians produced a standard set of modifications and then allowed their teams to customize the Gears of individual pilots based on these design specifications. The Gladiator piloted by Adrianne Bils is a fairly popular customization, reflecting the types of battles most preferred by POC pilots and the New Peace River home crowd.

Adrianne, used to the Warrior and Pit Bull military and police Gears, has learned to appreciate the flexibility of the dueling machine. When she returns to active duty she can hardly prevent herself from complaining about the comparative sluggishness of her standard Gears. Comments such as these have led to a movement within the POC to have their Gears overhauled to match the performance of the dueling machines. The officers argue that it is the pilots in the trenches (or on the battlefield) who should benefit from the peak of Paxton Arms technological advancement, rather than those partaking in sports events. A limited number of modified Police Gladiators — more prototypes than actual variants — have appeared within their ranks as a result of these negotiations. Company insiders believe that this project is designed to ensure labor peace in the POC rather than actually lead to a new Gear design. Indeed the cost of the limited production Gladiator makes it an unlikely candidate to replace the popular Pit Bull urban police Gear, although some members of the Gladiator design team have begun working on converting the Gear for mass production.

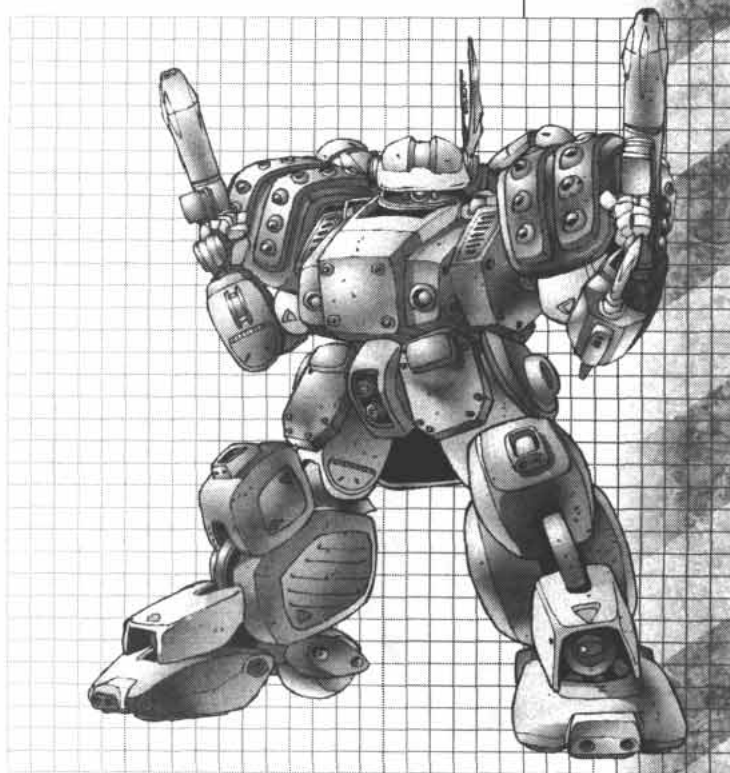
Specifications ◆

The POC places importance on speed and style in dueling, rather than the brutal close-combat carnage favored by the Gladiator's usual customers. As such, the POC technicians have removed both the shield, vibroax and spike gun from the Gear, although they have retained its reinforced shoulders for occasional ramming. To increase speed, several armor plates have been replaced with flexible armored weave.

The Gladiator's standard weapons load has been modified to suit the rapid-fire shoot-outs popular with POC officers. Adrianne's machine, with its left arm freed from carrying a shield, sports twin light autocannons. The machine also features the safe weapons and specialized sensors of a professional dueling Gear.

☐ Modifications

Add:	2 x LAC (F, 30 rounds each), Sporting Weapons, Scoring Sensors
Remove:	All weapons, Shield
Change:	Top Ground Speed to 80 kph, Base Armor to 13
Unit Defects:	Electronic Glitch (-1 Communications Rating)
Modified TV:	391
Offensive:	502
Defensive:	429
Miscellaneous:	242



DUELISTS AND THEIR MACHINES

5



Gaitan "Lash" Alani



Age:	38 cycles
Height:	1.70 meters
Weight:	63 kg
Hair Color:	Black (shaved)
Eye Color:	Brown
Handedness:	Right-Handed

Gaitan Alani was born in Fort William in TN 1903. Secondary members of the powerful Zucco clan, the Gaitans benefited from many advantages in Western society, attending the best schools and being favored for promotion. Alani was raised in a strict environment and sent to military boarding school after her mother died of pulmonary cancer in TN 1910. A child during the War, Alani nevertheless did her part in the Western Youth Resistance Brigade and watched with pride as her father Luis led his unit of the WFPA against the colonial forces. Becoming a WFPA Gear pilot in TN 1926, she discovered that few battles remained to be fought in the postwar détente and her desire to follow in her father's glorious footsteps led only to endless patrols and exercises. Finally in TN 1929, she went AWOL and paid smugglers to get her and her Jaguar to Khayr ad-Din, where she could finally prove herself in combat.

Profession

In the City of Trash, Alani took the moniker "Lash" and entered the Spider's dueling circuit. In TN 1930, she stunned locals by trouncing Solitaire, the reigning champion, in single combat. By 1931 she was top seed and remained so until Solitaire's dramatic comeback in 1934 — right before he retired from the life of a gladiator. Lash handily reclaimed her position in 1935, but she put aside her arena days in 1936 to join Katryne Sanz' Khayr ad-Din Army, where she has remained ever since.

Attitudes

Lash has always thought a glorious place on the battlefield was her birthright. Raised under the specter of Zucco clan's illustrious military history and her father's accomplishments, she has come to Khayr ad-Din to prove herself as a warrior. Her sense of honor is strong, but she feels that gladiatorial Duelists are but pale reflections of their regimental counterparts. With the Khayr ad-Din Army and both the Interpolar and White Wars, Lash was finally able to claim her birthright. In the past, she went to great lengths to conceal her identity to protect herself from Western military intelligence. Now, however, with her newfound role and comrades, she has relaxed somewhat, granting interviews and even using her real name. Shortly following the war, she received a short message from her father, who had applied pressure to keep the military police from thoroughly investigating her disappearance. It said, simply, "You've done me proud." She plans to reunite with him in the near future, though not in the Western Frontier Protectorate — she is still a wanted criminal there.

Combat Reactions

Lash prefers close-in physical combat to a ranged battle, since it allows her to use her signature weapon to its maximum effect. Even when she doesn't deploy the haywire whip, she often engages in melee combat. If her autocannon is spent, she simply employs it as a makeshift weapon. She prefers to target her opponent's engine housing when possible, but is just as happy to punch clean through the armor.

Attributes

AGI	2	APP	1	BUI	0	CRE	0	FIT	1
INF	0	KNO	0	PER	1	PSY	0	WIL	0
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	25	UD	4	AD	4

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Athletics	1	1	Gambling	1	1	Leadership	1	0	Notice	2	1
Combat Sense	2	1	Gunnery (HG)	2	1	Mechanics	1	0	Small Arms	2	2
Communications	1	0	HTH	1	2	Melee	1	2	Streetwise	1	0
Dodge	2	2	H. Gear Dueling	4	2	Navigation	1	0	Tactics	1	0
Electronic Warfare	1	0	Heavy Gear Pilot	4	2						



DUELISTS AND THEIR MACHINES

5

Lash's Jaguar

When Gaitan Alani went AWOL to seek glory in Khayr ad-Din, she took her HACS-02MG-MPS Jaguar with her. Transporting the Gear to the city of trash involved emptying much of the family's bank account to pay a cartel of Wounded Knee smugglers, but it was well worth it. In Khayr ad-Din, Lash repainted her machine and did her best to remove as many serial numbers and unit codes as possible. Needing modifications, but short of cash, Lash found that certain of Khayr ad-Din's top mechanics were willing to work on credit for the opportunity to work on such a top-of-the-line machine as the Jaguar. With their help, her Gear was made ready for gladiatorial combat.

Lash's skill as a pilot and the performance of her Gear led to an impressive string of victories. Her swashbuckling defeat of reigning champion Solitaire in the Web Arena made her the darling of gamblers in the city and got her invited to all the top competitions. By the time Lash became champion of the Khayr ad-Din circuit, she was one of the crowd favorites and had attracted the patronage of Saddik "the Spider" himself. Both of these facts assured Lash access to all the top mechanics in the city.

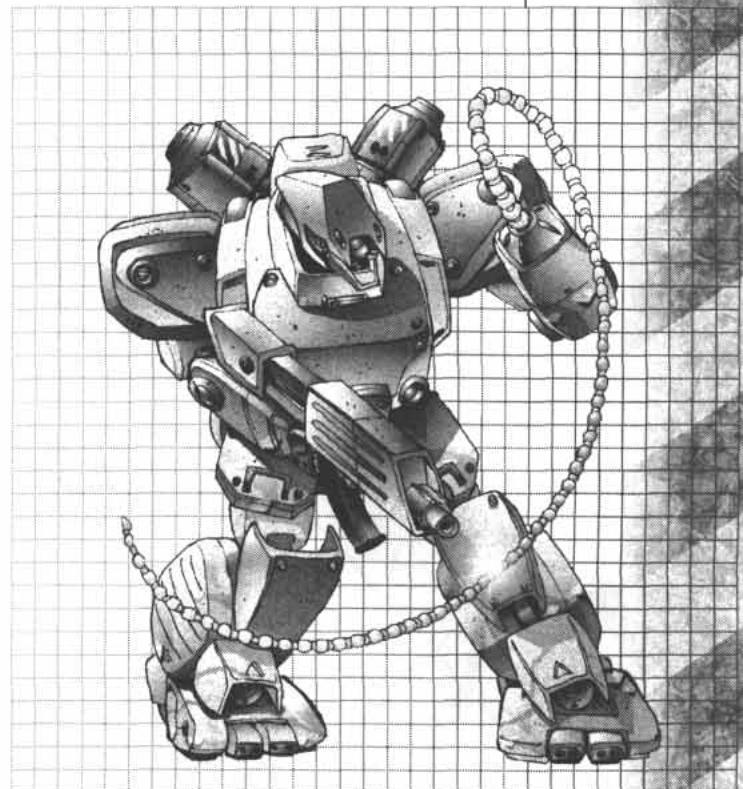
The attention of the city's best Gear techs, including some working for "Trasher Queen" Hanna Dominic, transformed the military machine. There are few systems that have been so handled, retooled, examined, maintained and admired by the best hands in Khayr ad-Din. The military payload of the Jaguar has been transformed, turning the Gear into an expression of Lash's fighting personality. Flamboyant and effective, Lash used her Gear to become the bane of many stars of the Web Arena. With each victory, she gained more fans and more resources to modify her machine further, making herself an even more effective competitor. Lash's ultimate goal is to use her winnings to have a new Gear custom-built for her. This machine would include all the dueling weapons and tools that she requires and ideally be based upon the Nemesis Jaguar chassis.

Specifications ◆

Lash's Jaguar has been redesigned and outfitted to match her dueling style. The major addition has been a unique haywire whip. Electronic systems in the Jaguar have been reinforced and insulated to withstand the whip's powerful electric charge, which is fed from a battery array charged by the Gear's V-engine. The Jaguar also features reinforced shoulders, a forearm spike and a complement of hand grenades to round out its close-combat punch. For ranged combat, Lash uses only a standard medium autocannon. Lash feels that use of such heavy weaponry in close quarters is dishonorable and too dangerous for the audience. She prefers to rely on skill and speed rather than heavy firepower.

☐ Modifications

Add:CR (F), HWP (F, 10 charges), Battle Arm (R6, can punch), Backup Communications, Backup Sensors, Ram Plate (F)	
Remove:	LRP/32, VB, one Manipulator Arm
Change:	N/A
Unit Defects:	None
Modified TV:	622
Offensive:	746
Defensive:	551
Miscellaneous:	570



DUELISTS AND THEIR MACHINES



5

Teresa "Roc" Orlov



Age:	30
Height:	207 cm
Weight:	115 kg
Hair Color:	Strawberry
Eye Color:	Blue
Handedness:	Right-Handed

Teresa Orlov, known also as Roc in the arena, is a large woman from the Orlov family of the Thirsk clan of the Liberati So-Doura nation. She is also a Mount Duelist who fights dramatic battles in the arenas of Gomorrah's Alpha Level; unlike most Caprician gladiatorial Duelists, however, who work as employees of the Alpha Level arenas, Orlov is that rarest of gladiators: a freelance agent who owns her own Mount. In reality, Orlov is a member of the Liberati resistance movement in Gomorrah, and she works the underground dueling arenas looking for recruits.

She has been a member of the resistance for only a few short years; prior to her new life, she worked as a miner for her clan, harvesting Caprice's natural petroleum deposits. During that time, she operated numerous Workmounts, including her clan's Pithom and her family's Type 64 "Hunchback." She became an exceptional pilot and also learned to repair and maintain Mounts. The Liberati resistance movement trained her in mechanized combat, a skill for which she had little use while mining petroleum.

Profession

Working for the resistance, Orlov's primary duty is to scout the Alpha Level arenas in search of talented pilots to recruit. When she identifies a candidate, she carefully studies him for several months, observing his behavior and looking for traits that mark him as someone the resistance can use. Once she has identified and recruited a pilot, she meets him in the gladiatorial arena for a spectacular one-on-one duel to the death that she always wins. In reality, she uses theatrics and special effects to trick the audience into believing they've just witnessed a real death match, providing the new recruit with the opportunity to slip away unnoticed into his new life.

Attitudes

Orlov generally detests the CEF occupation of her planet, and is happy enough to use her talents as a Mount pilot to recruit additional personnel into the ranks of the resistance movement. She sometimes feels out of place in the arena, having grown up in the highlands of Caprice as a nomad, but she also enjoys fighting Mount duels. She does not particularly relish killing, however, and rarely fights legitimate battles to the death.

Combat Reactions

As a youth, Orlov worked in her clan's hog farm huts, where one of her tasks was to net swine for slaughter. Her large size and great strength were distinct advantages for the grueling task, and she has carried her experiences into her adult life as a professional fighter. One of her favorite tactics, both in her Mount and out, is to disable her opponent using a net and to follow it up with either a lethal blow (if the situation warrants) or public humiliation. When Roc nets a "swine" in the gladiatorial arenas of Alpha Level and broadcasts hog-calling sounds over her loudspeakers, the crowds go wild.

Attributes

AGI	+1	APP	0	BUI	+2	CRE	0	FIT	+2
INF	0	KNO	0	PER	+1	PSY	+1	WIL	+1
STR	+2	HEA	+1	STA	40	UD	9	AD	9

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Athletics	2	2	F. Lang (Anglic)	2	0	Intimidate	1	2	Sleight-of-Hand	1	1
Combat Sense	2	1	Gunnery: Mount	2	1	Mechanics	3	0	Survival	2	0
Dodge	2	1	HTH	2	1	Melee	2	1	Theatrics	2	0
Drive	2	1	Human Perception	2	1	Mount Pilot	3	1	Tinker	3	0
Earth Sciences	1	0									



Teresa Orlov's Bruiser

When the Liberati resistance movement recruited Teresa Orlov to work the gladiatorial arenas of Alpha Level, looking for talented pilots to recruit herself, her superiors offered her a choice of Mounts to use in her role. She immediately picked a battered old Bruiser — while not any real comparison to the Pithom Workmount she had operated and maintained while prospecting for petroleum, its large size and broad shoulders at least appealed to her on a personal level. A Duelist's vehicle often reflects its operator, after all.

