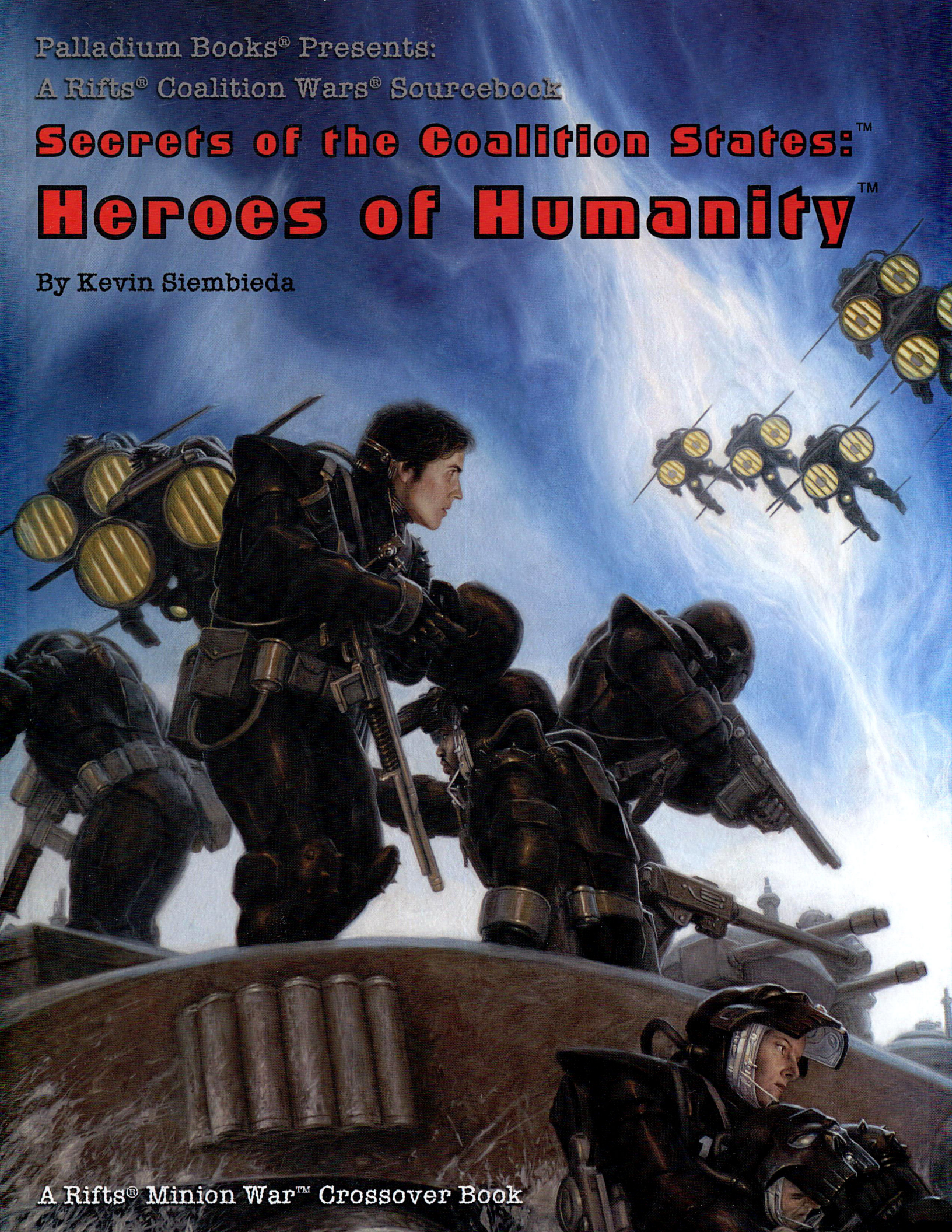
Palladium Books® Presents:

A Rifts® Coalition Wars® Sourcebook

Secrets of the Coalition States:™

Heroes of Humanity™

By Kevin Siembieda



A Rifts® Minion War™ Crossover Book

Warning!

Violence, War, Magic & the Supernatural

The fictional worlds of Rifts® are violent, deadly and filled with aliens, war and supernatural monsters. Other-dimensional beings often referred to as "demons," torment, stalk and prey on humans. Alien life forms, monsters, vampires, ghosts, ancient gods and demigods, as well as magic, insanity, psychic powers and combat are all elements in this book. *All of it is fiction.*

Some parents may find the violence, magic and supernatural elements of the game inappropriate for young readers/players. We suggest parental discretion.

Please note that none of us at Palladium Books® condone or encourage the occult, the practice of magic, the use of drugs, or violence.

Secrets of the Coalition States™:

Heroes of Humanity™

A Minion War™ Crossover book for *Rifts*®

and the *Megaverse® in Flames™ World Book*.

Dedication from Kevin

To my true friends, which are many. You will never know how much you mean to me. Thank you for your love and generosity. I could not survive this adventure through life without you at my side. You are loved and appreciated.

I wrote the above dedication for the sneak preview edition sold at the 2015 Palladium Open House. Those words ring true just as much now as they did then. The names you'll see on the credits page are just some of those wonderful friends. All people I am proud to work with and call my friends. They are just a few of the unnamed multitude of people – of friends – who enrich my life. Many of you reading this, counted among them. I love you all. Game on.

– Kevin Siembieda, Spring 2016

The cover, by *Drew Baker*, depicts Coalition soldiers in the aftermath of a battle. A squad of SAMAS chase after demonic enemies that have escaped through a Rift rapidly closing in the sky.

First Printing – May, 2016

No part of this publication may be scanned, OCRed, reproduced or distributed in any way for electronic publication on the web/ internet or any other medium.

Copyright 2016 Palladium Books Inc. & Kevin Siembieda

All rights reserved, worldwide, under the Universal Copyright Convention. No part of this book may be reproduced in part or whole, in any form or by any means, without permission from the publisher, except for brief quotes for use in reviews. All incidents, situations, institutions, governments and people are fictional and any similarity, without satiric intent, of characters or persons living or dead, is strictly coincidental.

Rifts®, The Rifter®, Megaverse®, The Mechanoids®, The Mechanoid Invasion®, Phase World®, Splicers®, Chaos Earth®, Coalition Wars®, Dead Reign®, After the Bomb®, RECON®, Nightbane®, The Palladium Fantasy Role-Playing Game® and Palladium Books® are registered trademarks owned and licensed by Palladium Books Inc. and Kevin Siembieda.

Anti-Monster, Archie-Bot, Archie Three, Arzno, Bandito Arms, BigBore, Bio-Armor, Biomancy, Biomancer, Bio-Constructs, Bio-Wizard, Black Faerie, Blind Warrior Women, Blood Warrior, 'Bot, 'Borg, 'Burb, Brodkil, Chaos Demon, Chi-Town, City Rat, Coalition States, CS, Coalition State of El Dorado, Colorado Baronies, Combat Cyborg, Coming of the Rifts, Crazies, Cyber-Doc, Cyber-Knight, Dead Boy, Death Knight, Death Wing, Deevils, Dinosaur Swamp, Doc Reid, Dog Boy, Dog Pack, Dyval, E-Clip, Elemental Fusionist, Emperor Prosek, Erin Tarn, Federation of Magic, Free Quebec, Gargoyle Empire, Glitter Boy, Great Cataclysm, Headhunter, Hell Lord, Hell Plague, Horune Pirates, Iron Heart, Ironwing, Juicer, Kittani, Lazlo, Lemurian, Ley Line Walker, Lord Splynncryth, Magic Zone, Manistique Imperium, Megaverse Armaments, MercTown, Metztla, Mind Bleeder, Mind Melter, Minion War, Naruni, Naruni Enterprises, Naut'Yll, NGR, New German Republic, New Navy, Northern Gun, NG, Pecos Empire, Psi-Hound, Psi-Stalker, Psyscape, Reid's Rangers, Rifts Earth, Secondary Vampire, SAMAS, Shemarrian, Shifter, Silent Shadow, Simvan, Skelebot, Soulmancy, Soulmancer, Splynn Dimensional Market, Splynn, Splugorth, Minions of Splugorth, Splugorth Slavers, Stone Magic, Stone Masters, Tattooed Man, Techno-Wizard, Thundercaster, Tolkeen, Triax, True Atlantean, Undead Slayer, Vampire Kingdoms, Rifts® Game Master Guide, Rifts® Book of Magic, Rifts® Atlantis, Wilk's, Witchling, Xiticix, Mega-Damage, M.D.C., S.D.C., I.S.P., P.P.E., and other names, titles, initials, characters, character likenesses, and slogans are trademarks owned and licensed by Kevin Siembieda and Palladium Books Inc.

Palladium Online: **www.palladiumbooks.com –** also visit us at **facebook.com/PalladiumBooks**

Secrets of the Coalition States™: Heroes of Humanity™ – A Rifts® sourcebook in the Minion War™ crossover series. Published by Palladium Books Inc., 39074 Webb Court, Westland, MI 48185-7606. Printed in the USA by McNaughton & Gunn, Saline, Michigan.

Palladium Books® Presents:

A Rifts® Coalition Wars® Sourcebook

Secrets of the Coalition States™:

Heroes of Humanity™

Written by: **Kevin Siembieda**

Additional Writing and/or Ideas:
Matthew Clements
Carl Gleba
Alex Marciniszyn
Charles Walton II

Editors: **Alex Marciniszyn**
Matthew Clements
Kevin Siembieda
Wayne Smith

Proofreader: **Julius Rosenstein**

Cover Illustration: **Drew Baker**

Interior Artists:
Amy L. Ashbaugh
Nick Bradshaw
Angela Deland-Baldwin
Mark Dudley
Allen Manning
Brian Manning
Michael Mumah
Apollo Okamura
Tanya Ramsey
Benjamin Rodriguez
Charles "Chuck" Walton II

Border Artists: **Kevin Siembieda** and **Charles Walton II**
Skull Border: **Angela Deland-Baldwin**

Art Direction: **Kevin Siembieda**
Typography and Layout: **Wayne Smith**

Based on the RPG rules, writings, characters, settings, concepts and Megaverse® created by **Kevin Siembieda**.

Special Thanks to *Carl Gleba* whose prior work on the Minion War series inspired this book and others, and for his ideas and writing contributions to this title; to *Matthew Clements* for expanding on concepts and additional writing; to *Charles Walton II* for his inspiring artistry and concept work; to *Drew Baker* for a dynamic cover; and to the Palladium staff in the trenches, *Alex, Wayne, Kathy*, and *Julius*, you are the best of the best.

– Kevin Siembieda, April, 2016

Contents

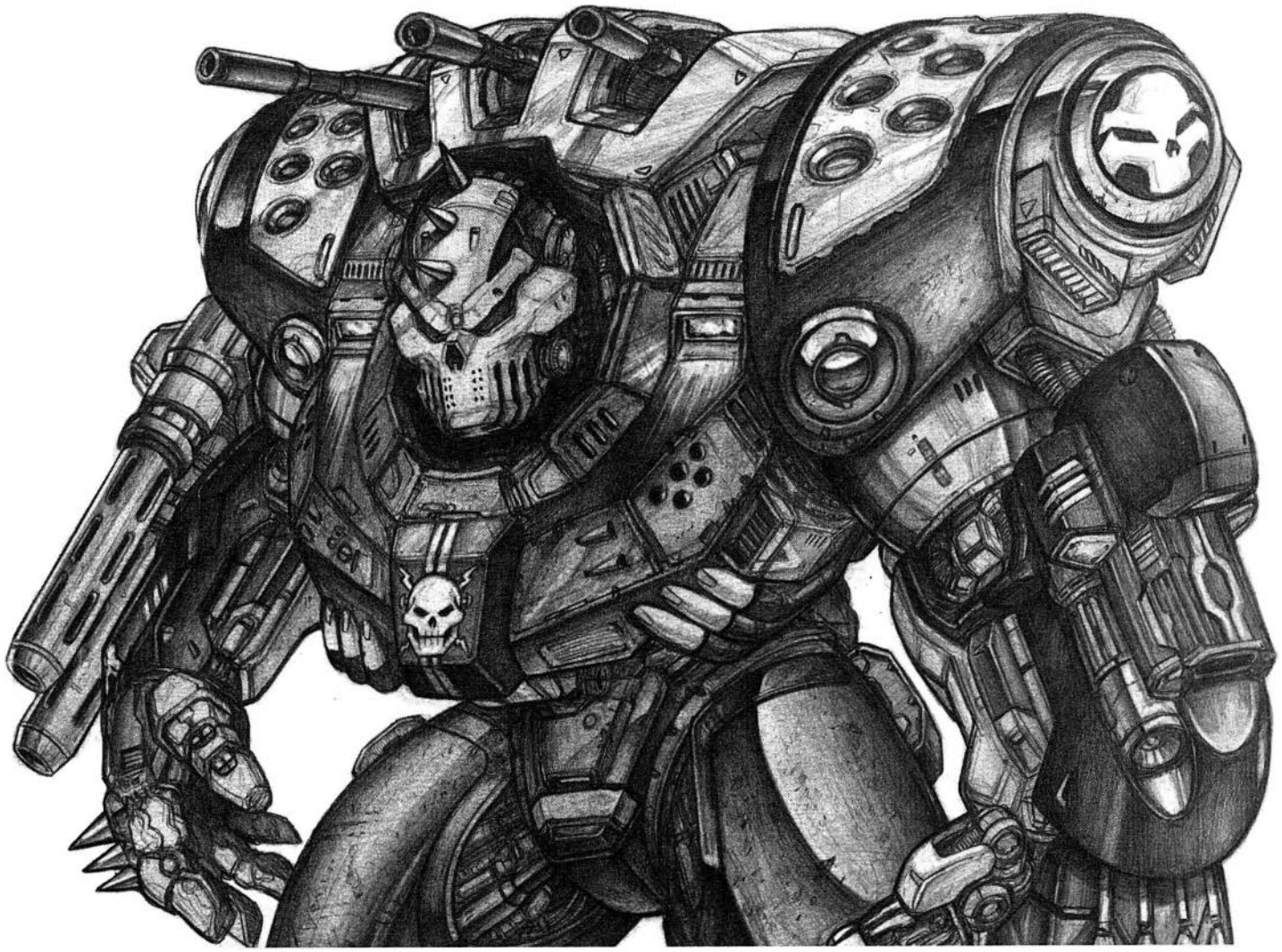
Some Insight from the Author . . . 7
Call to Arms . . . 8
Battlefield North America . . . 9
CS: Heroes of Humanity . . . 9
Absolution Program . . . 10
One small catch . . . 10
The Rise of Humanity and the CS . . . 11
Overnight, the 'Burbs become dangerous . . . 11
Night of Forgiveness . . . 12
Field Strategies Involving D-Bees and Mages . . . 12
Unexpected Consequences . . . 13
The D-Bee Perspective . . . 14
A simple question . . . 14
Fighting for hearth and home . . . 16
The face of true villainy . . . 16
CS Background . . . 18
The Coalition States – fortress of humankind . . . 18
The Psychological Effects of the Apocalypse . . . 18
Xenophobia . . . 19
Erin Tarn's Reflections on the Coalition . . . 19
Coalition Propaganda and Misinformation . . . 19
Propaganda Regarding D-Bees . . . 20
The Average CS Citizen's Opinion of D-Bees . . . 20
ISS Prison . . . 21
Undocumented D-Bees . . . 21
Propaganda Regarding Magic . . . 21
Citizens with Psychic Powers . . . 21
Psychic Registration Program . . . 21
Coalition Reserve Forces . . . 22
People's Militias . . . 22
The Coalition Prison System . . . 22
Processing . . . 22
Psi-Block . . . 23
Death Row . . . 23
Gangs & Market Factions Behind Bars . . . 23
Civilization outside the CS . . . 24
Town Protectors . . . 24
Communication in North America . . . 25
Hell on Earth – Demonic Strategies and Tactics . . . 26
Evil will always move against you . . . 26
Masters of the Game . . . 27
Strong demon leader . . . 27
Admonishment . . . 27
Reborn in Hell – Demons and Death . . . 27
Demonic Psychological Warfare . . . 28
Who can you trust? . . . 29
Demonic Intimidation . . . 29
Determining Demonic Intimidation on Mortals . . . 29
Infiltration and Treachery . . . 30
The enemy of my enemy is my ally ... until he's not . . . 30
Temptation and Lies . . . 31
Dirty Deals . . . 32
Revenge . . . 32
Gamesmanship . . . 33
Torture . . . 33
CS Strategies & Tactics . . . 34
Fighting Demons and Supernatural Monsters . . . 34
Demon Vulnerabilities . . . 34
Vulnerabilities of the Sub-Demons of Hades . . . 34
Vulnerabilities of Lesser Demons . . . 35
Vulnerabilities of Greater Demons . . . 37
Notable Hades Monsters . . . 41
Deevil Vulnerabilities . . . 41
Vulnerabilities of Deevil Host . . . 41
Vulnerabilities of Lesser Deevils . . . 42
Vulnerabilities of Greater Deevils . . . 44
Notable Dyval Monsters . . . 46
CS Strategies and Tactics – Teamwork is vital . . . 46
CS Combined-Arms Tactics . . . 48
CS Air Units . . . 48
CS Infantry . . . 48
CS Long-Range Attacks . . . 48
Aerial Combat with Demonkind . . . 49
Aerial Warfare . . . 49
Aerial Collision Penalty and Modifiers . . . 50
Demons are far from stupid . . . 51
Close combat with demons is trouble . . . 51
Evil supernatural beings fight dirty . . . 51
A wide range of abilities . . . 51
Beware alliances with supernatural evil . . . 52
Cut Off the Head of the Serpent . . . 52
Using the Intelligence skill . . . 52
Slaying Demonic Leaders – Penalties & loss of troops . . . 53
Demonic Reaction Table . . . 54
Demon Slayer Reputation Table (Optional) . . . 56
Target Hell Pits . . . 57
CS Intimidation Against the Demonic . . . 57
Determining Intimidation Table . . . 58
Special Bonus for High Morale . . . 58
CS Infiltration and Sabotage . . . 58
The enemy of my enemy is my friend ... for now . . . 59
Enemy Alliance Disposition Table . . . 59
Humans are Underestimated, Use That to Your Advantage . 60
The Human Factor is Our Strength . . . 61
Bring the Fight to the Enemy . . . 62
Human life is precious. Fight smart and live . . . 63
Specialized Ammunition . . . 63
Note on Weapons of Mass Destruction . . . 64
Ley Line Mass Death Table . . . 65
Secrets of the Coalition . . . 67
Resource Constraints . . . 67
Manufacturing Overtaxed . . . 67
Food Shortages . . . 68
Shadow Allies – Factions Helping the CS in Secret . . . 68
The Splugorth of Atlantis . . . 68
Game Note . . . 70
Lazlo and New Lazlo . . . 70
The Vanguard . . . 71
Archie Three . . . 72
The Republicans . . . 72

Lemurians . . . 73
The Coalition Army – Minion War, 110 P.A. . . . 74
Common CS Slang Combat Terms . . . 74
Coalition Fire Team in the Minion War . . . 75
Common CS Infantry Squad in the Minion War . . . 75
Coalition Helmet Types . . . 76
Advanced Training . . . 78
CS Military Schools . . . 78
Black Talon School (SAMAS) . . . 78
CS Officers' School . . . 78
CS Demon Slayer School . . . 79
CS Steel Armor School (Infantry) . . . 79
CS Special Forces Schools . . . 79
CS Military Technical Schools . . . 79
CS Psi-Battalion . . . 79
Upgrading Existing Characters with Advanced Training 79
Advanced Training Rules for existing characters . . . 80
Creating New Characters with Advanced Training . . . 81
Advanced Training Descriptions . . . 82
Black Talon Combat Pilot Advanced Training . . . 82
Top Gun Combat Ace Alternative Option . . . 83
Close Quarters Combat Advanced Training . . . 83
Demon Hunter Advanced Training . . . 85
Field Counter-Intelligence Advanced Training . . . 87
Field Intelligence Advanced Training . . . 89
Marksmanship Advanced Training . . . 91
Martial Expert Advanced Training . . . 91
Nonhuman Studies Advanced Training . . . 91
Officer Advanced Training . . . 92
Ordnance Advanced Training . . . 93
Rescue Advanced Training . . . 93
Salvage Expert Advanced Training . . . 94
Spycraft Advanced Training . . . 94
Stalking Advanced Training . . . 95
Stealth Advanced Training . . . 96
Steel Armor Advanced Training . . . 98
Survival Advanced Training . . . 99
New Coalition O.C.C.s . . . 100
CS Combat Courier . . . 100
Combat Courier O.C.C. Special Abilities . . . 102
Coalition States Combat Courier Stats . . . 102
Death Knight – Coalition Army Demon Slayer . . . 105
Demon Slayer O.C.C. Special Abilities . . . 105
Death Knight Demon Slayer O.C.C. Stats . . . 105
CS Death Knight Power Armor . . . 106
Demonbuster Mini-Missiles . . . 109
Heavy Skull Shield . . . 109
Heavy Skull Sword . . . 110
CS Skelebot Specialist . . . 111
CS Skelebot Specialist O.C.C. Special Abilities . . . 112
Skelebot Specialist O.C.C. Stats . . . 113
SRA Skelebot Repair Assistant . . . 114
Tools/Weapon Systems . . . 115
Operation Hellbender . . . 117
The Purpose of Operation Hellbender . . . 117
Troop Deployment . . . 119
Those with experience . . . 119
Those with no combat experience . . . 119
Coalition Citizens . . . 119
Coalition Juicers . . . 120
Juicer Army Division . . . 120
CS Juicer Program under Operation Hellbender . . . 121
CS Juicers, 110 P.A. . . . 121
Juicers are fast and deadly . . . 123
The J3-W Falcon Death Wing . . . 123
Availability of Volunteers . . . 123
Built-in Failsafe . . . 123
Combat Choices for Juicers . . . 124
Coalition Juicer (description and stats) . . . 124
Top Secret . . . 125
Juicer Vulnerabilities/Penalties . . . 125
CS Juicer Gear of Note . . . 126
CA-5 Juicer Dead Boy Armor . . . 126
CAJ-5A Standard Weapon Arm . . . 127
CAJ-5B Electro-Shield Weapon . . . 127
CAJ-5C "Stinger" Weapon Arm . . . 128
FIWS-J10 Juicer Weapon Arm . . . 128
C-58M "Rock Thrower" Variable Bore Cannon . . . 128
Improvised Ammunition . . . 129
Juicers and Vibro-Blades . . . 129
Vibro-Blade Vambraces . . . 129
J1-W "Condor" CS Death Wing . . . 130
J3-W "Falcon" Death Wing . . . 133
CS Psi-Stalkers . . . 135
Psycho-Stalkers – Juicer Psi-Stalkers . . . 135
CS Cyborg Program, 110 P.A. . . . 137
Implementor, Colonel Thaddius Lyboc . . . 137
Operation Hellbender . . . 137
Combat Cyborgs . . . 137
Coalition Cyborg Troopers . . . 137
Project Rebirth . . . 139
The Psychological Consequences . . . 139
Reborn Cyborg Psychology Table, Optional . . . 140
CS Cyborg Notes . . . 141
Typical Full Conversion Features of Note . . . 141
Coalition Cyborg Rank . . . 142
Underneath the Mask . . . 142
CS Cyborg Helmets and Faceplates . . . 142
CA-5C Citizen Helmet and Faceplate . . . 142
CA-6C Strike Trooper "Dead Boy" Helmet . . . 143
CA-7C Shadow Ops Helmet . . . 143
CA-8C Field Helmet . . . 145
CA-10C War Skull Helmet . . . 145
Coalition Hellbuster – Heavy Cyborg Battle Armor . . . 146
Psi-Battalion – Coalition Psychics . . . 149
Teleportation . . . 149
Mystic Portal . . . 149
What about upper levels (of Chi-Town) . . . 150
Psychics, Psi-Battalion and Psi-Net . . . 151
Fast Response Team . . . 151

A Summary of CS Psychics . . . 152
The Xiticix Threat . . . 154
The Coalition's Plan to Contain Xiticix Hivelands . . . 154
The Markeen Hive . . . 154
Volunteer Battalions . . . 154
Volunteering Process . . . 157
Volunteer Centers . . . 157
Deploying Volunteers . . . 157
Volunteer Deployment Vehicles . . . 157
Drop Pods . . . 157
High-Risk Mission Specialists . . . 157
Kill Teams . . . 158
Xiticix Killer: A Top Secret CS Program . . . 158
Disguising Skelebots . . . 159
Xiticix-Imposter Robot . . . 159
Volunteer Deployment Vehicle . . . 160

Quick Find

Advanced Training Descriptions . . . 82
Advanced Training Rules . . . 79
Bandito Arms . . . 67
'Burbs, Communication . . . 25
City Rats . . . 25
Civilization Outside the CS . . . 24
CS Aerial Collision Penalty and Modifiers . . . 50
CS Aerial Warfare . . . 49
CS City Defenses, see Psi-Battalion . . . 149
CS Combat Courier O.C.C. . . . 100
CS Combat Cyborgs . . . 137
CS Combat Cyborg Helmets and Faceplates . . . 142
CS Combined-Arms Tactics . . . 48
CS Death Knight O.C.C. . . . 104
CS Death Knight Power Armor . . . 106
CS Death Wings . . . 130 & 133
CS Demonbuster Mini-Missiles . . . 109
CS Enemy Alliance Disposition Table . . . 59
CS Field Strategies Involving D-Bees and Mages . . . 12
CS Field Strategies, Unexpected Consequences . . . 13
CS Fire Teams in the Minion War . . . 75
CS Hellbuster Cyborg Armor . . . 146
CS Helmet Types . . . 76
CS Heavy Skull Shield . . . 109
CS Infantry Squad in the Minion War . . . 75
CS Juicer . . . 120
CS Juicer Death Wings 130 and . . . 133
CS Juicer Weapons and Gear of Note . . . 126
CS Military Slang Combat Terms . . . 74
CS Nukes (see Weapons of Mass Destruction) . . . 64
CS Operation Hellbender . . . 117
CS Prison System . . . 22
CS Propaganda and Misinformation . . . 19
CS Psi-Battalion . . . 149
CS Psi-Stalkers . . . 135
CS Psychics, Summary of . . . 152
CS Psycho-Stalkers (a type of Juicer) . . . 135
CS Reserve Forces . . . 22
CS Secrets of . . . 67
CS Skelebot Specialist O.C.C. . . . 111
CS Skelebot Repair Assistant . . . 114
CS Specialized Ammunition . . . 63
CS Strategies and Tactics . . . 46
CS Xiticix Hive for Training Exercise . . . 154
CS Xiticix, Plan to contain them . . . 154
CS Xiticix-Imposter Robot . . . 159
Deevils, Vulnerabilities . . . 41
Demonbuster Mini-Missiles . . . 109
Demon Slayer Reputation Table . . . 56
Demonic Strategies and Tactics . . . 26
Demonic Reaction Table . . . 54
Demons, Admonishment . . . 27
Demons, Beware alliances with them . . . 52
Demons, Close combat is trouble . . . 51
Demons, Cut off the Head of the Serpent . . . 52
Demons, Death is different for them . . . 27
Demons, Determining Intimidation on Mortals . . . 29
Demons, Far from stupid . . . 51
Demons, Humans are Underestimated . . . 60
Demons, Fight dirty . . . 32 & 51
Demons, Psychological Warfare . . . 28
Demons, Range of abilities . . . 51
Demons, Strong demon leader . . . 27
Demons, Supernatural Strength . . . 51
Demons, Teamwork is difficult . . . 46
Demons, Vulnerabilities . . . 34
Demons, War Drums . . . 57
Doc Reid . . . 73
Erin Tarn on CS and D-Bees . . . 19
Heavy Skull Shield . . . 109
Hellbuster Cyborg Armor . . . 146
Intimidation Table from Demon War Drums . . . 58
Intelligence skill against demons . . . 52
Ley Line Mass Death Table . . . 65
Power Jumping Travel, see Death Knight PA . . . 107
Prosek, Absolution Program . . . 10
Prosek, Call to Arms speech . . . 8
Prosek, Validation . . . 9
Prosek, Night of Forgiveness . . . 12
Psi-Battalion . . . 21 & 149
Vampire Kingdoms . . . 73
Volunteer Battalions (Xiticix section) . . . 154
Volunteer Deployment Vehicles . . . 157 & 160
Shadow Factions . . . 68
Town Protectors . . . 24
Xiticix Hive, Markeen . . . 154
Xiticix-Imposter Robot . . . 159



Some Insight from the Author

This book was inspired by Karl Gleba's **Minion War™ series,** in general, and the **Megaverse® in Flames™ World Book**, specifically. The ideas began to form the moment he told me his plans to write it.

The Minion War on Rifts Earth is the first demon plague in more than two centuries. And with the Coalition States at new heights of power, wow, talk about a game changing conflict. This is exactly what the CS is built for. This invasion represents everything the Coalition has warned people about – dark magic, demonic forces, the enslavement of humanity and possibly the conquest of the planet Earth. And it all starts in the Coalition's backyard.

The concept for this book is simple: The Coalition's response to the Minion War. How they rise to the challenge, and how, at least to humans (and many others), the CS forces really are *heroes of humanity*. I think it will also become clear that **Emperor Prosek** believes everything he says. (Joseph Prosek II and others, um, not so much.) The Emperor is sincere in creating the Coalition military and the fortress cities to protect and preserve humanity against inhuman invaders and the dark, dangerous forces of magic. He immediately dispatches Coalition forces to battle true demons and the D-Bees, monsters, and traitorous humans who stand with them in order to save the lives of the innocent. If Emperor Prosek has anything to say about it, North America shall not fall.

If there is a problem for the Emperor and the Coalition States, it is that the world is not as black and white as they would like it to be. Can the Earth ever completely belong to humans again? Can it ever be free of nonhumans and magic? If not, can the CS come to reasonable terms with that? These are questions for the future (and things you can role-play). For now, the CS and humanity have more immediate concerns.

This book contains new insight about the Coalition States, its leaders, armed forces, operations, plans and new troops, new war machines, new weapons, and new strategies and tactics. All of which results in new realms of adventure and combinations of characters as fighting units that would not have been seen working together in the past. And that spells fun.

Oh, and just when you may start thinking that the CS really are genuine heroes (and in many ways, some Dead Boys really are), we provide some material to remind you that nothing is simple or black and white with the CS, unless perhaps, you are a human. That becomes all the more evident in **The Disavowed** sourcebook.

We hope you enjoy this journey as much as we have. It sure has grown since it first hit the drawing board.

– Kevin Siembieda, 2016

Call to Arms

This is the speech made by **Emperor Prosek** a short time after hordes of demons appeared on the Winter Solstice at many different ley line nexus points located in the ruins of the *Kingdom of Tolkeen*. Thousands of monsters poured through numerous Rifts that night. The mettle of the Coalition troops stationed at the toppled kingdom was sorely tested. Thousands of soldiers perished in a single night.

When CS intelligence confirmed this was not an isolated event, and that two sets of warring demonic beings were intent upon claiming Earth for themselves and making it an extension of their respective Hells, Emperor Prosek made this impassioned appeal to people across the continent.

"Some dare question our integrity. Our morality. And our motives. But none dare question our birthright to live free as human beings.

"We, the people of the Coalition States, stand in the defense of humanity. We alone have bled and died in the defense of our world against the invasion of inhuman monsters and demons who would enslave all people.

"We, the Coalition States, are the true, last bastion of humanity. A proud and noble people. A brave people. And we will not balk at the latest challenge before us.

"We, the Coalition States, and all who stand at our side in this, our darkest hour, are the new Heroes of Humanity. Our ancestors have survived the *Coming of the Rifts* and the *Great Cataclysm*. Our forefathers crawled out of the bleakness that was the Two Hundred Year Dark Age, and we have fought many an unearthly foe for generation after generation.

"In that time, we have grown strong and hardened our hearts to the treachery of monsters and magic. We are stronger than we have ever been. We *are* the heroes of humanity, and we shall stand victorious against the encroaching darkness. We fear you not demons and masters of magic. We will never kneel down before you. Never!

"My fellow citizens, we are called upon once again to take a stand against impossible odds. A new danger has emerged from beyond the Rifts. Demons from twin Hells seek to conquer and enslave us. They plan to turn our beautiful Mother Earth into a new plane of Hell. A dark, ugly world of misery where people are cattle and pets used for the amusement of wicked monsters. If we fail to stop these supernatural horrors, we shall be forced into obscenity and daily horror. No one shall be spared. No place will be safe. And the world we know will be transformed into a living nightmare.

"It shall be a cold day in Hell before the people of the Coalition States surrender to demons and monsters!

"Do not let inhuman creatures steal our world from under us and take our humanity away. I implore you, my fellow humans, to join us! Join us in sending these demon-spawn back to Hell! Become of a Hero of Humanity and live free or die a noble death in the service of a greater cause for your fellow man.

"It is time for you — for all of us — to stand tall and together. Join the Coalition Army. Together we will fight. Fight to save our fellow man. Fight to preserve the freedoms we and our ancestors have already fought so hard to obtain. We will bleed. And we will die, so all our children may know peace. This is the terrible price I ask of you, but it is a price that must be paid if we are to survive as a people. As a world.

"Heed not this call to arms and we all perish.

"Together, the human race can do anything. Together, we are unstoppable. And we shall win this fight, because we are not hell-spawned abominations. We are human. We are fueled by justice and righteousness. We fight for our children. We fight for our neighbors. We fight for our lives!

"Join the Coalition Army and fight with us, and I promise you, victory shall not be denied! Victory will be ours!

"If might makes right, then we will stand stronger than our enemy. We will punish them for trying to take our world from us. We will fight with a cunning and tenacity that is at the very core of the human spirit. And we shall fight until we stand triumphant, or every last one of us has died trying.

"These are lessons we must teach all inhuman invaders as we pull the trigger that sends their godforsaken souls back to the deepest pits of Hell from whence they came!

"Join me. Join us, my Heroes of Humanity, in the defense of our homes, our lives and our very existence. Make the demon-spawn pay in blood for thinking we are not up to the challenge to save humanity once again. Unite and stand free!

"Again I say, let this be a warning to all things inhuman: Crawl back into whatever alien hole you came from. Crawl back before we push you back with our guns blazing.

"This is our world! Our home! And not any of you will take it from us! We will not surrender quietly. We will fight you for every inch. The Coalition States stand, unyielding, to protect every innocent human life on this continent.

"My fellow humans, join us now, unflinching as we stare into face of the monsters who would devour us. And strike them down first!

– Emperor Prosek, rallying people against the demonic and infernal hordes of the Minion War.

Within the first 48 hours after this speech, a half million CS citizens register to join the Coalition Army. An additional 1.3 million denizens of the 'Burbs and people from across the Coalition States volunteer to fight against the demon hordes. Over the next three months, another 2 million come from all corners of North America to join the Coalition Army in the defense of their homeland. This includes Psi-Stalkers. Some join the Coalition Army with the hope of proving their loyalty and winning CS citizenship for their families. Others join to do battle against a greater evil than the Coalition itself. Many do not fight for any one nation, but for the survival of their families, neighbors and freedom.

An untold number of **Dog Boys** are manufactured at the **Lone Star Complex** to sniff out and battle the supernatural enemy.

When the CS offers clemency for Dog Boy deserters and Lone Star mutants if they join the battle, thousands of runaway Psi-Hounds, rogue mutants and feral Dog Boys do so.

Meanwhile, **many enemies of the CS,** humans and D-Bees alike, some for the first time in their lives, set aside their differences and take up arms against a common enemy. Most remain independent and decline joining the Coalition military – not that the CS would accept D-Bees or mages within its ranks even in this time of crisis – but all parties share intelligence. And for the first time in CS history, the Coalition Army frequently turns an unofficial blind eye to nonhumans and sorcerers who fight alongside them, brothers in arms, against a greater evil.

Far too many will die in the name of freedom and humanity, with no regret in their hearts and Emperor Prosek's words still ringing in their ears.

Battlefield North America

Rifts Earth is a dangerous and constantly changing environment. While there may be years, even decades of comparative stability, the Rifts are a constant X-factor. Depending on what might spill out of them on any given day, they could change everything, sometimes overnight. Towns and cities come and go like flowers in the field. However, massive, sweeping invasions like the one taking place with the **Minion War** are surprisingly uncommon, so it galvanizes many diverse people who would never otherwise work together or even tolerate each other.

The enemy are the demonic invaders from Hades and Dyval, and all the monsters and traitorous humanoids who serve as their henchmen and spies. Sure, some Coalition troops use this war as a reason to wipe out all nonhumans they encounter and to exact their own brand of revenge against D-Bees, creatures of magic and mages. But the vast majority see the bigger picture and will choose to protect and fight with any being that stands against the demon hordes.

Some wonder if the Minion War could actually bring about change and greater acceptance of nonhumans by the CS. Only time will tell, though Erin Tarn and Plato warn that any tolerance created by this war of survival is likely nothing more than a temporary truce of convenience, and that when the war is over, old hatreds and boundaries will resume as they were before the conflict.

CS: Heroes of Humanity

For the Coalition States, the Minion War is a validation of everything they have warned others about for generations.

Magic is dangerous and uncontrollable.

Magic breeds evil.

Magic attracts and creates monsters.

Use it for any reason, no matter how desperate or well justified, and at best it is your first step toward losing your soul, and at worst, utter doom.

Coalition soldiers and citizens, across all social strata, are more convinced of this than ever before. Magic and magic practitioners, along with demons and Deevils, are the embodiment of evil incarnate. Monsters, all of them, to be feared and destroyed before they enslave or destroy you.

In one fell swoop, people who had once questioned the morality and reason of the Coalition States, now embrace the nation and its philosophies. If humankind is to survive, the Coalition States and its insightful Emperor hold the answers.

Only yesterday seen as a heartless zealot, and even a murderous madman, **Emperor Prosek** is the hero of the hour, champion of the people and the face of hope. Maybe even a prophet. Overnight, he is transformed from one of the most hated and feared men in the Americas to a messianic hero. Humanity's savior and his Coalition States the bastions of hope – at least for humans. After all, he had been warning of a scenario like the Minion War invasion for decades. In the face of mass destruction and subjugation by demonic, magic wielding enemies vomited forth from the bowels of two Hell-like dimensions, Emperor Karl Prosek's unwavering warnings, hate-talk, fear-mongering and extreme methods suddenly seem perfectly measured. Words of wisdom that have proven to be prophetic. To many terrified humans, and even D-Bees, Emperor Prosek and his Coalition States are the only real hope humanity has.

For Prosek, who has been demonized, and his fascist regime condemned for decades by liberal humans and peace-loving D-Bees, it is his moment of vindication. A day the self-righteous Karl Prosek always knew would come, so he is ready to embrace the role of hero and savior with open arms and sincere humility. At last, the world can see that he spoke the truth. Emperor Prosek has always held the position that the methodical extermination of non-humans and practitioners of magic was a horrible reality. A tragedy of epic proportions, but a terrible truth that had to be done if humans were to survive against the endless array of inhuman refugees and monstrous invaders from the Rifts. He never took the slightest bit of pleasure in this task, but someone had to find the courage and will to take a stand, accept the horrible truth and do something about it. This was a battle for survival. It had always been war, with the prospect of human extinction on Earth hanging in the balance. It was them or us. And Karl Prosek chose us. There could be no exceptions. Mercy meant leaving the wolves at the gate waiting for an opening to attack. If humanity was to have any hope of surviving and reclaiming the Earth for themselves, magic and nonhumans had to be completely eradicated; wiped off the face of the planet. Now, at last, the world could see that he was right. That he and the Coalition Army have always been right. That they are heroes of humanity fighting for the survival of the human race in North America.

Despite what some of his critics may say about him, Karl Prosek sincerely believes in this cold, harsh "truth" with every fiber of his being. This is what motivates him. Drives him. And it is a message the Coalition propaganda machine has ingrained into every citizen behind the walls of its fortress cities, and beyond. To them, the advent of the *Minion War* only makes the argument irrefutable and forged in blood and steel. It is a message

that has been heard by virtually everyone living in what was once the Old Empires of the *United States of America, Canada* and *Mexico*. Anyone who has heard of the Coalition States has heard its anthem of fear and human supremacy, and knows exactly what it stands for. Only now, the message carries much more weight.

Progressives and free-thinkers still argue that the old days of an Earth dominated exclusively by human beings are a thing of the past. The appearance of the Rifts and magic makes that impossible. They insist we are now citizens of the bigger Megaverse and we must find a way to accept and find peace with the D-Bees (slang for *Dimensional Beings;* aliens from others worlds) who mean us no harm and may be refugees themselves with no place else to go. Magic, they say, is a resource that can be tamed and used for good or evil. That an Earth populated by a diversity of people who can find beauty and unity in their differences, can learn to accept one another, and can become something greater than anything one people can achieve.

These gentle souls and dreamers see a day when North America, if not the entirety of Earth, can become greater than the sum of its parts. A shining example of peace, camaraderie and enlightenment. An example for other people across the Megaverse to respect and emulate. This message of tolerance and enlightenment was gathering steam, especially among intellectuals, mages and peace-seekers at places like *Lazlo, New Lazlo, Tolkeen, the Colorado Baronies, Kingsdale* and elsewhere. With the arrival of the Minion War and demons and Deevils spilling across North America, that message is falling upon deaf ears. It is the Coalition's message and its "kill or be killed" sensibility that is winning the argument.

The CS government and military's swift and decisive action to protect *all humans* against Hells' armies wins over many. It removes the Coalition States from the position of villain and casts them into the role of hero. However, it is *Emperor Prosek's* next unprecedented move that wins over many of those on the bubble about the CS, including some of its harshest critics. That move is *absolution* for all human beings for past transgressions against the Coalition States, regardless of how grievous they may have been. Human rebels, mercenaries, and criminals guilty of association with D-Bees, monsters and the practice of magic, and other crimes against the States, such as trafficking in illegal contraband, educating D-Bees, and even public acts of open sedition and insurrection are all forgiven. Expunged from the records and those who were once outlaws invited back into the fold of humanity. A clean slate with the Coalition States. All sins forgiven.

There is one small catch. You must give up your old beliefs and embrace the laws and tenets of the Coalition States. The tenets of the CS are simple and somehow, suddenly more palatable:

- No non-human can be trusted.
- No magic practitioner can be trusted.
- Magic is evil, dangerous and uncontrollable.
- Magic attracts and creates monsters. Never accept it.
- All nonhumans, alien technology, practitioners of magic, and magic items are a threat to humanity. Do not be fooled. They must be *rejected and destroyed.* Purged from (what the CS calls) the *Domain of Man.*

The enforcement of the latter tenet is easy. All you have to do is immediately notify CS authorities and they will investigate and neutralize the danger.

For many, the choice to throw in with the Coalition States is made easier by Emperor Prosek's open appeal, forgiveness and apparent compassion for his fellow human beings. Tears come to his eyes (conveniently captured on video in a close up) when he gives the speech below.

"In these terrible times, you may look to your neighbor and feel fear or hatred. He or she may be someone you know who has had dalliances with D-Bees, associated with wizards, or spoken against me and the Coalition government. You may feel shame, yourself, for having done such things as do many of you for turning a blind eye to these dangerous activities.

"Now, with this life and death crisis against a supernatural foe the likes of which we have never known, you realize how wrong you have been. You see for yourself the folly of accepting magic and nonhumans in your lives, but fear it is too late.

"I tell you, it is not too late. And I give you a way to redeem yourselves. Take a stand against the inhuman and magical. Stand with the Coalition States. Support us. Join the battle to save humanity and reclaim your place among your fellow men.

"I know some of you may seek to wash away your shame and fear with your neighbor's blood. You may want to strike down those you know who have, as recently as yesterday, shown D-Bees kindness, traded with them, accepted magic or condemned me and the Coalition Army for our righteous actions. I beg of you to stay your hand. At least for the moment.

"Who among us has not made bad decisions or mistakenly accepted lies and deceptions as truth? Your neighbor may be such a poor soul. He, like yourself, has had his eyes opened by the terrible events that now threaten our very existence. For all you know, he condemns his own past words and actions. And feels greater shame and foolishness than anyone of us could ever imagine. I am certain such people now wish they can make amends. Wash away their past and become true champions of humanity, if only they could.

"And you can. I speak for all citizens of the Coalition States when I say, we don't hate you. We don't condemn any person who, in ignorance or misplaced trust in the sugarcoated lies of fools and enemies, made bad choices in the past. I don't care if you may have consorted with the enemy and done things to undermine this great nation. I forgive you. And with the authority of the Coalition States, I unconditionally pardon all of my fellow human beings of any and all past transgressions against the CS.

"Today, you start with a clean slate. Today, you see the undeniable and unsullied truth. Today is the day you choose abandon your dangerous and misguided thinking and accept the enlightened ways of the Coalition States. Today, you reclaim your humanity and stand with us. Today is the day you forsake your innocence and naivety, condemn all that is inhuman and steeped in magic, and embrace the heroic ideals and laws of the Coalition States!

"Do that, my prodigal brothers and sisters, and I welcome you back to the bosom of humanity that is your birthright. We all do.

"Our humanity is our common bond. Our common heritage that makes all humans brothers and sisters. Accept this. Accept the Coalition States. And trust in our good intentions, stand with us against an inhuman foe, and we accept you back into the fold, no questions asked. Your past wiped clean. You start anew, a fellow member of the human family as if you were reborn in this very moment.

"Together as one people, one nation forsaking the inhuman and the mystical, we stand against all enemies of humanity. And together, united, we shall win this war! Our very existence relies upon it."

– Emperor Prosek on the Night of Forgiveness

Faced with demon hordes from the pits of Hell, humans who once questioned or opposed the Coalition States on moral and philosophical grounds are jumping sides to embrace the CS completely. The first to do so are those who already had close ties and association with the Coalition States, the humans of the lawless 'Burbs. After the human inhabitants of the 'Burbs, many independent communities composed predominantly of humans are quick to follow suit. Even many of those who are critical and outspoken opponents of the Coalition States are putting aside their differences to join the CS in their battle against the terrifying supernatural threat.

Those who hold onto their anti-Coalition sentiments must stand alone, or join other, sometimes questionable, groups, or go into hiding, or leave the country in fear for their lives. But where is there to go? What place is safe from this new demon plague? And if the CS and its allies fall, the rest of the Americas will surely follow.

For many, there is no choice but to stand and fight alongside the Coalition States.

For the majority of humans, educated and uneducated alike, it seems as if Emperor Prosek is, indeed, a visionary who was right all along. With notable nations like *Northern Gun, Free Quebec, Whykin, Arzno* and others throwing their lot in with the CS, people across the continent are flocking to join the Coalition Army. Some are motivated to prove their loyalty to humankind. Some hope of becoming CS citizens when the fighting is over. Many because the Coalition Army seems like their best and perhaps only hope to defeat an immense and terrifying demonic invasion force. Two of them, in fact.

The Rise of Humanity and the CS

Though they are loath to admit it, even the Coalition's harshest critics have to accept that the CS has become the beacon of hope people can rally behind. The Coalition Army is the most visible and viable force ready and willing to stand against the armies of two Hells despite the seemingly impossible odds. Emperor Prosek's words and actions are bold and brave, and speak to the heart of every man, woman and child. A call of brotherhood against an inhuman enemy that intends to destroy everyone who stands in its way and enslave the rest. It is a call to arms that brings millions to the support of the Coalition States. That includes allies like Northern Gun, the Manistique Imperium and the independent nation of Free Quebec.

Most people are willing to do almost anything to stay alive and protect their families. Emperor Prosek has made the decision even easier with his compassionate words and forgiveness of humans who have been "blinded by lies," causing them to stray from what he calls "the path of righteousness." All past sins forgiven for renewed loyalty to the Coalition States, the rejection of all things the CS says are bad, and the acceptance of CS tenets as *the* truth to live by.

The siren call to restart afresh, by taking a stand against a demonic enemy, and be a "hero of humanity" is an effective campaign that wins the hearts and minds of the terrified and angry masses. Emotions the CS expertly channel and use to mount an effective war against the Minions of Hell. They are also emotions that boil over and spill into the streets with very public displays rejecting and destroying "the bad."

Though the Emperor never uses the words, "it is them or us," it is the galvanizing message taken away by most people. Emperor Prosek has made it clear that everyone has a stake in this war, and *ordinary people* must rise to the challenge. That they are the front line of defense and must be proactive in notifying CS authorities to the presence and, if known, the location and number of D-Bees, monsters, mages and other enemies. That latter category includes *fellow humans* who may continue to sympathize with and/or help or protect dangerous *enemies of humanity* (i.e. all nonhumans) as well as the people who associate with them, buy or sell alien technology and magic, study magic, or speak against the Emperor and the Coalition Army. Human scholars, teachers, freethinkers, booksellers, mercenaries and adventurers who may have open minds and show tolerance toward magic and D-Bees are all potential enemies of humanity and targets of CS aggression.

Overnight, the 'Burbs become a very dangerous place for D-Bees, mages and freethinkers. Frightened and angry, people are suddenly enforcing the letter of the Coalition's tenets and laws against magic and D-Bees. While many humans are shown forgiveness as the Emperor has asked, D-Bees and practitioners of magic fall under brutal attack.

Lucky D-Bees and sorcerers discreetly living in, or visiting, the 'Burbs are told they are no longer welcomed and need to leave, *or else.* And soon. Others manage to slip away before the angry and frightened mobs turn on them.

The unlucky ones are attacked, tarred and feathered, chained and dragged across the ground by vehicles, or hauled out into the street where they are severely beaten or killed. Angry mobs firebomb the homes and businesses of many such "enemies of humanity." Suddenly, all things nonhuman and magical seem tainted, dirty, ugly, and need to be purged.

The resulting violence and riots sparked by what would become known as **the Night of Forgiveness,** would last a full week. Three shanty towns in the Chi-Town 'Burbs are burned to the ground, and two Old Town 'Burbs suffer significant damage. Practitioners of magic caught trying to stop the violence or douse the fires via magic are killed on the spot. Countless innocent D-Bees are strung up and hanged until dead. Others are murdered in their own beds. For the most part, CS authorities stand back and watch as people take matters into their own hands. They do nothing to stop the carnage except to make sure it does not spread too close to the fortress city of Chi-Town and other CS communities. Mob justice prevails.

In the no-man's land that has become the 'Burbs, the Night of Forgiveness is a night of fire and death. It is a scenario that plays out across the continent as those who once accepted or turned a blind eye to D-Bees, magic and forbidden knowledge, now reject them with extreme prejudice. Armed with magic, mages are better able to escape alive. D-Bees who would have fought alongside their human neighbors against the demon hordes are slaughtered by the thousands. Only in places where D-Bees are truly citizens with equal rights or the inhabitants are mostly D-Bees themselves, are nonhumans spared.

Field Strategies Involving D-Bees and Mages

Though outsiders who join the CS are not automatically made citizens of the Coalition States, the Emperor has successfully made people feel united as members of the human family against a common and monstrous enemy. United and inspired by the courage and resolve of the Coalition States, all mortals, both humans and D-Bees, rush to engage the enemy. An enemy that includes not just demons and Deevils, but all things magical and nonhuman.

You might think having a common enemy would force alliances and encourage tolerance, if not outright acceptance of D-Bees and sorcerers willing to fight alongside Coalition forces. The opposite is true. Patriotic fervor, anger and fear turns soldiers, especially new recruits, into mad dog killers. Though they strive to be valiant heroes, the consequence is that D-Bees, practitioners of magic, and anything that looks magical, monstrous and menacing becomes a target.

Branding all things nonhuman or magical for destruction makes things simple. At first, it seems like a good plan. You come across a group of D-Bee mercenaries, you waste them. A village of nonhumans, vaporize them all. A magic device, destroy it. If they aren't human, wipe them out. Generations of Coalition soldiers and citizens have been brainwashed into completely accepting this, so it is easy to accept the demonized version of reality and act accordingly in ruthless fashion. *If it's not human, kill it.* Simple, but not very effective, as potentially valuable allies are destroyed without hesitation.

The Coalition's High Command quickly realizes its fighting forces are wasting time and resources engaging easier, mortal targets, rather than the demons and Deevils that are the real and immediate threat. Moreover, D-Bees and sorcerers can play an important, secondary role against the enemy, provided they aren't killed first by overanxious CS troops and frightened citizenry.

Unable to issue any commands that suggest working with D-Bees or practitioners of magic, CS Command offers the following clever strategy: Let D-Bees and mages, or any "undesirables" who engage the forces of Hell, or are en route to fight the hell-spawned enemy, do so unmolested. The logic being, let *rival enemies* fight and kill *each other*, rather than commit human lives to the fray prematurely. If D-Bees and mages win the battle, let them live to fight the demons another day. If the demons are winning the battle against D-Bees and wizards, CS forces should wait until they are being routed or crushed, before launching an *attack* of their own against the demons. With any luck, the D-Bees and sorcerers will have weakened the demon or Deevil troops, giving Coalition forces a leg up in their own attack.

Other strategies include letting D-Bees and sorcerers draw out the demon hordes or force them to show their hand. Nonhuman forces can also unwittingly function as a diversion that enables Coalition forces to surround and attack, ambush or strike at another enemy target while the enemy is distracted.

It is also advised that CS troops observe D-Bees and mages battle demons and Deevils to learn from their mistakes. To observe the enemy in action enables CS leaders to watch for weaknesses that their Coalition forces may be able to exploit against the Minions of Hell. This includes identifying demon commanders for targeted attacks or assassination. Likewise, if a hole in the demons' defenses should open up, and there is a clear opportunity for a win, Coalition troops are advised to take advantage of it and rush in to join the battle. If D-Bees or sorcerers are caught in the crossfire or take collateral damage, it is of little consequence.

When the battle is done, it is left to the discretion of the field commander whether the lesser enemy (i.e. D-Bees and/or mages) are allowed to collect their dead and leave, or should be engaged and finished off. If the intent is to use them as cannon fodder against the Minions of Hell in the future, they should allow them live. For now. But they are not to provide them with assistance or fraternize with them in any way.

These strategies all prove to be effective, but have some unexpected consequences. At first, the CS human supremacists are happy to deploy the strategies and tactics above, and watch D-Bees and magic practitioners get chewed up in combat or die as pawns and bait. However, these supposedly inferior, savage and inhuman warriors and wizards, more often than not, exhibit great courage and ability under fire. Traits the CS soldiers aspire to themselves, and which many believe are impossible for lowlife scum the likes of sorcerers and D-Bees. To see otherwise is a surprise and has a powerful impact on CS troops.

You need to remember that the average Coalition soldier, let alone sheltered CS citizen, has very little firsthand experience with D-Bees or magic. Most CS soldiers and police are stationed in and around the Coalition States and its heavily fortified cities and protected zones. Other than dealing with the occasional D-Bee individual, raiders or small band of D-Bee bandits, merce-

naries, adventurers, or visitors, they have few interactions with nonhumans or practitioners of magic. What little contact they do have in the 'Burbs or along the borders is with bandits and troublemakers, or harmless peasants, and they are usually brief and comparatively minor incidents.

Everything Coalition soldiers and citizens know about the savage wilderness all around their oases of civilization is CS propaganda. Lies and carefully manipulated stories that keep its soldiers and civilian population frightened and obedient. Truth be told, the average CS soldier and citizen has no idea what it is like outside their protected borders. The majority of city dwellers have never even been inside a 'Burb! This ignorance isn't limited only to the Coalition States. Knowledge about the outside world at most "civilized" communities, including *Northern Gun* and the *Manistique Imperium*, is very much limited to only what they are told or hear from rumors and tall tales. All of which is enough to prevent most citizens from ever leaving the safety of their community to learn the truth for themselves.

Rifts Earth is deadly. Outside the Coalition States' fortified cities' walls, Northern Gun, the Manistique Imperium, Lazlo and a few other places, life is cheap. And short. CS propaganda may be much more skewed toward one particular point of view, and its people much less worldly than those of some other communities, but everyone who lives in a city or town has little idea what it is like beyond their little corner of the world. That's why people flock to these safe havens and put up with all manner of inequity and injustice, because it's better than the alternative. This is just as true of the people of Lazlo as it is the Coalition States. And just as few CS citizens have ever met a D-Bee or a Ley Line Walker, many D-Bees and people of independent kingdoms who fear and loathe the Coalition States, its soldiers and citizens, have never actually encountered one. Their opinions and prejudices are all built on rumors, stories and their own perceptions, or whatever their leaders tell them. This is precisely why CS leaders have worked so hard to limit their people's exposure to other cultures and ideas. Familiarity may breed contempt, but it also breeds understanding, compassion and acceptance. None of which are wanted by the Coalition government.

Unexpected Consequences

The new faces of old enemies

As a result, Coalition soldiers are shocked by the heroism, intelligence and strength they observe watching D-Bees and non-Coalition forces in battle against the Minions of Hell. In a surprisingly short time, shock turns into grudging respect. Among

a growing number of CS soldiers in the field of combat, generations of carefully engineered propaganda and prejudice are being eroded by what they witness and experience.

Soon, CS strategies take an *unofficial turn.* Coalition forces begin to charge in or launch ambushes, or provide heavy support, long before the nonhuman forces are routed or crushed. To the surprise of D-Bees and mages, they find themselves fighting shoulder to shoulder with CS troops against a common enemy, and glad to have their assistance.

When the fighting is done, the Coalition troops often turn and leave as if the others were not even present, but they do not attack them. In time, this engenders greater familiarity, more direct contact, and a growing mutual respect on the part of both sides; even friendship. Exactly how much help and interaction each of these old enemies provides the other depends heavily on the leaders and individuals in each group, as well as preexisting prejudice, how long the troops have been in the field, and how much combat they've had against the Minions of Hell. While some leaders and combatants (on both sides) are "by the book" soldiers or zealous human supremacists who give little if any quarter to D-Bees and mages even when fighting on the same side, most come to respect these old "enemies," and do what they can to save their lives and win battles. Though direct interaction and camaraderie is uncommon at first, and seldom displayed out in the open, there is a strengthening bond growing between them. If the D-Bee forces need food or medicine, a crate or two might just get accidentally left behind for them. And it is becoming increasingly common for both sides to come to the defense of the other with a wink and a nod as acknowledgment.

However, such acts of kindness and cooperation, even after having fought shoulder to shoulder against demons and monsters, may come with a price for Coalition soldiers. Technically, any act of mercy or kindness shown to D-Bees and practitioners of magic is an act of collusion and treason. Unless everyone in the company, platoon or squad who witnesses such an action is in silent agreement, accusations and charges may be brought against the Coalition soldiers involved. Of course, the realities of war and distance from home have a profound effect upon what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior. It is difficult to bring yourself to gun down the Ley Line Walker or D-Bee who just saved your life, or the life of your buddy, or maybe even the entire platoon. It is difficult to refuse the mage or D-Bee psychic who can save your comrade from bleeding out and dying. And as noted, as Coalition soldiers, practitioners of magic and D-Bees fight together against the greater enemy, and witness tremendous acts of courage and heroism on both sides, it is increasingly difficult not to see each other as *brothers in arms.* And family stands together.

Of course there are exceptions on both sides. There are those who cannot give up their prejudice and hatred, even in war against a common enemy. There are Coalition officers and troops, Federation of Magic mages and D-Bees who still attack and try to kill each other. Many mages and D-Bee warriors from **the Federation** and survivors of the **Siege on Tolkeen** are happy to bushwhack, rob and undermine Coalition troops and operations for any reason, and vice versa. If forced to fight together, when the battle with the Minions of Hell is over, they turn their attention to their old enemy, and attack. It is a sad reality that makes knowing who you can trust an uncertainty and dangerous. Moreover, even those who are friends on the battlefield may have to arrest, fight or kill their battlefield allies under different conditions and circumstances, or face court-martial or execution (or worse) for treason.

It is the troops on both sides who fight in the trenches farthest from civilization, and away from the watchful eyes of their superiors and fellow citizens, who are most likely to strike up true alliances and friendships with forces they might otherwise consider an enemy. Here you may find Coalition troops of any type — Dead Boys, SAMAS pilots, Robot pilots, Dog Boys, Psi-Stalkers, Cyborgs, Juicers, Military Specialists, CS scientists, etc. — working with *trusted friends* who are D-Bees, Ley Line Walkers, Mystics, Techno-Wizards, Cyber-Knights, dragons, Minions of Splugorth, and other beings. Those separated from their larger units, whether by accident or design, are even more likely to forge relationships with *old enemies* and "go rogue" or "native" (consorting with, and living like, the locals or the enemy). They are likely to engage in unconventional warfare and behave in a manner not condoned by the code of their respective militaries or accepted mores. In the Minion War on Rifts Earth, these sorts of liaisons take place all the time out in the savage wilderness, particularly among the forces sent northwest to engage the legions of Hell in and around Calgary, the Kingdom of Monsters.

The D-Bee Perspective

A simple question

The roars from the demon army, their monstrous war steeds and the rain of missiles from SAMAS and CS aircraft overhead sounded as if they were finally moving away. That meant the cluster of D-Bees and Coalition troops could soon exit the long, narrow foxhole where they had taken refuge together. Normally, Coalition troops and D-Bees would be enemies, but surviving the Minion War made strange bedfellows and troubling situations. Both sides had gotten fairly used to fighting alongside each other on the field of battle, but it was uncomfortable looking at each other, eye to eye, in such a confined space. Barely an arm's length between them.

"I know why we're in this fight," stated one of the Coalition Dead Boys to the D-Bees across from him. "But what stake do you have in any of this? Why would you fight in this war?"

The Noli Bushman warrior hissed and turned to look away. Her annoyance and disdain on full display.

The N'mybr Gorilla Man in the group growled and said, "You Dead Boys really are stupid as rocks, ain't ya?"

"That's what I've been trying to tell you," said his Larmac companion with a chuckle. "It's all air inside those helmets. An' people call us dumb and lazy."

"Hey! Watch yer mouth," snapped one of the other Dead Boys.

Dudley 16

"He's right, guys. Let's keep it civil in here," said the massive Sword Fist, giving his rude companions a steely-eyed glare.

"It's a stupid question," snorted the Gorilla Man in his own defense.

"I didn't mean anything by it," said the recruit, fearing his question was about to cause a close quarters gunfight.

"You guys need to relax," said the Quick-Flex Alien Gunslinger in an attempt to settle his comrades down. "All the man did was ask a simple question. How about answerin' him instead of gettin' all pissy about it?"

"I can do that," interjected the D'Norr Devilman, a Ley Line Walker whose magical field helped keep them all safe from shrapnel and flying rubble. "The reason is simple, Friend." But before he could finish his statement, the Gorilla Man piped in again.

"We ain't fightin' for you, Dead Head. This is our home too, dumbass."

"Settle down, right now, or you'll be finishing this conversation with your ancestors, after one of us 'Dead Heads' sends you to your maker," growled the Coalition Juicer, already up on his feet and spoiling to fight.

The Sword Fist rested his elbow and large frame on the Gorilla Man's shoulder and leaned his full and considerable weight on him to while positioning himself between him and the Juicer.

"For pity's sake, Taltak," said the D-Bee the Gunslinger. "There ain't no need for harsh words or fighting amongst ourselves or these Dead Boys. We're all on the same side at the moment. Ain't that right, Brother?" The Quick-Flex Alien spoke with a surprising calm and sincerity, but he never took his eyes off the CS Juicer. "It's a damn fair question, if you ask me. And I appreciate him askin' it," he continued as he leaned back against the wall of their temporary hiding place.

"Indeed it is," said the Devilman Ley Line Walker in an equally calm, friendly voice. "Please, allow me to answer it. You look at us and you see monsters. D-Bee invaders from a Rift trying to steal the world from humanity. A quick glance tells you we aren't human, but we aren't the monsters that you ... um ... some people paint us to be. Not invaders, either. Most of our forefathers were ripped from our own planet and flung here against their will. I know I'm not the only one here when I say, Earth is my birthplace and the only home I have ever known."

"He's right," added the Quick-Flex Alien. "I don't rightly know nothin' about where my people come from. I don't have a clue about what that world or society might be like, or even if it still exists. I don't know anythin' about the culture or how the people live. I don't even know their native language. I speak American just like you. I was born an' raised right here on the edge of the Coalition State of Missouri. I don't know any other place 'cept this here as my home. Done some travelin', though. Picked up some skill with guns down south. So when stinkin' demons come lookin' to tear up my homeland, enslavin' and killin' folks where I live. Well, I'm not about to let that happen without some say in that fight. I figure that's why you, me and all of us are here, brother. I seen you fight. All o' ya'all in this hidey-hole. Yer fightin' hard and exhibitin' exceptional bravery to protect your loved ones back home. We all are. And I'm proud to be counted among ya'all."

Everyone stood quiet for moment. His words hanging in the air.

"Sorry. Didn't mean to be speechifyin'."

"No, it makes sense. Never thought of it like that before," said the Dead Boy who had asked the question.

"I ... I don't think any of us could have expressed it better, Brennan. Thank you," said the mage with a smile. Then looking at the Coalition Soldiers, he added, "This is our home, gentlemen. Like you, we are fighting for the only home we have ever known. For our families and everyone, human and D-Bee alike. I just hope that when we send these bastards back to the pits of Hell, we can find a way to coexist in peace. Because we don't have

anywhere else to go. These days, Earth is home to more than just humans. It has been for a long time."

"Amen to that, brother," said Brennan, the Gunsliner.

After that, everyone was quiet with their own thoughts about what the future might hold. There was one thing they could all agree upon: They hoped it would be a future in which the Minions of Hell had been soundly defeated and there was still a home and family to return to.

Fighting for hearth and home

The incident above is repeated countless times during the Minion War in the Americas. The reason D-Bees, practitioners of magic and other people are willing to fight alongside the feared and hated Coalition Army is spelled out in the conversation above. North America is their home. In most cases, the only home they have ever known. Their families, friends and all their ties are here on Rifts Earth, not an alien world. They have everything to lose, just like humans, so if they have to fight side by side with the Coalition, so be it. In this case, the Coalition States are the lesser of two evils.

Most D-Bees (but not all) are more accepting and tolerant of the Coalition States and humans in general, than the other way around. That said, for many, the CS is the big, bad, bogey-man everyone fears and hates. The magnitude of such emotions spiked to new heights in the aftermath of the war with Tolkeen, ending only months before the new threat of the Minion War. Thus, it is with a certain amount of irony and trepidation that D-Bees find themselves fighting on the same side – and often in the same battles – as the Coalition Army.

D-Bees and practitioners of magic are faced with the unexpected heroism and conflicting beliefs of Coalition forces fighting the Minions of Hell. Like the CS troops, outsiders have their own prejudices about the Coalition States and the fabled Dead Boy and Dog Boy soldiers. Everyone has heard countless stories and rumors about CS brutality and atrocities leveled at D-Bees and practitioners of magic. For those who recently stood with the "heroes of Tolkeen" against the CS, or lost family and friends to them in the war, they harbor powerful feelings about them. Some loathe the CS so deeply, they can not possibly find a middle ground to work with them. These bitter and emotionally raw individuals avoid working with Coalition forces under any circumstance. Others only under the most dire of circumstances or when the alliance is likely to save many fellow D-Bees or mages.

Still others hate the CS so much, they choose to waylay them whenever possible, robbing and killing CS troops when the opportunity presents itself. The tension after many a united battlefront has triumphed over the Minions of Hell can be terrible, as Coalition and inhuman forces size each other up and consider their next move. The question always being, does one side or the other now turn their weapons against the other? The answer can depend on any number of volatile elements. If one side despises the other and they see a weakness, they may seize the moment to attack and try to slaughter the other. Sometimes the hate is so intense that the slightest misunderstanding can spark bloody combat, with some participants praying for an opening that enables them to exact revenge. Thankfully, cooler heads usually prevail, but there are clashes and brutal combat instigated by both sides.

That said, just as Coalition troops are surprised to see courage and honor in D-Bees and sorcerers, so are D-Bees and mages surprised to recognize goodness and nobility in Coalition troops. Despite having been led to believe all people in the Coalition States are nothing more than bloodthirsty and merciless butchers of the innocent, what they observe on the field of battle is often quite the contrary. It is difficult to despise a Dead Boy soldier or Dog Boy who risks his own life rescuing a D-Bee child; or a SAMAS or Coalition cyborg who throws himself in harm's way so that the innocent can escape. The courage and sacrifice of CS soldiers, for the most part, is impressive and gut-wrenching. The vast majority are true believers who fight to the bitter end and hurl themselves into the jaws of death to stop the encroaching demon and monster hordes. Their sacrifice and heroics are undeniable except to the most callous and cold-hearted.

Just as Coalition soldiers come to know and respect D-Bees and sorcerers on the field of battle, so too do nonhumans and mages come to respect CS forces and begin to see them as people, not monsters. Depending on the circumstances, battlefield friendships and unofficial alliances are struck. And both CS humans and D-Bees and practitioners of magic find ways to help and work with each other in these trying times.

Whether any of this helps Coalition humans and D-Bees come to a greater and lasting understanding of one another is yet to be seen. On the field of battle, however, there are Coalition soldiers who die trying save their D-Bee friends or spell casting allies, and vice versa.

The face of true villainy

Besides the demons of Hades and the infernals of Dyval, the other two most despicable camps of people in the Minion War are the vermin who prey upon humanity, picking at the bones of survivors and stealing from Earth's defenders; and turncoats – the humans and D–Bees who willingly choose to side with the armies of Hell against humanity.

In times of war, there are always bandits, smugglers, raiders, and bushwhackers who see opportunity by staying unaffiliated to either side. Like vultures, they pick through the dead after a battle, looting bodies of weapons and valuables, and steal from those unable to stop them. Such thieves and cretins may sneak into a camp to rob it or hold people up at gunpoint. They steal valuable equipment from soldiers and heroes, and take food out of the mouths of children. Like ravenous wolves, the most brazen raiders and roughnecks openly attack CS bases and supply caravans, jump or ambush soldiers heading into or returning from battle, and take what they want. Those who resist are beaten into submission or killed. Stolen goods may include weapons, ammunition, armor and vehicles, to medical supplies, food, water and other basics like blankets and clothing.

Some of these villains turn around and sell the stolen goods right back to the CS a day or so later. The selling price is only 10-20% of the items' real value, the standard reward or bounty paid by the Coalition for the "recovery" of stolen CS military equipment in wartime. It may sound like a small amount, but it can equate to hundreds of thousands of credits or the equivalent in trade. Such "kindhearted souls" usually claim to have fought and run-off or killed the "real" culprits, and are bringing the items back to the CS out of "patriotic duty." They accept the "reward" only as fair payment for risking their own necks to liberate and return the goods, and to help their own families in these trying times. It's the only *right thing to do.*

As you might expect, the CS looks upon all traders in stolen CS goods with considerable suspicion, but since human life is precious, they only take action against humans if there is clear evidence that they are the evildoers who stole the goods and perhaps killed personnel to get them. Those caught in the act are regarded as traitors to humanity and executed; sometimes right on the spot, sometimes in a public display (usually hanging or firing squad), and other times, only after torture and interrogation.

Selling Coalition contraband to other bandits, raiders, criminals, smugglers, the Black Market, and lesser CS enemies like the **Pecos Empire** and **Federation of Magic**, is much more lucrative, but also more dangerous. There can be no pretense of being good Samaritans if caught selling stolen Coalition property to others. Stolen property of the *Coalition States, Northern Gun* and *Free Quebec* can fetch 40-70% (1D4x10+30%) of their true value. Thieves sell cheap because the goods didn't cost them anything but effort and a little ammo and bloodshed, and because they want to make a quick profit and get out. Potential customers can be other outlaws and mercs as noted above, as well as desperate people not affiliated with, nor protected by, the Coalition Army. This includes D-Bees, mages, independent towns, adventurers, mercenary groups, and heroes like the Cyber-Knights and Reid's Rangers.

Coalition soldiers take a hard stance toward anyone selling CS contraband and gear, especially if they are well-stocked in stolen goods. Sellers are raided by Dead Boys (or mercs), roughed up and see ALL property of the Coalition States and their allies (NG and Quebec) confiscated and redistributed to the troops. Any seller who protests too loudly or pulls a weapon is beaten or gunned down where he stands. Such arms-dealing carpetbaggers are also likely to be placed under surveillance and followed to determine their supplier and whether they are innocent dupes or the actual criminals raiding, killing and looting Coalition soldiers. The CS and most people fighting in the Minion War see rustlers, thieves, bandits and raiders as the lowest of the low — traitors who need to be stopped and *terminated.* This also means adventurers and heroes are happy to take down these bad guys and "liberate" stolen weapons, combat vehicles, food and supplies for themselves or to give away to innocent people in need of them, and who may have been victims of these brigands. Again, the slightest resistance or proof of their having killed people to get the contraband is reason to put down traitors without a trial or formal execution.

Most bandits and raiders who deal in stolen CS weapons and property are independent groups, large and small. During the battle against the Minions of Hell, the only **Black Market organizations** willing to buy and resell "hot" Coalition Army, Northern Gun and Free Quebec weapons and supplies are **Bandito Arms** and **El Oculta;** paying 20-35% of market value. The majority of **Pecos Bandits**, like most people, are off fighting the supernatural Minions of Hell. Though Pecos Bandits have no love for the Coalition States, they realize the CS is everyone's best chance to defeat the demonic invaders. As a result, while some petty crimes may be leveled at CS forces, Pecos Bandits are not going to risk doing anything that could seriously undermine Coalition operations or get people killed, not even Dead Boys.

The most despised and loathsome traitors are humans and D-Bees who willingly join forces with demons or Deevils. These traitors work to help the supernatural invaders conquer and enslave the people of Earth. They do it for all the reasons you might expect: revenge against the CS or other enemies, for wealth, for power, or simply because they are wicked themselves and enjoy hurting and killing others. For some pragmatic schemers and power-mongers who believe resistance is futile, it is better to serve at the side of demonic masters, even if it is as a lieutenant or henchman, than to be enslaved or slaughtered. Let the rest become slaves, playthings and livestock to be abused and devoured. Not them. They'll profit, as always, from the misery of others. Indeed, there are wicked beings, from witches and mages, soldiers and thieves, to D-Bees and dragons, who already hold elevated positions within the invaders' ranks. Some, like **Lord Dunscon**, have been promised positions as leaders and governors over the conquered people of Earth after their wicked patrons have won the war. Whether such promises will be kept is another matter.