It turned out that her Bruiser was actually one of the very first production units to roll off the assembly line when the Big Guy duelist conversion first appeared. The discovery of its history pleased Orlov greatly. Not only did she have a Mount suited to her personality and size, she had a piece of mechanized dueling history, an enviable position for any tinker or mechanic. (Additionally, the old age of the Mount appealed to her natural Liberati nomad propensity for recycling and reusing items and materials rather than discarding them.) Further research into the old Mount's past, however, revealed a trend that would have disturbed other pilots: the Mount had never won a duel. In fact, more than half of its previous pilots had died in battle. This fact hardly fazed Orlov, however. Her indomitable Liberati spirit saw merely another challenge to overcome, which she has accomplished in spades, having never lost a duel in the venerable machine. While she attributes this record to her own skill (not counting wins in fixed fights against recruits), she does keep a small Fate idol in a secret cache beneath her seat. The idol bears her ribbons and holds a small eagle, her symbol, in its left hand.

Orlov maintains her Mount herself, being an accomplished mechanic as well as a respectable Duelist. In addition to providing her with the reassurance that the machine is always in top shape, it keeps the secret of her theatrics safe from prying eyes. Only she knows all the tricks her Mount can perform to simulate the death of a "foe."

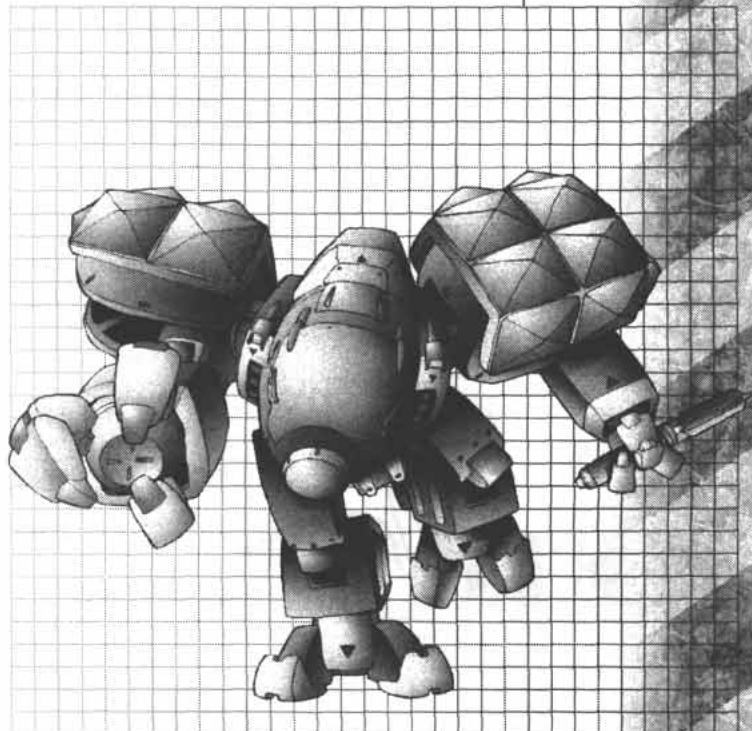
Specifications ◆

Orlov has installed extra protection in her cockpit, but has taken great steps to hide the fact from the casual observer. Her primary duty is to recruit for the resistance movement, after all, and not to die in the gladiatorial arenas of Alpha Level. As part of her arena theatrics, her mount features scoring sensors, smoke canisters and an upgraded CPU that manages her special effects. She can toggle her modified vibroblade from real to simulated damage with the flip of a switch. Additionally, her Mount features a vehicle-sized net gun mounted on the machine's back, where the stock Big Guy mounts a gas canister launcher, which she uses as part of her basic tactics.

□ Modifications

Add: Net Gun (F, 3 shots), High Capacity Computer, Reinforced Crew Compartment, Scoring Sensors, Smoke Launchers (3 charges), Sporting Weapon (vibroblade only)

Remove:	N/A
Change:	N/A
Unit Defects: Movement System Defect (-1 MP to Walking Top Speed)	
Modified TV:	353
Offensive:	253
Defensive:	61
Miscellaneous:	746



DUELISTS AND THEIR MACHINES

5



Kyle Seitz



Age:	35
Height:	175 cm
Weight:	68 kg
Hair Color:	Brown
Eye Color:	Brown
Handedness:	Right-Handed

Kyle Seitz is a corporate citizen to the bone. His family has worked for Hakkar or its subsidiaries for fifteen continuous generations; before that, the Seitz family worked for SynTek, Hakkar's predecessor. Seitz was born, raised and educated in South Dresden, one of Hakkar's Venarow Hub arcologies for its middle-class employees. Upon graduation, Hakkar's vocational placement division assigned him to MassTech Heavy Industries, its primary Mount manufacturing subsidiary, where he started out as a Mount operator in its shipping department while being groomed for an eventual management post.

Seitz demonstrated a keen aptitude in his piloting abilities and was transferred to MassTech's research and development division, where he worked his way up to the position of Principal Test Pilot. In addition to testing new Mount models, Seitz' duties included public relations tours of Gomorrah, demonstrating MassTech's vehicles in gaudy exhibitions and mock-combat with other MassTech test pilots. His flashy showmanship techniques earned him celebrity status amongst trade show attendees and the general public alike. He was looking forward to a comfortable, early retirement right up until the moment Isybel Czenza, Hakkar's best Duelist at the time, lost a fatal match to Costa Moreia's Dugga Revell. When Mazir de Souza himself appointed Seitz to the vacated role, Seitz saw his dreams all but shattered.

Profession

Team Hakkar comprises twenty professional, top-notch pilots, and Seitz is one of the finest ever to serve. His teammates publicly support him, but the appointment of a virtual outsider (who is little more than a pretender, in their eyes) to Principal Duelist and team leader has nearly all of them harboring private ill will towards Seitz. Still, he is a remarkable Duelist and has led the team to several spectacular victories during his short tenure.

Attitudes

Seitz has undergone a dramatic transformation in the year that he's been Hakkar's Principal Duelist. Battling fellow Hakkar employees in mock duels for show was one thing; being the focus of Hakkar pride and honor and fighting for real is an entirely different matter for him. The burden and the strain have pushed him to the edge, and he deeply resents being forced to take up real dueling. His own senses of personal honor, loyalty and duty, both to his family and to his employer, prevent him from stepping down. Instead, he sinks deeper and deeper into depression, awaiting with dread the day he slips up and gets himself killed, just like Czenza did.

Combat Reactions

Secretly fearing every moment he steps into the ring — despite the fact that few corporate duels ever result in a fatality — Seitz moves quickly and precisely, attempting to end the battle as rapidly as possible. During his first duels, he maintained a great deal of the showmanship that marked his days as a test pilot; few of these traits remain in his current style, however.

Attributes

AGI	+2	APP	-1	BUJ	-1	CRE	0	FIT	+1
INF	0	KNO	0	PER	+1	PSY	-1	WIL	0
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	20	UD	4	AD	3

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Acrobatics	2	2	Combat Sense	2	1	Gunnery: Mount	3	1	Streetwise	1	0
Aircraft Pilot	1	2	Communications	1	0	Hand-to-Hand	1	2	Theatrics	2	0
Athletics	2	1	Dodge	1	2	Leadership	1	0	*Specialization		
Business	1	0	Etiquette	1	0	Mount P.(Mayhem)*3	2				





Kyle Seitz' Mayhem

MassTech's new Type 119(D) "Mayhem" Mount was the last vehicle Kyle Seitz operated as MassTech's Principal Test Pilot, and it is the one with which he is most comfortable. He took it from its early stages of development through to its final production, and he toured the Gomorran trade shows with his Mayhem. It was only natural that he continue operating the machine as Hakkar's Principal Duelist.

His particular Mayhem Combat Mount is actually the original prototype model. It has seen its share of mishaps, accidents and catastrophes during its days on the test course, in the exhibition halls and on the dueling arena floor. Practically every component in the vehicle has been replaced at least once; the sole exception is the pilot's seat, which is still the original (if beat-up) item — a fact not lost on Seitz, who sees it as something of a good sign despite his otherwise negative attitude towards dueling. Most of the outer shell has actually been replaced numerous times. The first time it had to be replaced followed a test course mishap that put Seitz into the hospital for a week (an extremely long time considering the advancement of modern medical procedures). In a careless moment, while practicing his exhibition moves (such as his signature victory lap with arms outstretched) and taking the Mount through the Gauntlet obstacle course at the same time, Seitz lost control of his machine, stumbled fifteen meters through tank trap blocks, and flipped head over heels into a pit. Every surface of the Mount's shell was dented, punctured or scraped raw. He became a much more careful pilot following that particular accident.

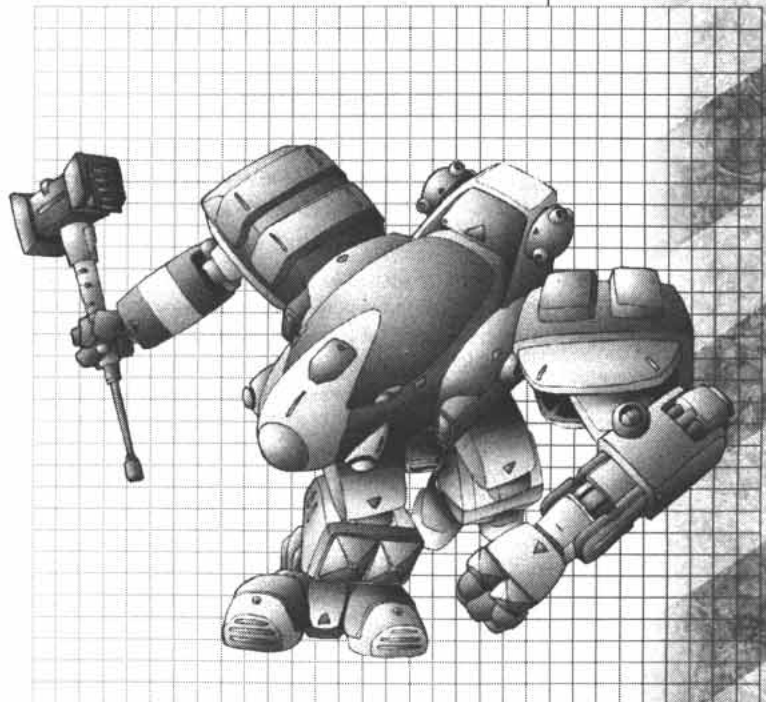
The original design of the Mayhem featured a compressed gas spike gun designed to damage severely an opponent's Mount. On a whim, Seitz used a heavy, studded mace while demonstrating the machine at the Tercentennial B. F. T. Heights Motor Show in LC 272 and was delighted to note that the crowds seemed to respond better to the mace than they had to the more effective spike gun. Immediately following the show, he suggested the final production version of the Mayhem feature the more viscerally exciting weapon.

Specifications ●

Although he was perfectly happy with the crowd-pleasing mace during his days of exhibition matches at trade shows, Seitz' desire to end his real battles quickly has led him to replace it with the spike gun he used during his initial tests of the machine. The battles still aren't over quickly enough for him, however, and he is looking into additional weapons upgrades. Besides the armament modification, he has wrangled a more powerful engine for his vehicle as well, giving him a faster Mount. Unfortunately, the machine was never designed for such speeds and is somewhat difficult to control. (Being a master pilot, however, Seitz hardly notices the setback.) Finally, for added protection, he has strengthened the structure of his cockpit, hoping the modification will keep him alive long enough to retire.

☐ Modifications

Add:	Spike Gun (F, 6 shots), Reinforced Crew Compartment
Remove:	Mace
Change:	Top Speed to 79 kph
Unit Defects:	Unstable
Modified TV:	258
Offensive:	129
Defensive:	75
Miscellaneous:	569





5.2 – The Duelist's Vehicle

A Duelist without a vehicle is, more often than not, just an old barfly telling tall tales in a pub or a starry-eyed youth daydreaming of making it into the big leagues. Duelists require vehicles, and, in many cases, the vehicle will make or break the Duelist. Each of the three broad classes of Duelist has different sources for their vehicles, and each source has its peculiarities to make the Duelist's life interesting.

Military Duelists have the least complicated lives when it comes to acquiring a vehicle; it is simply assigned to the Duelist by his military organization. Usually the vehicle a neophyte regimental Duelist uses in his new role is the vehicle he used the day before, when he was a regular combat pilot, but not always. It is not unheard of for the new Duelist to choose a new vehicle (or for the brass to assign one), and the higher-ups usually approve the request. He is often most comfortable in his original vehicle, however, and the vehicle's NNet has most likely long-since adapted to his particular style. The two, in essence, operate in concert, a duet unmatched by other pilots — after all, it is this synergy that likely attracted the attention of his peers in the first place. Analysts have noted that fully 25% of all military Duelists have NNet that can learn beyond their initial training, as opposed to roughly 17% of the general population of NNet. Whether being involved in dueling is the cause or the effect of this ability to learn is unknown, however. (See 2.5.3, “Neural Network Evolution,” on p. 16 of the [[Second Edition Technical Manual]] for more information on NNet learning.)

It is almost as easy for a sports Duelist to acquire a vehicle as it is for a military Duelist. The Duelist's sponsor typically supplies the vehicle; in the case of Duelist teams, the team owner is responsible for assigning vehicles — usually through lucrative sponsorship contracts. The supplier almost always purchases the vehicle directly from the manufacturer. Manufacturers sponsor their own teams, of course, and simply donate the vehicles to these teams, along with a favorable maintenance and supply contract that often gives their sponsored Duelists an edge over others that use the same vehicles. Vehicles used in sports dueling can be nearly any make or model (special operations vehicles and the Southern Republic's Fer-de-Lance Heavy Gear being notable exceptions). They are never shipped with actual military weapons, however, and come with sporting weapons only. In the occasional match that uses real weapons and live ammunition, the sponsor of the match supplies the weapons.

It is most difficult for a gladiatorial Duelist to come by a vehicle. Since the entire sport is usually illegal, gladiators do not have the resources or means that sports or military Duelists have. (The Eastern Suns Emirates' gladiators are an exception, of course, blurring the line between military, sports, and gladiatorial dueling at the whim of the Emirs.) Gladiatorial Duelists (or their sponsors, if they are lucky enough to have them) often purchase their vehicles from the black market or from military surplus. Civilian vehicles make interesting dueling vehicles, too, and it is not uncommon to see customized Work Gears such as a Groundhog or a Prairie Dog battling it out in the arena. Scrap heaps and landfills provide sources for the raw materials from which a Duelist can custom-build a vehicle. Gladiators sometimes steal their vehicles directly from military forces; this situation is especially true of gladiators who were once soldiers but have gone AWOL and entered the underground dueling circuit. The theft of military equipment is a serious crime, however, and can attract unwanted attention from a variety of unpleasant sources, so most Duelists do not choose this route.

□ Mario “The Procurer” Vincezi



Mario Vincezi was the Duelist for the Northern Guard's 28th Gear Regiment — the Rising Cross — from TN 1925 to TN 1927. During this time, he discovered that his access to the regiment's supplies was rarely questioned. In a rare moment of weakness, he “liberated” a few crates of rockets to sell on the black market, figuring no one would miss them. He was quite wrong and was caught.

While being transferred to a military prison to await his court-martial, Vincezi managed to escape and flee south, eventually finding himself in the border city of Wounded Knee. Figuring he had already made a wreck of his life, he saw little reason not to continue his life of crime and joined the Forzi Cartel. Today, “The Procurer” manages a network of spies and thieves for the Cartel, which he uses to steal military vehicles and weapons. His best clients are underground Duelists looking for new vehicles, though he supplies a number of Badlands rovers as well. He is rumored to own an impressive collection of stolen military Gears himself.





Outfitting a Dueling Vehicle - 5.2.1

Once a Duelist has acquired his vehicle, he will likely need to modify it for dueling. This process involves selecting an appropriate weapons load, improving the vehicle's defense and tweaking the vehicle's overall performance. Each kind of duel has its own peculiarities for this process.

Military Vehicles ◆

Military duels are not fought to entertain a crowd; they are fought to settle a score, to defend one's honor, to break a standoff. Military Duelists need to defeat their opponents decisively and quickly, and their weapons loads reflect this need, most often following traditional military principles. Gaudy, dramatic weapons such as most melee weapons are virtually unheard of on military dueling vehicles. The exceptions to this rule are vibroblades, which are a standard part of almost every Heavy Gear model, and vibrorapiers. The vibrorapier is an invention of the Southern Republic Army elite, for whom the regular, human-scale rapier is a mark of honor and nobility. When Heavy Gears became common in the Army, it was only natural to develop a Gear-sized rapier and to incorporate Gear-scale rapier duels into their rites. With few exceptions, only Southern Republic Army Gears carry vibrorapiers in the military sector.

Military dueling vehicles often feature top-of-the-line systems designed to give the Duelist an edge in battle. (Ironically, many Duelists refuse these modifications, instead preferring to defeat an opponent through sheer skill rather than with fancy, high-performance systems.) Advanced control systems and helmet-mounted retinal holoprojectors are common upgrades. Less common are modifications to the actuation systems of walkers that allow them to perform maneuvers normally unheard of in a massive vehicle. Although highly desirable in close quarters, this upgrade is costly to perform on a vehicle outside of its manufacturing line. Even during the design and manufacturing processes, it is an expensive feature; only the Northern Nemesis Jaguar incorporates the improved actuation systems during on the assembly line.

Sporting and Gladiatorial Vehicles ◆

In direct contrast to military duels, sporting and gladiatorial duels exist exclusively to please the masses — and to turn a tidy profit for the sponsors and promoters of these battles. Although it is possible for a quick "kill" (whether literal or simulated) to be entertaining, the best duels are long, loud and dramatic, capable of charging a crowd up into a frenzy of excitement. An energetic crowd will buy more merchandise and will look forward to the next duel, which means the sponsors and promoters stand to make a much larger profit with an exciting match. Brutal melee weapons and flashy tactics accomplish this task readily. Most of the Heavy Gear-scale melee weapons were developed for the gladiatorial or sports dueling arena, in fact, and few find their way into the military sector. Ranged weapons are almost as common as melee weapons, though rarely with live ammo outside of a gladiatorial arena.

Common modifications to the basic systems of sporting vehicles include improvements to speed, since racing is an element often incorporated into the sports duel (especially Innsbruck's Death Track 1000). Gladiatorial dueling vehicles, on the other hand, often feature increased protection in the form of shields, weld plates of armor, and the like. These extra defenses aren't so much for the pilot's sake, however; they're designed largely to keep the duel going as long as possible. Extra armor plates are often shaped to present a unique silhouette for the vehicle in order to increase audience recognition. Colorful paint or unique paint schemes serve the same purpose; some of the most well-known dueling Gears are practically works of art.

Gekko Skovran

Gekko Skovran is one of the finest Gear mechanics in Khayr ad-Din. He entered the Galland School of Engineering in Rapid City, UMF, at an early age and graduated with honors in record time. Before the War of the Alliance, he worked hard for Northco, designing actuation and control systems that improved the basic Hunter's performance by 10% and earning himself countless awards. He couldn't take the high-strung pace of corporate life, however, and moved to the quaint Badlands town of Johar Ridge after the War. He opened a small shop there and spent the next twenty cycles living at a more reasonable pace and tinkering with whatever Gear designs suited his fancy.

Just before the Interpolar War broke out, Skovran and an Isaac-class GREL friend of his signed on with the Khayr ad-Din Army as mechanics, figuring the KADA would need all the help it could get in its worthy cause of protecting the Gamma Maglev and Khayr ad-Din. With their aid, the KADA Gears and other vehicles remained in top condition throughout the harried days of the Polar War. He and his GREL friend still work for the KADA, but they accept contracts from regular Khayr ad-Din Duelists who can afford their services, too.



5.3 - Dueling Weapons

While most duels are fought using standard battlefield weapons, several new types of armament have been exclusively developed for these specialized battles. Many of these weapons are crowd-pleasing arms that put style over substance, but others are classic weapons preferred by traditional Duelists.

Dueling Weapons List

Name	Code	Rating	Range	DM	Acc.	RoF	Ammo	Min. Size	Special
Vibroax	VA	34	0/0/0/0	x10	-1	0	N/A	3	Armor Crushing
Vibroclaws	VC	24	0/0/0/0	x8	+1	0	N/A	2	-
Vibrorapier	VR	27	0/0/0/0	x6	+1	0	N/A	3	Armor Piercing
Lance	LN	28	0/0/0/0	x13	-1	0	N/A	3	-
Heavy Lance	HLN	28	0/0/0/0	x15	-2	0	N/A	3	Armor Crushing, Clumsy
Explosive Lance	ELN	33	0/0/0/0	x14	-1	0	0.14	3	-
Haywire Lance	HWLN	61	0/0/0/0	x9	+1	0	0.25	3	Haywire
Whip	WP	55	0/0/0/0	x7	+1	0	N/A	3	Entangle
Haywire Whip	HWP	110	0/0/0/0	x7	+1	0	0.44	4	Entangle, Haywire
Net Gun	NG	222	1/2/3/4	x6	0	0	0.89	5	Entangle
Chain Sword	CS	20	0/0/0/0	x9	0	0	N/A	3	-
Mauler Fist	MF	61	0/0/0/0	x9	+1	0	N/A	3	Armor Crushing
Mace	MC	11	0/0/0/0	x8	-1	0	N/A	2	-
Morningstar	MS	38	0/0/0/1	x10	-2	0	N/A	3	Entangle
Piston Punch	PP	13	0/0/0/0	x10	0	0	N/A	2	Clumsy
Heavy Spike Gun	HSKG	66	0/0/0/0	x14	-1	0	0.27	4	Armor Piercing

5.3.1 - Dueling Weapon Characteristics

The weapon special characteristics established in the **Second Edition Heavy Gear Rulebook** (see 9.8.2 Special Characteristics, p. 199) presented the factors necessary for the large majority of battlefield weapons. The following four characteristics represent very specialized weapons used in dueling.

Armor-Piercing: The weapon is highly efficient when penetrating armor, concentrating all its energy on a single location of the armor to enhance its force. Armor-piercing weapons halve the defending vehicle's Armor rating to determine damage. If the attack is successful, the target does not lose any Armor points (the entry hole is too small to affect the Armor rating), but takes damage as usual. Vibroblades and high-kinetic projectiles are often Armor-Piercing.

Armor-Crushing: The weapon is highly efficient when destroying armor and structure. If the attack is successful, the target loses twice the usual Armor points (2 for Light damage and 4 for Heavy damage) in addition to the system damage. "Hammerhead" missiles, acid sprayers and rotating saws are examples of Armor-Crushing weaponry.

Clumsy: These weapons are large or unwieldy. They cause a -1 penalty to the Maneuver rating of the vehicle while carried.

Entangle: Weapons with the Entangle characteristic can be used to immobilize an opponent. A vehicle hit by such a weapon either receives damage from it or is ensnared, unable to move or fight (attacker's choice). To escape an entangling attack, a Piloting skill roll must be made versus the Margin of Success of the attack. This is modified by the difference between the Damage Multiplier of the weapon and the Size of the trapped vehicle. If the vehicle has arms, half the rating of the largest arm (rounded up) is applied to the Piloting roll.

Ranged entangling weapons are attached to an ultra-resistant cable, which is itself attached to a winch. The winch can be used to drag the vehicle forward or, if the target is lighter than the vehicle, drag it toward the winch. The maximum weight that can be handled by the cable is equal to the Damage Multiplier expressed in Size capacity. For example, a x3 winch could drag a weight equivalent to Size 3, or 1.1 ton. Several cables can be used together to pull more weight. Thus, two x3 cables could drag up to 2.2 tons together.

If the Margin of Success of the ranged entangling attack is equal to or higher than 3, the entangling weapon is now attached to the target. It can be detached and reeled in at any time at the cost of one action. It is possible for a target to be both attached to the weapon and ensnared at the same time. The cable itself can take up to its rating in damage points before being severed. However, ranged attacks have a -3 penalty to hit because the cable is so small. Point-blank attacks on the cable have no such penalty.

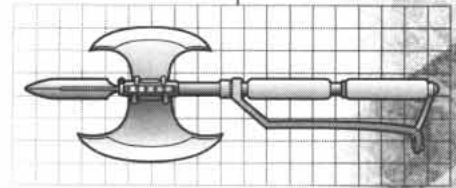


DUELISTS AND THEIR MACHINES

5

Vibroax

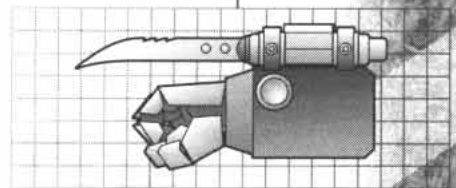
Purpose:	Dueling
Effective Range:	4 m
Penetration:	100 mm
Accuracy:	Poor
Mode of Fire:	N/A
Usual Ammo Magazine:	N/A



The massive vibroax is a distant cousin to the more versatile vibroblade. Usually consisting of two large vibroblades on a large staff, the ax is designed to terrify and destroy in close combat. Too cumbersome for use on the battlefield, the ax has found its home on the dueling field, often used to sheer off whole chunks of an opponent's weapon systems.

Vibroclaws

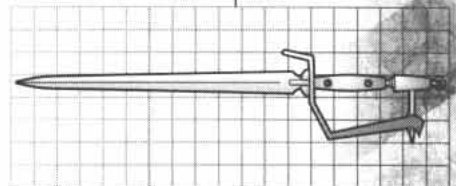
Purpose:	Dueling
Effective Range:	1 m
Penetration:	64 mm
Accuracy:	Good
Mode of Fire:	N/A
Usual Ammo Magazine:	N/A



Among the most characteristic weapons on the underground dueling circuits of Terra Nova are vibroclaws. Essentially modified vibroblades mounted on the forearm of the Gear, vibroclaws serve the same purpose as the more common forearm spike chassis reinforcement. The claws are more precise than handheld vibroblades but do limit the versatility of the Gear. Indeed, they slope over the manipulator hand, making it difficult to carry handheld weaponry.

Vibrorapier

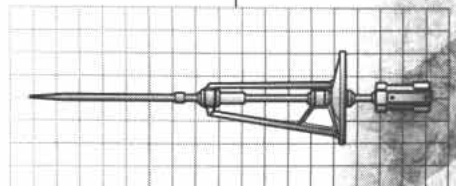
Purpose:	Dueling
Effective Range:	2 m
Penetration:	144 mm
Accuracy:	Good
Mode of Fire:	N/A
Usual Ammo Magazine:	N/A



Almost the opposite of the vibroax, the rapier is a highly accurate melee weapon which inflicts relatively little damage. Developed in the Southern Republic as a weapon of honor, it has maintained this role in its league of origin and is produced exclusively for the military market. In other areas, the use of rapiers has spread to gladiatorial combat, a practice severely frowned upon by Republican military officers.

Lance

Purpose:	Gear Jousting
Effective Range:	5 m
Penetration:	169 mm
Accuracy:	Poor
Mode of Fire:	N/A
Usual Ammo Magazine:	N/A

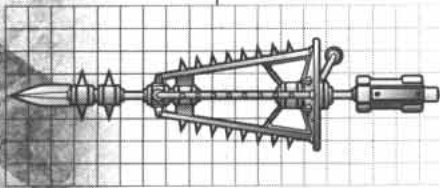


The simple Smyrna Gear lance is essentially a five-meter long steel alloy pole with a slightly sharpened tip. These are not weapons of finesse; they are designed to smash into the opposing jousting Gear with a maximum of force and entertainment value. Lances are usually made of simple steel, but some have been produced using military grade alloy, including durasheet and armoplast. These lances are only available to Duelists benefiting from wealthy patrons. Although many different improvised Gear lances are available across the Badlands, connoisseurs still prefer the Smyrna-built Sage L series for its balance and styling.

DUELISTS AND THEIR MACHINES



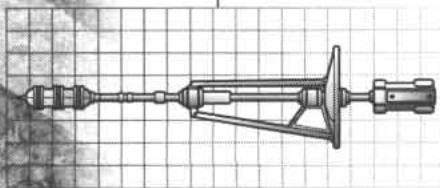
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Heavy Lance ☐

Purpose:	Gear jousting
Effective Range:	6 m
Penetration:	225 mm
Accuracy:	Poor
Mode of Fire:	N/A
Usual Ammo Magazine:	N/A

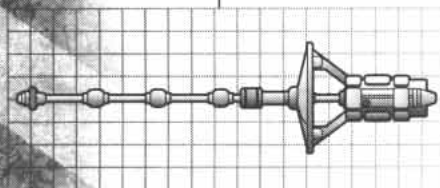
A massively heavy version of the standard lance, the heavy lance is strapped onto Gears with a huge harness that limits their maneuverability. Heavy lances also feature prongs and barbs designed to inflict great damage on the structure of an opponent. A sleeker version of the heavy lance is mounted on the forearm of the Gear and supported by a secondary handle for the other hand. These are becoming the standard configuration in Smyrna. Heavy lances are more complex than standard Gear lances and so most are produced by Sage Industries. The Sage LX series is the current standard.