Demons and Deevils learned long ago that a winning tactic is to utilize some of the very people they are trying to conquer. After all, such henchmen know the mortal enemy better than anyone, because they are one of them. This lets traitors who are secretly in league with the forces of Hell undermine resistance fighters and combat troops by feeding their demonic masters vital information, and their own people incorrect data that leads to defeat. Traitors may also engage in all manner of treachery and betrayal, including acts of sedition, sabotage and assassination. And who better to recruit such turncoats than the sugar-tongued Deevils skilled in the art of temptation and seduction, or the cunning demons, masters of lies and unkept promises?

Those who side with the demonic enemy are hated above all others. As traitors to their entire world, they are actively hunted down and destroyed by Coalition soldiers, Cyber-Knights and all people fighting to save the world from becoming an annex to Hell.

CS Background

The Coalition States

The fortress of humankind

Unlike the pre-Rifts world where urban settings were generally considered dangerous and the country peaceful and quiet, the reverse now holds true. Cities are havens from the uncertainty of the Rift-plagued wilderness inhabited by D-Bees and creatures from the Rifts. Cities are the oases that dot the savage wilderness, their crime and overcrowding a necessary evil that must be tolerated. Granted, there are a few cities that have risen above these challenges, such as Lazlo, New Lazlo and the most exclusive, privileged parts of the fortress cities of the Coalition States, but all urban centers at minimum force their occupants to sacrifice space and mobility for security and communication.

The Coalition's power and organization make it a very attractive destination for human beings trying to survive in this new world. As one of the first nations to emerge from the Dark Age, it was even more attractive years ago when smaller city-states were rarer, less developed and less able to defend themselves. Trading freedom and literacy in return for safety might seem unthinkable to us, but for people living in constant fear for their lives, the choice becomes much less difficult. The Coalition's policies might be distasteful to some, but the worst treatment they have to offer is reserved for D-Bees and magic users, making it much easier for normal human citizens to overlook. Desperate human refugees who are finally granted access to the safe haven of the Coalition States quickly forget about the Coalition's reputation on the outside and naturally start to absorb the attitudes of their neighbors and parent state.

During the Dark Age there were many towns and small city-states that persecuted or turned away D-Bees. That number has waned over the last two centuries as D-Bees become more settled and better understood – and as prejudiced humans emigrate to the Coalition where they feel their views are validated and dangerous "monsters" are kept far away. Even humans who have no hatred or mistrust of D-Bees still fall in line once they are made citizens of the CS. To rock the boat and advocate for D-Bee rights is to risk one's own status and safety. It is easy to imagine protests and civil rights movements from ages past, but in the CS such activities are responded to with mass arrests and unrestrained use of lethal force.

The Psychological Effects of the Apocalypse

The Two Hundred Year Dark Age that followed the Great Cataclysm had a dramatic effect on the overall psyche of humankind. For thousands of years humans had been slowly mastering their environment, creating a world conducive to their existence at the exclusion of other life on Earth. The Coming of the Rifts turned the clock back, returning mankind to an era of regional separation and isolation not seen since the Bronze Age. Satellite communications and GPS vanished overnight. The Internet was quick to follow. Radio communication was limited. The entire world in global crisis at the same time. Chaos reigned. Supernatural predators and giant monsters even drop mankind from the top of the food chain back down to another *prey animal* when they catch them without the advantages offered by weapons and high technology.

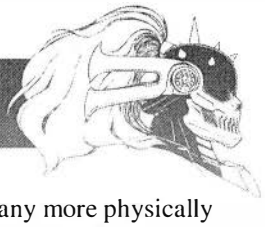
For the average human, this means that people have become grim, superstitious and untrusting. Doors are locked, possessions carefully guarded, supplies hoarded, and poking one's head into the wrong room or piece of property is an easy way to get shot. Almost any place might erupt into a warzone at any time, and the world is full of people who have lived through experiences too terrible to describe. The following conditions are all common amongst human and humanoid populations on Rifts Earth, past and present:

Mania is a state of mind characterized by changing ideas and exaggerated or intense positivity or happiness that may suddenly shift in its intensity and focus or become agitated or violent. On Rifts Earth, it manifests itself as a denial of the dangers and terror that can appear at any moment coupled with a "live hard, die young, but go out and live," mentality. This is most obvious in devil-may-care adventurers, swashbuckling mercenaries, daring explorers and others, who seem bold, confident and even cheerful in the face of danger and uncertainty, but is most epitomized by *Juicers* and *Crazies.* In the case of Juicers and to a lesser degree, Crazies and even Techno-Wizards, they seem focused on living large, defying the odds and cheating death. Within the broader population, it is a commitment to the ideal that one can live a relatively normal life, raise a family and find love, peace and purpose in a violent, ever-changing world filled with monsters and bad guys.

Paranoia is a state of irrational fear, experiencing delusions of being persecuted or followed. With the coming of the Rifts, however, reasons to be fearful are all around, often beyond human reasoning capabilities. Paranoia is understandable, even justifiable, with dangers like possession, mind control and magic out there. There are definitely still paranoid people on Rifts Earth, but many people who might be thought of as paranoid are actually the victims of psionics or mind-disrupting magic.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD, used to be a condition associated with soldiers, policemen and individuals who lived through extreme, one-in-a-million tragic circumstances. In Rifts Earth, almost anyone might have been snatched up by a demon or alien slaver at some point, or, even more likely, fallen prey to the much more common threat of human/D-Bee bandits, kidnappers, rapists or would-be murderers.

Superstition abounds again in a world returned to mysticism, but in the modern age it is difficult to separate superstition from actual magic or magic lore. Creatures like dragons, Faeries and demons can be encountered in the flesh, and many old wive's tales, myths and legends are now understood by scholars to be based on actual supernatural creatures and principles of magic.



With limited circulation of knowledge and legitimate propaganda spread by groups like the Coalition States, new superstitions, myths and legends have been created, particularly regarding human history, magic, the supernatural and Dimensional Beings (D-Bees).

Xenophobia is fear and/or contempt of outsiders, foreigners and beings who are different, as well as foreign ideas, cultures and technology. With the very real appearance of countless inhuman aliens/Dimensional Beings (dubbed "D-Bees"), real demons, monsters and magical devices, xenophobia runs rampant across Rifts Earth. In the average small town or walled city, it is a natural byproduct of the supernatural threats and untrustworthy strangers (both human and D-Bee) that wander in from the world at large. One never knows if the person before you is what he seems to be or whether he means you harm or not.

In the Coalition States, xenophobia is highly encouraged, keeping its human citizens from learning the truth that most D-Bees are simply different looking people, brought to Earth through no fault of their own and just trying to survive. Exposure to beneficial use of magic also helps dispel the Coalition's portrayal of it as an evil and alien/unearthly force, so the CS is ever-vigilant in keeping all magic, even harmless or beneficial spells, far away from its people. Likewise, the exchange of ideas and knowledge from D-Bees, magic practitioners and outside cultures, philosophies and beliefs is forbidden. The CS isolates, dominates and controls its people with the fear of the unknown and the inhuman. It is ironic then, that most D-Bees share shockingly human characteristics, emotions and cultures.

Erin Tarn's Reflections on the Coalition

The Coalition's leaders talk endlessly of humanity as their most precious resource, but humanity is not just a species, it is a concept. Where is the Coalition's humanity when it comes to Dimensional Beings? Where is their humanity when they kill their own kind for using magic? I am a student of history. I have read about enough people doing terrible things to know that there is more to humanity than just being human. Monsters come in many guises, and some of the most dangerous look just like you or I.

- Erin Tarn, 109 P.A.

The most infamous opponent of the Coalition States is not an evil wizard, enemy general or a powerful alien demigod, but a seventy year-old woman. **Erin Tarn, Coalition Enemy Number One**, scholar, historian and adventurer who dares to record the truth and report on the events of Rifts Earth. She is one of few people outside the Coalition elite who can remember the Great Library of Chi-Town and a time before Emperor Prosek took the reins of power. She wields a weapon that the CS fears almost as much as magic: information.

It is her rival (true) version of history that the CS seeks to suppress, as well as Ms. Tarn's less-than-complimentary opinions on the Coalition government and its leaders. Her popularity and name recognition makes her a threat while many more physically powerful enemies aren't even on the Coalition's watch list.

Erin Tarn's book, *Traversing Our Modern World,* is the only way most people learn about distant locations, people and cultures, apart from rumor and hearsay. Newspapers, twenty-four hour coverage and documentaries are all relics of the past, making accurate information extremely rare and valuable almost everywhere, not just in the Coalition States. Up-to-date news can mean the difference between life and death, provide a critical advantage to military forces, or destabilize the Coalition's world view. In her studies and travels, Erin Tarn has not shied away from the arcane power of magic, preferring to present an accurate and often positive view of the mysterious force that many believe to be the lifeblood of the Earth and a natural form of untapped energy. Not something alien or inherently wicked as the CS tells its people.

Her support for D-Bees as equals, fellow inhabitants of the Megaverse who deserve rights and recognition, also flies in the face of established Coalition xenophobic policies. Erin Tarn consorts with alien races from many worlds, and is a known associate of Plato, the dragon who oversees the nation of Lazlo. Her long collaboration with the **Lazlo Free State** and its population of magic users and myriad species has helped establish Lazlo as a clearly-defined Coalition enemy, and makes CS Military High Command fear the peaceful nation-state as a potential hostile power.

Coalition Propaganda and Misinformation

One way the Coalition maintains control over its citizens is by severely limiting and filtering the information made available to them. The Coalition States is built upon recovered plans and blueprints from the *Golden Age of Humanity*, and the *Great Library of Chi-Town* once held these records as public goods, one of the national treasures of the CS. For many years now that information has been suppressed and hidden away. The Great Library burned to the ground long ago, and its countless books and computer files supposedly lost with it.

Since that tragedy, the Coalition has intervened to fill in the gaps. They provide video discs and audio recordings of books, accessible to the small illiterate population of the CS. These histories have all been carefully reconstructed and edited, however, redesigned from the ground up to paint humanity and the Coalition as faultless, and to place the blame for the *Coming of the Rifts* on magic users and alien invaders – monsters whose descendants are the so-called D-Bees and fools who practice magic and consort with demons and dark gods. **Chairman Karl Prosek** consolidated his control over the Coalition States with equal parts military might and public manipulation, and his son and heir **Joseph Prosek II** is proving even better at orchestrating the opinions of the masses, learning new tricks all the time in his post as *Head of Propaganda.*

In order to placate the general population, *news* is doled out in small doses, always heavily filtered and always skewed to portray

the Coalition in the best possible light and D-Bees and mages as madmen and monsters. The information network the Coalition makes use of is broadcast by high-powered antennas placed atop fortress cities like Chi-Town and the City of Iron. Throughout the surrounding 'Burbs are receiver dishes that are fixed in position, oriented towards the broadcast antennas and unable to receive other signals without extensive (and illegal) modification (which is commonplace). Additional broadcast towers are located on the tops of hills, mountains and tall buildings, or sometimes erected as freestanding structures. More than 90% of Coalition citizens are within range of the broadcast network, receiving CS sanctioned propaganda as their only form of news and entertainment. Destruction of receiver dishes and hacking into any part of the system are both crimes punishable by death, sometimes reduced to a long term in a Coalition prison.

Propaganda Regarding D-Bees

As a melting pot of many peoples, North America has a long and complicated history of racial relations. **In 109 P.A.**, however, the Coalition States, heir to the old American Empire, is one of the least racist societies to ever exist on Earth. One might think this attitude is a holdover from the progress and enlightenment of the Golden Age, but the camaraderie found between humans in the CS is really a product of the overwhelming prejudice against Dimensional Beings (D-Bees). In the Coalition, every human is a part of the "masterrace," and one thing they all share is the ability to look down on D-Bees. The millions of Psi-Stalkers and Dog Boys who live in the CS provide a social buffer between humans and nonhumans as well, and are generally content with their role as second-class citizens (at least the Dog Boys are). Human beings naturally have an "us-and-them" mentality, and in the age of the Rifts there are a lot more options for who constitutes "them."

The Coalition's propaganda department, under the supervision of **Joseph Prosek II**, works hard to foster an attitude of mistrust and superstition between Coalition citizens and Dimensional Beings. The constant fear of alien outsiders helps to unite humans under a common cause and provides a scapegoat that can be held responsible for the Coalition's shortcomings.

State-sanctioned propaganda is the closest thing to interaction with D-Bees that most Coalition citizens ever experience. Dimensional Beings are not disenfranchised or enslaved, they are completely excluded from Coalition society. Their very existence is a crime. Any who flaunt their inhumanity are arrested and/or executed in short order. A few glimpses of nonhuman faces as they pass by a prison or work camp is likely to be as close to a D-Bee as most CS citizens ever get. D-Bees are never allowed to verbally defend themselves in court or voice their opinion, and they cannot protest or legally demonstrate against the government without being gunned down. For most people in the Coalition, especially those who are born there, the propaganda department's portrayal of D-Bees is the only perspective they have on the issue.

The "public relations" experts at the propaganda department also have no problem using theatrics and special effects to exaggerate their portrayal of D-Bees. The clips often played in propaganda vids are edited for maximum effect; a D-Bee seen lashing out at innocent people in grainy news footage may well be a captured prisoner who has been provoked (or drugged), the bystanders just actors or soldiers dressed as civilians, the streets nothing more than carefully controlled sets.

Some D-Bees are reported to be infant forms of demons and monsters, only vulnerable before they undergo a metamorphosis into their adult aspect. Bizarre-looking D-Bees help substantiate this fabricated story, at least in the eyes of the public, but there is absolutely no truth behind it. Dragons, vampires, shapeshifters and werebeasts, on the other hand, are a real threat that is difficult to detect, but they certainly don't lurk right around every corner like the Coalition claims. Whenever an incident occurs with a powerful wizard, shapeshifter or supernatural monster, the events are well publicized and their impact reinforced by repeated, alarmist news broadcasts.

The constant barrage of real incidents involving D-Bees and supernatural monsters, along with the CS propagandists' dirty tricks, have hardened the population's resolve, and for decades now the Coalition has become more and more fervent in its persecution of Dimensional Beings, its actions creating ripple effects that shape the political landscape of the entire continent. From a paranoid Dark Age policy to an attitude that defines and shapes every aspect of Coalition culture, the oppression of D-Bees is here to stay. The nation's elite have gambled too much upon total commitment to their beliefs – going back now would make every CS citizen question the relationship between mankind and the Megaverse. If the only options are peace and genocide, the Coalition has chosen *genocide.*

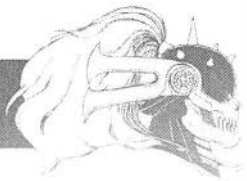
This is why encounters on the field of battle in response to the Minion War are upsetting the status quo and changing the long-standing beliefs of hundreds of thousands of soldiers. Whether it ultimately changes the conversation about D-Bees in the future is yet to be seen, but on the battlefield, D-Bees are being recognized as heroic and reliable allies.

The Average Coalition Citizen's Opinion of D-Bees

"Some of 'em look so much like people, we can't possibly sort 'em all out. Besides, what are we supposed to do? Live and let live? I watched my commanding officer get killed by a D-Bee I thought was just a child. Took the Lieutenant's head clean off his shoulders. I haven't trusted any of 'em since."

– Private First Class Frank Gibson, Tolkeen Occupation Force

There is a range of opinions regarding D-Bees among full citizens of the Coalition States. Some see them all as alien monsters, some differentiate between dangerous animals and intelligent beings, some even sympathize with the plight of D-Bees, even though they could never admit it. For most people, however, the State's definition of D-Bees as dangerous interdimensional intruders is the take on reality that they have chosen to accept. In fairness, it is the only reality they know. Until now.



Soldiers and ISS agents whose job is to police and fight Dimensional Beings are some of the worst culprits for prejudice and racism, validating their preconceived notions with "real world" experience. What they do not consider, however, is that as Coalition soldiers, they are most likely to run into only the most violent, D-Bee rebels, criminals and madmen. Others are desperate and terrified D-Bees who fight for their lives when they are threatened by the legendary "Coalition Dead Boy" soldiers or backed into a corner and think (correctly) that their live are in danger. The average Coalition Grunt or ISS Peacekeeper seldom has a full conversation or open interaction with a D-Bee, and their officers and NCOs are trained to make sure things stay that way. Dissenting voices are not permitted – most are reported up the chain of command as troublemakers and denied career advancement or get assignments that are likely to make them want to quit the service, or become a casualty in the line of duty.

In ISS prisons, rough treatment of D-Bees is justified as necessary for safety and to maintain discipline and control. Acts of kindness between guards and non-humans are not tolerated. On the battlefield, prisoners of war are often executed on the spot. When it comes to **undocumented D-Bees** with possible magic, psionic or physiological abilities, unarmed women and children are potentially just as dangerous as clearly defined warriors. A "take no chances" policy is part of the institutionalized practice among the Coalition military, especially after the intense street-fighting and urban pacification that took place during the Siege on Tolkeen.

During the Minion War the outlook toward D-Bees and magic in Coalition cities remains largely unchanged. If anything, they are attacked more aggressively than ever. Purged from the 'Burbs and not tolerated within the fortress cities, supernatural intruders are attacked and destroyed without mercy or hesistation. D-Bees and mortal mages are apprehended, interrogated and exterminated within 48-72 hours. The "take no chances" policy more rabidly enforced than in the past.

Propaganda Regarding Magic

The dangers of magic are emphasized everywhere throughout the Coalition, warnings echoed by officials, audio-recorded public service announcements and video clips run on various "news" channels. Children are taught from an early age to report anything that might be magic phenomena or suspicious behavior. CS citizens are conditioned throughout their lives to question the actions of their neighbors, but never those of the State or government. Citizens born in the Coalition have *never* known a world that tolerates magic or nonhuman people. They cannot imagine the reality of daily life in places like **Lazlo** or the **Federation of Magic** where mystic powers defy the laws of physics and humans are just one of many species.

The Coalition States' prohibition of magic is more complicated to enforce than its state-sanctioned oppression of D-Bees. Many practitioners of magic are human, an undeniable fact no matter what powers they wield or dark forces with which they consort. No matter how much the Coalition paints them as traitors to mankind, they are still human beings in a world with rising populations of aliens, monsters and supernatural creatures.

One way the Coalition helps create distance between its citizens and practitioners of magic is to emphasize magic's role as a "gateway to demonic and supernatural forces and corrupting influences." Magic brings D-Bees to Earth. Magic summons Rifts and Dimensional Storms and attracts demons and supernatural horrors like moths to a flame. In the Coalition's stunted education system, children are taught that the use of magic is what creates the Rifts and brought about the Great Cataclysm, while the total opposite is probably closer to the truth. All D-Bees are lumped together as weak-minded subhumans who foolishly embrace magic, which makes them easy prey for the darkest forces of the Megaverse and conduits through which demons, vampires, and Alien Intelligences enter our world.

In an environment where possession and mind control are real, magic is also the means with which perfectly honest citizens are turned into evil puppets of evil supernatural beings. To even *begin* to study magic, to expose oneself to arcane forces, is to dramatically increase the chances of demonic and ghostly possession, or so the Coalition says.

Citizens with Psychic Powers

"We don't really know what you are. You might be the next phase in human evolution – and as soon as we're sure of that we'll give you all your rights back. Until then, you need to prove you are one of us, by serving and protecting us all."

– ISS Major Glen Evans

While magic-using humans are labeled as enemies and threats, humans with psionic powers, the Psi-Stalker human mutants and even the genetically engineered Dog Boys that the Coalition breeds by the million, are all considered part of humanity, or at least part of the team. **Psi-Stalkers** and **Dog Boys** are an essential component of the Coalition's efforts to suppress magic and handle supernatural creatures. But all psychics play a bigger role in CS defenses and covert operations than anyone realizes. All human psychics are, in effect, the Coalition's secret weapon. Without their sensory powers the CS would be extremely vulnerable to shapeshifting enemies, magical illusions and human practitioners of magic who look like completely normal, everyday people without their amulets and mystic attire. Fewer than 50% of NTSET (Nonhuman Tactical Strike and Eradication Team) members are human beings. Psi-Stalkers and Dog Boys are far superior at tracking down the presence of magic and the supernatural. And that does not include the operatives within the ultra-secret Psi-Battalion.

Although they are officially accepted by the state, psychics can still be very dangerous, especially those with powers that reach beyond enhanced senses and Empathy. All psychics are required to submit to the **Psychic Registration Program (PRP)**, apart from soldiers who have been recruited into the military's elite **Psi-Battalion** (which has its own record-keeping system). Many citizens become uncomfortable when they notice someone has a *PRP bar code* tattooed on the back of his or her neck. Psy-

chics who could never do anything as dangerous as generate a Mind Bolt or Psi-Sword might still be using their superhuman abilities for no good, even if it's just to cheat or read the minds of the people around them.

The only real way to monitor psychics is with other psychics, leaving the CS little choice in that regard either. Psionic powers simply up the ante when it comes to police matters, and thankfully the Coalition already has decades of experience deploying and supervising individuals with psychic powers. The inclusion of the fiercely loyal, and quite fearless Psi-Hounds – better known as **Dog Boys** – helps to keep psychics serving the CS on their toes, and psychic citizens in line.

Note: See Defenses and Psi-Battalion for more details, elsewhere in this book.

Coalition Reserve Forces

As a highly militarized state, the Coalition has a vast number of citizens who are veterans of the military or police force or who have otherwise received some form of paramilitary training. For those who are still mentally and physically fit, a position in the **CS Reserves** is a way to make a few extra credits and help defend the nation without going back on active duty. While working their day jobs or eking their way through retirement, Reservists spend one day per week and one week every other month training and maintaining equipment. Should their state or city ever come under attack they are recalled, organized, armed and deployed in units completely made up of Reserves, typically used to reinforce active duty units, provide temporary security or help clean up the aftermath of natural disasters or attacks by demons.

Only in the most dire circumstances are Reservists sent to the front lines. The Coalition Army is extremely vigilant and receives more accusations of overkill than laziness, so unless a Xiticix swarm barrels right into CS territory or an entire demon army appears out of a nearby Rift, Reservists are usually stuck mopping up after the active duty troops do their job. Sometimes Reserve units are incorporated into larger military operations, but they are generally confined to supporting roles and Reserve units are equipped with only a limited number of expensive and high-tech systems like power armor suits and combat robots.

People's Militias

In remote or unusually dangerous sections of the Coalition States (which is generally everywhere outside the 'Burbs and fortified cities), citizens often form militias or local guard forces in order to better defend their town and territory. Equipped with leftover Coalition military gear and items from a range of civilian outfitters such as Northern Gun and the Manistique Imperium, Militiamen don't look like professional soldiers. They are neighbors who unite to protect their homes, not mercenaries after a buck or soldiers serving the greater authority of the state. Most have day jobs and only work with the militia on a part-time basis. Training is not formalized and many militia "officers" are veterans from the CS Army or ISS, teaching inexperienced recruits, cross-training others and generally helping spread their skills and combat knowledge around.

In large cities the role of the People's Militia is filled by Reservists or the ISS. In small towns and outposts, defense and law enforcement are often carried out by the same people. Sometimes militias use their limited authority to harass D-Bees, search homes for magic contraband or literature, even carry out death sentences on the spot. Rather than trying to rein in such vigilantism, the ISS and regional military command encourage it as a way to keep pressure on enemies of the state and keep the populace focused on outside threats as opposed to internal problems. Militias are all supposed to be registered and regularly inspected, but many are hastily organized in response to specific threats or far enough away from population centers that they are seldom checked up on. Their equipment is poorly maintained compared to Army units, and their training level varies widely from one soldier to the next.

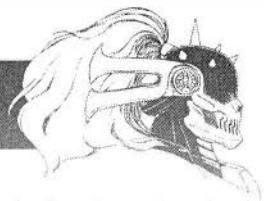
The Coalition Prison System

A good number of those involved with the Black Market are also familiar with the Coalition prison system. The CS doesn't just lock up its own citizens; *anyone* arrested by the ISS, NETset or the CS military has a chance of ending up inside a Coalition jail, especially if they are a D-Bee or magic user.

Once inside the system, prospects are grim. There are two separate "halves" of the Coalition prison complex; one for normal humans, which is mostly populated by CS citizens, and one for D-Bees, magic users and augmented humans, which is mostly prisoners from outside the CS. The normal prison system is run apart from the *super-max* system, with different degrees and very different types of security. Standard human guards and steel lockups are suitable for normal prisoners, while the super-max system employs a large number of Dog Boys and Psi-Stalkers, as well as cells that can safely contain Juicers and super-strong D-Bees. Psychics and particularly magic users are treated with the utmost caution and suspicion, often quarantined or placed in solitary confinement. *Nullification devices* are used to suspend their mystic powers and prevent breakouts. (See page 49 of the **Rifts® Bionics Sourcebook** and/or page 30 of **Coalition Wars®: Siege on Tolkeen, Chapter One**, for full details.)

Processing

The first step after being arrested and charged with a crime in the CS is processing into the Coalition prison system. Mug-shots and fingerprints are taken, as well as a DNA sample and pictures of tattoos, bionic enhancements and other distinguishing marks. From there, prisoners are either routed into the normal prison system or sent off to the CS super-max. Cyborgs and individuals with bionic enhancements have their systems removed, depowered or deactivated before being thrown in with other inmates.



Psychics and magic users are placed in manacles and containment cells that nullify their abilities, and are carefully monitored by specially trained Psi-Stalkers and Dog Boys. Breakouts are rare and the experienced guards have learned to expect the unexpected.

Before being locked in their individual cells, magic users in particular are stripped naked and given prison garb, while their clothing is searched for any tiny items that they may been concealing on their person. Enchanted amulets, rings, gems, jewels and other small objects can be extremely hard to find and guards are very thorough, sometimes even X-raying prisoners who they suspect may be hiding something.

D-Bees, mutants and augmented humans with extraordinary strength are bound with Mega-Damage chains and cuffs. Those deemed still dangerous may find themselves restricted by more elaborate restraints or even locked up in solitary confinement cells. Shapeshifters and those who can manipulate and morph their own body parts are treated even more suspiciously and usually kept under constant surveillance and placed in custom-made irons when transported.

Psi-Block

For creatures and practitioners of magic with mind altering abilities, the Psi-Block is the ultimate in security, even within the Coalition super-max prison system. Psi-Block is a special wing adjoining most super-max prisons that is kept distant and separate from the rest of the facility. Inside are high-level practitioners of magic, dragons, powerful psychics and otherworldly beings deemed too dangerous for even the super-max general population, but that the CS has not immediately executed or sent on to death row for "final interrogations" and execution. They may be in possession of information that the CS hopes to one day obtain, or may simply be doomed to die in a cell rather than given the mercy of a quick death. Ranking enemy agents may also be held for long periods in the hope that they may one day be exchanged for Coalition prisoners or used as pawns in diplomatic negotiations.

Every guard within Psi-Block is a Psi-Stalker, Dog Boy or other psychic trained specifically to resist mind control, possession, hypnotic suggestion and other forms of psychic or magical mind manipulation. Inmates find it exceptionally difficult to use their mind control abilities, and those who are detected trying to do so are sprayed with fire hoses, tasered, maced, rehabilitated (tortured) or given a simple beating to convince them not to attempt it again. Really powerful creatures may receive massive doses of drugs, shock therapy, heat or cold, and are kept in a general state of P.P.E. and I.S.P. starvation or pain. It is difficult to cast spells or use psychic abilities when in pain or drugged out of your mind.

Psi-Block response teams wear exoskeletons and power armor to give them enhanced strength and toughness. The **Mauler** and **Terror Trooper** models are common, and may even be backed up by ISS UAR-1 Enforcer robots and/or **Coalition Combat Cyborgs** when dealing with particularly strong inmates. They use Neural Maces, cattle prods, tear gas, smoke bombs and real frag grenades when suppressing riots and prison breaks, and are certain to cut the lights and completely lock down cell blocks where a prisoner is thought to have escaped. Skelebots with Neural Maces and other stun weapons are also common sentries and response units, as they are both expendable and completely immune to mind control and illusion.

Death Row

In the Coalition States, death row is a busy place. Murderers, kidnappers and other serious criminals are being executed all the time, and the charges for the use of magic and consorting with otherworldly beings are severe. Firing squads are the most common execution method, and military commanders are allowed and encouraged to carry out the law themselves while out in the field during military campaigns. Transporting monsters and criminals back to one of the Coalition States can be dangerous for CS personnel and tax important military resources, so field executions are common practice. After all, the victims are an alien or supernatural being to be eradicated from the planet Earth, making execution the most logical and efficient course of action.

Within the Coalition States themselves, executions are usually public and often televised. The public execution of notorious criminals, traitors, sorcerers, witches, D-Bees and creatures of magic gives the angry and frightened CS citizens a sense of justice, vengeance and triumph in the ongoing war to keep the people of the Coalition States safe from those who would do them harm. Witnessing the execution of a state enemy is a common assignment for Coalition schoolchildren and also encouraged for soldiers and ISS agents undergoing training and boot camp, but most executions are generally well attended by people onsite and watched on computers and televisions by a percentage of the citizenry. The execution of the most infamous "enemies of the States" may preempt scheduled programing.

Gangs & Market Factions Behind Bars

Life in a Coalition cage is not easy, and various groups have joined together to protect their own. Each super-max CS prison is likely to have a gang of magic users, a gang of psychics, a gang of 'Borgs and one of Juicers/Crazies. Sometimes gangs form along lines of origin, a Pecos Empire gang or a Federation of Magic gang, for example.

The five major Black Market factions also have established gangs within most Coalition prisons, depending on location. With their profession, there are always people on the inside with ties to the factions, and many prisoners consider themselves to still be "on the job" even behind bars. They smuggle weapons, drugs, cigarettes and other items into the prison and sell them to other prisoners, along with maintaining the trade in information, favors and physical intimidation and harassment. Assassinations and revenge killings are also conducted in the lock-up, often receiving less attention from prison guards and wardens than they would if they had occurred on the outside.

Civilization outside the CS

Like the days of old, before modern technology, robots and machines gave people leisure time, most people living outside the Coalition States, Northern Gun, Lazlo and the largest cities spend most of their time working and fighting to stay alive. There is little time for games, hobbies or entertainment. Events happening beyond the outskirts of your community only 10 miles (16 km) away are likely to be largely unknown and have little importance to you unless it involves the coming of war, invasion, plagues or new danger. (Think Little House on the Prairie, the American Old West or Medieval times in Europe.)

For most people on Rifts Earth, living is all about hard work and survival. Fun is found in the simple joys and beauty of nature, family and a good day of productive work. Entertainment comes by way of stories, talk of rumors, songs, games and laughter around the hearth before retiring to bed, as well as friendships, laughter, songs and good cheer as you work together with your neighbors in the fields or at the mill. One day a week, if lucky, is a day of rest and time for family for picnics, fishing, games around the house, a visit to nearby family or friends, song, religious worship, small get-togethers and work around the homestead. Parties and big events are harvest festivals or similar community celebrations that come two or three times a year with music, dancing, food, drink and all the good things that come with a celebratory gathering.

At most communities there is no radio or television station. No Internet. No mail delivery system. Though there are exceptions, *two-thirds of all* the people living in North America are illiterate and technologically deprived, even stinted. Many are the simple farm communities, trading post towns, villages and tribes. Songs, stories and news are all generally passed on by oral tradition – shared by word of mouth.

Many small towns and villages have one to a few residents or leaders who can read and write, but that's all. Technology may range from a few generators, power tools and some energy weapons to a few homes and/or a community center with a radio, and some computers and monitors that can take digital data and play digital recordings on one or more screens.

A "modern" town is one with a trading post, general store, mechanic's garage and one or more obvious types of manufacturing, not just farming or hunting. But life, leisure and information are not likely to be any different than a small town.

When a traveling show or circus comes to town – or a nearby town – it is a big deal and a huge attraction. Something special and likely to attract people from miles around.

Town protectors. In most cases, technology and/or magic, with weapons, armor and fighting machines, are in the hands of **the champions** who protect the community. Town protectors are also often the people who rule over the place or have tremendous influence on it. On Rifts Earth no community can survive without some sort of protector. Whether it be a Cyber-Knight and a group of local defenders, a Glitter Boy, a band of would-be heroes, a group of would-be kings, mercenaries, bandits, tyrants, mages, witches, monsters, tribal warriors, a dragon, militia or army like the Coalition States, *every* community needs **a protector**. Nine out of ten times, **the protectors** make the rules and run the show, or leave the day to day running of the community to a town council, but are the law unto themselves. Meaning they are not bound to the same laws and rules as everyone else. This is a world where might makes right and power over people is often taken, not invited or voted into power. Whether it is a fair trade or mutually beneficial or not, without the protector(s), the village, town or city-state is at the mercy of whatever danger happens upon it. Some "protectors" have good intentions and establish democracies and republics. Many others are dictatorships or little more than a base camp or front for gangs of thugs, bandits, raiders, mercenaries or monsters.

This is the case for the majority of communities in North America, and is true, to a shocking extent, even of **the 'Burbs** – the shanty towns and no-man's lands that spring up around Chi-Town and other fortress cities throughout the Coalition States. Here, local, self-appointed governments and gangs run the streets of the various 'Burbs with their indistinguishable borders, one spilling into the other.

The government leaders in the 'Burbs range from town councils and town elders to powerful individuals, even more powerful merchants, business groups, crime rings, secret organizations, relief groups, the Black Market, street gangs and heroic or despotic protectors. Law and order varies greatly and more resembles slightly organized chaos in most places; dictatorships at others; and pleasant neighborhoods at still others. Often a 'Burb is divided up by neighborhoods controlled or dominated by a particular cadre of citizens, heroes, street gang, mob family, business, or business cabal. Each of them with their own individual or group of "protectors/defenders/police" or "enforcers" with muscle, tech and magic used to protect their holdings and keep them and the people in their neighborhood or business safe. **Note:** The **Black Market** panders to all potential customers and does not usually take sides nor try to take over or run/rule any 'Burbs, town or city. They focus on their criminal enterprises, and though they may influence and affect a community, they do not function as its protector. The Black Market only protects its own criminal network and holdings.

Of course, all 'Burbs exist only by the good graces of the Coalition States. Designated as a no-man's zone without political or civil rights, the 'Burbs are an unofficial ocean of humanity sprinkled with D-Bees, practitioners of magic, refugees, and fugitives. Any CS police or military presence is not for the safety of the great wash of people, but to keep the fortress city safe from them and enemies hiding among them. When things seem to be getting too lawless or troublesome, rowdy, annoying or threatening to the Coalition States or one of its official cities, these dumping grounds for humanity are *purged*. Sometimes miles and miles of entire 'Burbs are razed to the ground, hundreds of people killed and thousands routed, injured and displaced. Their homes and possessions destroyed in the name of CS security. One more example of how the strong rule and might makes right.

Communication in North America

There are no sustainable satellite networks, nor national broadcast systems, cable system or telegraph. None of them can be maintained. Three-quarters of all news is spread by word of mouth and as such, becomes subject to serious miscommunication, personal bias, and exaggeration, turning much of it into unreliable gossip and rumors filled with half-truths and lies.

News broadcasts, film footage and entertainment are generally controlled by the local government or a strong commercial business, often the Black Market. Television, radio, and any semblance of the Internet are *always local* to that particular town, city or kingdom. Movies (pre-Rifts and new productions), radio shows, video, audio and other sources of news and entertainment come from independent suppliers that can range from a local group of thespians or filmmakers, to the government, radicals or a movement trying to make a living, push an agenda, educate, inform or just have fun. The quality of video disks, local radio and TV transmissions and digital downloads ranges from rank amateur and terrible quality, to fair to good and outstanding.

Most independent nations, kingdoms and large cities have a fairly free flow of gossip and rumor disguised as news, and unrestricted entertainment provided by independent manufacturers, local production companies, theater companies, the Black Market, and the government in charge. Medium and small cities and most towns have access to only limited local government fare or only independent and Black Market offerings available to them as entertainment and information networks, with virtually all of their news coming in as rumors, gossip and hearsay.

You might think communication, news and information are superior in **the 'Burbs** compared to tiny communities scattered across the savage wilderness of North America, but they are not. More baseless stories, tall tales, half-truths, mixed-up facts, rumors, gossip and outright lies circulate throughout the 'Burbs than anywhere else in the Americas. Almost everything in the 'Burbs is hearsay, and "secrets" abound. Since a 'Burb is broken down into neighborhoods with many subsets of groups with influence in the community, it means everyone seems to have their own agenda, secrets and point of view. Rumors can sweep from one 'Burb to the next like wildfire, spreading good news, bad news, lies, innuendo, paranoia and fear that may spark trouble and unrest, street wars or celebrations. While **pirate radio stations** abound, and all manner of contraband is bought and sold in the 'Burbs, including information, video, film, books, pre-Rifts artifacts, magic, radio recordings and illicit entertainment, it is all done behind closed doors under the cloak of secrecy.