Explosive Lance ☐

Purpose:	Gear jousting
Effective Range:	5 m
Penetration:	196 mm
Accuracy:	Poor
Mode of Fire:	Single fire
Usual Ammo Magazine:	one explosive charge

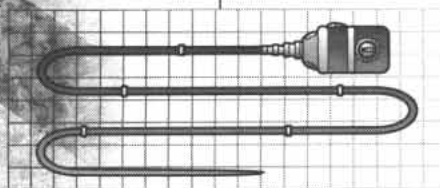
A variation on the simple Gear lance, the explosive lance features a shaped charge chamber mounted on the lance's tip. When contact is made during a charge, the explosive's force is added to the momentum of the Gear to cause additional damage. Explosive lances are seen as inferior weapons by several of the top competitors in Smyrna. They claim that it eliminates the factor of skill involved in well-placing a blow. Several Smyrna-based producers feature explosive lances in their repertoire, but it was Garidan Weapons which made its mark with their BangLance series.



Haywire Lance ☐

Purpose:	Gear jousting
Effective Range:	6 m
Penetration:	81 mm
Accuracy:	Good
Mode of Fire:	Single fire
Usual Ammo Magazine:	6 charges per battery

Much lighter and flexible than the simple Gear lance, the haywire lance relies on a powerful electro-magnetic charge sent along its length to inflict damage. As such, Gear joust participants need not hit their opponent squarely to inflict damage and often slash at each other with the thin charged lances.



Whip ☐

Purpose:	Dueling
Effective Range:	25 m
Penetration:	49 mm
Accuracy:	Good
Mode of Fire:	N/A
Usual Ammo Magazine:	N/A

Essentially a heavy weighted cable, the Gear-sized whip is used to lash or entangle an opposing vehicle. Practically useless on the battlefield, whips are extremely popular in dueling arenas. Most whips are mounted on a Gear's forearm and linked to a powerful winch which allows them to be reeled in when not in use. Others are carried in coiled whips on a Gear's hip plate. Paxton Arms introduced the dueling whip to an entertainment-starved Badlands audience with its PD991 whip in TN 1865. The PD991 and its successors have all essentially been clones of the makeshift whips used in underground arenas for decades.

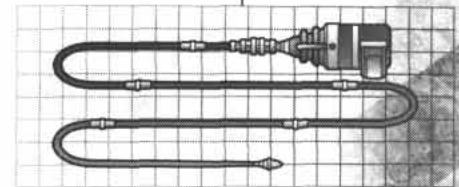


DUELISTS AND THEIR MACHINES

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Haywire Whip

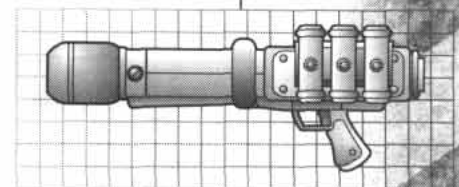
Purpose:	Dueling
Effective Range:	25 m
Penetration:	49 mm
Accuracy:	Good
Mode of Fire:	N/A
Usual Ammo Magazine:	5 charges for batteries



A high-tech version of the simple Gear whip, haywire whips can be used to send a powerful electrical charge from insulated batteries to the entangled opponent. On especially spectacular occasions this current can cause a massive overload of the neural net, the ammunition containment system or the engine.

Net Gun

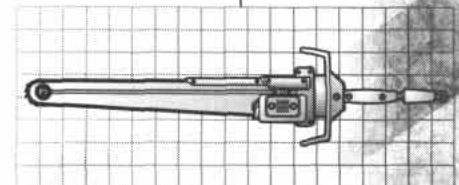
Purpose:	Dueling and animal hunting
Effective Range:	400 meters
Penetration:	25 mm
Accuracy:	Average
Mode of Fire:	Single fire
Usual Ammo Magazine:	3



Originally developed to be mounted on vehicles aimed at capturing giant wildlife such as barnabus iguanas or armadillo beasts, the net gun has found a second home in underground dueling arenas. Sometimes tied to a powerful winch, the net gun is used to paralyze an opponent at range. Dueling versions can be set so that the net does not expand, causing damage due to concussive force.

Chain Sword

Purpose:	Dueling
Effective Range:	3 m
Penetration:	81 mm
Accuracy:	Average
Mode of Fire:	N/A
Usual Ammo Magazine:	N/A

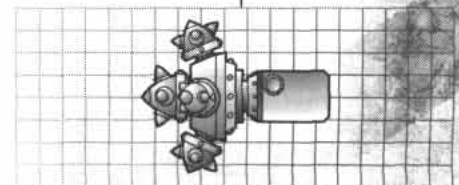


Derived from the common engineering chain saws featured on Gears employed in forestry and other industries, chain swords have become a visceral favorite in the arenas of the underground. The sound of durasheet being torn asunder by the sword is often greeted by cheers. Chain swords are widely considered by military Duelists as a prime example of the debasement of gladiators. They see these weapons as simple crowd-pleasing monstrosities.

Cimmario-based Thunderclaw Industries, famous for producing engineering machinery, entered the ESE dueling market with their Thundersword series of chain swords. They are currently the industry leaders and feature dueling in their advertising.

Mauler Fist

Purpose:	Dueling
Effective Range:	1 m
Penetration:	81 mm
Accuracy:	Good
Mode of Fire:	N/A
Usual Ammo Magazine:	N/A

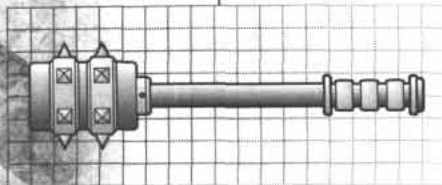


A frightening grinding device, the so-called mauler fist replaces the manipulator hand on a dueling Gear. The first is made up of two or more grinding heads, all of which rotate around the fist's central axis. The mauler fist is a devastating close combat weapons because of its tendency to shred the opposing Gear's armor. Internal systems fare little better. Some Duelists complain that it is too easy for a reinforced armor plate to jam the fist, however.

DUELISTS AND THEIR MACHINES



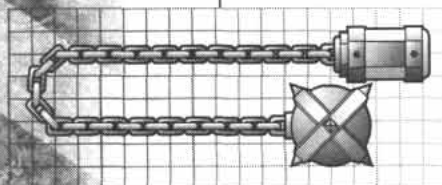
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Mace ☐

Purpose:	Dueling
Effective Range:	3 m
Penetration:	64 mm
Accuracy:	Poor
Mode of Fire:	N/A
Usual Ammo Magazine:	N/A

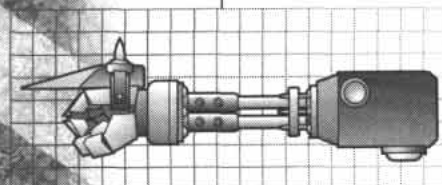
Maces are very simple close combat weapons used to pound an opponent into submission. They are usually of the short, one-handed variety, but larger two handed maces also exist. The most popular maces are studded balls of steel, but hammers and spiked maces are also widely used. These variations make very little difference against the armored skin of a Gear, but pilots often have a stylistic preference. One-handed weighted staffs are also used by some, often with one in each hand of the Gear.



Morning Star ☐

Purpose:	Dueling
Effective Range:	10 m
Penetration:	100 mm
Accuracy:	Bad
Mode of Fire:	N/A
Usual Ammo Magazine:	N/A

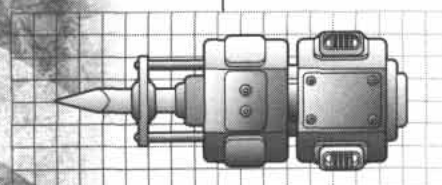
The big brother of the Gear mace, the morning star is a mace in which the weighted head is attached to a length of heavy cable or chain. The morning star does its damage by using its momentum to crack a Gear's armor, but can also be used to entangle. Most morning stars, like whips, are mounted into the Gear's forearm along with a winch. Others are simply modified maces and are incapable of reeling in opponents. Those who employ these simple devices do so because they find the emplacement of the standard weapon constricts the mobility of their manipulator hand. Others use the simpler configuration in conjunction with heavy shields in order to evoke classical gladiatorial combat.



Piston Punch ☐

Purpose:	Dueling
Effective Range:	3 m
Penetration:	100 mm
Accuracy:	Poor
Mode of Fire:	N/A
Usual Ammo Magazine:	N/A

A massive close combat weapon, the so-called piston punch is a dedicated battle arm for a dueling Heavy Gear. The arm serves as the support for a large piston that can be slammed into an opponent's Gear. This weapon creates a powerful close combat machine, but sacrifices one of the major weapon platforms for the Gear. Indeed, the piston punch cannot be used to support most other weapons. Shoulder mounted weapons are possible, but they tend to be difficult to place because of the support frame of the piston.



Heavy Spike Gun ☐

Purpose:	Close Combat
Effective Range:	1 m
Penetration:	196 mm
Accuracy:	Poor
Mode of Fire:	Single fire
Usual Ammo Magazine:	6 charges

A heavier version of the spike gun found on the Hunter Commando Heavy Gear, the heavy spike gun uses a stronger explosive charge and a reinforced shaft. The tip of the spike is also further sharpened to allow for increased armor penetration, although this entails reduced structural damage to the armor itself. Some heavy spike guns feature barbs and hooks to cause additional damage to the target's armor and internal systems.



DUELISTS AND THEIR MACHINES

5

Dueling Perks - 5.4

Dueling vehicles often incorporate modifications that deviate from standard battlefield models. The following Perks represent some of the capabilities of machines expressly designed for the dueling arena. Most of these modifications involve altering the vehicle's weapon load to become non-lethal for sport dueling purposes. As such they have low Threat Values because they do not increase the battlefield efficiency of the machine.

Acrobatic Handling AUX/R ◆

The maneuvering systems of battlefield Gears are designed with overall motion in mind. War machines must be able to move quickly and efficiently over varying terrain, but elaborate jumps are well beyond the needs of the military. All these factors are important in duels as well, but there is an added need for close-combat maneuverability. Being able to jump and flip the Gear through tight obstacle courses and to avoid multiple tackling opponents is not only useful but extremely crowd pleasing.

The rating of Acrobatic Handling is added to the Gear's maneuverability score for close combat attacks and defenses, and when defending against point-blank attacks. The Perk gives no advantage for any attack made from short range or further. Acrobatic Handling also modifies any rolls made to make jumps, flips or kicks.

No Gear may take a rating in Acrobatic Handling higher than one above their Maneuver rating. Gears with negative modifier ratings and vehicles without the Walker movement type may not take Acrobatic Handling.

COST = RATING X 6

Scoring Sensors AUX ◆

Professional sport Duelists often use a complex system of weapon simulations rather than actual arms. While these virtual arms can be used alone, they are more effective when opposing Gears are equipped with a special sensor net designed for this purpose. Several settings are possible for the sensors (which are set before a match begins). In scoring mode, the sensor net divides the Gear into a series of locations, assigning points based on the precision and intensity of a hit. In shut-down mode, the net keeps track of virtual damage and shuts down the Gear when it is "destroyed." In virtual mode, the sensor relays information from each hit to various systems of the Gear, shutting them down based on calculated damage.

When used in battle against Gears or other vehicles equipped with Sporting Weapons, the effects of battle damage depend on the mode of the Scoring Sensors. When in virtual mode, keep track of damage in the normal fashion (although none of the damage actually occurs, unless in close combat). In shut-down mode, keep track of damage but do not apply modifiers unless the system is destroyed. In scoring mode, there is no need to keep track of damage, only hit location for scoring purposes. To determine score, roll on the System Damage table and award one point for Structure or Auxilliary Systems hits, two for Fire Control or Movement hits, and three for Crew hits. Scoring Sensors do not cost Perk points but add 5000 marks/dinars to the final price of the vehicle.

Sporting Weapons ◆

Usually paired with Scoring Sensors (see above), the Sporting Weapons perk transforms a Gear's actual weapons into harmless virtual arms. Rounds are replaced with blanks while arms are loaded with harmless laser pointers. Complex pointer rockets, grenades and mortar shells are created by combining a smoke round with a very mild haywire round. Vibro-weapons can be converted by stopping the vibration and putting a targeting charge along the blade. A similar charge can be applied to Gear fists and ram plates, but in these cases true damage is not negated. Sporting Weapons do not cost Perk points but add 100 marks/dinars per weapon modified to the final price of the vehicle.

Trideo Link-up AUX ●

All military sensor and communications systems can be used to relay simple video images to a remote location, but few Gears have the special equipment required for a full trideo feed. First developed for vehicles used by reporters, the trideo link involves mounting twin stereoscopic cameras on the machine. The feed from these cameras is relayed through the vehicle's communications system (which is also slightly modified), enabling distant spectators to watch a duel or other encounter as if they were there. The trideo feed also includes a back-up recorder, allowing the storing of an hour of images in the vehicle proper.

On Gears, trideo cameras are usually mounted in special armored shoulder assemblies or on either side of the sensor head. The cameras can also be mounted on thin tool arms, hence allowing greater visibility, but this exposes the sensitive equipment to a degree that makes such a mounting impractical in combat models. A Trideo Link-up does not cost Perk points but adds 15,000 marks/dinars to the vehicle's final price.



PA-09 Gladiator

Based on Paxton's successful Warrior series Heavy Gear, the Gladiator was introduced as a dedicated dueling model in TN 1862. Designed with the close and dirty fighting of underground arenas in mind, the Gladiator is renowned for its speed and agility over the uneven ground often featured in such arenas. This permits it to close quickly with its opponents and make use of the close combat weapons it features. A shield and armored jacket provide extra protection in the arena.

Paxton designers abandoned the defense-only shield employed by police Gears when designing the buckler used by the Gladiator. Mounting impressive spikes on the shield has made it a dangerous weapon as well. The addition of reinforced shoulders for ramming and a huge vibroax make the Gladiator an underground dueling favorite.

The basic Gladiator chassis has inspired several variants including the Gladiator-C designed for the Southern market and featuring a vibrorapier. Variants used for other functions than dueling are beginning to be produced in limited numbers, but Paxton continues to focus on its Warrior line for military designs, although the Gladiator design office vehemently disagrees.

◆ Service Record

The Gladiator has been a favorite of underground kingpins since its inception. Designed for their needs and backed by Paxton's willingness to sell spare parts to just about anyone, the Gear has found a home throughout the Badlands, the Eastern Sun Emirates and other disreputable areas. Unfortunately, the awful smell of half-consumed fuel oil — taken in by a poorly placed ventilation intake — annoys Duelists to no end. The sight of Gladiator crew compartments stuffed with saguaro-sweet hanging deodorant strips and other air-freshening material is common in underworld hangars.

Game Statistics ☐

Threat Value:	642	Offensive:	550	Defensive:	501	Miscellaneous:	876	Lemon Dice:	2
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Vehicle Specifications ☐

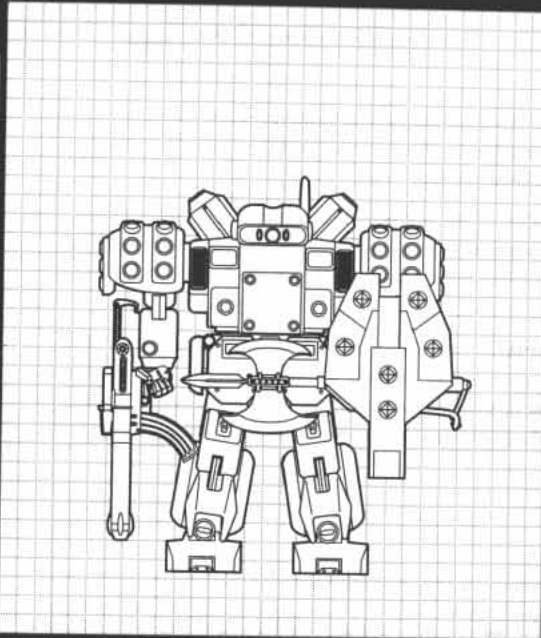
Code name:	Gladiator
Production Code:	PA-09
Production Type:	Limited Production
Cost:	963,500 Peace Dollars (1,927,000 Marks/Dinars)
Manufacturer:	Paxton Arms
Use:	Dueling
Height:	4.3 m
Width:	2.5 m
Average Armor Thickness:	45 mm
Armor Material:	Durasheet w/glazing
Standard Operational Weight:	6541 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (55 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (73 kph)
Deployment Range:	500 km
Sensor Range:	2 km
Communications Range:	10 km
Powerplant:	PMW-V747 V-engine
Horsepower:	520 hp

Weapons ☐

Name	Ammunition Payload
Elite Vibroax	-
Paxton PR-35 Autocannon	30 rounds
Paxton S-2 Spike Gun	6 charges
Spiked Buckler	-



PA-09 GLADIATOR



ARMOR DAMAGE

0	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
30	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
40	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

CREW INFORMATION

• PILOT NAME: _____
 • RANK: _____
 • SQUADRON: _____
 • AFFILIATION: _____
 PILOT (LV/AT): ☐ GUNNERY (LV/AT): ☐ ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT): ☐

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW
 • CREW: ☐ 1
 • BONUS ACTIONS: ☐ 0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW
 CREW • ☐
 BONUS ACTIONS • ☐

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT
 • PRIMARY COMBAT SPD: W 5
 • PRIMARY TOP SPD: W 9
 • SECONDARY COMBAT SPD: G 6
 • SECONDARY TOP SPD: G 12
 • MANEUVER: +1
 • DEPLOYMENT RANGE: 500
ELECTRONICS
 • SENSORS: 0 2
 • COMMUNICATION: 0 10
 • FIRE CONTROL: 0
ARMOR
 • LIGHT DAMAGE: 15
 • HEAVY DAMAGE: 30
 • OVERKILL: 45

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT
 COMBAT SPD • ☐
 TOP SPD • ☐
 COMBAT SPD • ☐
 TOP SPD • ☐
 MANEUVER • ☐
 FUEL SPENT • ☐
ELECTRONICS
 SENSORS • ☐
 COMM • ☐
 FIRE CONTROL • ☐
ARMOR
 LIGHT DAMAGE • ☐
 HEAVY DAMAGE • ☐
 OVERKILL • ☐

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 642 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 963,500 Peace Dollars (1,927,000 Marks/Dinars)

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Elite Vibroax	VA	F	0	0	0	0	-1	x10	1	0	Armor Crushing
PR-35 Autocannon	MAC	F	3	6	12	24	0	x10	1	+1	-
SK-2 Spike Gun	SKG	F	0	0	0	0	-1	x12	1	0	-
Spiked Buckler	CR	F	0	0	0	0	0	+1	1	0	-

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
-	-
30	-
6	-
-	-

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 • ☐
 WEAPON 02 • ☐
 WEAPON 03 • ☐
 WEAPON 04 • ☐
 WEAPON 05 • ☐
 WEAPON 06 • ☐
 WEAPON 07 • ☐
 WEAPON 08 • ☐
 WEAPON 09 • ☐
 WEAPON 10 • ☐

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
HEP: Desert	-	Protection from the elements	-
Manipulator Arm x2	6	Can punch	-
Ram Plate	-	Forward	-
Reinforced Chassis	-	Absorbs first "Structure" Damage	-
Reinforced Location Armor	2	Crew	-
Shield	5	Left arc	-

PERKS

PERK 01 • ☐
 PERK 02 • ☐
 PERK 03 • ☐
 PERK 04 • ☐
 PERK 05 • ☐
 PERK 06 • ☐
 PERK 07 • ☐
 PERK 08 • ☐
 PERK 09 • ☐
 PERK 10 • ☐
 PERK 11 • ☐

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Annoyance	-	Fuel smell in ventilation system
Fuel Inefficient	1	Each Top Speed km counts as 2 for Deployment Range
Poor Towing Capacity	-	Can tow half its weight

NOTES

- Gladiator-B: Remove Shield, CR and VA, add HWP (F, 6 charges), 488 TV
 Gladiator-C: Remove VA and MAC, add VR (F), LAC (F, 20 rounds), -143 OTV
 Gladiator-D: Remove VA, SKG and MAC, add MFL (F, 25 shots), -358 OTV





OACS-01L/DL Rapier Iguana

Territorial Arms' Rapier Iguana has the distinction of being Terra Nova's only mass-produced dedicated dueling Heavy Gear. The Republican Army and the Southern MILICIA take dueling very seriously and have built a powerful tradition around combat with vibrorapiers in particular. The Rapier is designed expressly with these needs in mind.

The most obvious alterations from the basic Iguana in the Rapier design is the addition of a shoulder ram plate and arm-mounted buckler to increase combat efficiency in rapier duels. The protected but less powerful sensor array was borrowed from the Iguana MP to prevent the "blinding" of the Duelist on the field. The Gear was also equipped with the latest virtual reality HUD controls. The Rapier is usually mounted with a pack gun for use in case of different dueling techniques.

Because the Rapier Iguana is aimed at the huge Southern military market a wide variety of variants have been produced to match different dueling styles. Added protection for the pilot is a major feature of these variants, but some also include different weapon loads and performance profiles, including some rather flamboyant variants inspired by underground dueling. A few battlefield variants have also been provided for those seeking a dual-purpose combat vehicle. This permits the formation of truly varied squadrons led by the Duelist.

◆ Service Record

The Rapier has become the darling of the top field officers of the Republican Army, representing all the prestige and honor of their roles. Several regiments have taken to requesting multiple Rapiers, creating one or more "honor squadrons" heavily featured in parades and public functions. Territorial Arms does its best to fill in orders, but the waiting period can last several seasons.

Game Statistics ☐

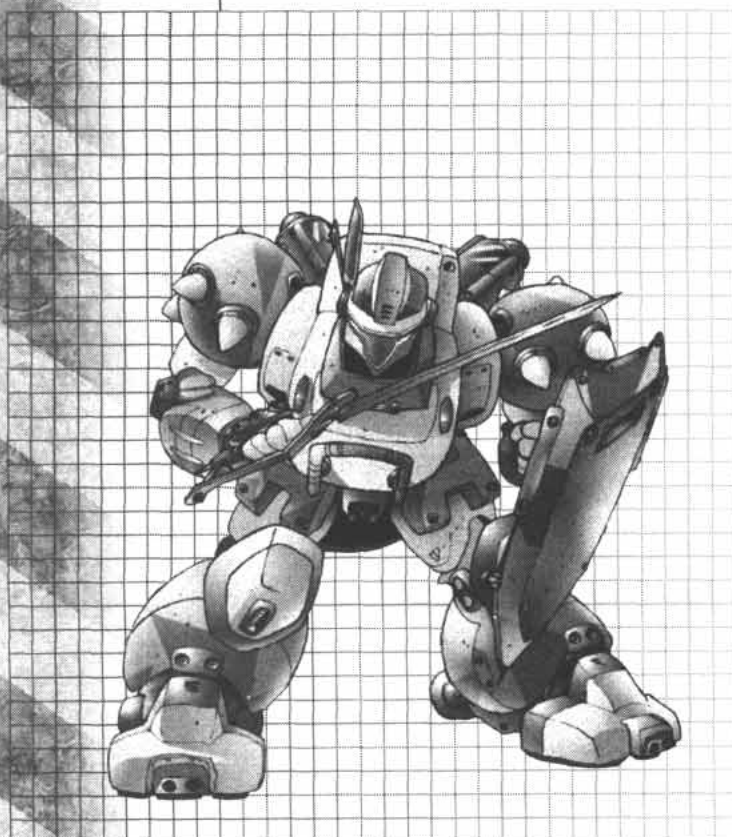
Threat Value:	732	Offensive:	108	Defensive:	470	Miscellaneous:	1618	Lemon Dice:	3
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Vehicle Specifications ☐

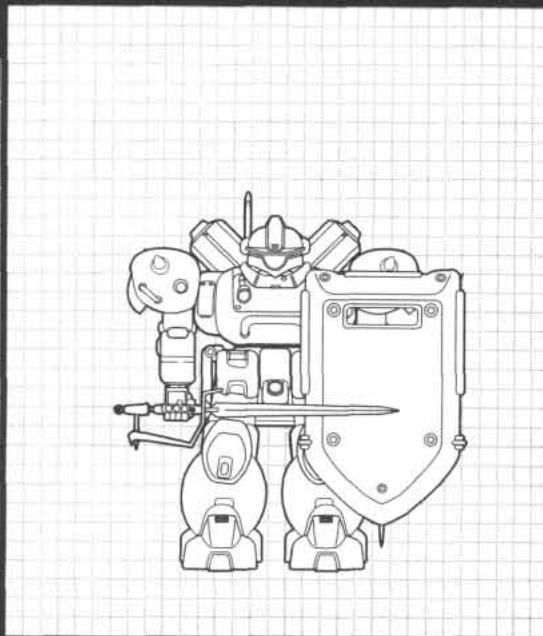
Code name:	Rapier Iguana
Production Code:	OACS-01L/DL
Production Type:	Mass Production
Cost:	549,000 Dinars
Manufacturer:	Territorial Arms
Use:	Dueling
Height:	4.1 m
Width:	3.4 m
Average Armor Thickness:	40 mm
Armor Material:	Armoplast w/alloy
Standard Operational Weight:	5101 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (54 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (83 kph)
Deployment Range:	500 km
Sensor Range:	3 km
Communications Range:	20 km
Powerplant:	WV-750TC/B V-engine
Horsepower:	360 hp

Weapons ☐

Name	Ammunition Payload
Escrime Mk 9 Vibrorapier	-
MPGU-22 Pack Gun	30



OACS-01L/DL RAPIER IGUANA



ARMOR DAMAGE

0

10

20

30

40

CREW INFORMATION

PILOT NAME: _____

RANK: _____

SQUADRON: _____

AFFILIATION: _____

PILOT (LV/AT): ☐ GUNNERY (LV/AT): ☐ ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT): ☐

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

CREW: ☐ 1

BONUS ACTIONS: ☐ 1

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW: ☐

BONUS ACTIONS: ☐

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

PRIMARY COMBAT SPD: W 5

PRIMARY TOP SPD: W 9

SECONDARY COMBAT SPD: G 7

SECONDARY TOP SPD: G 14

MANEUVER: +1

DEPLOYMENT RANGE: 500

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS: 0 3

COMMUNICATION: +1 20

FIRE CONTROL: 0

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE: 14

HEAVY DAMAGE: 28

OVERKILL: 42

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD: ☐

TOP SPD: ☐

COMBAT SPD: ☐

TOP SPD: ☐

MANEUVER: ☐

FUEL SPENT: ☐

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS: ☐

COMM: ☐

FIRE CONTROL: ☐

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE: ☐

HEAVY DAMAGE: ☐

OVERKILL: ☐

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

THREAT VALUE: 732 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 549,000 Dinars

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Escrime Mk 9 Vibrorapier	VR	F	0	0	0	0	+1	x6	1	0	Armor Piercing
MPGU-22 Pack Gun	DPG	F	2	4	8	16	-1	x8	1	+2	Disposale

AMMO

FULL LEFT

30

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Advanced Controls	-	+1 Action per round	-
Backup Sensors	-	Absorbs first "Sensors" Damage	-
HEP: Desert	-	Protection from the elements	-
Manipulator Arm x2	6	Can punch	-
Ram Plate	-	Forward Arc	-
Shield	4	Left Arc	-

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT

NOTES

Battlefield Rapier-A: Add LRP/16 (F, 16 rockets) and 2 HG (F), +240 OTV

Battlefield Rapier-B: Add AGM (F, 1 missile) and APGL (FF, 6 rounds), +789 OTV

Armored Vest (Reinforced Location Armor, Crew, R2), 1696 MTV





HACS-12MG-DL Nemesis Jaguar

The original Jaguar designers at Northco had the elite Gear pilot in mind when they put their high-performance machine together. Duelists, however, had requirements that often could not be met in a general battlefield model. The Jaguar designers began the Nemesis variant as a side project, using the overall chassis of the battlefield model as a base. What started as an unofficial sideline has become one of the prestige Gears of the United Mercantile Federation.

The Nemesis quickly became the place to put many of the "toys" becoming available to Northco designers. The standard Jaguar actuators were replaced by the high-performance models sub-contracted to Shaian Mechanics, resulting in a level of agility unknown in a Gear of its size. Similarly computer technicians had a field day overhauling the command system, creating a remarkably efficient system layout. The resulting high-performance dueling machine is frighteningly effective on the field of honor and has been used as part of a Northco/Shaian Mechanics advertising campaign.

Some sacrifices had to be made, however. The communications system was downgraded to make room for the added control computers and the complex electronics were more exposed than in the battlefield Jaguar. Armor also had to be slightly reduced to make full use of the Shaian actuators, although added protection was given to the pilot to reduce casualties.

◆ Service Record

The Nemesis has been the pride and joy of many lucky Northern Duelists since its release just prior to the War of the Alliance. The added responsiveness and incredible dexterity of the machine have been used to greater advantage on the field of honor. Duelists experienced with the Nemesis swear by it.