City Rats are the best source of reliable gossip and word through the grapevine on the street involving matters going on throughout their specific 'Burb. That includes everything from notable visitors to work for heroes and mercs, political concerns, Black Market sales, the arrival of new goods and contraband, celebrations, rallies, meetings, drugs, gambling, illegal games and competitions, and criminal infighting, street fights, and other notable goings-on such as rumors about suspected CS operations, corruption, possible raids and politics. HOWEVER, this news is limited to their particular 'Burb/shanty town/city, not everything in all the surrounding 'Burbs or anything from inside the fortress city itself, other than what is released by the CS and word from the grapevine.

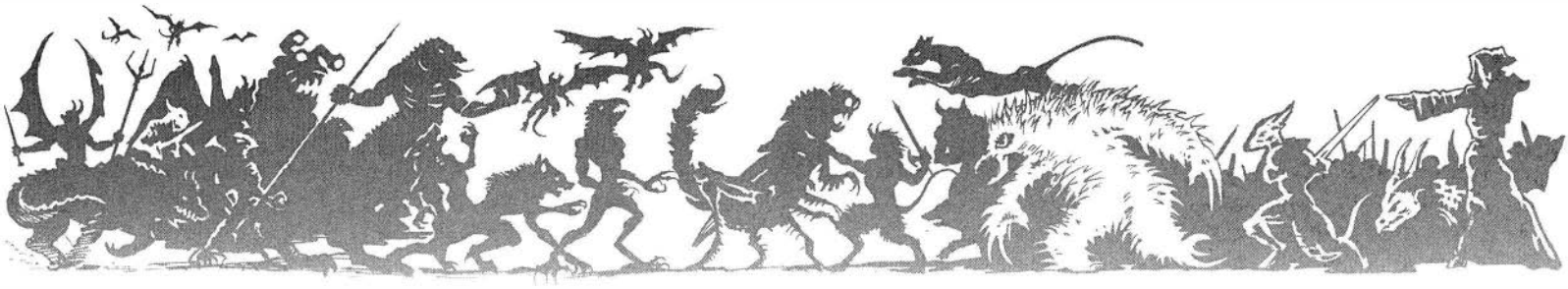
The Coalition State of Chi-Town is happy to broadcast and share its CS news reports (propaganda), civil announcements (propaganda), war reports (propaganda), television programing (propaganda), and other news and entertainment (more propaganda), but it is all skewed with CS bias, politics and mind control. News from the Coalition States must always be taken with more than a grain of salt. Those who want to believe the CS version of regional events and the Coalition's role in them, can do so. And there are plenty of people who do, but that's the most reliable news people are going to get.

The Coalition States do, of course, communicate with each other, but there is no national communication network. Reports and video are often placed on some digital medium and *hand-delivered* by secret couriers or diplomatic ambassadors, armed troops, military specialists and spies. This is done to prevent information from falling into the *wrong hands* or being shared with the public before the CS government is ready to unveil its "sanitized" version of it. Even the Coalition government really only knows most of what is going on in its own major cities. Outside of the cities, authorities mostly know what's transpiring in their smaller communities, holdings and along their borders. Complete information and real-time, minute by minute accounts are a thing of the past. Even a lot of what goes on in the 'Burbs on a daily basis is largely unknown to CS authorities. Outside of the Coalition States, even among allies, the CS only gets glimpses of what is happening in *Northern Gun, Free Quebec, Lazlo, the Federation of Magic,* and a few other select locations. Less is known about what's transpiring in the old Canadian Empire, and virtually nothing is known of what exists beyond the *Rocky Mountains* or what is really taking place in *Mexico.* Much of what is known, is information relayed to them by their spies, military patrols and outsiders — once or twice a month.

Events gestating in other, more distant parts of North America, let alone the world, are often a complete mystery. The stories that leak out of Mexico, South America and Atlantis are terrifying. As for what may be happening beyond the shores of North America? Those continents might as well be black holes where only a few rumors and frightening stories occasionally emerge. That leaves a massive amount of real estate unaccounted for. A multitude of missing pieces from a gigantic puzzle that is the world today.

The scariest part of it all is that the Coalition States has one of the best communications networks in the world.

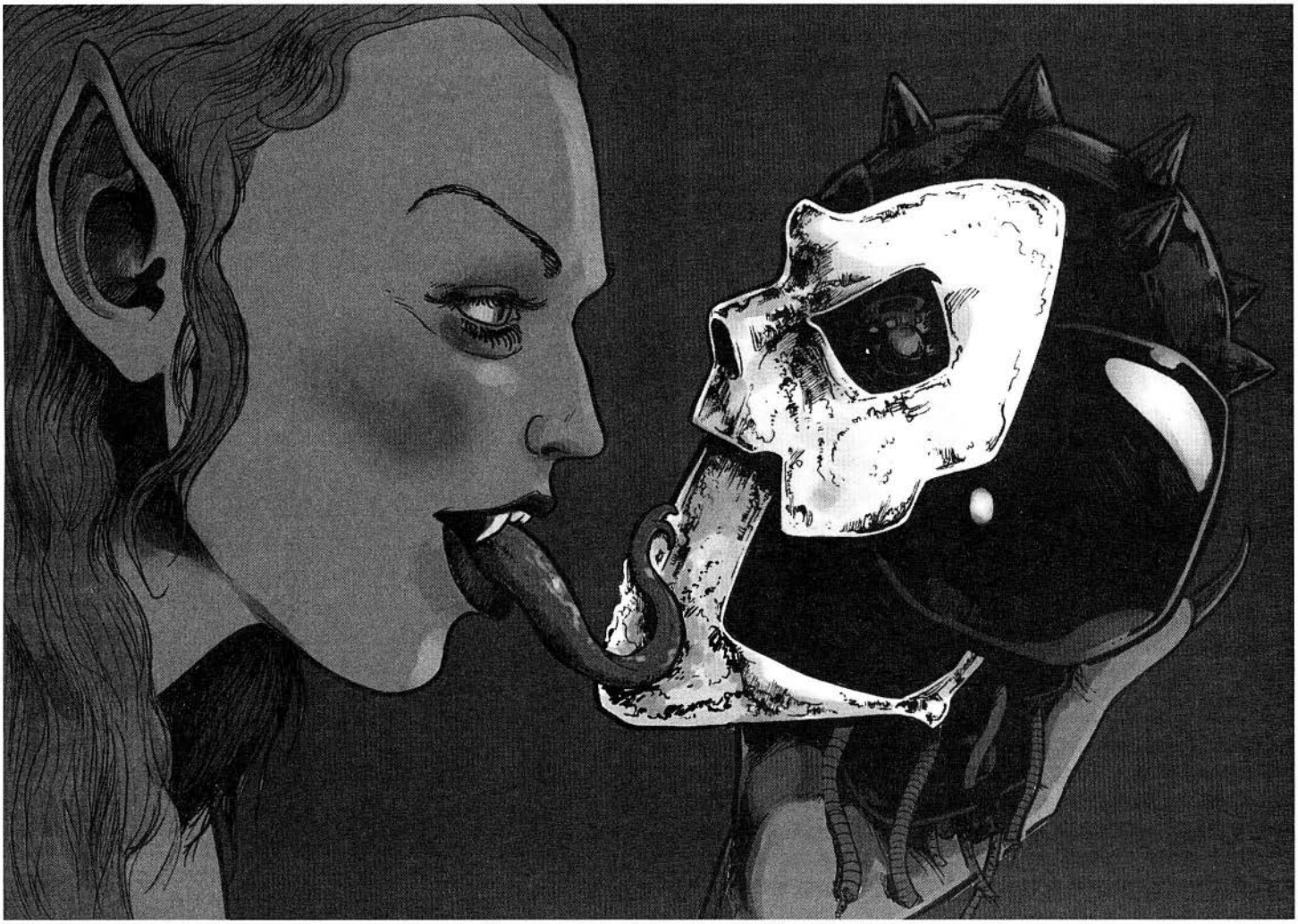
With such a dearth of reliable news and information, it shocked many people when the Coalition States recently began to circulate what seems to be incredibly open and honest reports and film footage about the Minion War and battle against the demonic enemy. This includes CS broadcasts of what appears to be actual, unedited (or slightly edited) combat footage and accurate assessment-based reports. Of course, coverage is slanted to make Coalition forces look favorable and courageous, but still, this is something new for the CS.



Hell on Earth

Demonic Strategies and Tactics

From the perspective of the Coalition Army

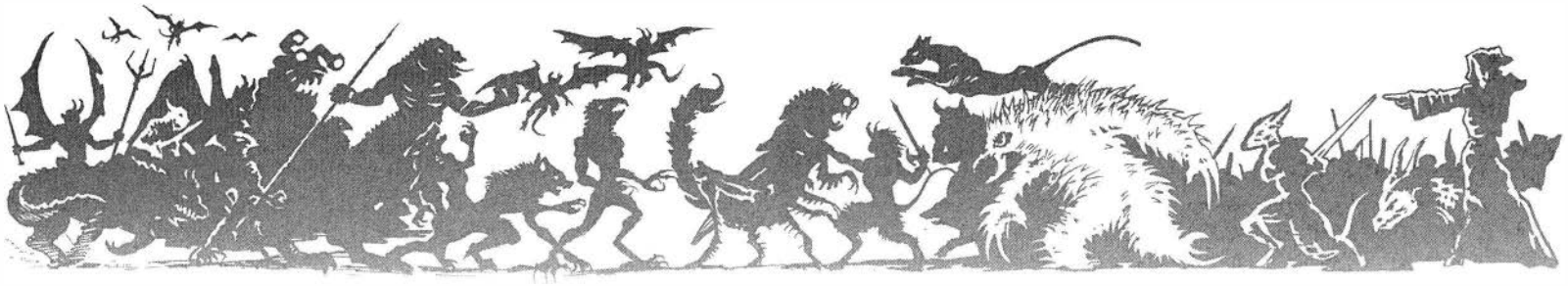


Evil will always move against you

It is important to remember that *evil will always move against you.* Associating with evil under the belief that you are in control and using it for a greater good is always a fallacy. You are lying to yourself. Sooner or later, that evil *will* move against you and bring suffering, sorrow and destruction.

Evil also loves it when people try to deny its existence or when they think they can change evil into a force for good with words and trust. The Minions of Hell, especially the Raksasha, and Deevils as an entire species, are masters at playing on these and other ideals mortals may bring to the table. Any demon who becomes a confidant, helper, friend or submissive servant is playing you for his own purpose.

That's another thing about evil supernatural beings, not only are they convincing liars and pretenders, but they are patient and manipulative. Deevils in particular are masters of the "long con" and playing out elaborate games and charades to achieve their



goals. And when people suffer and/or die because of the Deevil's or demon's words and deeds, the creature enjoys and celebrates it. Demons and Deevils are proud of what they have done, and enjoy the fruit of their cunning labor. The more people who suffer, the better. That is the nature of the malignant creatures our heroes must face.

The concept that any intelligent being can be so *completely evil* that there is virtually no room for redemption and is beyond reach, is one that most humans and D-Bees have considerable trouble grasping and accepting. And the enemy uses that against them. But when it comes to the Minions of Hell, it is absolutely true. These are not beings from our natural world. They are not human or mortal. They live and exist by completely different standards and rules. Ones in which the laws of nature do not apply. They are supernatural creatures of chaos that thrive on wickedness and cruelty. They disregard love, sympathy, and all the virtues we humans uphold, as repugnant and a weakness. Mortal combatants would do well to think of ALL demons, Deevils and evil supernatural beings as *psychotic sociopaths* never to be completely believed or trusted. And to be prepared when evil turns against them, because it will. It always will.

Masters of the Game

The Minions of Hell, particularly the smarter and more powerful *Greater Demons* and *Deevils,* view life and combat rather like a game of chess. So it should come as no surprise that they regard all subordinates as pawns to be sacrificed in order to win regardless of the cost in lives. Sub-Demons, Lesser Demons, Lesser Deevils, Host and, most certainly mortals, are all expendable cannon fodder to the greater evil that uses them. Even when cunning humans like Shifters believe they are the ones in control of the monsters they have summoned, it is often the supernatural being(s) pulling their strings or waiting for the right moment to make their move and turn the tables.

Greater Demons and Deevils exist in much smaller numbers than those they subjugate. That's good news, because they are much more powerful and almost always armed with intelligence, raw physical power, magic and/or psionic abilities that surpass those of the lesser beings they command. Like the *alpha wolf*, it is the Greater ones who lead and direct the pack. They do so through superior power, cunning and ruthless enforcement of their control. Why fight when you can have your lesser minions do that for you, or better yet, serve your every whim and need?

A strong demon leader is merciless and there are always dire and painful consequences when disobeyed. The offending lesser beings may be beaten, tortured, or slain, but there are fates worse than death. Torment and bullying are built into the psyche of demons and Deevils. Thus, rather than outright kill their minions and henchmen who fail or disappoint them, they prefer to make them suffer. Underperforming underlings are given the worst duties and chores, and endlessly harangued and ridiculed about their mistakes, failures and failings. The browbeating and endless mockery of their peers can be so relentless and terrible that many welcome a quick death rather than face their leader/master and the repercussions that are certain to follow. For many lesser henchmen, the threat of failure is motivation enough to obey and follow orders to the letter. That way, they take no (or little) blame for the mistakes or failings of those above them.

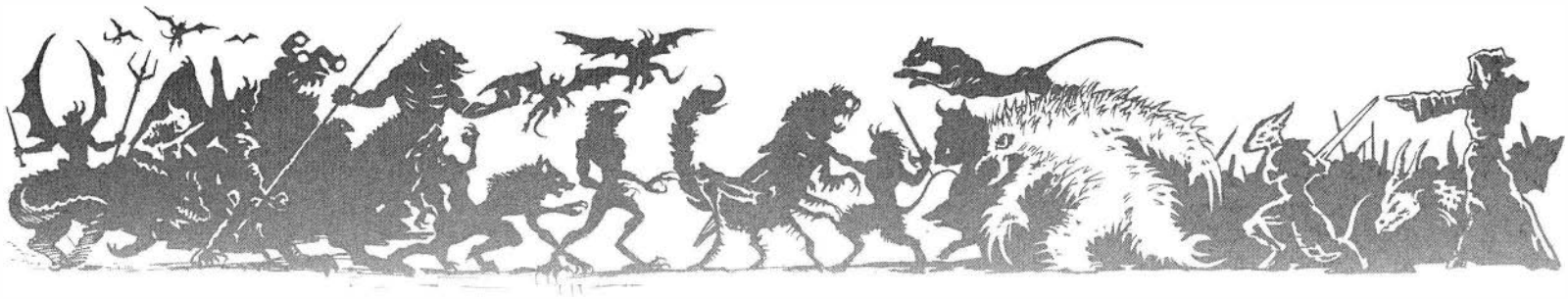
Admonishment is almost always public spectacle done in front of fellow demonic beings, because humiliation is one of the worst punishments demons and Deevils can be forced to endure. When you are immortal it's not fun to be constantly reminded of your cowardice at the Battle of Hell's Gate, or the mistake that gave a human mage the upper hand, or the defeat you suffered at the hands of a Cyber-Knight, or a band of heroes, or Coalition defenders. Defeat by a mere mortal is one of the greatest humiliations and embarrassments a Minion of Hell can face.

Reborn in Hell – Demons and Death

Death has a very different meaning for the Minions of Hell when they are not on the plane of Hades or Dyval. Evil supernatural beings slain outside of Hell do not truly die. Not like mortals. They feel the pain of dying and the sting of failure, but their bodies *discorporate* and fade into nothing from our mortal realm of existence. The damnable life essences of these monsters eventually reform in the pits of Hell where they return to life, whole again. The process may take months to a few decades, but the *immortal* beings reform back in Hell at a later time. The memory of their defeat or humiliation burning inside them as if it were only yesterday, giving fuel to their hatred of mortals and the dark and angry emotions boiling within their breasts.

As a result, the survival instinct of most Minions of Hell is not as strong as it is among humans and D-Bees, making many demons and Deevils seem fearless and behave in a more daring and careless manner with their lives. After all, like a cat with nine lives, they get many chances to prove themselves or to get revenge upon humans as a species. Immortality is probably also what makes them less motivated and more shiftless when it comes to their work and obligations.

The fact that they are *reborn in Hell* contributes to the heartless deployment of demonic legions by their leaders, who seem to show little regard for the fate of their subordinates. Many a Greater Demon and commander is careless with the lives under his charge, and makes swarming attacks and the use of overwhelming numbers a favorite tactic of the demons of Hades, in particular. (Deevils always seem to prefer subterfuge, treachery and manipulation to win their campaigns, though it is often a much longer path to victory.) While this gives demons and Deevils a decided advantage, they still need to be careful, as it can take decades for a rebirth to happen, so carelessness about the loss of troops can deplete demonic forces in quick order, leaving them unable to fight.



It should also be noted that Greater Demons/Deevils and leaders of Hell are not so quick or careless to risk and lose their own lives. Defeat, especially a humiliating one, can drop them back down into the lower ranks where they might never claw their way back on top. Dying and being lost in limbo for even a few months might as well be an eternity when fighting for position within the hierarchy of Hell. The power vacuum left by the slain Greater Demon/Deevil is filled in a matter of days, sometimes hours, so when an ex-Warlord or Regent is reborn, neither his position nor his followers are likely to be waiting for him upon his return. A Demon/Deevil Lord has few if any real friends, so he starts anew, from the bottom of the pack. This is one reason Demon and Deevil Lords, and any who manage to attain any level of real power among the Minions of Hell, fight to hang onto it with such ruthless resolve.

Demonic Psychological Warfare

"Don't trust him. I don't think that's Victor."

"You're talking about disobeying a direct order."

"I know."

"What do you mean, you don't think that's Lieutenant Peterson?"

"I mean, I think he's not Victor. I think it's a damn Deevil disguised as the Lieutenant. You've seen how he's been behaving."

"A damn shapechanger? You really think so?"

"Yeah, a damn Deevil shapechanger."

"What if you're wrong?"

"I'm not."

"You don't know that. You don't. We can't make that leap."

"No, I agree with Jim. No way that's the Lieutenant."

"Okay. Then we kill him. Mist him right now, before he knows we're on to him."

"Wait. Wait! What if it is Victor?"

"You just said there's no way it's him.

"Yeah ... I mean, he's not acting like the Lieutenant, but what if they have him under a magical charm or ... mind control ... or he's possessed. Victor's still in there! They're ... they're just using him ... like ... like a freakin' puppet."

"Tough, I'm icing him."

"What the ...! No! Victor saved my life! Yours too. We can't kill him, unless we're sure it's not really him."

"Then what? Let's say he's mind controlled or possessed instead? How do we undo that? Our last psychic died under suspicious circumstances two days ago, remember?

"He's right, Jake. All our Psi-Bat team got taken out."

"Isn't it weird that our Dog Boys and psychics have gotten picked off one by one."

"Weird? Or deliberate?"

"You don't think that it has been Lieutenant Peterson this whole time, do you?"

"Makes a hell of a lot of sense if it were."

"And why the Lieutenant relieved Captain Ruiz of duty, last night."

"That was ugly."

"But he was so reluctant to do it."

"Yeah, a nice bit of acting, I'd say."

"I bet Captain Ruiz didn't take his own life, either."

"That's a safe bet. I was surprised when it happened."

"Then Victor ... Lieutenant Peterson ..."

"You mean the Deevil disguised as him? Yeah, probably slit his throat this morning an' claimed it to be suicide."

"Oh god, this is too much."

"You don't know that. *We* – don't know if any of this is true. We need to slow down."

"If there's a Deevil shapechanger among us, it ... it could be any of us."

"Guys."

"Yeah. Hadn't thought about that. You're quick to ice the Lieutenant, but weren't you the last one to see Captain Ruiz alive?"

"Kiss my heinny, Jim."

"No, he's right. You were."

"Up yours, too. Now I'm a Deevil?"

"We're not equipped to handle this."

"Damn right we're not, but we need to make some hard choices. We either disobey an order and let this thing know we're on to it, or we kill it."

"Or we kill an innocent man, if we're wrong."

"A damn good man."

"Only if he's human and not a Deevil screwin' with us."

"But we don't know that."

"You deal with this crap, then. I'm out of here."

"You're going AWOL?"

"Didn't say that now, did I? Cripes. You guys make me sick. Just steppin' out to get some air."

"Shouldn't we ... you know, stay together? I mean ... so we know the Deevil doesn't take one of our appearances."

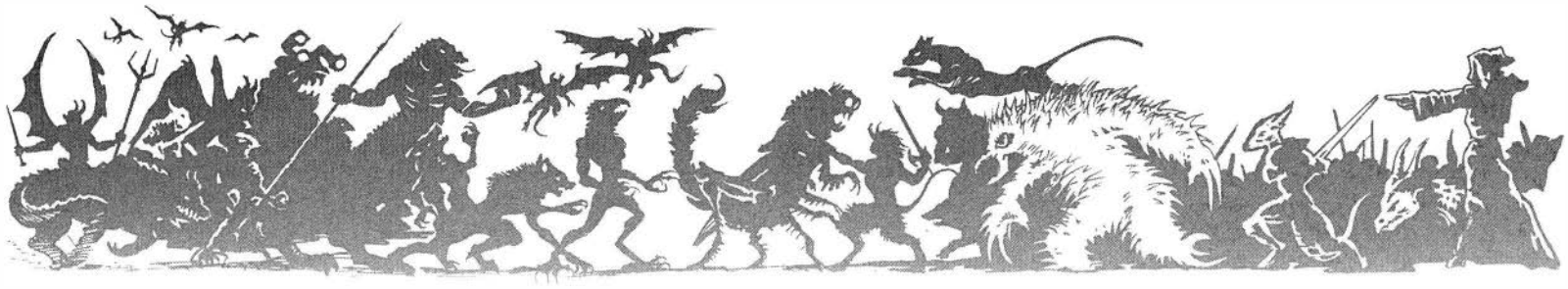
"Yeah, that makes sense."

"Guys, we don't even know if there is a Deevil among us."

"But you said ..."

"That's it, I'm done. You guys hash it out. I'm gettin' some air. An' just so you know, if I see him, or any of you start acting weirder than you already are, I'm shooting an' lettin' the brass figure it all out afterward."

The Coalition States is no slouch when it comes to propaganda or motivating their people, but Deevils, in particular, take psychological warfare to a whole other level. They are expert at turning the psychological knife to make mortals question their superiors, friends and even themselves. Fear, of course, is a key component. And what is more terrifying than having your own ranks infiltrated by supernatural creatures who look like someone you know and trust? Even worse is the



horror of having a teammate, friend or loved one *possessed* – taken over – by a supernatural monster that is literally inside of him and using his or her body to attack, torment and kill you and your teammates. It creates an atmosphere of suspicion and fear that eats away at the human psyche. First nibbling away at the edges, creating doubt and worry before growing into full-scale paranoia and madness.

It is one thing to fight monsters regardless of what they are – Demons, Deevils, Brodkil, dragons, or whatever – but it is another thing entirely to have to wonder about your teammates, question the sanity of your commanding officers, or fight a comrade because he's out of his head, or quite literally possessed by a demon. The psychological toll can be unbearable. Paranoia, if left unchecked, is more than paralyzing, it can destroy an entire brigade from within. Add in some questionable or strange behavior, unexplained disappearances or deaths, and bedlam ensues. Demons and, especially Deevils understand this and use it as mercilessly as a sword to strike down their enemies. And they enjoy it.

Who can you trust?

The demons of Hades and the Deevils of Dyval both have **shapechangers** amongst their legions, but the infernals of Dyval are overflowing with them. Even the Lesser Deevils, Devilkins, and Fiends can take the form of ordinary humans and D-Bees. As masters of lies, seduction and temptation, each is skilled at saying just the right things to get people's minds spiraling down whatever the dark paths their imaginations may carry them. Sow the seeds of distrust and betrayal, and give it a few well placed pokes, and you can provoke human beings and their D-Bee cousins to tear themselves apart.

You catch a glimpse of it in the opening dialogue of this section, and that's just the beginning. You are talking about soldiers far from home, fighting in a hostile enviroment, fighting *actual demons* from Hell – the stuff of nightmares and horror stories that have haunted humans since man crawled out of the trees. Creatures that are cruel and macabre and delight in tormenting mortals. Monsters who love to be "the thing" that goes bump in the night and lurks in the shadows and under the stairs waiting to rip people apart. Despicably cruel creatures who prefer to break humans and bring them to their knees, to watch them sob and plead for mercy before slowly ending their suffering. This is what Coalition Dead Boys, and everyone who dares to oppose the Minions of Hell, must deal with on a regular basis. The straight-up, standing battles? Those are easy compared to being picked off, one by one, by someone or something you can't see or fully comprehend. It is pure horror to see your friends and comrades be turned against you via magic, mind control, illusion or possession. It is this aspect of the Minion War, and the *Deevils'* role in it, that can make the nightfall and quiet moments worse than combat.

Demonic Intimidation

The Minions of Hell love to use terror and intimidation to rattle their enemies. Both demon and Deevil legions display large banners, the corpses of the slain and symbology to intimidate and scare their enemies. It is common practice for the monsters to hang the severed heads and dead bodies of defeated human enemies from pikes, trees, walls, and towers as well as from their Netherbeasts and war steeds. Many wear necklaces and belts made from the skulls, rotting heads, hands, helmets or bones of mortals to instill fear. Others smear the blood of their enemies on their vehicles, war steeds, bodies and faces. They also engage in acts of animalistic savagery such as eating the guts of their victims, tearing or biting off the limbs of their dead victims, holding up the dead body of their last victim in triumph before tossing it aside, or standing on a victim's chest and bellowing in victory. Such gruesome brutality, displays and fanfare are deliberate. Designed to horrify and unnerve their mortal enemies (as well as satisfy their cruel natures). War drums are also used to create an atmosphere of dread and fear, as are attacks upon, and slaughtering of, innocent women and children, and the wounded, and other despicable displays of torture and savagery.

An enemy that is horrified and intimidated fights impaired. They are hesitant and off their game. In war, the slightest edge can mean the difference between life and death. Press your advantage and at some point they may retreat or surrender.

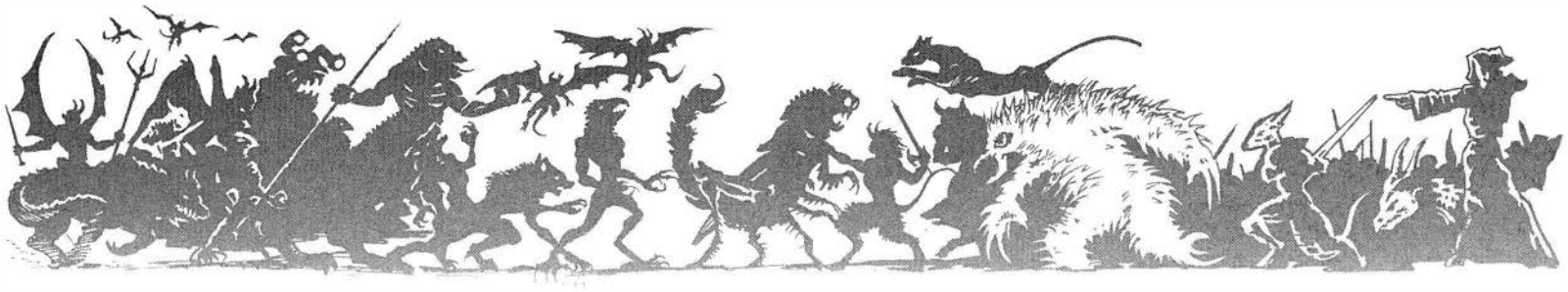
Determining Demonic Intimidation on Mortals:

Roll to save vs Horror Factor 16: Demonic Intimidation affects entire companies, battalions and armies of mortal soldiers. Roll once to save vs Demonic Intimidation without any sort of modifiers; straight, natural roll only (needs a 16 or higher to save). This determines if the larger, non-player forces are fighting at their full capacity or whether morale is low and fear is running high. **Note:** The Game Master can make this roll, but we have found it is more fun, fateful and fair to let one of the player characters roll to see if the mortal non-player characters of the sweeping army are intimidated or not. A failed roll means the mortal troops succumb to Demonic Intimidation!

Penalties for Demonic Intimidation: -2 on Perception Rolls, -1 on initiative (scared and hesitant), -1 to strike, parry, dodge, disarm and pin, and all future Demonic Intimidation rolls or Horror Factor (H.F.) rolls are -2 to save until the end of the battle or 8 hours, whichever comes first.

Duration of Penalties: Until the demonic enemy seems to become obviously unnerved, is pushed back or shows signs of retreat. **Note:** If a key demonic leader is slain, Demonic Intimidation penalties end in an instant.

It is a different story for player characters: Even though the attack force or entire army may have succumbed to Demonic Intimidation, EACH individual *player character* (and NPC in the actual player group, if applicable) gets to roll a separate save vs



Demonic Intimidation with any bonus to save vs Horror Factor added to the saving throw. A successful save means no penalties. A failed roll to save results in the penalties above, but *the duration* is only 10 minutes. At the end of 10 minutes, player characters who were intimidated get to re-roll, but are -2 to save. A successful save means penalties are gone. A failed roll means the penalties remain in place for another 10 minutes. **Note:** If a key demonic leader is slain or the group saves against Demonic Intimidation, the penalties instantly end.

Infiltration and Treachery

A favorite ploy of demonkind is to infiltrate the enemy's ranks and attack from within. This is easy, as both Hell factions have their share of shapechangers, particularly the Deevils of Dyval.

The types of attacks that may follow can vary considerably. A shapechanged demon or Deevil can disguise itself as an innocent and helpless refugee, beautiful woman or man who may seduce their victim to get information or plant seeds of divisiveness, or to entice their lover to undermine his leader, teammates or nation. A disguised supernatural being may engage in actions to frame, hurt and eliminate the actual mortal it is impersonating (imprisoned for crimes he or she did not commit, relieved of command, killed by angry teammates, etc.) or just to create an atmosphere of distrust and chaos. Disguise and infiltration is a way for the enemy to get all manner of strategic information, get close to leaders and key personnel in order to assassinate them, and so on.

Others much more prefer stalking mortals within a camp, base or group, serial killer style, creating as much tension and fear as they can with each subsequent murder. Deevils and demons love it when a group realizes one of them (actually a demon in disguise) is picking them off one by one. This often means they attack and kill *targets of opportunity*, meaning if they come across someone who is alone, injured, and otherwise vulnerable, they may take advantage of the situation and strike. After the kill(s), the monster hides in the shadows or hides in plain sight by resuming its impersonated mortal persona, and waits for the next opportunity to kill or strike fear within the group. In the latter case, that may involve destroying or hiding vital equipment, weapons and other types of sabotage.

Demons and Deevils who can infiltrate a group of mortals probably do so as a lone hunter/saboteur, though it may have teammates or henchmen waiting for its signal to attack. Acts of infiltration, serial-killer type murders/stalkings, and acts of sabotage are usually preferred because demonkind loves to engage in cat and mouse games and battles of wits with mortals. Deevils, Devilkins, Fiends, Succubi and Raksasha are all especially astute at such operations. Of course, the arrogant, Greater Demons known as Raksasha are unleashed in this fashion only for the most important infiltration assignments or when one seeks personal revenge.

These tactics have a chilling psychological impact on humans and D-Bees – the constant threat keeps them on edge, unable to rest properly, and requires constant vigilance. When the demon strikes, it always tries to do so as quietly as possible and without witnesses until it is ready to reveal itself, usually for dramatic effect or a parting shot. Others slink away in the shadows, leaving the mortals to continue to wonder if the culprit is still among them.

The enemy of my enemy is my ally ... until he's not

The Minions of Hell are malevolent manipulators, liars and con artists who have no hesitation or regret in allying with, or tricking, anyone. They love to manipulate and use the enemies of their enemy against them. For demonkind, the end always justifies the means. If that requires cutting a deal with a mortal, or even a past rival or enemy, so be it, provided the payoff is worthwhile. And for these wicked monsters, that payoff could be as simple as their personal satisfaction in hurting or destroying someone.

This makes enemies and rivals of their enemies susceptible and easy targets. Turning a Federation of Magic sorcerer, hate-filled Tolkeen survivor, angry D-Bee or wicked dragon against the Coalition States, for example (and vice versa), is not a difficult task, especially if the demon or Deevil sweetens the arrangement with the promise of power, wealth or revenge.

Of course, whether or not the demon lives up to its end of the deal is a whole other matter. If this first "alliance" is the beginning of a "beautiful friendship" in which the demon believes he can get the mortal(s) to do more to hurt his enemies, then it is certain to live up to its end of the bargain, this time. If a Greater Demon/Deevil or demonic Lord is involved, and these mortal "henchmen" serve him well, this is a relationship that could last years, even a lifetime. However, evil supernatural beings are fickle and volatile creatures and such alliances, partnerships or apparent friendships last only as long as the demon or Deevil has need of that individual or group. As a general rule, when anyone's usefulness comes to an end, all bets are off. Likewise, anger or betray your demonic "partner" and that partnership is likely to end in a sudden and most unpleasant way.

Mortals make such great pawns. Another way for demons and Deevils to use the enemies of their enemy is to provide mortals with information they will want to use against that enemy. This most often applies to the *Minions of Hell's* war against each other. Demons feed strategic information to the Coalition Army and other groups of heroes about Deevil forces; their positions, weaknesses, and opportunities to get the upper hand over them. The Deevils do the same thing to get mortals to attack demons. This is a very effective tactic. Think about it. If you are given information that would enable your group to save lives, sabotage

or destroy a Hell Pit, slay a demonic leader or destroy a Deevil force before it can attack your own army, wouldn't you use it? Would you question where it came from or why? Actually, the reason why is pretty obvious, one side is using you to strike at their enemy in the Minion War. That doesn't change the value or veracity of that data.

Most of the time, strategic information about demon or Deevil forces is slipped to mortals without them ever realizing that one of the Minions of Hell is the source. However, there are other times where the source is obvious. In fact, our heroes in the Minion War may sometimes find themselves blackmailed into helping one side or the other. "Do this for me and I will pull my troops back for X number of days, giving you time to evacuate the villages in the area," or "I'll release X number of prisoners," or "I'll tell you where you can get the medical supplies (or food, etc.) you need to save your men, or the people of that town," and so on. Our heroes can refuse, but there are dire consequences if they do.

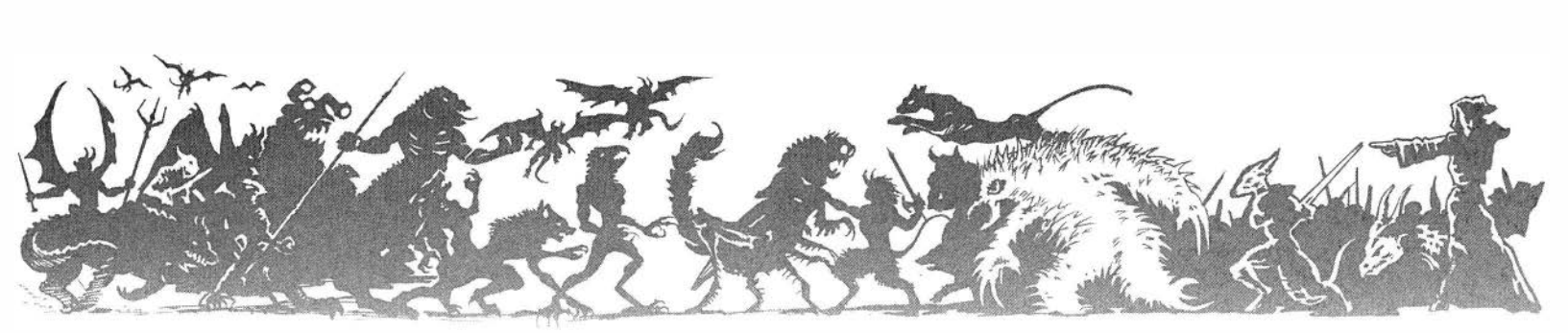
Sometimes such information is provided just so a Greater Demon, Regent or Deevil Overlord can mess with the humans and torment them with the fact humanity is being manipulated out of fun or spite. "The Deevils plan to attack so and so at 0900, at location X. If you move quickly, you can ambush them at Deadman's Pass. You should catch them off guard before they know what hit them." The demon might provide additional information like where the Deevil army's Overlord/General can be found, and/or open a Rift to transport the heroes nearby. Or perhaps offers the name and location of one or more Deevil sympathizers who could be "convinced" to reveal the rest of the info our heroes need to accomplish their mission. Demonkind never likes making things too easy for mortals. They enjoy making people jump through hoops and work for what they get. It is part of "the fun" for these evil beings. Such *help* may also be provided against rivals within their own faction! Meaning a *Demon Hell Lord* might secretly help mortals destroy or undermine the efforts of *a rival Demon Hell Lord*. Such are the games and treachery of demonkind.

Temptation and Lies

Many people hear the word *temptation* and think seduction. Sex and seduction can be involved, but temptation takes many forms.