Game Statistics ☐

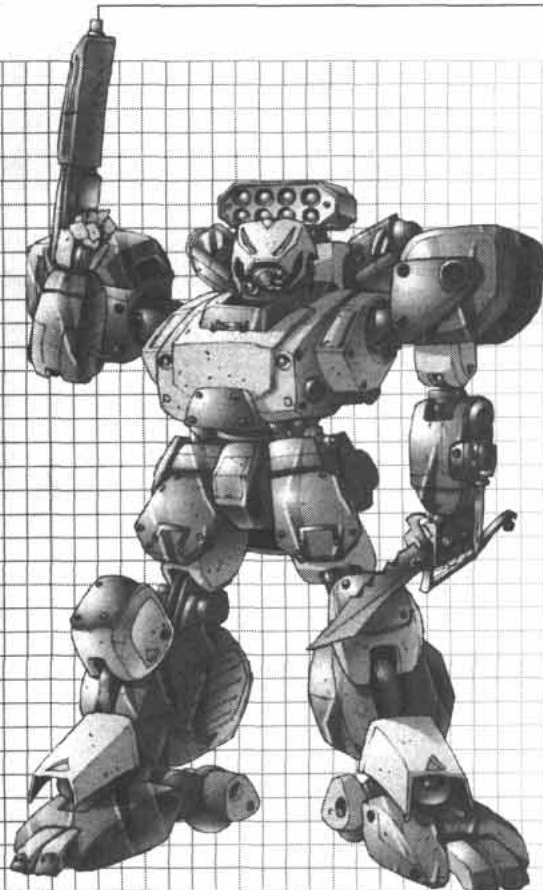
Threat Value:	735	Offensive:	974	Defensive:	504	Miscellaneous:	726	Lemon Dice:	2
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Vehicle Specifications ☐

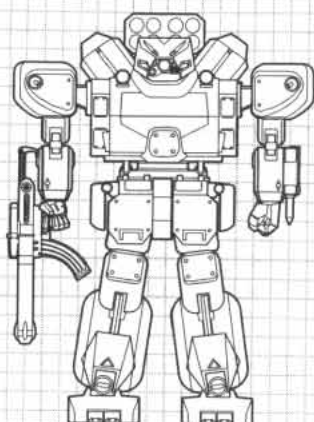
Code name:	Nemesis Jaguar
Production Code:	HACS-12MG-DL
Production Type:	Limited Production
Cost:	2,200,000 Marks
Manufacturer:	Northco
Use:	Dueling/Assault
Height:	4.7 m (5.3 m w/LRP)
Width:	3.4 m
Average Armor Thickness:	45 mm
Armor Material:	Durasheet w/alloy and ceramic
Standard Operational Weight:	7134 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (53 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (80 kph)
Deployment Range:	380 km
Sensor Range:	2 km
Communications Range:	10 km
Powerplant:	S-V1110K V-engine
Horsepower:	615 hp

Weapons ☐

Name	Ammunition Payload
MR25 30 mm Autocannon	40 rounds
RP-109 Pepperbox II	32 rockets
HW-VB2 Vibroblade	-
Forearm Spike	-



HACS-12MG-DL NEMESIS JAGUAR



ARMOR DAMAGE

0	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
30	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
40	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

CREW INFORMATION

• PILOT NAME:
 • RANK:
 • SQUADRON:
 • AFFILIATION:
 PILOT (LV, AT): ☐ GUNNERY (LV, AT): ☐ ELIC. WAR. (LV, AT): ☐

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW
 • CREW: 1
 • BONUS ACTIONS: 1

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW
 CREW
 BONUS ACTIONS

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT
 • PRIMARY COMBAT SPD: W 5
 • PRIMARY TOP SPD: W 9
 • SECONDARY COMBAT SPD: G 7
 • SECONDARY TOP SPD: G 13
 • MANEUVER: +1
 • DEPLOYMENT RANGE: 380
 ELECTRONICS
 • SENSORS: 0 2
 • COMMUNICATION: 0 10
 • FIRE CONTROL: 0

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT
 COMBAT SPD
 TOP SPD
 COMBAT SPD
 TOP SPD
 MANEUVER
 FUEL SPENT
 ELECTRONICS
 SENSORS
 COMM
 FIRE CONTROL
 ARMOR
 LIGHT DAMAGE
 HEAVY DAMAGE
 OVERKILL

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 735 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 2,200,000 Marks

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
MR25 Autocannon	MAC	F	3	6	12	24	0	x10	1	+1	-
RP-109 Pepperbox II	LRP/32	F	1	2	4	8	-1	x12	1	+4	IF
HW-VB2 Vibroblade	VB	F	0	0	0	0	0	x8	1	0	-
Forearm Spike	CR	F	0	0	0	0	0	+1	1	0	-

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
40	
32	
-	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01
 WEAPON 02
 WEAPON 03
 WEAPON 04
 WEAPON 05
 WEAPON 06
 WEAPON 07
 WEAPON 08
 WEAPON 09
 WEAPON 10

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Acrobatic Handling	1	+1 Maneuver in close combat	Y
Advanced Controls	-	+1 Action per round	-
Airdroppable	-	Can be airdropped	-
HEP: Desert	-	Protection from the elements	-
Manipulator Arm x2	6	Can punch	-
Reinforced Crew Compartment	-	Absorbs first "Crew" Damage	-

PERKS

PERK 01
 PERK 02
 PERK 03
 PERK 04
 PERK 05
 PERK 06
 PERK 07
 PERK 08
 PERK 09
 PERK 10
 PERK 11

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Annoyance	-	Cramped head space
Exposed Auxiliary Systems	-	"Auxiliary" Damage is one step worse

NOTES

Southern Special Nemesis: Replace VB and CR with VR, +10 OTV





Type 27[D] "Bruiser"

An oddball of the dueling arena of Caprice, the Mount nicknamed the "Bruiser" is a dueling variant of the heavy rescue Mount "Big Guy." Like its brother, the Bruiser is not a particularly common sight, but its large bulk lends it a certain powerful look that tends to appeal to crowds looking for a good fight. Thus, the Bruiser is one of the most popular Mounts amongst audiences, if not with the actual Duelists themselves.

The Bruiser replaces most of the Big Guy's fire-resistant features with equipment capable of absorbing a more physical punishment. These changes cannot be made in the field; they involve modifying the vehicle's underlying frame and re-engineering some of its articulation joints, especially those in the shoulders. The Bruiser retains the Big Guy's trideo link-up. Instead of relaying data to a central precinct headquarters like the Big Guy, however, the trideo feeds the viewing monitors scattered throughout the arenas in which it fights.

The Bruiser ships with only a common vibroblade as a weapon system. Most pilots prefer to customize their weapon loads according to personal taste and the needs of their duels, and since the vehicle is so uncommon, its manufacturers find it easier to keep the default model as simple as possible in its offensive capability.

◆ Service Record

Because of its large bulk, few Duelists use Bruisers, thinking it ungainly and cumbersome. Those that do make use of the Bruiser, however, know that its actual performance isn't much different from other dueling Mounts, and the cheers of a crowd excited to see it on the battlefield outweigh whatever minor drawbacks it otherwise carries.

Game Statistics ☐

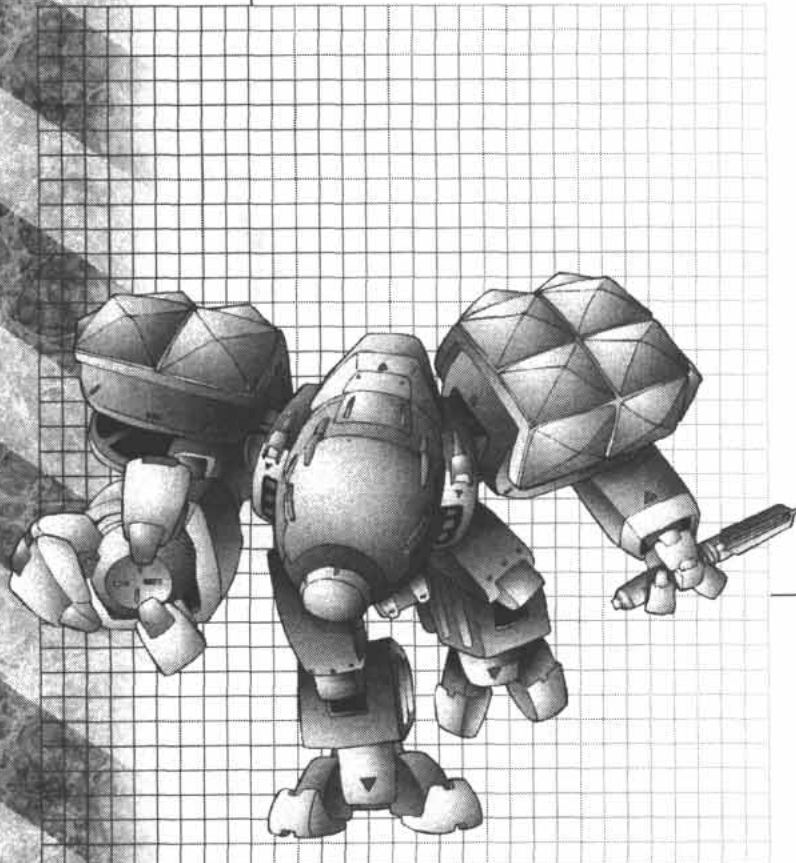
Threat Value:	200	Offensive:	29	Defensive:	63	Miscellaneous:	509	Lemon Dice:	3
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Vehicle Specifications ☐

Code name:	Bruiser (unofficial)
Production Code:	Type 27(D)
Production Type:	Mass Production
Cost:	135,000 Pounds
Manufacturer:	Various Corporations
Use:	Dueling
Height:	4.0 m
Width:	4.4 m
Average Armor Thickness:	12 mm
Armor Material:	Composite
Standard Operational Weight:	4100 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (60 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	N/A
Deployment Range:	150 km
Sensor Range:	2 km
Communications Range:	10 km
Powerplant:	Electric/gas turbine
Horsepower:	400 hp

Weapons ☐

Name	Ammunition Payload
Vibroblade	-



• PILOT NAME: _____
 • RANK: _____
 • SQUADRON: _____
 • AFFILIATION: _____
 PILOT (V.V. AT) [] GUNNERY (V.V. AT) [] ELIC. WAR. (V.V. AT) []

VEHICLE CREW		VEHICLE CREW
• CREW:	1	CREW •
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0	BONUS ACTIONS •

VEHICLE CREW
CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

MOVEMENT		
• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	5
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	10
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	-	-
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	-	-
• MANEUVER:		-1
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		150
ELECTRONICS		
• SENSORS:	0	2
• COMMUNICATION:	0	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		0
ARMOR		
• LIGHT DAMAGE:		9
• HEAVY DAMAGE:		18
• OVERKILL:		27

MOVEMENT

- COMBAT SPD •
- TOP SPD •
- COMBAT SPD •
- TOP SPD •
- MANEUVER •
- FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

- SENSORS •
- COMM •
- FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

- LIGHT DAMAGE •
- HEAVY DAMAGE •
- OVERKILL •

• THREAT VALUE: 200 • SIZE: 5 • COST: 135,000 Pounds

[illegible][illegible]

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
HEP; Desert, Extreme Cold	-	Protection against the elements	-
Improved Off-Road Ability	-	Wide feet; -1 MP cost for hexes with cost greater than one	-
Life Support	-	Limited	Y
Loudspeakers	-	External sound system	Y
Manipulator Arms x2	5	Can punch	-
Ram Plate	-	Front	-
Reinforced Armor	2	Front	-
Reinforced Chassis	-	Absorbs first "Structure" Damage	-
Trideo Link-Up	-	Trideo feed to arena monitors	Y
Urban Friendly	-	-	-

	PERK 01 •
	PERK 02 •
	PERK 03 •
	PERK 04 •
	PERK 05 •
	PERK 06 •
	PERK 07 •
	PERK 08 •
	PERK 09 •
	PERK 10 •
	PERK 11 •

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Annoyance	-	Wide shoulders make for a tight fit in some areas
Sensor Dependent	-	Must rely on sensors in combat

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-





Type 119[D] "Mayhem"

The Type 119(D) "Mayhem" dueling Mount is something of an enigma in the Mount industry. Manufactured by MassTech Heavy Industries, a subsidiary of Hakkar, Inc., it is plainly designated as a dueling variant, but to date, the unmodified Type 119 has not been seen. More than one slightly paranoid industry insider has speculated that Hakkar has special plans for the Type 119, but these rumors are entirely unfounded. MassTech's official press releases on the subject state simply that the 119 was a dead-end project and the 119(D) is an attempt to recoup development costs.

Regardless, the Mayhem is designed to please the crowd. With a reinforced chassis, extra armor plating on the front and armored knee housings, it is designed with collisions in mind. Like most dueling Mounts, it sports a trideo link-up system to broadcast battle highlights to arena monitors. It also features a smoke launching system designed both to give the pilot a tactical advantage and to thrill the audience. A common tactic for Mayhem pilots is to fire one or two canisters immediately upon entering the arena, which usually gains them a long, rousing cheer.

The Mayhem ships with a heavy battle mace for pummeling its opponents. It also features a piston punch modification to one of its arms (pilot's choice as to which). Both weapons are crowd-pleasers.

Service Record

The Mayhem is a relatively recent model of dueling Mount, and as such has seen little public combat. It is the Mount of choice for Hakkar's newest Duelist, however, which suggests that it is at least a passable vehicle.

Game Statistics

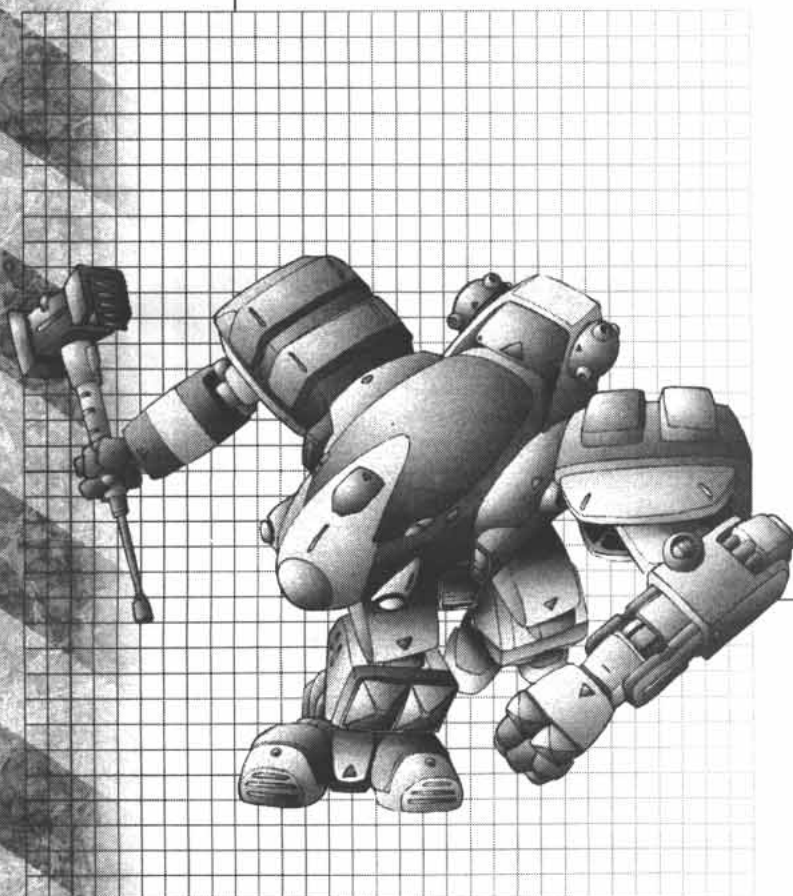
Threat Value:	207	Offensive:	73	Defensive:	67	Miscellaneous:	479	Lemon Dice:	3
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Vehicle Specifications