Deevils and demons know how to prey upon human compassion and exploit trust and hope. Nine out of ten times, the temptation is not about personal gain, power or vengeance, but ways to help others. Cunning and wicked, supernatural tempters often paint an alluring picture about saving lives. At first, demons and Deevils usually make the temptation easy, simple and seemingly harmless. Suggesting nobody will get hurt, or how could things get any worse? "Help yourself." "Save your friend." "Ease the suffering." "Be one of the smart ones. Be a survivor." "It is not for you, it's for them." "How many lives will you save from this one little thing? Can you live with yourself knowing you could have saved them all, but didn't? And for what? Your personal morals or disdain for me? Really?"

Remember, Deevils are patient and expert at starting out small and easy. That first "little thing" might, indeed, be small, inconsequential or justifiable. But it opens up a line of communication and sets a precedent. In short, the insidious and evil being gets its hook into you. Gullible, caring and desperate people are the most vulnerable to such temptation and manipulation. It is afterward



that things start to get bad. Really bad. That "little thing" may have saved an entire company of soldiers or a village from attack or starvation, but maybe it resulted in others being harmed, or it comes back to haunt the individual or that community.

Greater Demons and Deevils understand how to use human virtue against them, and are constantly trying to work them to their advantage. **Telepathy** and reading surface thoughts, or **Empathy** and reading emotions, gives these tormentors and tempters the weapons they need to weave convincing lies and to know exactly which hot buttons to push to tempt or torment others.

"Oh, you're so hungry. Tell me X and I will provide food. No one has to know."

"He doesn't have long to live. I can restore him. Don't you want that?"

"Oh my, look at that water going to waste. And you and your men are so thirsty. I can't imagine what you might give so that they might quench their thirst. It's a terrible thing to see men die of dehydration. Their tongues swollen inside their mouths, choking on dust."

Or ...

"I appreciate your strength. Most men would have cracked under the torture you have endured. You are strong. Brave. I suspect you are willing to die rather than betray your brothers in arms. Admirable. But does that extend to your daughters? Oh, yes, we know about them. Pretty little things. Especially ... Rebecca. She's going to blossom into such a beautiful young woman. A shame if something happens to her. What's that? Leave them alone? I'm sorry, I can't do that unless you cooperate. I think I'll start with your wife. What's her name? Oh yes, Jessica. My how she dotes on those precious little girls. With you missing in action and Jessica dead ... Tell me, what happens to orphans in the Coalition States?

"I doesn't really matter, because your girls will be taken. Yes, taken right out from under the Coalition's nose. Are you really willing to sacrifice them too? For a war you know you can't win?

"Oh, my. Tears and screams can't save them, Lieutenant Hansen. Tell me what I want to know and at least Rebecca and Amy will grow up having one loving parent to care for them."

In the examples above, the demon or Deevil uses the victim's virtuous emotions of love and caring against him. Telepathy is used to pluck a few names out of the ether – Rebecca and Jessica – with which to spin a convincing lie. Empathy as well as observation confirms the monster has hit upon a sensitive subject it can manipulate. The truth is, until that moment, the Deevil didn't know anything about the man it was tormenting. Like a con artist, it uses words and ideas to get a reaction that reveals more about its victim. Information it can manipulate to gather more information that can be used against its victim or coerce him to do what the Deevil wants. Once it had a name and could read the emotional intensity, it knew it had the tools to get what it wants. And failing that, the monster made a human suffer and weep. Always a fun and worthwhile use of one's time.

Knowing humans and D-Bees fear death, magical healing, Restoration and Resurrection are always mechanisms with which to get mortals to betray their comrades. Whether it is to save themselves or another, the promise of life and freedom from pain is an excellent way to get leverage over somebody.

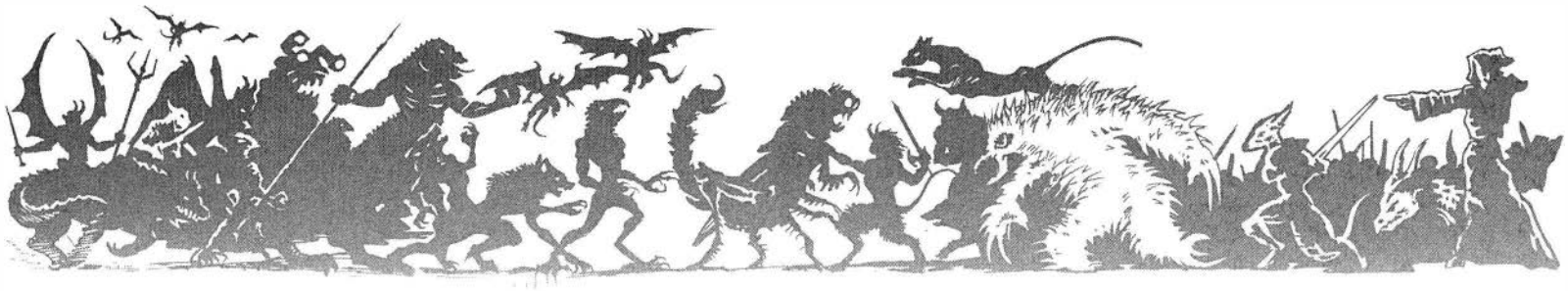
Dirty Deals

Not all temptation is couched in the guise of something good or helpful to others, and not everyone has altruistic motives. Selfishness is just as common, and another emotion Deevils are skilled at nurturing. A poor soul may be tempted to save himself or his family at the price of sacrificing his commanding officer or perhaps his entire platoon. Self-preservation is a great motivator and negotiating chip. "They're all going to die whether you help us or not. At least save yourself."

Revenge is another well used instrument of temptation and the Minions of Hell are quick to offer any number of ways to bring it about – with or without their direct intervention. This can be petty vengeance against a person who did an individual wrong (stole his girl, his job, his position, money, embarrassed him, etc.), or revenge against a leader, cause or nation that is perceived to have failed the individual or done him wrong. Righteous indignation, imposing punishment, and exacting justice are all subsets of the revenge scenario, and evil supernatural beings are quick to play off any of them to get what *they* want. Demons and Deevils also use blackmail, extortion, threats and bribes to cut deals, exact revenge and move things in the direction they desire.

The promise of power is another common source of temptation, whether it is getting the upper hand over an enemy or rival, or securing one's own future. The lust for power is a favorite ploy of evil and may include offering informants and traitors a place in their organization as a valued henchman, independent contractor or even as a lieutenant in Hell's army.

Precious resources, like food, water, medical supplies, weapons, ammunition and other necessities, are all potential sources of reward and punishment, and the stuff of blackmail. Just as watching such precious resources destroyed in plain sight can be a source of torture. Necessities are also used to set traps and ambushes. ("Sir, there are several convoy trucks in the gully, just waiting for someone to claim them." "The base camp must have been overrun, but it looks like the fresh water and medical supplies are untouched." "The supplies have been taken by a small force of demons, but we can easily overwhelm them and take the supplies for ourselves." Or, "A team could slip in under the cover of night and get the vital supplies – food, meds, explosives, vehicles, etc. – we need.") A leader making a deal with the devil to get the food his starving troops need comes with the territory in the Minion War.



Gamesmanship. Playing one enemy off the other is another favorite tactic among the manipulators and tempters of Hell. Rather than fight an enemy directly, themselves, demons and Deevils often try to manipulate other combatants to do their dirty work for them. This is done by various means: leaking information, spreading rumors, compromising another group's position, forcing their hand to action, causing critical personnel or equipment or information to fall into the enemy's hands and to force or entice a group into action against a particular foe.

Remember, this is a war between at least three factions in the Minion War on Rifts Earth: The Minions of Hades, the Minions of Dyval – both of which are at each other's throats – and the people of Earth against both sides. Matters are further complicated by rivalry and division within all three of these parties. *The Coalition's combat forces* have issues and concerns about *D-Bees* and *practitioners of magic*, and vice versa. Issues that often divide their forces against each other, rather than unite them against a common enemy. Issues, prejudice and fear that demons and Deevils can use to turn them against each other. Along those lines, there are questions of loyalty between the *Federation of Magic* and the people of North America. Rumors have it that at least the Lord Dunscon faction of the Federation has met with both sides in the Minion War for reasons unknown. There are also other powerful players in this political war-torn landscape that have yet to make their stand known, including Archie Three, the Republicans, and the Splugorth of Atlantis, as well as many, many additional, smaller factions, each with their own agenda and point of view within the great scope of the Minion War. Each a potential chess piece for demons and Deevils to manipulate and put into play against their despised enemy or other players in the war.

While this can work to the advantage of the Heroes of Humanity, it is always tricky business dealing with supernatural evil. If you are smart, you have to assume that any favors coming from the Minions of Hades or Dyval come with ulterior motives, hidden agendas and unseen consequences. Of which one of the most immediate consequences could be letting yourself become a pawn or dupe in a bigger scheme. And there's the rub. You know demons and Deevils are by nature wicked, deceptive and treacherous, and that you should NEVER trust them. But how do you ignore intelligence or a hot tip that could save lives or crush a demon/Deevil army? This is a hard choice especially when you know a demon or Deevil has either openly provided the information for a way to succeed in a mission objective, or is the one who has quietly set everything in motion from behind the scenes. Do you take the win? Save lives and hurt one of the demonic enemies? By anyone's standards this is a winning proposition, but at the same time you know it must help the enemy side in the Minion War. Something you don't want to do. And even if you believe you have the upper hand, how can you know if the help is coming out of spite or revenge? How do you know it won't have lasting, dangerous repercussions? How can you be sure you aren't being played as a dupe? A pawn in a bigger game? You can't. Most people take the win and a chance to save lives and do some good, knowing full well it may be a small win or lead to something terrible. This is one of the silent horrors of the Minion War and dealing with supernatural evil.

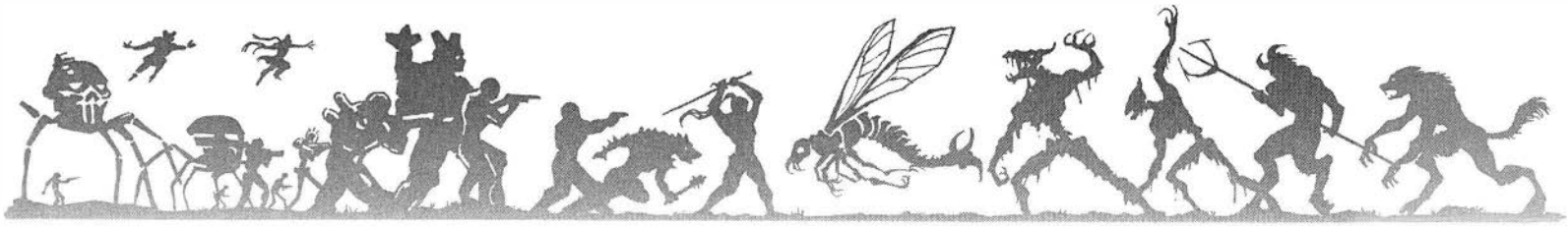
Game Master Note: Play this to hilt. Be smart with it, but have fun. Demon or Deevil interventions, or even both sides using our heroes (the player characters) as a weapon of retaliation against each other, is a lot of fun and intrigue. You can even have demons/Deevils arrive like the proverbial cavalry to save them from certain capture or destruction. Why would demons/Deevils do it? **One,** to hurt a hated rival, whether it's out of pure spite, hatred, or a bigger plan. **Two,** as an inroad to winning the characters' trust and thus make the first step of turning them into their informants, partners, pawns, stooges or potential henchmen. **Three,** to move forward or put into place their agenda for something bigger or personal. **Four,** to make contact with a new group of "heroes" they can monitor and try to manipulate or destroy. **Five**, as a first step in tormenting and driving mortals mad; because it's fun and they too are the enemy. **Six,** to embarrass or put an arrogant enemy/rival in their place. **Seven,** just to mess with someone. Anyone. Be it their Hell-spawned enemy, a disliked leader or rival, a particular nation or species, or even the player character(s) themselves. Such is the wicked and mercurial nature of supernatural evil, and it is all yours to use as you deem fit. Enjoy.

Oh, and the demonic beings are expert at concealing any of those motives. To make it all seem like our heroes have earned the information or success on their own, or tricked a Minion of Hell into providing the information or help, etc. Evil seldom steps up to take a bow until it believes it is too late. No, evil supernatural beings like to push, prod and pull the strings from the shadows.

Torture

Torture can be used to punish, extract information and force people to do things to stop their suffering. Not everyone can be strong. We all like to think we would be brave and courageous under torture. That we would never break. But torture is used, because when done well, it can be effective. And when it comes to the Minions of Hell, the sadistic torturers enjoy their work. The demons of Hades and Deevils of Dyval enjoy inflicting pain and suffering, and they are very good at it.

It should be noted that in the hands of supernatural evil, Healing and Resurrection can be used in the most cruel manner. A victim can be tortured endlessly if he or she is regularly healed. A victim may beg for death, only to be denied it time and time again until he breaks. And should he find release in death, that blessing, too, can be taken away by having a powerful demon/Deevil lord or spell casting underling perform Resurrection on the individual so he can suffer all the more.



CS Strategies & Tactics

By Kevin Siembieda, Carl Gleba and Matthew Clements

Fighting Demons and Supernatural Monsters

Even before the formation of the Coalition, the people who would become citizens of the Coalition States had years of experience fighting supernatural creatures from beyond the Rifts. However, those battles were usually with small bands of monsters with a few to a dozen demons. A large group was seldom more than a few dozen demonic beings, or a mixed gang of D-Bees and monsters led by a few or even several dozen supernatural beings. The most common modern day encounters with a small group of supernatural beings are those controlled by a human or D-Bee Shifter or Witch. A mortal, human or D-Bee, who has summoned or made alliances with the creatures and believes it is they who serve him, not the other way around. The Coalition learned very quickly that supernatural beings do not like being placed under the control of mortals, so slaying the controller would release them and the creatures would flee. Fighting monsters on the loose is a different matter, but again, in most cases, the Coalition troops would face a few dozen, maybe up to a hundred. Not legions of them. Demon plagues, as they are known, were thankfully a thing of the past.

Tactics for fighting "demons" changed during the **Siege on Tolkeen**. Yes, there were many mortals in control, but Tolkeen mages went so far as to make deals and pacts with dark forces that added thousands of supernatural beings such as *Daemonix, Brodkil,* and others to their fighting forces. Evil supernatural creatures that, for the most part, followed the orders of mortals but were not under their thrall. These creatures looked to strong leaders, mortal or otherwise, and used weight of numbers and their savage ferocity with deadly effectiveness. Still, even when fighting in large numbers, without a strong leader to motivate and direct them, most would succumb to their chaotic natures. Some would fight to the death, while others quickly abandoned the battle if they felt they were being overwhelmed or when other opportunities arose.

Though the demon hordes unleashed during the **Siege on Tolkeen** was the largest conflict with demons in recent memory, the CS has had its share of large-scale clashes with the supernatural. People forget the Coalition Army has the **Devil's Gate** (St. Louis Archway Rift) under complete lockdown where many an unpublicized battle with demons and monsters from beyond the Rifts have taken place. Likewise, the ruins of Chicago, though mostly tamed and under control now, have been the sight of many "Demonic Class Incidents," classified as Top Secret by the Coalition brass.

The strategies and tactics below have been used for decades before *Major Dominic Larsen* (father to the now infamous Colonel Larsen of Larsen's Brigade) finally drafted them in an official training manual around 63 P.A. It would later become famous as the **New Art of War, Fighting the Inhuman and Supernatural**, among Coalition officer graduates. It has been updated since the War on Tolkeen and the voluminous files shared by Lazlo are now an official appendix to the manual.

In short, CS troops know how to deal with demonic beings on a small and large scale. But it is never easy. And NEVER has the CS faced anything on the scale of the Minion War. Not even close. Such demon plagues go back to the shadowy past of the Two Hundred Year Dark Age.

Demon Vulnerabilities

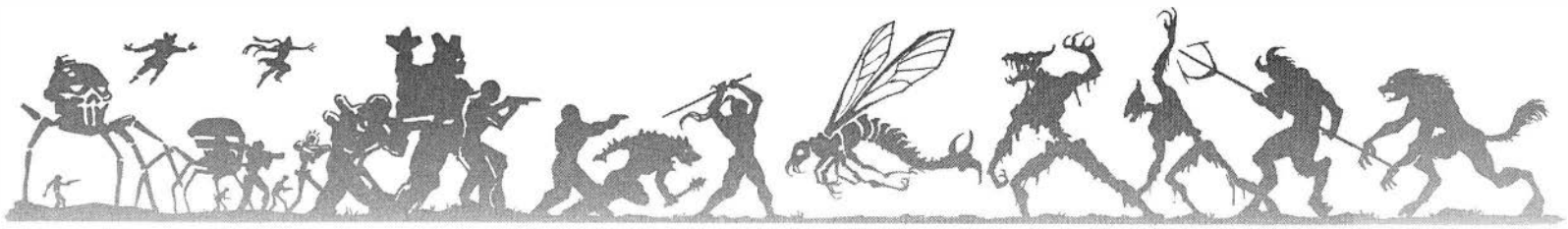
Compiled and summarized by Kevin Siembieda and Alex Marciniszyn

The Coalition Army and its allies has all this information. What the CS didn't already know, was filled in by the data files unleashed by the magic nation of Lazlo.

Vulnerabilities of the Sub-Demons of Hades

Vulnerabilities Common to ALL Gargoyles: The following bullet point vulnerabilities apply to *all* species of Gargoyle Sub-Demons. Listed under specific sub-Demons are additional weaknesses and flaws.

- *Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of stone do damage equal to M.D.!* Meaning a stone axe that does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage does the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to all species of Gargoyles; a rock the size of a boulder or brick does 1D4 M.D. to Gargoyles if used in hand to hand combat, but only 1 M.D. when thrown. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of stone do double damage.) The same holds true of *silver* and *silver-plated* weapons.
- *Holy Weapons* and *Demon Slayer weapons* inflict double damage.
- *Rune Weapons and other magic weapons* and *spells* inflict their usual damage.
- *Most Mega-Damage weapons/guns/explosives do full M.D.*; except heat/plasma based weapons – they do no damage (Gargoyles are impervious to fire and heat). However, magic fire and fire spells do full damage.



- *Psionic/psychic powers* and attacks usually have full effect and inflict full damage unless noted otherwise.

Note: The Minions of Hades are all described in detail, as is the Hades plane of Hell, in **Dimension Book 10: Hades.**

Gargoylite: As above, plus the following: Underestimate their opponents. Greed can be used to lure them into traps, betraying their master or taking foolish risks.

Gargoyles: As above, plus the following: Soldiers that lack military expertise, resourcefulness and a full understanding of strategies and tactics. Without a strong leader, they break ranks, and are easily divided, pushed back or defeated.

Gurgoyle: As above, plus the following: Soldiers that lack military expertise, resourcefulness and a full understanding of strategies and tactics. Without a strong, more powerful leader, they will break ranks, and are easily divided, pushed back or defeated.

Gargoyle Mage: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following. The rarest of the Gargoyle species, there is only one in 20,000 that is a Gargoyle Mage, sometimes two. As such, they tend to be kept out of combat to serve Gargoyle High Lords/Kings as their second-in-commands, counsel to the king, advisors and confidants. Most are subservient to their Gargoyle High Lord, but often believe themselves to be smarter and more cunning than their masters, and sometimes pull the strings of puppet kings. Of course, Gargoyle Mages also think they are more cunning than any mere mortal, whom they enjoy using as pawns and henchmen. This sense of superiority gives the Gargoyle Mages a propensity for grandstanding, underestimating mortals and taking foolish risks. They are also likely to sacrifice their subordinates to preserve their own life, and most lesser Gargoyles, Gurgoyles, and Gargoylites consider Mages to be more important and necessary than a Gargoyle Lord, often sacrificing their own lives so that a Gargoyle Mage can escape and continue to live.

Gargoyle Lord: The bullet point vulnerabilities, as above, and the following. Gargoyle Lords are the leaders and warrior chiefs of their Gargoyle tribe/flock. There is one Gargoyle Lord for every one hundred Gargoyles and one High Lord/Prince/King/Flock Leader in every 2D4x1000. Lords are larger and more powerful than the average Gargoyle, and are more confident, demanding and forceful than the rest. This can get them into trouble as many feel they have something to prove and are quick to fight and take risks.

Gargoyle Lords are extremely jealous and resentful of other demons, including Lesser Demons, because even the Lesser Ones are treated with more respect than a Gargoyle Lord by the rest of the demon hordes. As the "lowest of the low," many Gargoyle Lords are open to the temptation of taking advantage of their superiors, disobeying or twisting the orders that come from Lesser and Greater Demons, and even betraying their cruel "demon masters" when they think they can get away with it. May work with or take bribes from mortals. Like all demons, they underestimate mortal opponents.

Vulnerabilities of Lesser Demons

Vulnerabilities Common to ALL Lesser Demons: The following bullet point vulnerabilities apply to *all* species of Hades Demons. Listed under specific demons are additional weaknesses and flaws.

- *Holy Weapons* and *Demon Slayer weapons* inflict double damage.
- *Rune Weapons, Millennium Tree and other magic weapons* and *spells* inflict their usual damage, unless noted otherwise.
- *Most Mega-Damage weapons/guns/explosives/energy blasts do full M.D.*; except heat/plasma based weapons -- they do no damage. (The demons of Hades are impervious to fire and heat.) However, magic fire and fire spells do full damage to demons, unless noted otherwise.
- *Psionic/psychic powers* and attacks usually have full effect and inflict full damage unless noted otherwise.

Demon Bat: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Sunlight kills the Demon Bat, doing 2D6 M.D. (S.D.C.) per melee round. Blind in even moderate light; sees in twilight and darkness only. Penalties for fighting blind in artificial light or an overcast day are half the usual due to the Demon Bat's other senses, but that is still -5 to strike, parry, dodge, disarm, etc. In bright sunlight the full, -10 blinded penalty applies as the sunlight is much too bright and painful, inflicting damage every melee round. **Note:** Damage caused by sunlight (yes, this includes the magic spell, Globe of Daylight) can NOT be healed via Bio-Regeneration until the Demon Bat can find a dark place to hide out of the sunlight.

No resistance to magic or psionics; no saving throw bonuses other than physical attribute bonuses, if any.

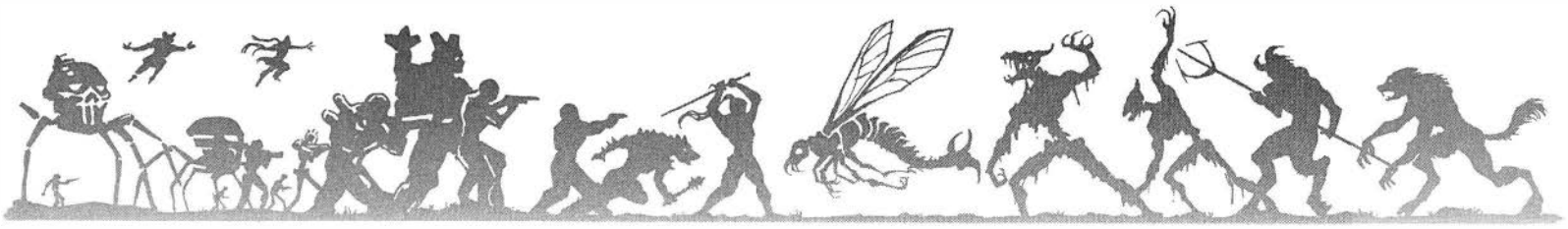
Holy water inflicts 1D4 M.D. (or 1D6 S.D.C. in those settings) per eight ounce (0.24 liter) vial/splash; it burns like acid.

Cannot swim and avoids water.

Demon Fly: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Cold and Ice: Cold and ice-based magic spells and magic weapons inflict double damage. A simple S.D.C. snowball does 1D4 M.D. Demon Flies become sluggish in winter conditions and temperatures at freezing (32 F/0 C) or below; reduce Spd, the number of attacks per melee and all bonuses by half (round down) in temps at or below freezing.

Mirrors/Reflection – cannot look at own image! A Demon Fly cannot look at its own image. If it sees its reflection in a mirror or polished reflective surface, the Demon Fly *turns into a pillar of salt!* **Note:** If it is turned into salt in any dimension outside of Hades, its death sends the salt pillar of the Demon Fly to Hades, where it must remain discorporated for 4D4 years. The only way



it can be restored sooner is if every grain of salt is collected and made whole via a Restoration spell.

Notes About Demon Flies and Reflective Surfaces: Must be a *true mirror* or highly polished and reflective, mirror-like surface. A reflective surface that creates a distorted, unclear or wavy image like what you see in water, a window or the chrome surface of a **Glitter Boy**, scares the monsters (*Horror Factor 18!)* and sends it flying away in terror (at least 1D4x1000 feet/305 to 1,219 m away), but does NOT turn it into salt. When fighting Glitter Boys (or any chromium Free Quebec or Republican power armor), the Demon Fly does so with half its usual number of attacks and combat bonuses even if it successfully saves vs Horror Factor 18, because it keeps catching glimpses of its ugly visage.

Holy water inflicts 1D4 M.D. (or 1D6 S.D.C. in those settings) per eight ounce (0.24 liter) vial/splash; it burns like acid.

Cannot swim and avoids water.

Alu Demon Hound: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following. *S.D.C. weapons made of stone or silver (or silver-plated) do damage equal to M.D.!* Meaning a stone axe or silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Alu; a rock the size of a grapefruit or brick does 1D4 M.D. in hand to hand combat, but only 1 M.D. when thrown. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of stone or silver do double damage.)

Aquatic: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following. *S.D.C. weapons made of silver or silver-plated do damage equal to M.D.!* Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Aquatic. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.)

M.D. and magic fire and heat inflict double damage.

Aquatics can survive on dry land indefinitely, but its number of attacks, speed and bonuses are all reduced by half on dry land.

Banshee (ethereal by nature): Impervious to physical weapons and attacks.

Holy Weapons, Rune Weapons, magic items, spells and many psionic attacks all do full damage, including Mind Bolt, Psi-Sword and Telekinesis "force" attacks (punch, push, hold, etc.). Pyrokinesis/psionic fire and Hydrokinesis and Electrokinesis do no damage to a Banshee, nor do objects thrown at it via Telekinesis.

Techno-Wizard weapons that release magic energy blasts and TK rounds (Telekinetic) do full damage. Likewise, psionic Telekinesis attacks do full damage and the *Exorcism* psi-ability and *Exorcism spell* also work on the creature to make it leave the area.

Demon Slayer weapons and those made from the wood of a Millennium Tree inflict double damage.

Other ethereal beings, including *Astral Travelers,* can attack and hurt the Banshee, but her attacks also hurt them. Physical attacks, bullets, and explosives do NOT hurt this ghostlike demon.

Couril (Demon Faerie): The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following. **Stat Correction for D.B. 10: Hades:** *Size* for this Faerie-like demon should be 1.5 to 2 feet (0.45 to 0.6 m) tall; 10 pounds (4.5 kg).

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of wood do damage equal to M.D.! Meaning a wooden club or baseball bat, or wood arrow (without an arrowhead, only a sharpened wooden tip) that normally does 1D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 1D6 M.D. to the Couril. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of wood do double damage.)

Millennium Tree Wood or Bark Weapons inflict triple damage.

Note About Wood Weapons: The wood can be from any type of tree, but must have some girth and weight to it, equal to a club, knife, sword, staff, or spear. Arrows cannot have an arrowhead made of any substance other than wood or it bounces off with no damage. Small or thin branches snap like dry twigs and do no damage.

Ghouls & Nasu: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of bone or *silver (or silver-plated) do damage equal to M.D.!* Meaning a bone knife or club, or silver-plated sword that normally does 1D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 1D6 M.D. to the Ghoul or Nasu. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of bone or silver do double damage.) **Note About Bones:** The bone can be that of an animal or humanoid, but must have some girth and weight to it, like a femur or leg bone, or jawbone of a large animal. Small bones like vertebrae do no damage and thin bones snap like dry twigs and do no damage. Clubs lined with teeth count as bone weapons. Claws do not.

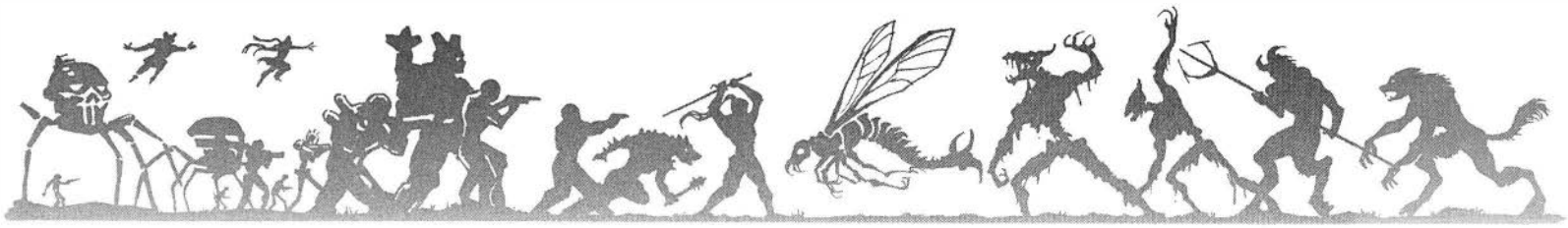
Labassu Lost Souls: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of silver or silver-plated weapons do damage equal to M.D. even when it is in ethereal form! Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Labassu. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.)

Must become tangible to attack! Making it vulnerable. The Labassu's natural form is that of a spectre made of mist. In mist form, physical and energy attacks (bullets, lasers, punches, etc.) do no damage, but magic spells and magic weapons do half damage to it even as a mist. HOWEVER, the Labassu must, itself, become partially tangible to attack mortals, and even to use its psionics. When even only tangible in part, the ghostlike Labassu becomes open and vulnerable to all forms of attack, bullets, energy blasts, magic spells, psionics, magic weapons, etc., including circles and spells, and exorcism, all of which inflict full effect and damage.

Lasae (Insect-like): The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of silver or silver-plated weapons do damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts



the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Lasae. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.) Otherwise, any M.D. attack does full damage.

Surprise turnabout. Lasae love to fight, torture and play cat and mouse games with their prey, which can leave them vulnerable and caught by surprise if the tables suddenly turn. They also have a habit of fighting to the death when enraged.

Mares or Nightmares (Demon Hag):

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of silver or silver-plated weapons do DOUBLE damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 4D6 M.D. to the Mare. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.)

Rune Weapons, Millennium Tree and Holy Weapons also do double damage.

Otherwise, any M.D. attack does full damage.

Jealousy. Nightmares are jealous of the more powerful *Night Owl* and *Raksasha* Greater Demons, which can sometimes be used to distract her or make her angry and careless. However, despite this jealousy, Mares remain grudgingly loyal and obedient to their superiors, so any lapse in judgement will be temporary, and they seldom betray their demonic masters or do anything to hurt the causes of Hades.

Shedim: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of silver or silver-plated weapons do damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Shedim. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.) Otherwise, any M.D. attack does full damage.

Bloodlust. Shedim love to fight and often get lost in bloodlust, making them reluctant to give up even against impossible odds, which often spells their doom; fight to the death unless a strong leader commands otherwise.

Succubus & Incubus: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of silver or silver-plated weapons do damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the demon. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.) Otherwise, any M.D. attack does full damage.

Underestimate opponents, especially humans and mortals.

Cannot impersonate a specific person.

Taursis, one of the Fallen, Demon Outcasts: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Intense aggression, bloodlust and anger cause this demon to fight in a reckless manner, take risks, accept challenges when they should not, and fight to the death when cornered, unless otherwise subdued. Taursis hate to retreat, and without a strong leader, may try to tackle impossible odds and fight to the death.

Music puts them to sleep. Soothing, pleasant sounding instrumental music puts Taursis to sleep in 1D4+1 melee rounds, but the monster gets a saving throw. *A roll of 15 or higher* must be made once per every five minutes of music to make sure the person playing the instrument does not hit a sour note and wake the monster up. The Taursis stays asleep until the music stops, there is a sour note, squeal, static or break in the music, or physically shaken awake. **Note:** On Rifts Earth, recorded music projected through speakers can have the same effect. Any Taursis jostled awake or awoken by a loud noise/explosion, while the music still plays, continues to feel drowsy and suffers the following penalties: -2 on Perception Rolls and initiative, -1 to strike, parry, and dodge. Every five minutes of continually playing pleasant music, even in combat (unless the clash of combat, gunfire and missiles is so loud the music cannot be heard clearly), means the Taursis must roll to save (15 or higher) to shake off the penalties.

When the music stops, the slumbering demon remains asleep for 2D4 melee rounds unless awakened by physical contact or loud noise.

Not applicable if already locked in combat or enraged before the music is played; automatic save.

It is interesting to note that Taursis do not believe they have this sleep vulnerability at all, and will gut any lesser being who claims otherwise. Thus, they always fall prey to this tactic to undermine them.

A successful save means a clear head and no penalties apply.

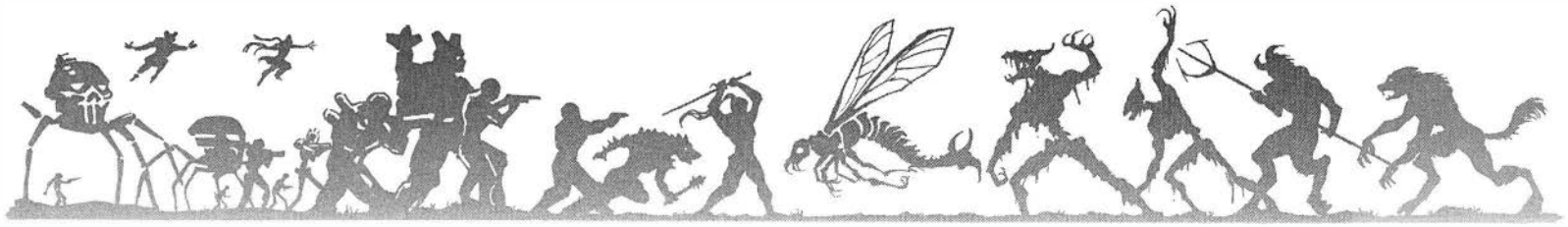
Vulnerabilities of Greater Demons

Vulnerabilities Common to ALL Greater Demons: The following bullet point vulnerabilities apply to *all* species of Hades Demons. Listed under specific demons are additional weaknesses and flaws.

- *Holy Weapons* and *Demon Slayer weapons* inflict double damage.
- *Rune Weapons, Millennium Tree and other magic weapons* and *spells* inflict their usual damage unless noted otherwise.
- *Most Mega-Damage weapons/guns/explosives/energy blasts do full M.D.*; except heat/plasma based weapons – they do no damage to most Greater Demons. (The majority of Greater Demons are impervious to fire and heat, but not all.) Magic fire and fire spells do full damage to the demons unless noted otherwise.
- *Psionic/psychic powers* and attacks usually have full effect and inflict full damage unless noted otherwise.

Baal-Rog: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of silver or silver-plated weapons do damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Baal-Rog. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.) Otherwise, any M.D. attack, spell or psionic power does full damage.



Tend to underestimate opponents, especially humans.

Brek-Shall (special): The Brek-Shall are natural killing machines that love to fight and kill.

Vulnerable to cold and ice. All bonuses are reduced by half in cool temperatures below 70 degrees Fahrenheit (21 Celsius), except during berserker rage (no penalties), but cold cuts the duration of the berserker rage by half. Cold-based spells, magic weapons and weapons made of ice inflict double damage; even an ordinary S.D.C. ice club, dagger or spear does 1D4 M.D. to the Brek-Shall.

Salt and garlic are poison. If salt or garlic are consumed, each serving does 1D4x10 M.D. (Or 10D4x10 points of damage direct to Hit Points in S.D.C. settings. An arrow coated with garlic or salt, via honey or other sticky substance to hold the salt, on a successful strike, automatically penetrates the monster's A.R. and does 4D6 damage.) In Mega-Damage settings, like Rifts Earth, an arrow covered in salt or garlic does 2D6 M.D. **Note:** Brek-Shall cannot be stopped by a line of salt or trapped inside a circle of salt, like the Soul Catcher. The Brek-Shall just steps over it.

Magic weapons, spells, psionic attacks and M.D. energy weapons, rail gun rounds, explosives, etc., do full damage. Silver weapons have no effect on this demon.

The Four Demon Beetles: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of silver or silver-plated weapons do damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Demon Beetles. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.) Otherwise, any M.D. attack, spell or psionic power does full damage, except fire, plasma and heat-based weapons (impervious to M.D. fire).

Search for mayhem. The four Demon Beetles are on par with a Demon Lord, but are a force unto themselves. One or more may appear on Rifts Earth, because of the chaos of the Minion War and because they know what control over the Rifts could mean for Hades. The Demon Beetles' hatred of mortals and Deevils, with plenty of both to torment and destroy, is another incentive for coming to Earth. Their desire for chaos and destruction draw Demon Beetles out of the darkness to participate in the fun, leaving themselves vulnerable to attack.

Always underestimate mortals.

Holy Weapons, Demon Slayer weapons and Millennium Tree weapons and wands do double damage.