Code name:	Mayhem (unofficial)
Production Code:	Type 119(D)
Production Type:	Mass Production
Cost:	139,000 Pounds
Manufacturer:	MassTech Heavy Industries
Use:	Dueling
Height:	3.2 m
Width:	2.9 m
Average Armor Thickness:	12 mm
Armor Material:	Composite
Standard Operational Weight:	3300 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (68 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	N/A
Deployment Range:	150 km
Sensor Range:	2 km
Communications Range:	10 km
Powerplant:	Electric/gas turbine
Horsepower:	400 hp

Weapons

Name	Ammunition Payload
Mace	-
Piston Punch	-



• PILOT NAME: _____
 • RANK: _____
 • SQUADRON: _____
 • AFFILIATION: _____

PILOT (LV/AT): ☐ ☐ GUNNERY (LV/AT): ☐ ☐ ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT): ☐ ☐

VEHICLE CREW	
• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

VEHICLE CREW
CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

MOVEMENT	
• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W 6
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W 11
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	- -
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	- -
• MANEUVER:	-1
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:	200

Category	Value
COMBAT SPD	100
TOP SPD	100
COMBAT SPD	100
TOP SPD	100
MANEUVER	100
FUEL SPENT	100

• SENSORS:	0	2
• COMMUNICATION:	0	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		+1

- SENSORS •
- COMM •
- FIRE CONTROL •

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	9
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	18
• OVERKILL:	27

 LIGHT DAMAGE •
 HEAVY DAMAGE •
 OVERKILL •

• THREAT VALUE: 206 • SIZE: 5 • COST: 139,000 Pounds

[illegible][illegible]

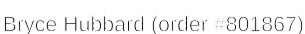
WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Battle Arm, Manipulator Arm	5	Can punch	-
HEP: Desert, Extreme Cold	-	Protection against the elements	-
Improved Off-Road Ability	-	Wide feet; -1 MP cost for hexes with cost greater than one	-
Life Support	-	Limited	Y
Loudspeakers	-	External sound system	Y
Ram Plate	-	Front	-
Reinforced Armor	2	Front	-
Reinforced Chassis	-	Absorbs first "Structure" Damage	-
Smoke Launchers	-	6 shots	Y
Trideo Link-Up	-	Trideo feed to arena monitors	Y
Urban Friendly	-	-	-

	PERK 01 •
	PERK 02 •
	PERK 03 •
	PERK 04 •
	PERK 05 •
	PERK 06 •
	PERK 07 •
	PERK 08 •
	PERK 09 •
	PERK 10 •
	PERK 11 •

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Sensor Dependent	-	Must rely on sensors in combat

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-





Electronic Heroes



The place smelled of old dust and grime, with a faint aroma of sweat floating above it all. Whispers of Johar smoke snaked along the ceiling of the room, faint precursors of the dense cloud that would follow in a few hours. The few people present were silent, anxiously watching the efforts of the two men working on the opened black box lying at their feet.

"Hurry up, they'll be here any minute now!" Sam was panting, sweat covering his brown and dropping down on his ample gut. There were wet spots elsewhere on the stained shirt he wore.

"It won't go any faster if ya ask," replied the thin man who had his hands buried in the machine's innards. He cursed in Atshi-go as his tool slipped and caused a spark. "How's that?"

Behind him, the wall flickered to life, bands of static marring its surface. The faint image of a Gear moving toward the camera could be seen, but little else. The thin man cursed again and fiddled with a control. The image disappeared completely. Sam groaned.

A distant engine noise could now be heard outside the wall. One of the men seated near the door looked outside nervously. He reflexively checked the sidearm strapped to his thigh.

"I think I've got it now!" The thin man shouted in triumph. The screen flickered to life again, showing the same static as before. Sam cursed and made an anguished noise.

The engine noise had stopped just outside the bunker, and steps could be heard coming toward the door. One of the seated men dove under his table.

The door opened with a bang as someone kicked it open from the outside. The thin man screamed reflectively and slammed his tool against the side of the box in despair, which caused a spark to jump from inside the casing.

The screen came to life with a clear picture, quickly followed by music from the old speakers bolted to the ceiling.

A mixed gang of huge, dirty gangers and Badlanders stood in the door frame, grunting. They came in one by one, heading for the tables in front of the vidwall and causing the patrons to scatter out of their way.

Sam and Yonz, operator of the Broken Bolt — one of the worst dives within an hour of travel of Khayr ad-Din — sat down behind the bar in obvious relief. The bar's trideo set, temperamental as ever, was now working perfectly. From experience, they knew it would last long enough.

Sam used a wet towel to wash his brow, wasting precious water with abandon. "You pulled us out of the springer's droppings again, southface. Thanks."

"No problem, boss." He glanced at the new crowd, which sat at attention before the wall screen, oblivious to their surrounding, cheering occasionally.

"It's my neck too, ya know. Who knows what they'd do to us if they missed an episode of *The Heavy Gear Championship Tournament*?"



CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

6

Glory and Steel - 6.1

The Interpolar War caused a dramatic decrease in the number of dueling events taking place across the planet. Most of the better duelists found themselves drafted in the armies or on the run, and few viewers were interested in witnessing arena fights when their city-states were under attack. Once the war ended, both the arena promoters and the fans expected that business would rapidly go back to normal. The rise of the KADA, however, threw an unexpected wrench in these plans: the former have lost much of their star power and must now do with second-stringers, while the latter miss the old glory days of the dueling leagues.

When there is an opportunity to profit, someone will take it, however. A brand new trideo show out of the Southern Republic (and syndicated across much of the planet) follows the exploits of a crack dueling team in "Trash City," where they constantly compete against their opposite number on the Northern side. Though the show is heavily romanticized, the action sequences are unbelievable. The fans are eating it up; at this rate, there won't be any need for the real duelists to go back to the arena!



Backstory - 6.1.1

Von "Boom Boom" Maddox was a lowly fight promoter who used to spend his time shuttling between the Southern Republic and Khayr ad-Din, organizing second-string events in the smaller arena. The Interpolar War almost ruined him, and he spent most of the conflict hiding from his creditors in the shadier neighborhoods of Port Oasis. During that time, he established a series of contacts in the world of underground dueling and managed to get his hands on second-hand trideo equipment which he hoped to sell to finance his debts.

During an all-night drinking binge with his few remaining friends, however, an idea took shape. Someone was lamenting the fact that the only good fights on the trideo were re-runs of events that took place long before the war. When Maddox replied that only a few duelists were left, the friend replied: "I don't care how good they are, or how fixed the fight is — all I want is to see some action!" Maddox later reported that he had an illumination that night.

After the war ended, he tracked down his creditors and offered them a deal. If they would erase his standing debts and provide him with additional contacts and financing, he would cut them in on his new dueling league: the Heavy Gear Championship Tournament™ (HGCT). He already had the fighters, most of the Gears and all the electronic equipment he needed — with their backing, he could make it one of the biggest media events ever on the planet.

The group, now known as the Heavy Gear Council, accepted Maddox's proposal and secured the rights to several abandoned arenas in the Badlands. The latter were chosen for both tax and practical reasons — some of the events Maddox had in mind would require a lot of room. Contracts were signed, duelists recruited and trained, and soon the show was a breakaway hit, with viewers tuning in every week to follow the latest intrigues between the conniving, scheming pilots and their managers. Maddox himself appears in the show as the main promoter and announcer, blurring the line between fiction and reality even further.

Now, a new hero has appeared on the scene. Young Marcus Steven Rover's introduction earlier this season was one of the most watched episodes ever, and many predict that he will rise to cult status before the current Tournament series is over. Already, merchandise bearing the image of his red Jäger is vanishing from the stores as fast as the shelves can be restocked.

Interview with Marcus Steven Rover™

"I'm part of the Shadow Dragons™, a special independent dueling squad of the Southern MILICIA. Our team is pitted against the Vanguard of Justice™, our counterparts from the Northern Guard. Every week, we meet in a series of events and battles in the arenas and deserts around the town of Trash City to determine who will take home the coveted Heavy Gear Championship Cup and its associated glory!

"Yeah, you could say we're the good guys. I'm sure Major Drake Alexander Wallis III™, the leader of the Vanguard, would disagree. But hey, I'm not the one who'll let his team do anything to secure a victory, know what I mean? We play by the rules, and we win fair and square every time.

"What? Yes, I'm a true Badlander — I was raised not too far from here, actually, a little place called Orem. Yes, I pilot my own Gear. Yes, the stunts you see are real, including the battles. Hey, we're pros, not actors. It's all a matter of taking calculated risks.

"Sure it's a show, but it's more much interesting than real life, don't you think?"





MARCUS STEVEN ROVER™



Marcus Rover, the main character, is a twenty-cycle-old boy who has always wanted to be an Ace Gear Pilot and a Heavy Gear Champion. A bright, resourceful and unique individual, Marcus starts out as a kid on his own who struggles to survive by his wits in the wild desert Badlands. His life takes a dramatic turn when he steps into a Heavy Gear tournament event to help out his hero, Lt. Jan Augusta, squad leader of the Southern Shadow Dragons dueling team.

When the Shadow Dragons recruit Marcus, he finds that as the newest member, he has a lot of growing up to do. As a young man, he has to deal with issues such as learning responsibility; as a duelist in the Heavy Gear Championship Series, he has to deal with the thrill of victory and the sting of defeat; and as a squadmate, he has to learn how to cooperate with others, especially those in authority. The growing pains aren't easy, and the process takes time, but the charismatic teen soon begins to mature, bonding with his new friends, and proving his courage and loyalty on and off the arena field.

Marcus has an unconventional, grassroots approach to life, and it is reflected in both his attitude (which is a bit rebellious) and in his fighting style (which is very free-style, allowing for surprises and tactics not included in any book of rules). A man barely out of his teens, who constantly challenges the system's rules and bucks tradition, Marcus inspires the Dragons to ever improving performances. Although he is younger than his squadmates, when he puts on his Gear he is as big and as powerful as the other Pilots are. On the field, Marcus is no longer just "a kid."

Marcus has an ongoing rivalry with Major Drake Alexander Wallis III, squad leader of the Northern team, the Vanguard of Justice. Wallis is an Ace Gear Pilot and, before Marcus arrives on the scene, the reigning Heavy Gear Champion. Once Marcus fights with the Dragons against the Vanguard and wins the Heavy Gear trophy and title, Wallis engages in a continual battle with Marcus to regain his title and reputation.

Colonel Rika, the Vanguard's commanding officer, especially has Marcus targeted. Rika wants to eliminate all competition to the Vanguard — and Marcus is definitely at the top of her hit list. Despite the dirty tricks of Rika, Wallis and the Vanguard, Marcus rises above the opposition and proves to be a genuine Ace Gear Pilot and a Heavy Gear Champion.

Dirx™



Dirx is a muscle-bound, loudmouthed Gear pilot. He is big, brash and boisterous. He loves one-on-one matches — and the word "defeat" is not part of his vocabulary. In fact, he is not very eloquent at all. Dirx sees a sort of dark humor in everything, and he uses that to mask his negative emotions — fear, pain, etc. He loves to poke fun at anyone he considers to be arrogant or stuck-up.

Dirx is a real in-your-face pain-in-the-ass, but a lovable goon just the same. He can easily get on everyone's nerves. However, when the going gets tough, Dirx comes through, blasting his way to victory.

Zerve™



Zerve is laid-back and considered 'odd' by almost everyone who knows him. He is an excellent Duelist, but he takes everything in stride, only occasionally "stressing out." He is unconventional and keeps everyone around him off guard with his colorful comments and often strange, yet accurate, observations.

He is a free spirit who loves to dance to a good beat, and who will do so regardless of the situation — on foot or aboard his Gear. He says this helps him keep his "groove" and focus better during a competition.

Zerve likes Marcus, especially the kid's seat-of-the-pants style. Being off-center himself, he likes anyone who marches to the beat of a different drummer. Marcus is always surprising the team with his unconventional way of doing things, and Zerve really appreciates that.





CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

6

Sonja Briggs™

Briggs has won more awards for racing than any man or woman on Terra Nova. A former Gear racer from the South who participated in the Badlands' notorious Doom Race 1000, she is a whiz on wheels. Even without her Gear, she is fast on her feet. She doesn't like to just rely on the vehicle's weaponry; when ammunition runs out or her Gear is damaged, she can still fight using her natural speed.

Though roughly the same age as her squadmates, Sonja is extremely mature and levelheaded. Loyal to the core, she follows the rules laid down by her superiors and is willing to duel, anytime and any place. A skillful Gear pilot who provides excellent backup and support, she favors the martial arts. She is also a jock at heart: a superb athlete and an avid extreme sports enthusiast, she loves a good challenge.

One thing that sets Sonja apart from her squadmates is her unflappable patience in battle. She knows how to get the most out of her V-engine and hydraulics, and she knows that sometimes it is better to move into a battle situation slowly and methodically instead of rushing in full-force.

Kusunoki Tachi™

Like his samurai ancestors, Tachi is a serious duelist. He is a master of his Gear's weaponry, but he also specializes in finding the weak points in the frame of others' Gears and using that knowledge to defeat them in unarmed combat. In addition to his bazooka cannon, this pilot has added a samurai-like sword to his arsenal. This sword, a vibrokatana, can pierce armor and cut through reinforced durasheet. When Tachi shears off an enemy's Gear leg, the pilot feels no actual pain, but the humiliation of losing in battle from a sword swing is devastating.

Under heavy fire, Tachi is relentless, often seeming to be superhuman as he weaves and dodges past thousands of incoming rounds. The flash of steel of his katana swings almost blinds his opponents, making him a feared warrior. Deep underneath his tough samurai exterior, however, Tachi is a gentle soul with a sense of humor. He is constantly saying and doing things that surprise his fellow Dragons.

GREL Soldier Sebastian™

Sebastian is a Jan-class genetically enhanced human supersoldier left behind by the retreating CEF troops. Like other GRELS, Sebastian is big and powerfully built, unstoppable by normal means. The ultimate fighting machine, he has been bred through hypno-training for strength, toughness and loyalty. He has incredible stamina under heavy fire.

Unlike other GRELS, however, Sebastian has extremely high intelligence and unusual independence. He works hard to overcome his feelings of megalomania, a flaw remaining from his hypno-training and genetic programming. The typical GREL does not have the same capacity for emotion as normal humans, but Sebastian is anything but typical. Although he is unable to feel much fear or pain, he does have strong ties to his squadmates.

Sebastian's best friend on the squad is Marcus, who feels a natural kinship with him. Marcus admires the enhanced human, especially for his desire to break the GREL conditioning and follow his own heart and destiny.



Budd Squires™

Budd Squires is the energetic pilot of the arena clown Gear known to all fans as "Rex Aplenty," which is used to provide entertainment and comic relief between events in the Heavy Gear Championship Series. Along with his remote-controlled dog-robot Buttons, "Rex" runs around the arena, taking pratfalls and trying to keep the fans in the stadium roaring with laughter while the hulks are towed off the field. Early on, Marcus befriends Budd after he borrows the latter's clown Gear to help the Shadow Dragons win a tournament.