Death Demon – one of the Fallen: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of silver or silver-plated weapons do damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Death Demon. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.) Otherwise, any M.D. attack does full damage.

Underestimates mortals, especially humans.

Holy Weapons and Demon Slaying weapons inflict double damage.

Holy water does 2D6 M.D. per dose (goes direct to Hit Points in S.D.C. worlds).

Exposure to sunlight weakens the Death Demon. Reduces the number of attacks per melee, combat bonuses, speed and natural abilities by half.

Insane. Roll to determine 1D4 Phobias, one Psychosis, and two Random Insanities, plus one Obsession for every two levels of experience.

Demon Locust (Psychic & Magic): The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of silver or silver-plated weapons do damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Demon Locust. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.) Otherwise, any M.D. attack, spell or psionic power does full damage.

Underestimates opponents, especially humans, and is unnerved and angered when mortals get the upper hand on it. Enjoys battles of wits and cunning, but is treacherous in the extreme.

Gallu, the Demon Bull: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of silver or silver-plated weapons do damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Gallu Bull. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.) Otherwise, any M.D. attack, spell or psionic power does full damage.

Do not usually underestimate humans and other opponents, but pride and stubbornness may prevent them from accepting defeat.

Aggression and stubbornness sometimes get the best of them, causing them to take on forces that outnumber them or are more than they can handle. May fight to the death when angered or their reputation is at stake, even if retreat is an option.

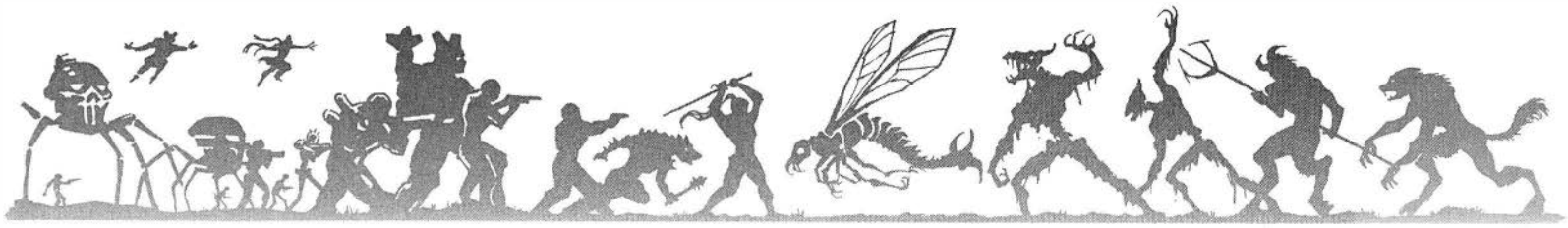
Vulnerable to magic spells, magic weapons and psionics (normal damage).

Jinn (Special): Impervious to most normal weapons, including S.D.C. and Mega-Damage weapons! M.D. explosives, energy blasts, rail gun rounds, bullets, etc., do NO damage.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of silver or silver-plated weapons do damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Jinn. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.)

Other M.D. attacks, spells or psionic powers do full damage, as do attacks (bites, claws, breath weapons, etc.) from creatures of magic like dragons, and supernatural creatures like their fellow demons and Deevils.

Holy Weapons and weapons made from the wood of a *Millennium Tree* do double damage.



Magic weapons, spells and psionic attacks do their normal damage.

Always underestimate opponents, especially humans, and overestimates its own, formidable abilities.

Half Strength in Daytime. All bonuses and attacks per melee are reduced by half during the daytime (round down). Even if the Jinn is in a cave or dark basement during daytime, its abilities are reduced, because the Jinn are creatures of darkness.

Flattery. All Jinn have a massive ego and may be distracted, manipulated, and tricked with flattery, praise and faux worship. For example, when a human convincingly states it would be his greatest honor to serve a mighty Jinn, the demon is likely to believe him and think, "Of course it is." A cunning enemy might also create dissension between a Jinn and other Greater Demons if the monster can be convinced they don't appreciate it, think it a fool, and so on.

Trapping a Jinn inside a bottle (as mist). If it can be tricked to turn into mist and enter a container that can be sealed airtight, and stay inside long enough that the container can be sealed inside, a Jinn can be trapped. And a trapped Jinn is completely powerless to hurt others until the container is opened and it is released. A trapped Jinn can buy its freedom by performing three wishes (see **Dimension Book 10: Hades,** page 73 for details), but the demon always tries to pervert and alter all wish requests, so beware.

Curse of the Jinn. Anybody who captures a Jinn or saves its life, or provides it with vital aid, becomes the creature's master. It is bound to its master until it grants the three wishes. A captured/enslaved Jinn may be forced to serve its master, but it can be surly and mock him/her as much as it likes. The Jinn may offer "assistance," but assistance is likely to lead to treachery or death for the person who has it trapped. "Do you *wish* for my assistance, master?" If the master is tricked or dies, the Jinn is free. Jinn hate calling anyone "master," even for a short time. (See **Dimension Book 10: Hades,** page 73 for details about the wish and curse.)

Magot (Petrification Eye Beams): The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of silver or silver-plated weapons do damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Magot. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.) Otherwise, any M.D. attack, spell or psionic power does full damage, except fire, plasma and heat-based weapons (impervious to M.D. fire).

Hates mortals and tends to underestimate them in conflict, and is a bossy, belligerent, threatening bully to captives, slaves and underlings.

Aggression and anger often get the better of Magots, causing them to take on forces that outnumber them. When enraged or cornered, a Magot is likely to fight to the death. Though dull-witted, Magots are cunning, massive brutes that use their three petrification eyes to incapacitate the living and take combatants out of the picture quickly, turning them to stone.

Night Owl (Psychic Powers): The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Fire resistant (not impervious), so M.D. fire, plasma and magic fire or heat attacks do half damage.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of silver or silver-plated weapons do damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Night Owl. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do *triple damage*.) Otherwise, any M.D. attack, spell or psionic power does full damage; except fire, plasma and heat-based weapons which do half damage.

Chess Master. Night Owls see mortals – the imaginative and resourceful humans in particular – as pawns and tools to be used and manipulated to fulfill their schemes and agendas. However, they still tend to underestimate people when it comes to such manipulation and chicanery.

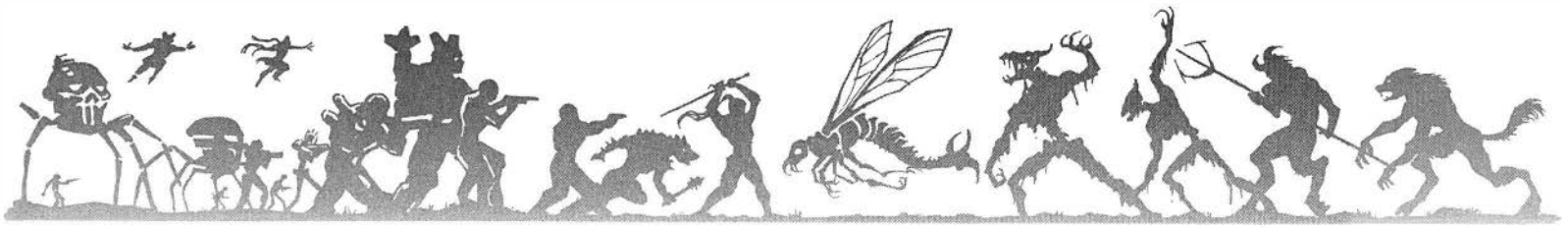
Overreaching/Too Ambitious. Night Owls are so cunning, clever and sneaky that they often overreach with schemes and plots that are too complex with too many variables and too many henchmen to execute the plan smoothly. As a result, many Night Owl schemes go awry and take unexpected twists and turns that may unspool completely. The main reason being that when a Night Owl wants something bad enough, it overestimates its own cleverness as well as the capabilities of its henchmen. It is almost as if because the demon wants it to work so badly, that the plan must succeed through sheer force of will or desire. Except things do not work that way. The reality is the plan is often so "clever and complex" its underlings cannot execute every phase with the necessary precision, so it fails. Night Owls never seem to learn from this. In part, because so many of their schemes (50/50) succeed, and they only focus on success.

Raksasha (Psychic Illusions): The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of silver or silver-plated weapons do damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Raksasha. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.) Otherwise, any M.D. attack, spell or psionic power does full damage, except fire, plasma and heat-based weapons which do half damage (resistant to M.D. fire).

Fire resistant (not impervious), so M.D. fire, plasma and magic fire or heat attacks do half damage.

Haughty Superiority. A Raksasha's sense of superiority knows no bounds. Most believe themselves to be smarter, more capable, suave and cool than anyone else, including fellow Greater Demons and even Demon Lords. They positively drip with snide arrogance. (Think of almost any *Alan Rickman* movie character from Die Hard to the Harry Potter movies.) As a result, they are *resented and disliked* by many of their own demonic minions and underlings, except those who kiss their boots to get ahead. This can be used against the Raksasha as there is almost always someone (or a lot of someones) so resentful that they'll do things



to undermine and discredit their master out of spite or revenge. Likewise, rivals and enemies are quick to join forces with the Raksasha's enemies if only to make their rival look bad, let alone for a chance to get a leg up on one. This supreme arrogance also causes Raksasha to regularly underestimate most enemies, including rival demons. After all, isn't the Raksasha the smartest guy in the room?

Use of humans. It may seem strange to list the Raksasha's admiration and fondness of humans as a vulnerability, but it is not. The tiger-demons like to use humans as henchmen, lackeys and pawns above all other mortals, due to human ingenuity and determination. At the same time, Raksasha still underestimate humans. They never believe that humans can figure out what they are really up to, or are able to turn the tables on them, or work against them, or foil one of their schemes. And that makes them vulnerable to the very human ingenuity, strength of will and treachery they so admire.

Soul Catchers: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of silver or silver-plated weapons do damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Soul Catcher. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.) Otherwise, any M.D. attack does full damage.

Tends to underestimate opponents, especially humans.

Rune Weapons inflict double damage and the Soul Catcher is -3 to save against Rune weapon attacks from psionics, magic, etc.

Holy Weapons, Demon Slayer and Millennium Tree weapons inflict double damage.

Salt is poison and a barrier. If salt is ingested, it does 2D6 M.D. Soul Catchers cannot cross/step over a line of salt, making it possible to trap one in a circle of salt or hold it at bay with salt. *A circle of salt* can trap the demon inside of it indefinitely; until a swath large enough for the demon to squeeze through is created. **Note:** If trapped in a circle of salt, and a successful *Exorcism* is performed (01-50% chance of success), it can be forced to release 1D4 souls!

Notable Hades Monsters

See **Dimension Book 10: Hades** for complete stats and details. All take damage from M.D. weapons, magic and psionics, as well as from the vulnerabilities listed below.

Ant Lion: Cannot fight or move well when not in sand; reduce speed, number of attacks and combat bonuses by half.

Murmur's Black Vultures: Cowardly and have comparatively low M.D.C.

Psi-Hawk: Hates water and is unable to activate its psionics in rain or when drenched/covered in water. Typically flees from rain and water, seeing it as a Horror Factor of 15.

Sand Worm: Cold-based spells and weapons of ice inflict double damage. Also stunned by sonic attacks, losing half of its combat bonuses and one melee attack.

Desert Howler Netherbeast: Cold-based magic spells and weapons of ice inflict double damage. In a pack, if the alpha male is slain, there is a chance the rest of the pack flees (equal to a Horror Factor 13). Those that turn tail and run away, do not return to the area for at least 6D6 hours.

Serpent Lion Netherbeast: Ordinary S.D.C. weapons made of silver do damage as M.D. (In S.D.C. settings, silver inflicts double the usual damage.)

Infernal Mastodon Netherbeast: The massive creature is -4 to dodge. Magic-based cold attacks do double damage. Temperatures below 60 Fahrenheit (15.5 Celsius) make it sluggish, reducing speed and number of attacks by half, and all combat bonuses to zero. Vulnerable to all types of M.D. weaponry.

Pit Viper Netherbeast: Cold-based attacks do double damage. Temperatures below 60 Fahrenheit (15.5 Celsius) make it sluggish, reducing speed and all combat bonuses to one quarter.

Worms of Taut: All worms are predatory animals. Though they cannot be trained and behave like aggressive predators who see humanoids as prey, they are sometimes unleashed upon unsuspecting worlds and used as guard animals. *The Blow Worm* is a dumb predator. It is most vulnerable from intelligent prey it has swallowed whole and who can damage and kill it from the inside if they act fast.

All Worms of Taut are vulnerable to M.D. weapons, magic, spells and psionics.

Deevil Vulnerabilities

Vulnerabilities of Deevil Host

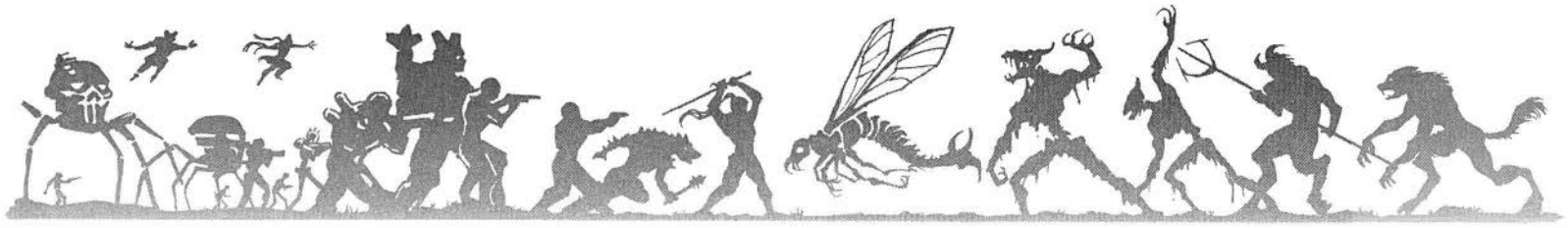
Vulnerabilities Common to ALL Host Servants of Dyval: The following bullet point vulnerabilities apply to *all* species of Host. Listed under specific Host types are additional weaknesses and flaws.

- *Holy Weapons, Demon Slayer weapons, Rune Weapons and other magic devices* and *spells* inflict their usual damage, unless noted otherwise.
- *Most Mega-Damage weapons/guns/explosives/energy blasts/plasma, and fire do full M.D., unless noted otherwise.*
- *Psionic/psychic powers* and attacks usually have full effect and inflict full damage, unless noted otherwise.

Note: The Minions of Dyval are all described in detail, as is the Dyval plane of Hell, in **Dimension Book 11: Dyval**.

Cryxon (Insectoid Host): The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Explosives and Loud Sounds. Sonic-based attacks inflict double damage and/or double the penalties. Furthermore, extremely loud noises within 100 feet (30.5 m) hurt the Cryxon's ears and



send shock waves through the nervous system, inflicting penalties: -1 attack per melee, reduce Perception Rolls, initiative, and skill performance by half.

Explosions do more damage: The painful sound and shock wave of explosions hurt and inflict damage to Cryxon even if they were not caught in the blast radius. Any Cryxon within 100 feet (30.5 m) of the explosion, even if outside the actual blast radius, suffers the equivalent of 10% of the damage unleashed from the explosion. So if a mini-missile did 30 M.D., the Cryxon 100 feet (30.5 m) away take 3 M.D. (10%) of the damage. The same applies to volleys. When caught in the actual blast radius of an explosion, the Cryxon suffer 30% more damage and the penalties, above, for Loud Sounds.

Dyval Stalkers (Alien Host): The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Vulnerable to cold and ice. All bonuses, attacks per melee and speed are reduced by half in cool temperatures between 75 degrees and 51 degrees Fahrenheit (24 to 11 Celsius) and -20% to skill performance. At or below freezing, skills are -50%, attacks per melee are reduced to a total of two, the Stalker cannot cast magic and suffers 6D6 M.D. for every 12 hours of exposure to freezing temperatures; is likely to die in 2-6 days. Cold-based spells and magic weapons made of ice inflict double damage; even an ordinary S.D.C. ice club, dagger or spear does one M.D. to the Stalker.

Harpy (Host/Sub-Deevils): The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

All weapons. These vile Sub-Deevils are vulnerable to normal weapons! M.D. weapons in Mega-Damage settings like Rifts Earth, and S.D.C. weapons in S.D.C. settings. This includes magic, spells and psionics. Resistant to M.D. fire, cold and poison, all of which do half damage.

Ordinary S.D.C. weapons made of silver or silver-plated weapons do damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Harpy. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.)

Distracted by/attracted to fresh killed prey. Any time a "fresh kill" is made and Harpies are around, 1D4+1 of the animalistic creatures (sometimes more; G.M.'s discretion) descend to feed upon the body like hungry vultures. This is in addition to the Harpy that may have made the kill. The feeding Harpies stop fighting for *2D4 melee rounds* to partake in eating parts of the fallen victim, be it a man or large animal like a cow, pony, donkey or horse. This momentary feeding frenzy can be used to distract small flocks of Harpies to give player characters a chance to make good an escape, hide, regroup, trap or attack the Harpies caught in the bloodlust and feeding frenzy – attackers automatically get initiative.

Disorganized and easily scattered and frightened away. Harpy Host (not to be confused with Dire Harpies, who are Lesser Deevils) are wicked, evil Sub-Deevils that are driven by animal instinct and emotions. As such. they behave more like smart animals and cruel beasts than people. This means they flee in the face of difficult opposition to find easier prey or to lick their wounds. When facing a powerful opponent(s), Harpies give up and fly off unless they outnumber him/them by ten to one. Even then Harpies flee when one third of their flock has been killed or half are seriously injured. Consequently, only Greater Deevils and other powerful beings can command Harpies. Still, because the monsters are so vicious and prey upon mortals and demons, flocks of them are unleashed to go hunt as they please.

Shock Dragon (Host): These strong, deadly warriors have the following vulnerabilities.

Holy Weapons, Demon Slayer weapons, Rune Weapons and other magic devices and *spells* inflict their usual damage. Any M.D. attack, energy blast, explosive, spell or psionic power does full damage, except fire and cold-based weapons (resistant to M.D. fire and cold; does half damage).

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made from dragon bones or silver (or silver-plated weapons) inflict damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword or dragon bone club that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to Shock Dragons. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.)

Tiger Beast: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made from iron (not other metals or composite metals) inflict triple damage! S.D.C. weapons made from iron inflict damage equal to M.D. x3. Meaning a iron sword or spear that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 6D6 M.D. to Tiger Beasts! (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of iron do triple S.D.C. damage.)

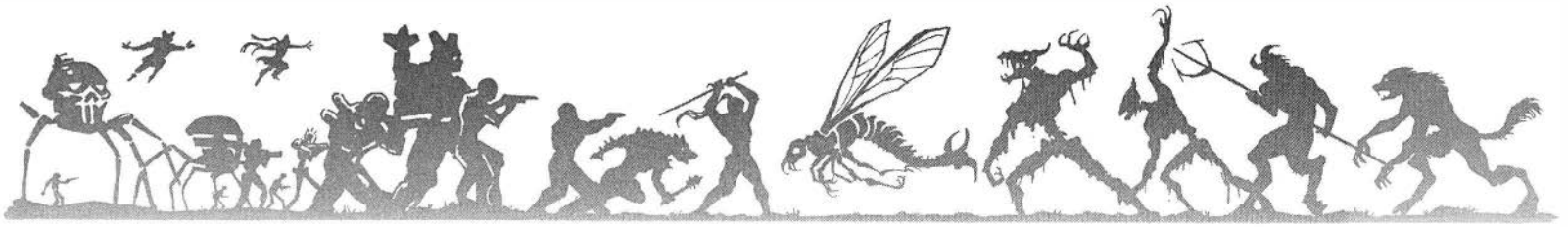
Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made from silver or the wood of a Millennium Tree inflict double damage. Any S.D.C. weapons made from Millennium Tree wood or silver (or silver-plated weapons) inflict damage equal to M.D. x2. Meaning a silver-plated sword or Millennium Tree club or staff that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 4D6 M.D. to Tiger Beasts. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.)

Underestimate humans and demons, especially if prey is cornered or appears to be injured.

Vulnerabilities of Lesser Deevils

Note: The demons of Dyval, a dimension of Hell that is rival to Hades, are most well known for their entire species as "Deevils." They are also known as "infernals." It should be noted there is a specific lesser infernal named the *Deevil* who resembles common depictions of a burly, brutish devil, complete with the goat legs, devil's tail and large, ram-like horns. The *Devilkin* is very similar in appearance except with small horns, a lighter build and attractive, human-looking features.

Vulnerabilities Common to ALL Lesser Deevils: The following bullet point vulnerabilities apply to *all* Lesser species of



Dyval infernals. Listed under specific Deevil species are additional weaknesses and flaws.

- *Holy Weapons* and *Demon Slayer weapons* either inflict their normal damage or double damage (sometimes more). Specific Deevil descriptions will indicate when damage is double or greater.
- *Rune Weapons, Millennium Tree weapons, other magic weapons* and *spells* inflict their usual damage, unless noted otherwise.
- *Most Mega-Damage weapons/guns/explosives/energy blasts/ plasma and fire do full M.D., unless noted otherwise.*
- *Psionic/psychic powers* and attacks usually have full effect and inflict full damage unless noted otherwise.
- *Vulnerability to iron, bone and wood, as well as silver.* Many Deevil species have one or more vulnerabilities to common materials. Such weaknesses are indicated under their respective descriptions.

Bonelings: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of wood or silver do damage equal to M.D.! Meaning a wooden club or silver dagger or arrow (without an arrowhead or one plated in silver), that normally does 1D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 1D6 M.D. to the Boneling. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of wood or plated in silver inflict double damage.)

Millennium Tree Wood or Bark Weapons inflict double damage.

Holy Weapons and *Demon/Deevil Slaying magic weapons* do double damage.

Emboldened in packs of 12 or more. This is a vulnerability, because packs of Bonelings are more aggressive and tend to take risks, tackle more than they can handle and overestimate their own abilities in larger groups. Destroy half their numbers and the rest are likely to flee in panic unless a strong leader commands otherwise.

Deevil: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of bone or silver. S.D.C. weapons made from bone or silver (or silver-plated weapons) inflict damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword or bone club that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to Deevils. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.)

Underestimate mortals.

Hot tempered and let their emotions get the best of them. The Deevil is the more brutish, hot tempered and violent cousin of the Devilkin. Though they too can shape-change into human form and like to provoke, trick and use mortals, Deevils are aggressive, impatient and quick to physical violence and action. *Such hot emotions* – revenge at the top of the list toward those who have wronged, embarrassed or defeated them in the past – can drive Deevils to make bad judgements, distract them from the mission at hand (choosing revenge over their mission), and, blinded by revenge, provoked to rush into action unprepared, take foolish risks, and ignore the events going on around them. A vengeful Deevil may only see red and forget everything else when it sees the object of its lust for revenge.

Devilkin: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made from bone or silver. S.D.C. weapons made from bone or silver (or silver-plated weapons) inflict damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword or bone club that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to a Devilkin. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.)

Underestimates mortals. Devilkins are your classic tempters and seducers and they love to manipulate and use mortals. However, Devilkin arrogance makes them underestimate mortals and they often get too caught up in long-term schemes, and forget their short-term objectives. ("I could kill her now, as I've been ordered. Or I can wait, and do X, Y and Z, to make her suffer first. Yes, that's a much better plan.")

Dire Harpy (Lesser Demon): The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made from bone, wood, iron or silver. S.D.C. weapons made from the materials listed above inflict damage equal to M.D. Meaning a bone, wood, iron or silver-plated sword or club that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to Dire Harpies. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of these materials do double damage.)

Water/drowning/cannot swim. Dire Harpies try to fly clear of large bodies of water because they can drown even though they can breathe without air.

Poor planners. Dire Harpies are aggressive predators who use straightforward tactics to hunt and kill their enemies. They function best when a strong, non-Harpy leader is present to make strategies and tactics, issue orders and keep them on point.

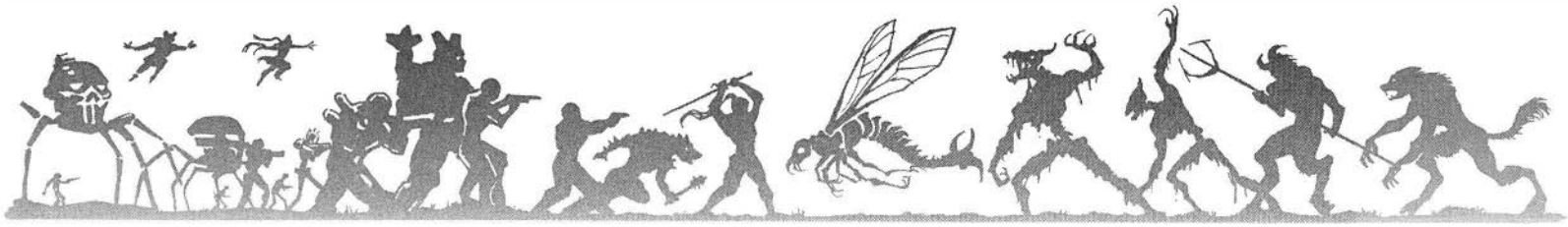
Always underestimate mortals.

Bloodlust. The bloodthirsty Dire Harpy loves nothing more than to hunt, fight and kill. However, they often get lost in bloodlust, making them reluctant to give up a fight even when they are losing or face impossible odds. Many fight to the death when enraged, lost to bloodlust or cornered unless a strong leader commands them to take other action.

Fenry, Demon Wolf: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made from bone or silver. S.D.C. weapons made from bone or silver (or silver-plated weapons) inflict damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword or bone club that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to Fenry. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.)

Underestimates mortals.



Fiend (a Living Shadow): The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made from bone or silver. S.D.C. weapons made from bone or silver (or silver-plated weapons) inflict damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword or bone club that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to a Fiend. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.)

Underestimates mortals. Fiends find humans to be weak and pathetic creatures, and never give them any credit. Like most Deevils, Fiends have a taste for mortal flesh and blood, and enjoy tormenting, killing and feeding upon them.

Gorgon/Medusa (Petrifier): The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made from bone or silver. S.D.C. weapons made from bone or silver (or silver-plated weapons) inflict damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword or bone club that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to a Gorgon. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.)

Dragon Bone weapons inflict double damage! (In S.D.C. settings Dragon Bone weapons inflict triple damage.)

Always underestimates mortals and often takes on more than it can handle when facing them in combat.

Ice Wraith: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Vulnerable to heat and hot temperatures. All bonuses are reduced by half in temperatures above 85 degrees Fahrenheit (29.4 Celsius). Fire and heat-based spells, magic fire weapons, plasma blasts, flamethrowers and other fire or heat attacks inflict double damage. Against an Ice Wraith, ordinary S.D.C. fire does one M.D. point of damage for every 8 S.D.C. points it would normally inflict.

Imp: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made from silver. S.D.C. weapons made from silver (or silver-plated weapons) inflict damage equal to M.D. Meaning a silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to an Imp. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of silver do double damage.)

Gluttony. Imps are the epitome of debauchery and excess. They enjoy good food and alcohol, and love to gorge themselves on both. Food, booze, and good times can be used to bribe and distract Imps, as well as to lure them into traps, taking foolish risks, and sometimes betraying their master, especially if the one it serves is a mortal.

Mischievous and cruel. Imps love to inflict cruel jokes and spiteful acts of petty vengeance, but sometimes overplay their hand or push the "joke" too far or too long. This can get them into trouble and lure them into dangerous situations or traps. The opportunity to inflict revenge upon someone it hates – including a Greater Deevil master – may be too tempting to pass up, and an Imp may betray other Deevils and even its master if it believes the plot and people involved can really pull it off.

Naga Deevil: Naga are wicked and quite powerful for being a Lesser Deevil.

Most Mega-Damage weapons/guns/explosives/energy blasts, etc. do only HALF their normal M.D. Fire and heat, even M.D. fire, does NO damage (Naga live in rivers and lakes of lava!).

Magic Fire and heat attacks still inflict their normal damage.

Magic spells, magic weapons, Holy Weapons, Rune Weapons, and *Millennium Tree weapons/attacks* usually have full effect and inflict their usual amount of full damage, unless noted otherwise.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made from bone, wood, iron or silver. S.D.C. weapons or ammunition made from the materials listed above inflict damage equal to M.D. Meaning a bone, wood, iron or silver-plated sword or club that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to Naga. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of these materials do double damage.)

Psionic powers and attacks inflict double damage!

Always underestimate mortals, particularly humans. Naga often toy and play with their mortal victims/prey too much, giving them a chance to escape or fight back.

Nexus Deevil: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

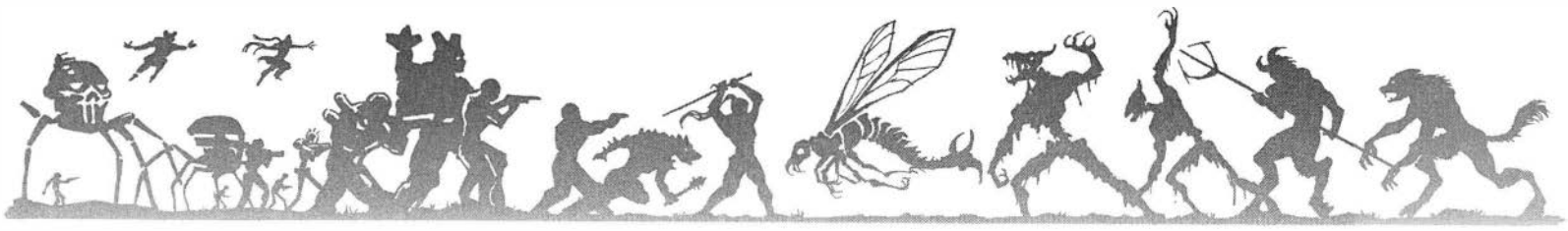
Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made from bone, wood, iron or silver. S.D.C. weapons or ammunition made from the materials listed above inflict damage equal to M.D. Meaning a bone, wood, iron or silver-plated sword or club that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to Nexus Deevils. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of these materials do double damage.)

Its curiosity, contempt and arrogance for most life forms can lure it into trouble, traps and work against it in other ways.

Vulnerabilities of Greater Deevils

Vulnerabilities Common to ALL Greater Deevils: The following bullet point vulnerabilities apply to *all* Greater species of Dyval infernals. Listed under specific Deevil species are additional weaknesses and flaws.

- *Holy Weapons* and *Demon Slayer weapons* either inflict their normal damage or double damage (sometimes more). Specific Deevil descriptions will indicate when damage is double or greater.
- *Rune Weapons, Millennium Tree and other magic weapons* and *spells* inflict their usual damage, unless noted otherwise.
- *Most Mega-Damage weapons/guns/explosives/energy blasts/plasma and fire do full M.D., unless noted otherwise.*
- *Psionic/psychic powers* and attacks usually have full effect and inflict full damage unless noted otherwise.
- *Vulnerability to iron, bone and wood, as well as silver.* Many Deevil species have one or more vulnerabilities to common



materials. Such weaknesses are indicated under their respective description.

Deevil Dragon: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Soulmancy M.D. bone weapons inflict double damage.

Magic Weapons. Demon/Deevil Slaying weapons, and any magic weapon that does damage to Dragons or Serpents/Reptiles inflicts double damage.

Magic spells do normal damage, unless the Deevil Dragon's special impervious power is magic. If impervious to magic, the monster takes NO damage from any spells, including attack spells (fire, cold, lightning, energy blast, etc.), and is +3 to save vs all other types of magic! **Note:** All Deevil Dragons have one special immunity. See Impervious (Special) on page 67 of **Dimension Book 11: Dyval** for more details and the six possible types of imperviousness. Magic is just one possibility.

Holy Weapons, Millennium Tree weapons, and Dragon Bone weapons or those powered by the life essence of a dragon, inflict triple damage!

Dragons! Physical attacks from true dragons (bites, claw strikes, fire breath, etc.) and Shock Dragons inflict 50% more damage than usual.

Tend to underestimate mortals, especially humans.

Arch Fiends: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of wood or silver do damage equal to M.D.! Meaning a wooden club or silver-plated sword, or wooden arrow (without an arrowhead or one plated in silver), that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Arch Fiend. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of wood or plated in silver inflict double damage.)

Millennium Tree Wood or Bark Weapons inflict double M.D.

Holy Weapons and *Demon/Deevil Slaying magic weapons* do double damage.

Underestimate mortals and have a total disregard for human life; see them only as pawns and prey.

The Beast: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of bone or silver do damage equal to M.D.! Meaning a bone club or silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Beast. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of bone or plated in silver inflict double damage.)

Holy Weapons and *Demon/Deevil Slaying magic weapons* do double damage.

Soulmancy M.D. bone weapons inflict double damage.

Underestimate mortals.

Horror: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of bone or silver do damage equal to M.D.! Meaning a bone club or silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D. to the Horror. (In S.D.C. settings, weapons made of bone or plated in silver inflict double damage.)

Holy Weapons and *Demon/Deevil Slaying magic weapons* do double damage.

Soulmancy M.D. bone weapons inflict double damage.

Underestimate mortals. Underestimate humans and most mortals.

Bloodlust! Horrors may give in to bloodletting and massacres, which often results in the enemy seeking revenge. They also sometimes fight to the death when pushed to the brink.

Pandemonium: The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, and the following.

Holy Weapons and weapons made from the wood of a *Millennium Tree inflict triple damage!*

Demon Slaying weapons inflict double damage.

Magic. Spells and other types of magic weapons (Rune, TW, etc.) and spells do their usual, full damage.

Arrogant and overconfident. Their smug attitude lets Pandemoniums get in over their heads and underestimate mortals.

Serpents: One of the most powerful Greater Deevils is the Serpent. The bullet point vulnerabilities, above, apply, and the following.

Holy Weapons, Demon/Deevil Slaying weapons and weapons made from the wood of a *Millennium Tree inflict double damage!*

Magic. Spells and Techno-Wizard weapons do their usual, full damage.

Wraith or Deevil Wraith: The ghost-like Deevil Wraith is impervious to most weapons and physical attacks! Only the following affect and keep out Wraiths.

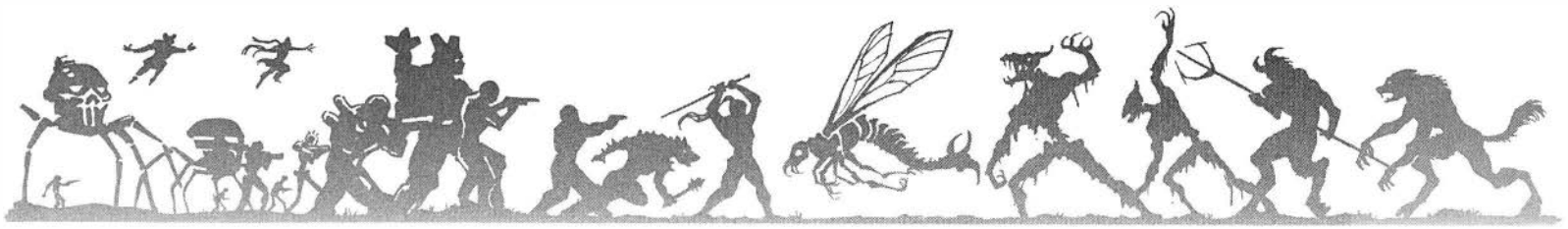
Holy Weapons, Rune Weapons, and weapons made from the wood of a *Millennium Tree* inflict full damage. **Note:** Techno-Wizard weapons and spells that unleash an energy or physical attack (Fire Ball, Blind, Call Lightning, etc.) have no effect and do NO damage.

Psionics and magic that affect the mind and emotions have full effect and inflict full damage, including Mind Bolt and Telekinetic Punch/Push/Hold.

Susceptible to magic illusions.

Weapons of Thorns. Deevil Wraiths are hurt by thorns and bleed when pricked by a thorn, which inflicts one M.D. per prick or scratch; or 2D4 M.D. when lashed with a long, thorn covered branch or struck by a blunt weapon (club, baseball bat, staff, etc.) wrapped with torn covered vines.

Thorny barrier keeps Wraiths out. A Deevil Wraith cannot pass through a door, window or opening that has a sprig of thorns (rose thorns and others). If all doors and windows have a branch of thorns (at least 5 inches/12.7 cm long), the entire room or house is closed to the Wraith. Remove one sprig and it can enter.



It avoids rose gardens, and won't come within 100 feet (30.5 m) of one.

Magic barriers. Wraiths can be blocked out of magic circles and by most magic barriers (cannot penetrate them).

Notable Dyval Monsters

See **Dimension Book 11: Dyval** for complete stats and details. All take damage from M.D. weapons, magic and psionics, as well as from the vulnerabilities listed below.

Flying Horror (War Steed): Weapons made of iron do triple damage. Weapons made of silver do double damage. *Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of iron or silver (or silver-plated) do damage equal to M.D.!* Meaning an iron club or silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D.

Infernal Sprite (War Steed): Weapons made of iron do triple damage. Weapons made of silver do double damage. *Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of iron or silver (or silver-plated) do damage equal to M.D.!* Meaning an iron club or silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D.

Infernal Tri-Tops (War Steed): Weapons made of iron inflict double damage. *Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of iron do damage equal to M.D.!* Meaning an iron club or sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D.

Magic weapons that do damage to reptiles and dragons have the same effect on Tri-Tops.

Lava Serpent (War Steed): In temperatures under 80 Fahrenheit (26.6 Celsius), reduce speed, number of attacks and combat bonuses by half. Temperatures below zero Fahrenheit (-18 Celsius) put it into a deep slumber from which it cannot waken until the temperature rises to 60 Fahrenheit (15.6 C), but remains sluggish and slow, as noted above, until the temperature rises to 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 C) or warmer.

Cold-based attacks do double damage.

Magical cold attacks and magic weapons made of ice or inflict cold damage do triple damage.

Rune weapons, magical attacks and weapons not based on heat or fire inflict normal damage; impervious to fire and heat.

Mimic (War Steed): Weapons made of pure iron do double damage. Weapons made of silver do triple damage. *Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of iron or silver (or silver-plated) do damage equal to M.D.* Meaning an iron club or silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D.

Shock Beast (War Steed): *Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons or ammunition made of iron do damage equal to M.D. x2!* Meaning an iron club or sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./ Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 4D6 M.D. If impaled on an iron rod that is stuck in the earth they are trapped in their lightning form until the rod is removed from the ground.

Fire, cold and most other weapons/attacks do their normal damage.

Tend to underestimate humanoids and try too hard to please Deevils, causing them to sometimes take foolish risks or fight to the death.

Tiger Beast (War Steed): Weapons made of iron do triple damage. Weapons made of silver or from the wood of a Millennium Tree do double damage. *Ordinary S.D.C. melee weapons made of iron or silver (or silver-plated) do damage equal to M.D.* Meaning an iron club or silver-plated sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts the equivalent of 2D6 M.D.

Underestimate demons and humans.

Devil Worm: Suffers double damage from iron weapons and cold attacks. Does not function well in temperatures below 40 Fahrenheit (4.4 Celsius). Goes into a slumber until the temperature rises to above 50 Fahrenheit (10 Celsius).

Fire Scorpion: Suffers double damage from cold and ice attacks. Will die if exposed to cold temperatures 60 Fahrenheit (15.6 Celsius) and below for more than one hour.

Ice Worm: Low animal I.Q. predator. Most weapons and attacks (electricity, energy blasts, explosives, magic and magic weapons, psionic attacks, etc.) do their normal damage, but fire, heat and laser attacks do only half damage.

CS Strategies and Tactics

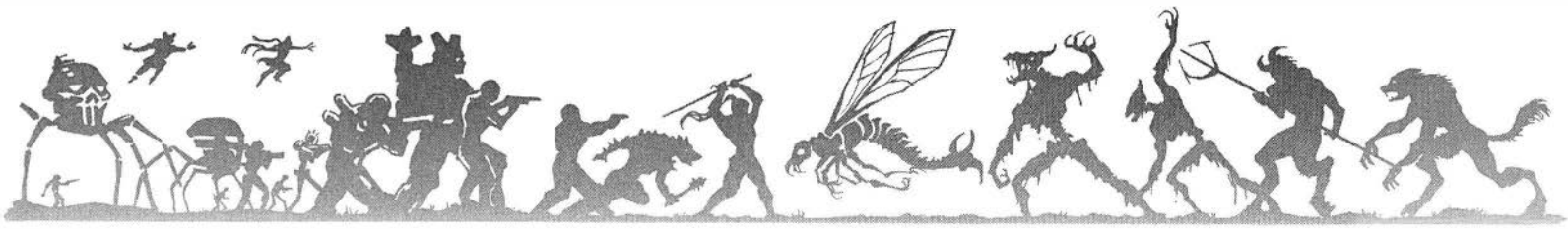
Teamwork is vital

The biggest advantage humans have over most demons and Deevils is our ability to work together and their *inability to do likewise.* Yes, they may command legions of warrior slaves. Sure, vast armies of lesser supernatural monsters have been unleashed by the forces of Hades and Dyval, but these are large units organized around a shared bloodlust or fear of their Greater Demon or Deevil commanders. Which makes a very different fighting force than human armies that rely on training, teamwork, patriotism and camaraderie.

Teamwork is difficult for demons. Demon and Deevil soldiers who are fighting as part of a larger military action are likely to become distracted by their own *predatory nature* or *drive to prove themselves superior* to mortal warriors. *Individuals,* even if they are incredibly powerful beings, are vulnerable to being outnumbered, outmaneuvered and overwhelmed. And since they have lived their entire existence fighting smaller, weaker enemies, many do not have the patience or caution to survive on a battlefield dominated by high-tech weapon systems and the human spirit.

Fighting as part of a large force that works together to accomplish military objectives is always difficult for the demons and infernals of Hades and Dyval. The minions of both Hells are fickle, supernatural predators driven by primal instincts and raw emotions. Predators, by nature, are solitary stalkers or pack hunt-

BRIAN MANNING



ers. While demons and Deevils love to use swarming assaults in large-scale combat, these demonic predators tend to get lost in bloodlust, personal accomplishment, and vendettas as well as petty rivalries between each other to prove which of them is better within their own group. This means keeping armies of evil supernatural predators united, under control and working toward a common objective requires strong leadership.

Thanks to decades of experience and Lazlo's release of detailed information about the creatures of Hell, the CS knows that identifying and eliminating demon officers and warlords is the key to rattling an entire army of demons. Kill enough leaders and the entire force falls into disarray, scatters and becomes easier to rout. When the Minions of Hell start to lose a battle, things really fall apart and even a legion of demons or Deevils that outnumber their mortal opponents is likely to retreat without several strong warlords to hold them together and keep fighting.

The Minions of Hell are creatures of passion and emotion whose very *instincts* push them to give vent to their dark emotions – lust, rage, hunger, revenge, sadistic pleasures, and personal satisfaction in fighting and killing. All things that can pull them out of combat and distract them from strategies, tactics and the objective of the mission they have been sent out to fulfill. Unlike trained and disciplined human and D-Bee soldiers, demons and infernals are creatures of chaos that more closely resemble poorly trained hounds whose attention is diverted by the scent of blood, the wail of a wounded animal or a squirrel running across their path. And like a dog pack, there is usually a pecking order, with an alpha male or a few vying for the position, as well as those who try to prove which of them is better by getting the most kills, or that stop to play cat and mouse games with an enemy, engage in torture, feeding upon the blood and entrails of their victims like hungry beasts, and acts of self-gratification and premature celebration. Demonic passion can also lead to acts of savagery that go beyond fighting and killing the enemy, and include wholesale slaughter, senseless butchery, debauchery, infighting, pointless destruction of property and running off on side missions the demonic grunt believes may win him favor. This makes the battlefields of the Minion War chaotic and disjointed, with groups of demons or Deevils splintering off on their own agenda or scattering when their leader(s) cannot be heard barking orders to keep them on track. This is less true of the intelligent and powerful Greater Demons and Deevils, but very true of most Lesser Demons, Lesser Deevils, Sub-Demons and Host. That said, any, even a Demon or Deevil Lord may become lost in bloodlust and any of the things noted above.

Most supernatural beings have the mindset of, and operate as, pack hunters, pairs or lone predators on the prowl. In any group larger than two of them, the members squabble and compete against each other. And in a harsh, warlike society that rewards individuals for kill numbers, cunning and ruthlessness, they tend to see each other as rivals and treat each other as such; one trying to get the upperhand over the others, or to prove himself the bravest, strongest, meanest, deadliest, scariest, sneakiest, most cunning, and on and on. It is how they distinguish themselves within their groups and earn the recognition of their superiors. It also means they may engage in behavior that undermines or trips up each other, and therefore conduct their combat operation, in order to make *themselves* look better.

Likewise, when demons see Deevils on the battlefield, and vice versa, they are likely to stop fighting mortals or working to accomplish their goal and engage their Hell-spawned rivals.

CS Combined-Arms Tactics

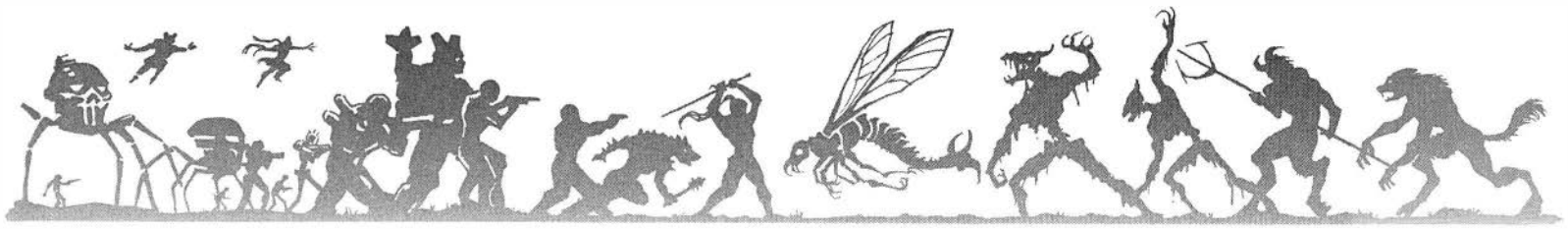
The CS recognizes that mortal soldiers cannot engage supernatural enemies on a one-on-one basis and expect to win. Not even mechanized and augmented troops. As a result, **full squads of Dead Boys** or Dog Packs are told to engage a single supernatural foe, maintaining a five- or even ten-to-one numerical advantage. For **armored CS units** with Combat Cyborgs, power armor, robots or tanks, their overall numbers might be smaller, with 2-3 combatants versus one supernatural, but the same principle applies: *overwhelm and destroy* demonic enemies who are unprepared for a combined-arms approach. Along these lines, **Skelebots** are often sent in ahead of troops to engage and destroy as many of the enemy as they can. They too are programmed to fight the Minions of Hell in groups of 2-5.

CS Air units guide distant artillery and spot targets for ground forces, engage in bombing runs and targeted assaults like directing a barrage of missiles at Greater Demons and other commanders, as well as target enemy fliers, break up and scatter flocks of Harpies and Demon Flies and engage in aerial dogfights.

CS Ground units are often assisted by air strikes from SAMAS and Fly Boys on Sky Cycles or Rocket Bikes to provide troop support, scatter enemy troops and to help take down demons and Deevils on the ground. Air units man also swoop in to finish off enemy troops who are already weakened and on the run from the infantry.

The Coalition Infantry dig in and hold positions while swarms of Skelebots and/or columns of tanks and/or giant robots attack to throw the enemy off balance, then charge forward to launch their own ground attack. The Coalition Army has plenty of surprises for the Minions of Hell and the monsters and turncoats who have joined them. The immediate necessity for powerful combat troops has, at least for this conflict, seen the Coalition Army turn to creating and unleashing an unprecedented number of *CS Juicers, Combat Cyborgs, psychics* and *special forces* on a scale never before considered, not even in the Siege on Tolkeen. The CS leadership realizes they cannot be conservative or shy in their response to the demon invasion. The fate of the Coalition States and all of humanity hangs on their being victorious. The sooner the better.

Long-Range Attacks. For many demons, Deevils and Minions of Hell, wild melee combat and bladed butchery is the norm. They prefer savage, close combat with melee weapons and short-range magic. And being able to heal in seconds while locked in combat makes such swarming tactics very effective. However, it



also means supernatural beings are not used to dealing with long-range weapons and attacks. Nor are they used to fighting robots, drones, power armor troops, Cyborgs, or Juicers, and especially not in combination with magic and psionics — the latter coming from fighting forces outside the CS, but making their contribution whether the CS wants it or not. And though the CS may not realize it, they need them.

It is ironic, but the winning formula to defeat the demons hordes is the diversity of technology with a diversity of magic, and the wide range of different beings working in unison across Rifts North America that will ultimately be the undoing for the Minion War on Earth. NEVER have the demons or Deevils faced such an eclectic combination of people anywhere in the Megaverse – not like this. Nor the combined tenacity and ferocity of such forces. Always underestimating human capabilities, the Minions of Hell are not prepared for the Coalition's swift action against them. Words and actions that have inspired everyone else to join the fight hot on the heels of the Coalition Army. It is something of a domino effect that CS strategists could not have predicted, but it works like a dream.

When **Northern Gun** and **Manistique Imperium** troops and war machines immediately join to stand with the Coalition, it eliminates any hesitation there might have been by other human kingdoms and communities. This show of unity compels them to also enter the fray much more quickly than they would have done otherwise. If Northern Gun supports the CS on this and is taking immediate action, so must they. Likewise, the forces at **Lazlo** and non-CS communities know they need to join the battle with haste if they are going to help the technological forces mount an effective assault against the *supernatural invaders*. **New Lazlo, the Cyber-Knights, Lynn-Srial, Lemurians** and others follow Lazlo's lead and the fight is on before the forces of Hell know what's hit them.

That said, demons and Deevils are deadly supernatural beings who heal quickly and fight without mercy. Even using melee weapons, they can do tremendous damage, and Greater Demons and Deevils are both cunning and powerful. Both demons and Deevils are most dangerous when they use psychological warfare and treachery to undermine their enemies from within. Masters of seduction, lies and temptation, they are most dangerous when they get inside the heads of their opponents and cause doubt, fear, and discord. Because the Coalition's Allied Forces hit them so fast and hard, the demons and infernals are caught off balance and flounder. But if they are able to catch their breath and regroup, it could mean serious trouble for the mortal warriors. And as long as the **Kingdom of Monsters** in Calgary exists, the demons have a powerful, entrenched position from which to formulate new strategies and schemes.

Aerial Combat with Demonkind

Power Armor Pilots and Fly Boys beware. Inexperienced SAMAS pilots and Fly Boys not used to fighting the supernatural often find themselves suddenly in over their heads and in trouble on the battlefield. The common mistake is the assumption that their high-tech armor, long-range weapons and superior speed give them all the advantage that they need to take down key enemy targets such as Generals, Princes and other leaders. They forget how chaotic the battlefield can become and that they are fighting highly intelligent supernatural beings. An army of them.

Before we even get into to the powers of demons and Deevils, there is the combat environment itself. Attackers may not have a clear shot. Ground forces may have a sea of hostile enemies of all shapes and sizes to navigate through before they can get to a specific target. Fliers must contend with "vision blur." Instrumentation and computer targeting may help to keep aces on target and in the right trajectory at fast speeds, but it is nearly impossible for the pilot (and crew of aircraft) to see what's going on around them or dodge a large number of flying obstacles or enemies even if they are moving much slower. It is all *a blur*. The human eyes and mind can only see and process so much visual information. When actions take place by the second and microsecond, humans can only respond so fast and so well. And you had better be attacking in squads or waves, because by the time you can turn around and make another attack, your opponent is already healing from your last attack. Even when flying by instrumentation alone, there is a lot to take in, consider and respond to.

Demons and Deevils frequently use the cover of darkness, fire, smoke, fog, and weather to provide cover and obscure vision and optic systems. As supernatural beings with spell casting abilities, demonkind is able to manipulate and control ordinary, natural occurrences like weather, but also create mists, rain, fire and smoke via magic. This is particularly true of Greater Demons and Deevils. Speaking of which, Greater Demons/Deevils love to use illusions and magic walls and winds, often invisible until you run into them. Slamming into an invisible *Wind Rush* or *Wall of Force* is going to rattle anyone, inflict damage and require a new course of action to level an attack.

Reminder: Many supernatural beings can turn invisible at will! They may still register on instruments, but ordinary sight shows nothing. While it is true that most supernatural and spell created **Invisibility magic** requires the invisible creature to become visible before it attacks, the monster can remain invisible until that moment, and invisible enemies flying in the air or on the ground still present obstacles you need to avoid and you cannot see with the naked eye.

Other types of magic are also used with devastating effectiveness. The electrical bolt from a **Call Lightning** spell does not miss, and the higher the demon's rank, the greater the damage that spell inflicts. Likewise, **magical storms** and other **Elemental Magic** play havoc with sensors, aerial acrobatics and speed. All these things are used to slow down, catch and knock power armor, rocket bikes, and aircraft out of the sky. On the ground, these tactics are used to divide enemy forces and create confusion and fear.

Aerial Warfare. The Minions of Hell have their share of fliers, from giant *Gargoyles* to the closer to man-sized Demon Bats,

Demon Flies, Succubus, Demon Locusts, Harpies, Deevil Dragons, and others, as well as a range of *flying monsters* they use as attack animals and war steeds. As one SAMAS pilot put it, "You don't know the meaning of hell until you fly into a flock of Harpies or Gargoyles."

Aerial Collision Penalty and Modifiers: Getting body checked by an M.D.C. demon or Deevil, especially when you are flying at hundreds of miles per hour, is no love tap. It knocks you out of your trajectory by thousands of feet. Even if you don't spiral and crash.

Control Skill Penalty Resulting from a Collision: -20% to piloting skill to regain control and -1D4 melee attacks/actions while the pilot fights to recover and maintain control. All the while the armor or vehicle continues to careen off course and off target.

Now imagine being swatted at, charged and hammered by dozens in *a flock* as you try to rocket through them, and the focus, concentration and reflexes necessary to dodge through such a flock blocking your path. Clouds of demonic fliers usually cover and protect the skies overhead of the most important commanders of Hell for this very reason.

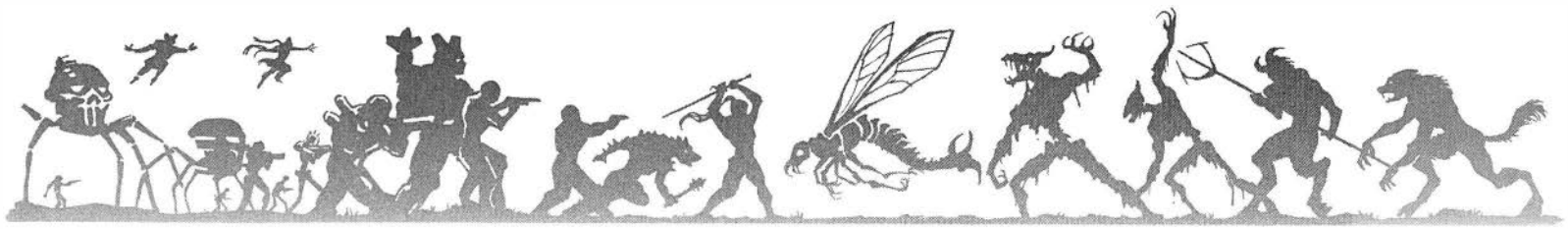
Piloting Penalty in a Flock: -70% when flying faster than half speed. -40% at half speed. -30% at slower speeds but faster than 60 mph (96 km) and -15% even at slower speeds. Dodge rolls may be applicable at half the usual number when navigating through a flock. (**Note:** This also applies to Xiticix and other flying opponents that attack in a large flock or swarm.)

Damage: 4D6 M.D. for each high-speed, mid-air sideswipe, bump or glancing body block at speeds below 100 mph (160 km), double damage for each additional 100 mph (160 km; *round up*). Double the damage for the appropriate speed from head-on collisions! And your power armor or aircraft does not Bio-Regenerate like your supernatural enemy!

Yes, you may be able to fly many times faster than your demonic opponents, but to successfully navigate through them without bouncing off M.D.C. supernatural creatures like an out of control pinball, is a difficult and potentially deadly challenge. Most pilots find it necessary to reduce flying speed to better navigate such gauntlets and avoid collisions. By the time a pilot zigzags out of the gauntlet, he may have already lost half of his power armor's M.D.C. and ammo, and now he must acquire (locate) his intended target, say a Greater Demon/Deevil or General (some of the most powerful beings on the battlefield, by the way). And once the flyer has made it through the demon swarm, he is likely to be targeted and attacked by other enemies in the air or on the ground. Another reason to attack in small squads.

This scenario has yet to consider *actual combat*, the slashing talons of Harpies and Gargoyles, or the common tactic of grabbing hold of power armor and aircraft, and not letting go. In this grappling attack, the beast(s) may inflict no damage, but even if the flying demon does not try to attack or rip at the power armor, or use magic or other weapons against its victim, the weight and drag of the hitchhiker reduces speed and inflicts a piloting penalty. And often two or three latch on to hold or pull their victim off course.

Penalty for Clinging Aerial Attack: -2 to strike, parry and dodge and -20% penalty to the piloting skill and reduce speed by 20%; double the piloting and speed penalty if the demon is 15 feet (4.6 m) or larger, like a Gargoyle or Baal-Rog, or if TWO



man-sized demons or Deevils cling to the flyer. Increase that to -5 to strike, parry and dodge, and -50% piloting penalty if the winged creature(s) is deliberately trying to crash, steer or prevent their victim from flying and maneuvering (probably trying to drag him to the ground or higher up in the air to take him out of the battle equation).

Being intelligent beings, more than one may join this battle. They may also just cling or spin or pull upward to keep their victim from effectively engaging in combat, or these additional attackers may target vulnerable wings, engines and thruster systems *to disable* the power armor or aircraft and force it to continue the battle on the ground.

The standard tactic of winged demons and Deevils is to knock flying opponents out of the sky and keep them grounded. Even the best Coalition SAMAS pilots and Fly Boys are likely to get snagged in mid-air or knocked out of the sky and brought down to the ground below. Being brought down behind enemy lines or within a horde of vicious demons or Deevils is extremely bad news. If the flight or jump system is damaged or the warrior is just overwhelmed, he could be doomed.

Downed flyers and even agile ground troops like Combat Cyborgs, power armor pilots, Juicers, Crazies and even robot pilots, may be on the defensive and find it necessary to hide if they become isolated from the rest of their team or fighting forces. This is one more reason that CS forces are being trained to tackle a single supernatural opponent in groups of 3-10, depending on the composition and power of the strike force.

Demons and Deevils are far from stupid. Though they behave like it sometimes, the Minions of Hell are not a pack of wild animals. They may be ruled by primordial predatory instincts and raw emotion, but they are smart. And powerful. Mortals would be wise to remember that this is NOT a battle of physical force, but of mortals pitted against a supernatural foe. Ancient, immortal creatures of darkness that possess superhuman powers, magic spell casting abilities and psionics. The bigger and higher in rank, starting with Greater Demons and Deevils, the smarter and more powerful the enemy. Powers that may include instant healing, shapeshifting, the ability to read thoughts, mind control and demonic possession! It is a horror to be possessed and turned against your own troops, or to see a Deevil take your appearance to infiltrate your comrades.

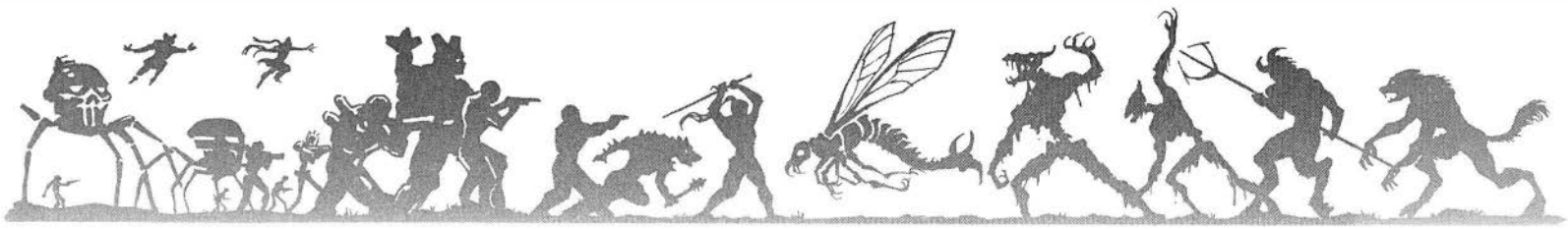
Close combat with demons is trouble, especially against the heavy hitters of Hell. Anyone charging in to engage in a dogfight or to attack a Greater Demon/Deevil or a powerful leader should think of it as a kamikaze attack that may very well result in their own death. For one thing, the higher the rank of a leader, the more powerful an opponent you are tackling. These are not soft, armchair generals. Greater Demons and Deevils, their Generals, Warlords, Regents, Princes, Overlords and Hell Lords are true beasts – unholy terrors with the power of a god (or at least that of a demi-god or adult dragon), and *centuries of combat experience!* Each is a supernatural horror that loves to fight – lives to fight – and welcomes challenge from brave and foolish bands of would-be heroes. And some, like the *Raksasha, Demon Locust, Night Owl, Arch-Fiend* and *Serpent*, among others, are usually calm under fire, calculating, cunning and merciless. Included in their arsenal of weapons are magic spells, mind control, illusions, natural weapons, and bloodthirsty instincts.

Evil supernatural beings fight dirty. Most do not have a sense of ethics, fair play or justice. Such concepts are for the weak and foolish, like humans. They fight to win at all costs. That means they lie, cheat, steal, manipulate, blackmail, kill and backstab without thinking twice about it. The ends always justify the means, and they will win by any means. Many Minions of Hell love to use psychological warfare, seduction, torture and treachery to undermine and defeat their mortal opponents, and are proud of their underhanded tricks and acts of treachery. Tactics that create toxic environments of fear, paranoia and betrayal among mortals. Games of chess that Greater Demons/Deevils and Princes love to play on the battlefield and off.

Supernatural beings possess a wide range of abilities that make them the equivalent of power armor-clad warriors. They have **M.D.C. hides** that heal (**Bio-Regenerate**) every melee round, enabling them to take tremendous amounts of damage, over time, and keep fighting. That's why mortal combatants need to be merciless and inflict damage faster than the monsters' bodies can recover. When a Minion of Hell begs for mercy or offers to trade information, or be taken prisoner, more often than not he is stalling for time to let his body heal. The same is true of tactical retreats and battlefield truces. Don't fall for them. Press the attack while the enemy is weak and vulnerable. The more sincere such pleas and stalling tactics appear, the more desperate and weakened the supernatural foe. Strike fast and hard to finish them!

The many strengths and powers of the denizens of Hell do not end there. All demons and Deevils, and most Sub-Demons and Host, possess **Supernatural Strength** which surpasses the strength of any man-made robot. Many have stealth capabilities, can climb, swim, are impervious (no damage) or resistant (half damage) to heat, fire and cold. They are impervious to disease, do not fatigue like mortals, and are likely to possess enhanced senses such as *Nightvision* and *see the invisible*, have keen olfactory senses (track by scent), sharp hearing and quick reflexes. Though they may pretend otherwise, they magically understand all spoken languages (but may not be able to read), and may possess other superhuman powers such as flight, metamorphosis, the ability to turn invisible, breathe fire, a poisonous bite, prehensile tail, and all have claws and fangs. This is in addition to some measure of psychic and/or magic abilities that most also possess. All of which come natural to these monsters and are used with considerable skill. In many instances, *one Lesser Demon/Deevil* is easily the equivalent of one or two suits of power armor. A Greater Demon/Deevil, the equivalent of a powerful giant robot or a tank, or a quartet of SAMAS.

Though it is seldom considered, the Minions of Hell, even the lowliest Sub-Demon or Lesser Deevil, have one more advantage, they revel in the horror and brutality of war. They enjoy the mur-



der and mayhem. The blood and gore. They feed upon the dead (and the living!), and encourage rape, torture and all manner of decadence and brutality. The sight and sounds of such carnage is welcomed and satisfying. There is no Horror Factor or emotional trauma from such things. The Minions of Hell don't suffer from PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) or have nightmares about combat and death. They live for bloodbaths and wallow in gore. There are a few reasons for this. One, such is their inhuman, demonic nature. Another is they are generally immortal, so death is not a trauma they have to deal with. They heal fast, often circumventing mortal injury, and when they do die in dimensions outside of Hades or Dyval, they discorporate and return to life, albeit perhaps centuries later, back in their native plane of Hell.

Greater Demons/Deevils generally all serve in leadership positions – the Sergeants, Lieutenants, Captains, Warlords, Dukes, Marquees, Regents, Overlords, Commanders, Generals, Princes and Hell Lords usually start as Greater Demons/Deevils and rise through their ranks to positions of power. Most attain the higher positions through brute strength, terror and force of will. Others do so through wicked cunning, backstabbing and ruthless treachery. Like the laws of the jungle, only the strongest survive or attain positions of power, might makes right, and you get respect through fear via displays of strength, cunning and pure aggression. This is important to understand, because once a Greater Demon/Deevil has tasted power, he or she will not relinquish it easily. In fact, too much is never enough, and many covet the top spots in the hierarchy as a Lord of Hades or Dyval, or even the Supreme Ruler of the Realm. Rivals are always nipping at their heels or plotting their undoing, so the leaders at the top are constantly at war within their own civilization. This makes them sharp and keenly aware of potential treachery. Some become quite paranoid or control freaks, and almost always surround themselves with loyal advisors, an elite guard (2-8) and a trusted second-in-command. Positions of true power in Hades and Dyval are limited, so there are Greater Demons and Deevils who are happy to serve in an elevated secondary position. Some even come to truly love and serve their "master."

Beware alliances with supernatural evil. Demons, Deevils and other evil supernatural beings NEVER do anything out of the kindness of their hearts, no matter how hard they may try to make you believe it. There is always an ulterior motive. It may be something plain and simple, like revenge, lust, greed, etc., or things much more subtle, like winning your trust or favor so they can manipulate you or position you to get them what they want. Then, when the moment is right, they stab you in the back or destroy someone close to you, or bring down your entire army or cause. Some do this just for the fun or challenge of it.

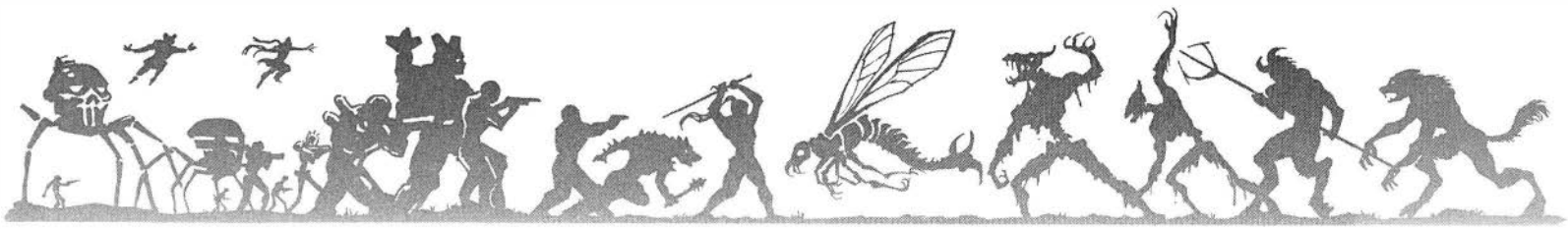
Cut Off the Head of the Serpent

Understanding that supernatural troops desperately need strong leaders to keep their warriors effective, Coalition tactics call for the targeting and termination of demon commanders and anyone who appears to hold a position of leadership among the Minions of Hell. Though CS Special Forces are charged with this task, it is common knowledge and common practice among all fighting forces to quickly identify and take down Greater Demons, Greater Deevils and other leaders. When the leaders of the Minions of Hell are eliminated, the troops they lead become confused, disorganized and quick to retreat against a determined enemy.

In most cases, the demonic leader is the one shouting orders and usually looks more impressive than his fellow demonic creatures. He is likely several heads taller, often has identifying features that make him stand out, and usually has unique body armor and/or a weapon that is bigger or different than everyone around him. Identification of the leader in a small group is usually easy, but amidst the chaos of a full-scale onslaught against one or more battalions or entire armies of demons or infernals, it can be a serious challenge.

Using the Intelligence skill. This is where the **Intelligence skill** comes into game play. Characters with this skill who spend at least 1D6+4 minutes studying enemy troop movement on the battlefield should be able to identify 1D4x10%+40% of the field commanders and their lieutenants within the character's field of vision. He must be able to see a large area and can NOT be actively engaged in combat himself in order to use this skill to I.D. enemy leaders. **A percentile die roll under** the character's Intelligence skill determines success. **Bonus:** If the character has the skill *Lore: Demons and Monsters,* add a +5% bonus to the Intelligence skill roll. Add another +5% if the character also *speaks Demongogian* or has a language translator that accurately translates it, and is able *to hear* specific individuals speaking. **The longer the character studies the enemy force from a distance,** without engaging in combat himself, the easier it is to identify enemy leaders. +5% bonus for each additional 10 minutes of observation. Observing for 30 additional minutes provides a +15% bonus, 40 minutes +20%, and so on. **RPG Note:** In the course of role-playing, the Game Master may openly reveal key leaders via their words, actions and how the minions respond to them so that any character paying attention or looking for enemy leaders can identify them whether they have the Intelligence skill or not. Some demons and Deevils may boldly declare themselves as leaders or do nothing to conceal their position. Likewise, troops and henchmen may give away the identity of their commander by their words and deeds. If the player characters are clever enough to figure things like this out, they should be awarded some additional experience points, especially if deception was being used to conceal the leader(s)'s identity.

Some demons and Deevils make it very easy to identify field commanders. Remember, supernatural beings are arrogant and underestimate mortal opponents. They may demand a throne of skulls be built for them, or be carried into battle on said throne, or on an ornate war barge or war steed, and they sit or stand above their troops so everyone is forced to look up. Furthermore, demons and Deevils in positions of power and authority like to be worshiped and praised, so some proudly announce themselves as



the one who is about to be responsible for their enemy's destruction. Others make their forces kneel before them and pray to them just before their troops charge into combat, or praise their deeds in song or chants. In some cases, this is meant to unnerve or terrify their mortal enemies, but often it is a gesture of self-gratification that may lead to their downfall. Under these circumstances, the leader should be easy to locate and the Game Master should consider a situational bonus of +10% to +30% to the Intelligence skill.

Slaying Demonic Leaders

Penalties and loss of demon troops

The death of a demonic leader always has a major impact on the troops under his command.

Killing a Sub-Regent or captain creates uncertainty and anxiety for those who were under his charge, but only them. They are likely to follow his last orders or follow the lead of other nearby troops and their leader. However, they do so with the following **penalties** until a new leader is assigned or rises up from among their ranks: -3 on Perception Rolls, -2 on initiative and -1 to save vs Horror Factor.

Destroy a high-ranking leader such as a Prince, General/ Warlord, Duke, Marquis, or Regent, and 1D6x10% of the demonic troops scatter and flee. **Troop Penalties:** Those who remain *fight at half* their usual number of attacks per melee round and all other bonuses are reduced *by half!* Including saving throws vs magic, psionics and Horror Factor. The more spectacular and dramatic the death of their high-ranking leader, the more demoralized the troops, and the longer it takes for another leader to claim them and place them under his command; typically 1D6 weeks.

Permanent Death at Hell Pits! If the death of any demon or Deevil happens on the *dimensional bleed* around a **Hell Pit**, their death, regardless of their power level and rank, *is permanent!* The slain ones do not discorporate from the realm of mortals and get reborn at some time in the future in the abyss of hell. They are slain forever! This is the worst possible fate for any Minion of Hell, let alone a great and powerful leader. **Note:** Demonic leaders know this about Hell Pits and are more likely to retreat and flee from confrontations at one when the creature is seriously injured (has lost 70% or more of its M.D.C.). On the other hand, ego and rage may keep the fiend fighting to the bitter end rather than flee in disgrace, or fighting until down to only a handful of M.D.C.

Destroying one of the seven *Demon Hell Lords* or seven *Deevil Overlords* sent to conquer Rifts Earth has an even more profound and devastating impact on the vast number of Minions of Hell who served under them. **1.** The construction of all Hell Pits under his or her jurisdiction immediately stops and the places are abandoned. **2.** 80% of the Hell Lord's legions flee back to the pits of Hell on Hades or Dyval, and are unlikely to return to Earth anytime soon, as in eons! **3.** Of the remaining 20% without a master to lead them, they scatter. Some join the forces of other Hell Lords or Overlords, and others continue the fight under lower ranking leaders in units seldom larger than a platoon (40-60 fighters) or company (100-140 combatants). *The rest* run off to murder and create mayhem as lone individuals, pairs, trios and small squads of 3D4. In the latter case, these small bands of masterless demons and infernals may seek revenge and continue to torment and kill humans and D-Bees on their own, or join other sinister groups such as bands of evil cultists, mercenaries, bandits, raiders or even seek leadership from one or more powerful, wicked, mortal Shifters, Ley Line Walkers and other evil practitioners of magic or powerful beings. Most Lesser Demons and Deevils, Sub-Demons and Deevil Host seek powerful beings, even mortals, to lead them and give them purpose. It's how they are wired and the only life they have known for countless eons.

It should be noted that while Coalition Army High Command see the *deaths* of demonic leaders as the best tactic, the results are often (though not always) similar when powerful supernatural commanders are defeated and forced to flee from mere mortals. Seeing their leader running (or Teleporting) to save his own skin angers and frightens his troops. After all, this is not an organized retreat where the leader is still in charge and making calls. No, the leader is running for his life, leaving the troops to fend for themselves. **Troop Penalties:** As with the death of a leader, *HALF* of his troops scatter, joining other, stronger leaders. The rest may also flee (01-50%), but remain together as a unit, or they may continue to fight (51-00%), but do so *at half* their usual number of attacks per melee round and reduce all bonuses by *half!* The more spectacular and dramatic the defeat of the leader, the more demoralized the troops, and the longer it takes for another warlord to claim them and place them under his command; typically 1D6 weeks.