Besides being an amusing arena entertainer, Budd Squires is also an excellent mechanic. Good with engines and weapons alike, he likes to build things on his own. He is definitely a guy who likes to get his hands dirty. This grease monkey prides himself on his ability to patch up defective Gears as quickly as possible — a skill that comes in very handy during the tournament events.



Major Drake Alexander Wallis III™



Major Drake Alexander Wallis III is believed by many to be the finest Gear pilot ever to come out of the North. Born into one of the wealthiest Northern families and groomed from early on to be a member of the elite, Wallis has been piloting a Gear since he was a teenager. He has a noble air about him, and he believes in the North's manifest destiny to direct the future of the planet.

Educated in the finest military schools the North has to offer, Wallis is a superb strategist, his grasp of military tactics unequaled. His fighting style is precise, his tactics are crisp and his marksmanship is unparalleled. He is good at pushing the combat frame of any Gear and knows how to use light weapons load to maximum advantage. His specialty is sneaking up on enemy Gears from behind and blasting them to bits.

Wallis firmly believes in the four tenets of the Duelist's Proviso, the legendary code of honor — Honor before All, Regiment before Self, Thought before Action, and Justice before Reconciliation. The rules are very important to him — until he meets his nemesis, Marcus Steven Rover. From then on, Wallis' code of honor becomes twisted and largely subordinate to his desire to win back his status at any cost.

Yoji Hirakowa™



Yoji is a former street brat and gang member. A former resident of the Badlands' notorious "Trash City," she has come a long way since her days of hover-by shootings and Gearbangs. Now she is a master saboteur, using disguises and other methods of subterfuge to gather information and set booby traps against the Shadow Dragons and anyone opposing her team. An expert hacker, Yoji also enjoys cyber-sabotage.

When Yoji is in the midst of battle, she turns into a "dirty fighter" with an explosive, fiery personality. She is a relentless duelist who never retreats in battle. However, she can sometimes act like a loose cannon and careen out of control. Fortunately for her and the rest of the team, Major Wallis always brings her back down to earth.

Rank™

Rank is the ultimate tournament duelist — he literally lives to fight, especially when the odds are against him. Loud and boisterous, he loves to play up to the crowd, standing up in the open cockpit of his machine and taunting opponents any chance he can get. He hates the Shadow Dragons: to him, they're just "slimy slitherin' snakes." A master of "trash talk," he enjoys berating the Dragons in and out of the arena. Sometimes, however, he goes overboard, angering even his own teammates with his blundering methods.

Rank is tough, but he is not invincible. Although he is a serious Gear Pilot in battle, Rank can sometimes act like a petulant child. This is a guy with a short fuse, and he has a long history of getting into trouble because of his temper. If he doesn't get his way, he launches into a temper tantrum — Rank-style.

Serge Garpenlov™



Serge is a man of many trades. Older than his squadmates, Serge has been around and seems like someone who's seen it all. Having been a former bodyguard for a gangster in "Trash City," Serge is an expert marksman. Some people think he is cold and unemotional, but he is not. He is just good at what he does — and that is setting up ambushes and sniper attacks on the competition, and taking them out of the picture as fast as possible.

Serge knows all the ins and outs of sabotage. He has an uncanny ability to hit his target, no matter how impossible the feat might appear. His Gear's well-trained Neural Net computer helps him register targets and fire faster. Serge judges a situation quickly, devises a plan of action and sticks to it. When he moves in for the kill, he strikes first, fast and hard. He engages in hand-to-hand combat without hesitation.





CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

6

Sgt. Gunther Groonz™

Sgt. Groonz is the perfect squadmate — he is one thousand per cent loyal to his squad and to his adored commanding officer, Major Wallis. He is willing to do anything for the team, including risking his life in the face of danger, hoping to gain the respect and appreciation of his superiors.

In battle, everything is all or nothing for him. He relies extensively on the heavy weaponry of his Gear, often firing all guns at once. If there were still John Wayne movies around, Groonz would be watching them in his off-hours. He especially loves to design and detonate explosive devices. In fact, he is so personally "attached" to his bombs, he actually names them. Groonz is twisted!

Colonel Magnilda Rika™

An ambitious soldier who has spent most of her life on military bases, Colonel Rika commands the Northern Vanguard Army and its most elite squad of Northern Gear Pilots, the Vanguard of Justice. Determined to win the Heavy Gear Championship title at any cost, Rika continually urges the Vanguard to use extreme tactics and dirty tricks, including the use of untested weapons, covert operations, sabotaging the opposition's weapons and vehicles, ringers, anti-matter bombs, etc. For Rika, S.O.P. is "victory by any means necessary."

She can be extremely strict and unyielding in her command. Major Wallis' streak of losses in the tournaments enrages her, and she is constantly pushing him to win. Rika loathes Marcus Rover: her obsession to eliminate him is overwhelming, and she's always looking for ways to get rid of this thorn in her side.

Greco™

Greco, Marcus' uncle, is the only remaining family member in Marcus' life. While Marcus' father was an ex-Gear Pilot, Greco never got involved in the dueling circuit. Instead he studied at the Port Oasis Academy of the Sciences and furthered his studies as an inventor. Later, he went into the Badlands to live with his brother, Henry Rover. All he wanted to do was live a peaceful life, inventing laborsaving devices. To find parts for his machines, Greco roamed the deserts with his young nephew Marcus, scavenging and salvaging spare pieces of machinery from Gears and vehicle wrecks found abandoned in the desert.

Before Marcus' dad died, he made Greco promise that he'd look out for his son — and that he'd make sure Marcus stay out of the dueling business. Greco assured his brother that he would watch over the teenager like a guardian angel and keep the kid out of trouble. Even that promise, however, couldn't stop Marcus from donning his own Gear and fighting with the Shadow Dragons in the Heavy Gear tournaments. Despite Greco's reservations, he remains proud of his nephew. Marcus' successes in the arena prove that he's a natural Ace Gear pilot and a genuine champion of the Badlands.

Lieutenant Creet™

"Creet the Creep," as he's called behind his back by more than a few Duelists, is a fussy, persnickety and dangerous desk officer who works as Training Officer and "Special Liaison" for the Southern MILICIA. He also runs and trains the Tournament dueling squads, including the Shadow Dragons. Though not seen at every event, his presence is always felt. A smallish, wiry man, he doesn't like getting his hands "dirty" with fieldwork, but enjoys making political messes and dangerous situations for his enemies. He demands respect from the squad, but seldom gets it because he's such a jerk. Creet especially detests Marcus — a "sand-belly" kid — who constantly gives him grief and tries to bend the rules to beat the Northern Vanguard of Justice.

Striders and Heavy Machinery

Though striders are generally considered too heavy, ponderous and expensive to be used in arena combat, Maddox has always felt they are crowd-pleasers — and he's right. To this end, he has arranged the purchase of several decommissioned Mammoth and Naga striders for use in the Championship Tournament and had them extensively modified to make them more appealing and menacing. The unsalvageable ones ended as spare parts or in one of the "monster vehicle" contraptions Maddox's technicians are so fond of producing.

To provide more opponents to his Duelists, Maddox has also contacted several robotics experts all over the planet to have them design a number of new combat drones for use in special-themed tournament events. He is always very careful to hide the existence of his new toys right until the last moment to preserve the fans' excitement. Who knows what is hidden in his warehouse?





6.2 - GEARS

The Gears used in the Heavy Gear Championship Tournament™ series are all customized variants of existing military vehicles. The purpose of this was two-fold: to promote audience recognition of vehicles they may have already seen on the news, and to facilitate the repairs and maintenance by using readily-available parts. For example, almost all the Southern Duelists use a variant of the trusty Jäger. Reliance on known models also simplifies the job of retro-fitting them with the extra weapons and systems imagined for the competition.

All the Gears were heavily modified for improved performances: super-charged engines, high-speed actuators and hyper-accurate gyroscopes replace the stock parts, allowing the pilots to pull incredible moves and maneuvers. Even machines that are not normally thought of as nimble, such as the Kodiak and King Cobra, see a significant improvement. (In game terms, all machines have their Maneuver value raised to at least 0 and are equipped with the Acrobatic Handling Perk.)

For safety purposes, all vehicles received additional armor and bracing around their cockpit and main body (in game terms, all have an additional level of the Reinforced Crew Compartment Perk). It is not unusual to see a Championship Gear fly literally fly apart after a solid hit, yet having the pilot simply walk away from the crash. At the demand of the insurers, the Gears are equipped with non-standard ejection seats as well — and given the extreme stunts pulled by the stars, it is money well-invested.

Command Hero Jäger - "Red Rover"™

Marcus' Gear, known in the arena simply as the Red Rover, is a customized Command Hero Jäger he inherited from its former owner, Lt. Augusta of the Shadow Dragons. It is both maneuverable and dependable. The main weapon is an experimental design: a rapid-fire "pulse-shock" rifle that uses a modified standard autocannon to shoot high energy rounds that can blast apart even the thickest armor. It has shoulder-mounted Anti-Gear Missiles (AGMs) good for destroying enemy units from a distance. For close combat, Marcus mounted a "Sticky Grenade" dispenser which lobes a grenade that covers the enemy in an acidic glue-like substance.

Blitz Jäger - "Sweet Venom"™

This Gear was designed to dominate the Badlands. It is the extreme pilot's dream, due to its ability to climb rocks, ford rivers and streams, and move quickly over broken ground. Sonja Briggs' level-headedness in the midst of battle comes in handy when piloting this demanding vehicle. It is designed to be the "mountain bike" of machines and is perfect for a pilot like Briggs who has the confidence to take it into tight spots and rough terrain. It's extremely quick for a Gear of its size, which allows Briggs to make use of her Gear racing experience. And if racing fails, the heavy autocannon packs real knockdown power.

Desert Jäger - "Crush Bucket"™

The Crush Bucket was designed around a radical new weapon — the Laserflame, a flamethrower-like device based on a high intensity laser. It can have a concentrated beam, or a wide, "green light" flaming stream that is useful against enemy tanks, pillboxes and Gears. The Crush Bucket can also carry a digging claw that is used to quickly "dig in" for defensive fire, or used to quickly "dig out" enemy units. The wacked-out Zerve loves to use his big gun to knock holes in lots of stuff. Sometimes he even uses the laser to make "cool pictures in the desert, man" by burning designs into wood, rock, or the sand itself.

Rattlesnake - "Bonzai Basher"™

Kusunoki Tachi's Bonzai Basher is one of the most feared Gears in the Shadow Dragons. Fast and deadly, the Bonzai Basher has the distinction of being the only one in the Tournament with a Gear-sized Samurai Vibro-Katana. The Bonzai Basher's glowing vibro-weapon can actually cut through much of the armor on enemy Gears.

Armored Jäger - "Buzz Womp"™

Equipped with a heavy automatic grenade launcher, Dirx's Buzz Womp is the perfect Gear for "tearin' up some sand!" in the Badlands. The grenade launcher can fire a variety of shells including high explosive, armor piercing, incendiary, flares, solid shot etc. It is backed by twin large-capacity rocket launchers, one per shoulder hardpoint. Dirx likes the fact that his Gear's heavy armor allows him to get in closer and wrestle with opponents. Dirx's "go for broke" style means that the Buzz Womp undergoes lots of punishment — but it can take it. Dirx likes to close range and hammer away at the enemy with vibro-weapons or just his fists. It is a good fit for Dirx himself.



CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

6

King Cobra - "Warhawk"™

The Warhawk is one of the most powerful Gears ever produced. It was designed to punch through defensive lines and engage the enemy at close quarters. It is an excellent choice for a super soldier GREL like Sebastian because his skills allow him to make use of the myriad of weapons on the machine. The particle accelerator is good for almost any armored target, and the 20mm Gating Gun helps it hit hard at medium ranges. The 71mm rocket pack is mounted on the Gear's back and provides heavy support fire from long ranges. The size of the Warhawk means that Sebastian can also carry extra ammo and supplies. Usually, he takes a position towards the rear of the squad where his firepower can provide maximum benefit. Although somewhat slow compared to other Gears, Sebastian gets the most out of his mount and can move surprisingly swiftly when the need arises. Sebastian enjoys having all the Warhawk's firepower and his disposal, and he also enjoys seeing how little of it he has to use to accomplish his mission.



Grizzly - "King of Sting"™

Wallis' Gear, the King of Sting, is a highly customized Grizzly that carries an impressive load of both melee and ranged weaponry. The Gear has been extensively modified to move and maneuver as well as other vehicles half its size; rumors that some former members of the Strike Cheetah development team have been involved with the redesign may not be exaggerated. The Gear has a distinctive silhouette, being equipped with a Headhunter turret assembly to take advantage of the latter vehicle's improved communication system. As a result, many fans (and enemy pilots) have mistaken it for the lighter Hunter variant — usually, much to their chagrin.



Cheetah - "Punk-Fu"™

The Punk-Fu is one of the fastest Gears on the planet. The standard light autocannon, combined with a missile rack, makes this Gear quite deadly, and Yoji uses her machine's speed and lightning quickness to her advantage. Yoji also enjoys having the option of being able to rapidly close ground and attack with her Gear's vibroknife. Punk-Fu excels in the sabotage role, and is used quite often by Yoji to cheat during tournaments and other "unofficial" duels. It has an electronics pod fitted to its right shoulder so that Yoji can hack enemy systems and computers while her Gear is out in the field.



Mad Dog - "Droolin' Duelin' Mad Dog"™

The Droolin' Duelin' Mad Dog enjoys the comfort of having twenty-four heavy rockets ready to fire just above the inverted V-Engine. The heavy load of rockets allows Rank to experiment with a variety of different rockets and guided missiles in his pod. As he would say, "I'm just lookin' for more bang for my buck." The problem is that in an engagement Rank often turns and fires at anything that moves and expends all his ammunition in the process. He gets all lathered up and becomes something of a... mad dog. To back up the rockets, the Mad Dog carries an autocannon in its right hand and twin gatling machineguns in its torso. It also has two light shoulder-mounted grenade launchers to help in close quarters fighting.



Jaguar - "Hammer"™

The power, range and phenomenal accuracy of the Arrowlight Laser Rifle make the Hammer a premier sniper Gear. Rugged and dependable, this Gear, in the hands of an expert marksman like Serge, has created havoc on the field. Designed to fire from long ranges, the Hammer can nonetheless get in close with its vibroknife and light grenade launcher. The Hammer is also good at setting up ambushes and doing impromptu sabotage — two tasks which Serge excels at. He believes in the axiom "Speak softly and carry a large laser weapon".



Kodiak - "Crunch Muncher"™

The powerful Crunch Muncher is the largest Gear in the Vanguard arsenal. Groonz enjoys piloting this walking nightmare because he likes the raw firepower it carries. The huge particle accelerator held in the right manipulator can blast through almost any armor, and with the many missiles at his disposal, Groonz can really "light up" a Dragon formation. A series of special compartments built into the chassis lets him conceal numerous bombs and mines of his own creation, ready to be deployed in the field.



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