Should the cowardly leader return to reclaim leadership, he is likely to be viewed as weak and vulnerable. This invites subordinates seeking power and position to challenge his authority, defying orders and even attacking and trying to destroy him so they can take his place. If he is successfully destroyed from within by one of his lieutenants, more infighting is likely and another 1D4x10% are likely to return to Hell or scatter to hunt and operate on their own. And this is assuming there is no punishment from an even higher ranking member within the ruling hierarchy of Hell. Those who disappoint the rulers of Hades and Dyval are usually given humiliating positions, mocked, tormented or punished in any number of ways.

It should be noted that if the demonic leader is part of an *organized retreat*, the penalties above do NOT apply. In other words, he is *leading* his troops away from the enemy, and it is not seen as cowardice because most demonic creatures are more concerned with saving their own skin than fighting to the death. Their leader has not left them, in fact he is working to save their hides so they can seek revenge another day. *And demons and Deevils are all about revenge.* There are no penalties for an organized retreat, though confidence in their leader may be shaken, and continued "retreats" may cause dissension within the ranks of his army.

It should also be noted that **the wrath of a defeated Demon Warlord**, General or other powerful leader can be terrible. The humiliated leader must prove to his men, and especially to rivals who covet his position, that he is a deadly force to be reckoned with. This means the defeated leader will seek a terrible vengeance upon those responsible for his embarrassing defeat, and all mortals in general. Some become absolutely obsessed with finding and punishing the core people (the player characters?) responsible. This can result in long running vendettas, bounties, and displays of cruelty and terror to prove himself superior and in control. The more brutal and terrible, the better his demonic soldiers and henchmen like it. Oddly enough, this can play to the advantage of the heroes he seeks and to the war effort. Demon and Deevil leaders clouded with obsessive lust for revenge don't think clearly. They are easily provoked and lured into rash, ill-conceived action, and drawn out of hiding and into traps and ambushes by those they crave to destroy. And because they were so humiliated by mere mortals, the monster is likely to want to humiliate and torture those responsible. That probably means cat and mouse games or very public conflicts, that if turned around on the demonic Warlord, leads to more humiliation and likely defeat. Some become so enraged that they force their troops to fight to the death even when they are losing and enter the fray themselves, consumed in bloodlust and an overriding need for revenge. All of this gives a well prepared enemy the upper hand, though they must be prepared for a ruthless and merciless assault on par with a berserker onslaught.

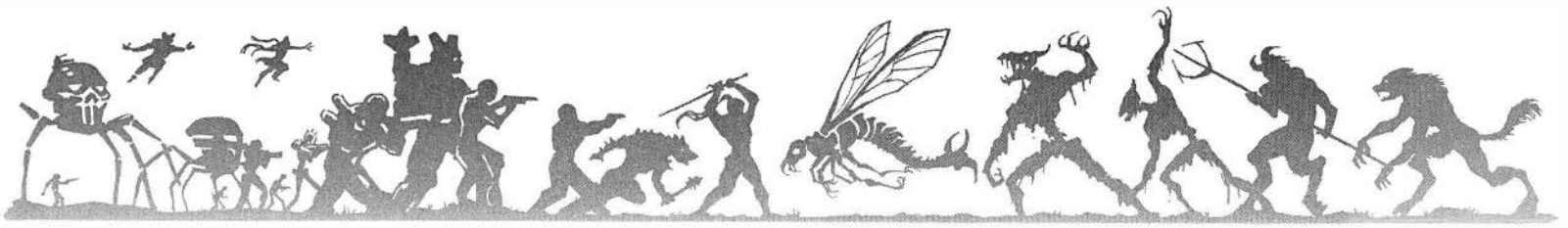
Sometimes, loyal henchmen, friends and lovers (not so much family) *may* seek to avenge the death of a popular leader.

Finally, Game Masters need to use good judgment. If for some reason the demonic leader is killed in secret or out of the eyes of his most trusted lieutenants or demonic forces, then who killed the leader is a mystery and our group of heroes does not gain any kind of reputation even if they claim responsibility for it. ("Them? Impossible. Lies. Kill them.") Since assassination attempts are common among demon and Deevil forces, the impact to the rest of the troops is half the duration and penalties noted above and below.

A failed battle. Whether the demonic leader is slain, defeated or forced to retreat or flee, his forces are routed and his primary goal and objective is foiled.

Table: Demonic Reaction to Cutting Off the Head of the Serpent (Optional)

In addition to the penalties and reactions noted above, the Game Master may want to roll or pick from the following table to determine the reaction and disposition of the troops if the player characters are seen slaying a powerful demonic leader. This table works best when the leader is clearly seen being defeated by one third or more of his troops. Word spreads like wildfire and has a profound and immediate result.



01-15% Fearful and Intimidated. In the shock of the moment, the fighting forces and even other Greater Demons within the demonic legion are rocked and unnerved. Any bluff, show of force, or pressing of the attack by humans, especially if preceded by a theatrical and bold demand or threat like, "Leave now or share the same fate as your Master," sends the rest of the monsters fleeing the battlefield. Any Lesser Minion that is cornered or captured, spills everything it knows (which may not be much) if questioned in a forceful manner soon after its leader's death by those responsible. Greater Demons are not likely to fall prey to such tactics and threats; G.M. discretion.

16-30% Shocked and Horrified. The demonic forces flee the battle scene, fighting only to protect themselves. They do not consider joining or fighting under another leader. It is mass panic. They can be regrouped by a forceful and/or charismatic leader, ideally a Demon Prince or Deevil Regent or even more powerful leader, within 2D6+2 days. Until then, they cower in fear and do NOT attack mortals; fighting only to protect themselves should they fall under attack.

31-45% Scattered. Confusion reigns. Initiative is zero (the enemy automatically has the initiative against them and strikes first; initiative roll is not required), and the number of attacks per melee and bonuses of the fighting forces that remain on the battlefield are all reduced by half. They are easily routed and after 1D6 melee rounds of combat, unless they have made significant progress against the mortal enemy, the entire remaining force flees. They scatter into squad-sized groups (4D4 members), and do not rejoin their legion or go back to their base camp. Instead, they run off in all directions. This leaves many vulnerable to larger or determined enemy troops, and their panic causes 4D6% of troops led by other commanders to break ranks and also run away; though they don't know why or what they are running from. These demonic forces may end up being a plague to some other unfortunate souls that encounter them, but do not regroup to fight in the Minion War for 1D4 weeks.

46–65% Demoralized. Fighting continues but the troops are so demoralized that they only fight to defend themselves, and slowly begin to drop back. A full-scale retreat happens within 1D6 minutes even if they were winning. They simply lack confidence and direction without that powerful leader. However, they remain together as a fighting force and a new leader is assigned or rises from their ranks within 1D6+1 days.

66-85% Power Vacuum. With the leader slain or forced to flee, 2D6 lieutenants or Greater Demons among the remaining forces begin fighting amongst themselves to be the next leader. This creates more mayhem and confusion. Half of the remaining troops continue fighting but do so with double the usual penalties, and the other half flee the battlefield not knowing whose orders to follow. They wait until a new leader has surfaced before rejoining the war effort.

86–95% New Leadership. Unexpectedly, a new leader takes charge of the troops, who continue to fight in the name of their new commander. It is likely that this individual may have been pulling the strings behind the scenes or was a trusted captain or lieutenant that often led demonic troops when their top leader was not around. This secondary leader is well known, has the troops' confidence and they follow him with renewed resolve (no penalties or only minor ones; G.M. discretion). *However, if he is also slain,* the troops fighting under him are horrified and respond as if a Hell Lord was slain! (Same penalties and same percentage flee all the way back to Hades or Dyval, while the rest scatter for the hills.)

96-00% Unlikely Turnabout. Eighty percent of the troops flee, but in a strange twist of fate, many of the demonic forces now see the person or several people (some or all of the player characters?) as *the new leader(s)!* 1D4x5% of those who remain on the battlefield drop to their knees, pledging devotion to those who slew their old leader. Another 1D6x5% of those who remained, flee rather than accept this new leader but take no action against them even if another Demon Warlord commands them to attack. The rest do not accept the mortals as their new leader, but take no action against them, and for the next 2D6+24 hours, they do anything reasonable asked of them by the mortals. They will not fight, but they will fetch them food, medicine, weapons, ammunition, magic items, turn over prisoners, and share information – detailed information – about the demonic forces they serve. This can include information about other leaders, the location of base camps and supply depots, meeting places, alliances, Hell Pits, battle plans, and even safe passage through enemy held territory to these locations or people. However, after that period expires, the majority of demons or Deevils leave to find a new master. Only the 1D4x5% remain loyal to the person or people who slew their leader.

What happens next is likely to depend on the alignment of the player characters and how far they are willing to take this. The demonic minions who accept them as their new leader will, for a while at least, do whatever they are told to do, including fight and kill other demons, Deevils, CS troops, or whoever they are told to fight. The more cunning, brutal, deadly or wicked their assignment, the better they like it, and the longer the monsters stay loyal to their new masters. Coalition characters might use this to their advantage to get to other key demon/Deevil leaders; maybe even a Hell Lord or Deevil Overlord, or get them access to a *Hell Pit* so they may destroy it. OR they may send their "demonic warriors" to execute the task. However, without a leader present to hold the monsters together and keep them on task, such an assignment is almost certain to fail and get all the demons/Deevils killed without any real chance of success.

Evil characters might use their demonic underlings to exact revenge upon the CS or D-Bees, or demons as a rogue combat force, or try to become a powerful mercenary company working for one or both sides or whomever can afford them, or function as raiders or bandits, on so on. By the way, the demon/Deevil forces are not likely to question whether they are doing good and helping humans/mortals, as long as they get to hurt, kill and have fun, which involves fighting, torture and wanton destruction.

The mortal leaders only lose their hold upon the demons/Deevils when the creatures become bored and dissatisfied. Keep them busy with bloodshed and destruction and they are happy and compliant. Have them rebuild and help people, or sit around doing nothing, and they get disenchanted and dangerous very quickly. Mutiny and desertion soon follow.

Of course, utilizing evil supernatural beings is tricky business, and the longer you associate with them, the more likely you are to slide down the path of evil and/or selfishness yourself. Characters of good alignments and noble intentions beware. Using fire to fight fire almost always results in you, or innocent people, getting burnt. Badly.

Demon Slayer Reputation (Optional)

Reputation and H.F. of those who slay demonic leaders

Killing or defeating a powerful demon or Deevil leader is, of course, a good thing for the war effort, the people and the player characters. Well, good and bad for the *player characters.*

The people responsible (the player characters) are now *recognized* by the forces of darkness as a serious threat. This is good in the sense that *Lesser Demons/Deevils, Host* and *Sub-Demons* fear them (but not mortal henchmen). The group has earned (or is developing) a reputation as heroes and demon slayers. Their names are whispered among all the creatures fighting with the Minions of Hell, giving the characters a Horror Factor (9, to start) as Demon Slayers. The Horror Factor (H.F.) increases with additional success and kills of notable demonic leaders.

It is also a bad thing, because their triumph forever marks them as enemies of Hades or Dyval, or both. And as noted elsewhere, the vengeance of Greater Demons and Deevils, or a Lord of Hell, can be a terrible, terrible thing.

Slaying or forcing a powerful Greater Demon or Deevil leader to flee, or playing a pivotal role in a publicized defeat, gives the key characters involved a reputation as an enemy of Hell. This also gives him/them a base **Horror Factor of 9** against *Lesser Demons, Lesser Deevils, Sub-Demons, Host and most lesser underlings,* but not mortals. Add the bonus, described below, based on the rank/power level of the slain leader.

Limitations: The reputation and Horror Factor is applicable only to the *specific individual* or *small group* who slew or defeated the powerful demon/Deevil leader. Not the entire army or nation like the Coalition States or Northern Gun. (Though if these human forces are successful in repelling the Minion War on Rifts Earth, the people of these nations will earn some respect and fear.) The rep and H.F. go to the specific person or handful of people who played a *key and obvious role in the demonic leader's demise or defeat.* If the killing blow was a backstab or magic spell that nobody witnessed, or only a few supernatural beings saw, there is no reputation or Horror Factor! Likewise, just because a character was part of the attack and got in a few licks, does not mean he gets a reputation boost unless he contributed heavily or very visibly to the defeat, or landed the killing blow or delivered an impressive assault.

Base Horror Factor (H.F.): Nine. Requires Lesser supernatural Minions of Hell to roll an H.F. of 9 or higher to save vs Horror Factor. A failed roll means they suffer from Horror Factor by simply realizing who they face in combat and momentarily freeze in terror; the usual H.F. penalties apply. This gives the heroes with the reputation an advantage in initial combat, but this rep can also be used to intimidate lesser minions as the heroes have a +10% bonus to intimidation/trust/impress rolls and +10% to the Interrogation skill rolls against *lesser supernatural beings.*

Reduce the Horror Factor for reputation *by half* against Greater Demons/Deevils and other leaders of Hell that are of equally or greater power to the one defeated by the character(s).

No H.F. is applicable when facing any *Demon/Deevil Lords, Lords of Hell,* or the *Supreme Ruler of Hades or Dyval, gods or Alien Intelligences.*

Mortals, dragons and other creatures of magic are not that impressed; *no Horror Factor* applies to them.

Additional H.F. bonus based on the rank and power level of the leader slain: If the demonic leader slain was especially powerful or infamous, add the bonus below to the H.F. base of 9.

Hell Lord/Overlord +4

Prince/Princess/Regent +3

Duke/Marquis/Sub-Regent/Warlord or Infamous +2

Master/Sovereign/Captain or Greater Demon/Deevil *of Renown* +1

Note: The bonuses are cumulative, but if more powerhouse Minions of Hell are destroyed by the same person or people in the future, *each subsequent bonus is half* that listed above, round down. A half bonus point does not count until another half point is earned to make one full point.

Other Horror Factor Bonuses for some Rifts Earth Forces: An extra H.F. bonus applies to the Horror Factor reputation of the following iconic O.C.C.s/R.C.C.s listed below, because they already have a bit of a reputation to begin with. Only applies when the character(s) slay a high-ranking demon or Deevil leader of Hell as described above.

+1 H.F. to Combat Cyborgs (any).

+2 H.F. to CS Hellbuster Combat Cyborgs.

+2 H.F. to CS Hell Fighter Knights and NG Gunwolf.

+1 H.F. to CS Juicers (and all Juicers and Crazies).

+1 H.F. to CS Psi-Battalion Squads (and the most powerful psychics).

+1 H.F. to CS SAMAS (any) and NG power armor.

+1 H.F. to Cyber-Knights.

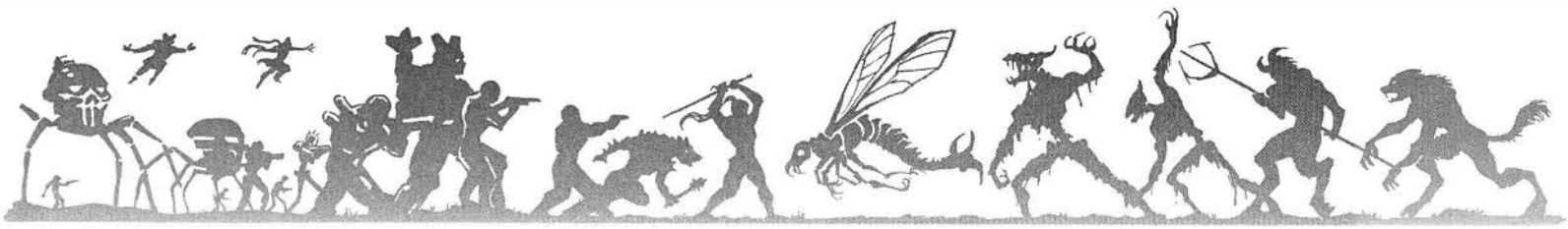
+1 H.F. to Demon Slayers (any type), CS, Sunaj, and True Atlanteans.

+1 H.F. to Glitter Boys (any).

+1 H.F. to Native American Shaman (any).

+1 H.F. to Native American Warrior Class (any).

+2 H.F. to Lemurians in Bio-Armor (any) and Anti-Monsters of South America.



+1 to Stormspire/Federation of Magic Automatons (any) and Conjurers.

Note: Federation of Magic Automatons use their existing Horror Factor plus the bonus listed above. Forces and technology from around the world very similar to those noted above, get similar bonuses. G.M. discretion. Practitioners of magic are not included for a bonus, because though they wield knowledge and power, demons and Deevils do not consider them warriors and do not respect them. Another example of underestimating mortals and brains over brawn.

Target Hell Pits

Internal CS intelligence and external intelligence have confirmed that Hell Pits are the Minions of Hell's *greatest threat* and *weakest link*. While Hell Pits serve as heavily populated enemy base camps with the terrible purpose of opening permanent Rifts directly between Earth and the planes of Hell, the Pits are also a huge vulnerability for the invaders. Hell Pits are rooted in one place. They require defense which demons/Deevils are not great at, tie up troops and other resources, and most importantly, because the dimensional bleed is so strong at these locations, slaying any demon or Deevil on or within range of a Hell Pit results in a *permanent death* which there is no returning from. Killing a demon or Deevil onsite at a Hell Pit means the monster is dead and gone. Forever. Its cursed life essence does NOT return to life back in its Hell. There is no rebirth. This is a permanent way to exterminate supernatural beings from Hades and Dyval, which makes targeting leaders, and any demon or Deevil, at Hell Pits all the more important. Some call it a "godsend."

Targeting Hell Pits and the evil supernatural beings defending them and working onsite are among the most dangerous of strategies to employ, but the most effective. This is one more reason why mortal slaves are usually forced into making the Hell Pits rather than demons. But that's another weakness of the Pits that enables CS forces to engage and take down supernatural foes while liberating captives and slaves forced to work in the Hell Pits.

Coalition troops in small Special Forces groups are being dispatched to every known Hell Pit in North America on a regular basis. Meanwhile, other teams are constantly in search of new constructions. When a Hell Pit is found, they engage in all manner of sabotage and targeted attacks to, **a)** stop or slow the progress of the Hell Pit's completion by any and all means, **b)** eliminate top leaders, and **c)** take down any demons and Deevils. The ultimate goal of constant harassment and sabotage is to force the Hell Minions to abandon the construction of that particular Hell Pit. (**Note:** As a precaution, abandoned Hell Pits are further defiled, all Blood Pillars smashed to pieces, and the Pit filled in.)

An effective campaign of Hell Pit harassment requires as much intelligence gathering as possible, such as identifying the leaders and taskmasters, defenses and dangers, enemy strengths and numbers, priority targets, enemy weapons and equipment, fortifications, the vulnerability of the Hell Pit, and what additional forces may be on their way. The primary goal is to stop the construction of all Hell Pits. The secondary goal, to permanently destroy as many hell spawned leaders as possible. Everything else, even scattering or destroying additional enemy forces, is a bonus.

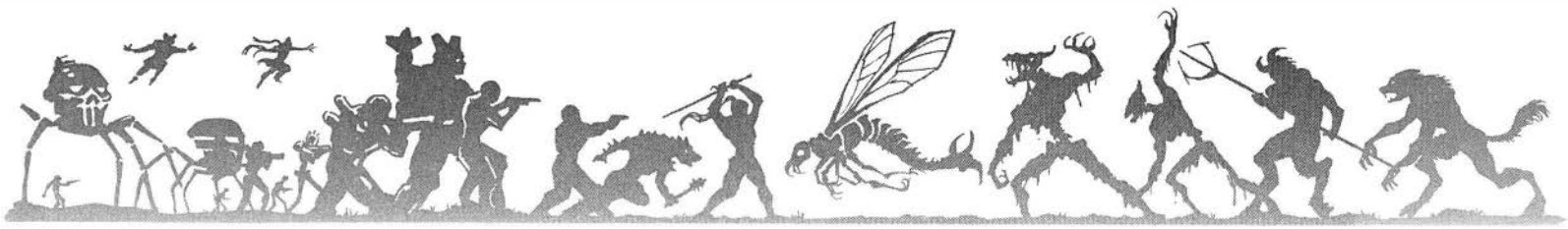
CS Intimidation Against the Demonic

The Coalition is well acquainted with the power of propaganda. After analysis of enemy battle tactics, Joseph Prosek II, the head of CS Propaganda, presented a plan to intimidate and rattle the Minions of Hell by using many of the enemies' own fear tactics against them. Both demon and Deevil legions display large banners. Many hang severed heads and human bodies from pikes, trees, walls, and towers, as well as wear them around their necks and bodies like jewelry and from their vehicles, Netherbeasts and war steeds. The Minions of Hell also smear the blood of their enemies on their vehicles, armor, bodies and faces. All of it designed to horrify and unnerve their mortal enemies.

Joseph Prosek II has recommended that the Coalition Army use similar tactics. CS troops are encouraged to display tattered enemy standards, upside down, indicating defeat, paint defiant and heroic images and words on their robots, vehicles and armor with paint or the blood of demons, and even mount the severed heads of their mortal minions on their vehicles and on pikes, hanging their dead bodies from trees and the like, just as the Minions of Hell do. All of this serves to disparage their supernatural enemy. According to Joseph, it sends the message that: "We – the Coalition Army and Heroes of Humanity – do NOT fear you or respect you. We spit in your face and we shall destroy you." This enrages supernatural beings and takes them out of their game. ("Who do these puny mortals think they are?!")

Characters with the skills *Intelligence* or *Lore: Demons and Monsters* combined with *Art* or *Wardrobe* are the most capable of "dressing up" vehicles, robots, power armor, cyborgs and body armor with imagery that is sure to inflame and incense the demonic enemy (and inflict them with the penalties noted below). *Intelligence* and *Lore: Demon and Monsters* give the character the know-how of what will strike a negative chord and get the desired response. Art or Wardrobe skills achieve the best presentation and results from the imagery that presses the minions' emotional buttons, but anyone who uses their head and creativity should get the desired effect. All of this is cosmetic to make the armor look intimidating, insulting and degrading to the enemy. **Note:** Such displays do NOT frighten Minions of Hell, who are accustomed to such gruesome sights and who use such tactics themselves. They infuriate and insult demonkind, making them so angry and irritated that it makes them distracted and focused on punishing the humans for their insolence rather than their own defense in combat. That little bit of taking the enemy out of the zone makes them fight sloppily and provides CS soldiers (and anyone who uses this tactic) with a small advantage.

The Coalition has also taken note of the **demonic war drums** used to motivate and focus the demonic troops even when a piv-



otal leader is slain. Often one of the first tactics is to destroy the drum bearer, but that can be difficult if there are several dozen drummers. In addition, the Coalition plays the Coalition National Anthem over loudspeakers and several other approved pieces of music such as America the Beautiful, Flight of the Valkyries and other pounding music, including some pre-Rifts movie themes, that have proven to motivate its soldiers. Designated robots and vehicles blast the music through their external speakers and can be heard for several miles.

In war and competition, often the win goes to the side that has the emotional edge and mental fortitude to triumph against the enemy. "The will to win," can be a very real thing. Highly motivated people can do amazing things together. Remember the Alamo and the 300 Spartans, both of whom stood against thousands to give their people a chance. The emotional elements of combat, morale and heart, can tilt the balance toward victory in favor of one side or the other. And right now, with tactics such as this, the passion and moment rests with the Heroes of Humanity fighting to save the world – the Coalition States, NG, their allies and all people who oppose the Minions of Hell.

Will it be enough? That remains yet to be seen.

Determining CS Group Intimidation on Demons and Deevils:

Roll to save vs Horror/Anger Factor 15: Coalition or Combat Intimidation affects entire companies, battalions and armies of evil supernatural beings. Roll once to save vs CS Intimidation without any sort of modifiers; straight, natural roll only (needs a 15 or higher to save). This determines if the larger, demonic legion is fighting at their full capacity or whether morale is low and fear is running high. **Note:** The Game Master can make this roll, or let one of the player characters roll to see if the Minions of Hell are enraged and intimidated or not. A failed roll means the demonic troops succumb to Coalition/Combat Intimidation!

Penalties for CS Intimidation (applicable only to lesser evil supernatural beings: -2 on Perception Rolls (too angry), -1 to parry, dodge, and disarm, because they are focused on the insult and driven by rage/bloodlust. All future Coalition Intimidation rolls or Horror Factor (H.F.) rolls are -1 to save. **Note:** Not applicable to Greater Demons with a rank of Regent, Overlord, Demon/Deevil Lords and higher.

Duration of Penalties: Until their mortal enemy seems to become obviously unnerved, is pushed back or shows signs of retreat. **Note:** If the mortal forces are routed and retreat, Coalition Intimidation penalties instantly end.

Special Bonus for High Morale among Heroes of Humanity! The psychological aspect that Joseph Prosek II does not openly discuss is the effect this tactic also has on his own men (and allies). It really does send a defiant message AND it instills the human fighting forces with confidence against a superior and monstrous supernatural enemy. In short, it makes them feel like badasses who "can" win, despite the odds. And it sends the defiant, adrenaline-filled message: "We are not afraid of you. We are strong. We will crush you. We will win!" Bonus: +1 on Perception Rolls and +1 on initiative for confident, gung-ho troops ready to take on the Minions of Hell. Evil supernatural beings do not get such a bonus.

CS Infiltration and Sabotage

This is another tactic used by both mortals and demons. The war is an all-out battle between two rival forces of Hell, the demons of Hades and the infernals of Dyval. The conquests of Rifts Earth and other worlds are strategic moves for one side to get the upper hand over the other. So the real war is between rival bands of marauding supernatural beings, not war against humanity itself as painted by Emperor Prosek. And humans can use that to their advantage. We and our planet are just additional playing pieces in the much bigger game between the rival forces of Hell. A chess game, if you will, that has erupted into fisticuffs, and turned into interdimensional war sweeping parts of the Megaverse.

Since each side in the Minion War hates the other more than anything else, cunning and careful humans and D-Bees can play one side against the other, as well as create dissension among them.

This is not as easy as it sounds. First, having solid intelligence on the respective enemy forces is key. Knowing their exact position and plan, and knowing it up to the minute takes exact coordination and timing. Once these details are available, however, they can be used to instigate conflict between the two. Coalition forces can leak enemy troop movement and even plant false plans or evidence to get one side to move upon the other at a particular time and place. The CS can then just let them beat on each other or strike after one side proves victorious, but is already weakened and/or distracted. Instigating battles between the Minions of Hell can also work as a diversion while Coalition forces strike elsewhere, or rescue prisoners, or steal a powerful magic artifact, strike to assassinate a powerful leader, or shut down a Hell Pit.

Just as demons and Deevils play upon our fears and desires, the CS has found they can often instigate combat or get the enemy to take foolish chances by shaming them, suggesting they are afraid, that their enemy is too strong or cunning, or by appealing to their vanity. ("Only a great leader like you could pull off a raid or attack like that.") Appealing to their demon/Deevil greed and lust for glory and power are also effective. ("The Warlord who can pull this off will be remembered forever as the greatest of Generals." Or gain great reward, etc.)

And because demons and Deevils, especially the latter, are so conniving and treacherous, it is easy to plant the seeds of distrust and paranoia to foil a plan or create suspicion and betrayal from within their own group. ("Huh? That's not what so and so said to that other guy? Which guy? I don't know. All of you Devilkins look the same to us, sorry. But he told him something entirely different. Or that he was the one responsible for victory, or the one deserving of the reward, promotion, etc. Oh, I shouldn't have said that. Please don't tell him. He'll ... he'll hurt me for telling you this. What? It is you I should fear? Of course, master.") Similarly, demons/Deevils are suckers for praise and hero worship. ("I am honored to serve you, my Lord. It is clear you are the brains

of this operation and I want to be on the winning side.") And once confidence is won, the mortal(s) can try to create discord and provoke infighting or sabotage from within. Some demons and Deevils become particularly attached to their "pet humans," and go to great lengths to protect them. And because they underestimate mortals, they are likely to speak of important matters in front of them without concern that they can use the information against them.

The most dangerous aspect of this tactic is that the mortal operative(s) must get close to a particular demon/Deevil leader or group, meaning an undercover or infiltration operation. Should the demons/Deevils being conned and manipulated catch wise of the deceit before our heroes succeed in their mission, there will be hell to pay. Moreover, as a secret, undercover op, the mortals involved may be regarded with hate and targeted for retribution by their fellow humans who don't know they are undercover, but think they are traitors helping the enemy. It is a dangerous game, but one that can have dramatic effect if played just right.

The enemy of my enemy is my friend ... for now

As noted earlier, Coalition forces are spread across North America, hundreds and thousands of miles away from home. Out in the savage wilderness, Coalition field troops are likely to encounter D-Bees, magic users, rogue heroes and mercenaries whom they would normally consider enemies of the Coalition States. However, the extreme circumstances of the Minion War may create temporary alliances with such groups that Coalition Dead Boys would not ordinarily consider. However, shifting attitudes, grudging respect and desperate times make "unofficial" and "temporary" alliances acceptable on an ever increasing basis. This is especially true when the "old enemy" exhibits uncommon bravery and skill, or offers the means to bring down the greater demonic enemy or save lives. Being so far away from home and from those who might judge them harshly, many CS Dead Boys and their officers choose to do whatever is necessary to win and/or survive, rather than follow the letter of Coalition doctrine. This is not to say attitudes will be changed forever, or that Coalition troops embrace all D-Bees and mages as allies or comrades, but temporary alliances, especially with those they come to know and trust, are going to happen, and occur often.

Game Note: This is a wonderful opportunity for role-playing, so use it. The **Enemy Alliance Disposition Table,** below, is a quick way to determine how specific characters, be they a player character, an NPC, or the general attitude of an entire army of CS or non-Coalition NPCs feel about their old enemies who may now be needed as a necessary ally.

Enemy Alliance Disposition Table

This table is created to be used for Coalition and non-Coalition groups alike. Since the player characters are likely to be one of the groups, they must decide among themselves, but for NPC (Non-Player Character) groups controlled by the Game Master, please feel free to make use of this table or select the option that makes the most sense for the story you are trying to tell. This is a great opportunity for some solid role-playing. Don't pass it up.

Roll percentile dice. G.M.s may select the one that is most appropriate for an NPC individual or group.

01-03% Don't trust them. Tension is high. The character or group doesn't like or trust this old nemesis, but they have a greater enemy to worry about. As a result, they try to ignore the other's presence by acting as if they were not there and don't matter. There is no communication or cooperation between them. When conflict breaks out, all bets are off as to whether one side or the other will lift a finger to help the other. Odds are, the answer is no. Both continue to work toward their own agenda, clashing only if the two are working at cross purposes. The slightest misunderstanding could send these two groups at each other's throats, Minion War be damned.

04-07% Go about your business. Non-aggression pact. This character or group has no intention of working with the old enemy for any reason. However, given the circumstances, they will not attack them either. Both may have similar goals and objectives but working together is out of the question. The other group is allowed to do what they have to do and will not be attacked unless they attack first or their actions conflict with the group's current objectives.

08-10% Benefit of the doubt. Intelligence sharing. I don't know enough about them to make any decision, positive or negative.

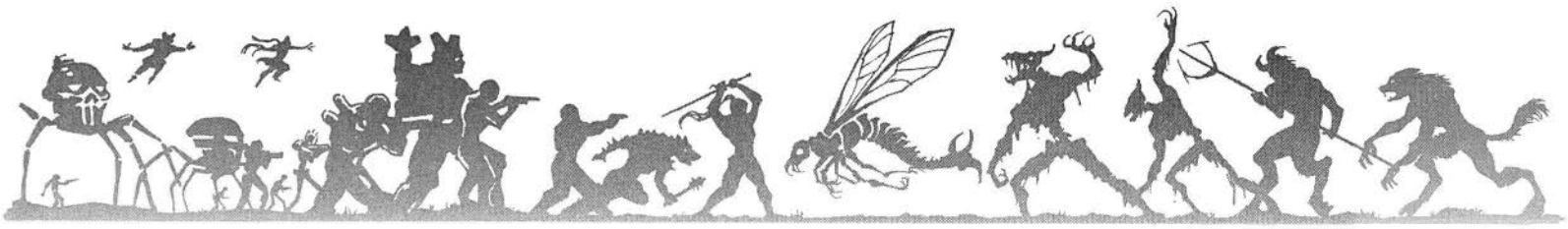
The character or group is not yet ready to work with these former enemies, but sees the benefit of sharing intelligence. They are likely to hold back key pieces of intel, just in case, until the intention of the other group is determined to be honorable. If the information proves to be reliable, or the two end up helping each other out, a relationship may form. This can lead to a temporary alliance.

11-14% Testing the waters. I don't like it, but our chances for success are better if we pool our resources.

The character or group is still feeling things out. It seems wrong to work with an old enemy or fearsome boogeyman (the CS, mages, D-Bees, dragon, etc., as the case may be), so working together in any capacity is a test to see how things turn out. Suspicion and worry runs high. If all goes well it could turn into a legitimate and continuing alliance. If they go bad or perceive things to have gone bad, they may never trust this group or people like them again. For the temporary alliance, risk may determine how far each group is willing to go to work with and help the other.

15-18% Ulterior motives or callous disregard. Sure, let us use these jokers for our benefit. If they die, what did we lose? Nothing. I mean, it is only the Coalition, D-Bees, mages, or whomever as the case may be.

The group or individual agrees to an alliance but only because they see their former enemy as expendable cannon fodder whose presence should give themselves an advantage. No or little regard



for the other makes the risk of teaming up, negligible. After all, it is not like anyone is going to trust them or care about their well-being. As such, no extraordinary effort is likely to be given to them. HOWEVER, if the expendables are courageous or loyal, it may move that individual or others in the group to come to their aid.

19-21% The enemy is the enemy! An alliance? Are you kidding? I would sooner submit to the demon hordes than work with the likes of them! No alliance is possible and there is a good chance that hostility breaks out if the issue is pressed.

22-25% I fought them at the Siege on Tolkeen. I have seen what they are capable of and I will always hate them. I don't need a reason to kill every last one of them along with the Minions of Hell. You give me a direct order to work with them, I will, but I won't like it. And don't expect me to risk my life for one of them.

26-28% I have no love for them. I've fought them many times in the past. Vile animals, but if they are willing to fight the Minions of Hell, I can tolerate their presence. Just don't ask me to like it, because I don't. And when this war is over, I hope they are next on the hit list.

29-31% Nothing is different. Yeah, I've seen courage and bravery, but that doesn't change anything. When this war is over, we will still be enemies.

32-33% I'll do what I must. I don't care what anyone says, I don't like 'em, I don't trust 'em and I hate working beside them. But I'm not stupid. We need every man and weapon at our disposal to win this fight. So yeah, if we need to turn a blind eye and work with these goons, let's do it. But if one of them makes a hostile move toward me or one of my brothers, I'm wasting him.

34-37% Seen enough to know these guys are capable in the field. So I'm willing to fight right along side of them, but they still creep me out.

38-40% The end justifies the means. Hate to say it, but we need allies like these, at least for now. When this war ends, it will be a different story. For now, we're in this together.

41-43% The big equalizer (CS firepower or magic/magic weapons as the case may be). Seen enough to know it gives our boys a big advantage so, I guess we accept it/them and hope it doesn't come back to haunt us later.

44-47% The rules don't matter. Ain't none of us out here going to survive this and see home again, so the rules don't matter. Not out here. All that matters is we stop the demons/Deevils. If that means working with D-Bees, mages (or the Coalition Army), or the Devil himself, I'm okay with it.

48-51% I don't know what to think anymore. I'll let them sort out the politics back home. Out here, if you oppose the Minion War, that's good enough for me. I don't care who you are, what you are or whether you use tech, magic or psionics.

52-54% You've got my back, I've got yours. Sure they're monsters, but you have to give them credit; in a fight, they're as good as anyone, even us. Teaming up for the greater good seems smart to me.

55-58% I've seen these guys fight. Maybe there are some bad apples, but they are heroes in my book. I'm willing to fight with them any time.

59-61% I'm done asking questions. If you have my back, I've got yours. No questions asked. Let's finish this and go home.

62-65% We're in this together. We lose this war, there will be nothing to go home to. That makes us all brothers under our armor. I don't care where you come from or what you believe. Let's send these demons and Deevils back to Hell.

66-70% Enlightened. I was always told they were the scum of the earth, but now I know better. I don't know if they're as good as us, or whether we'll ever find peace between us when this is all over, but I'm glad they are on our side in this war. I welcome them in any battle.

71-74% Good is good. I was led to believe they were dangerous and evil. Not the warriors I have fought alongside of. They're all heroes in my book and I'm proud to fight with them.

75-78% New point of view. All my life they have been the enemy. Not anymore. Not ever again.

79-82% No difference. Out here, I don't see differences no more. I see brothers in arms. If you're willing to fight and die for me and mine, I'm willing to do the same for you. End of story.

83-85% We all bleed. We all have families. Share the same hopes and dreams. United we stand. Divided we fall. That's the reality out here. Live or die, we fight the demons and Deevils by any means necessary. Whatever it takes. If that makes me a traitor to my people back in the world, so be it. You don't know crap until you've walked in my boots one day out here. One day.

86-89% Respect. I have nothing but respect and admiration for them. Fight together? Anytime. Anywhere. Against anyone.

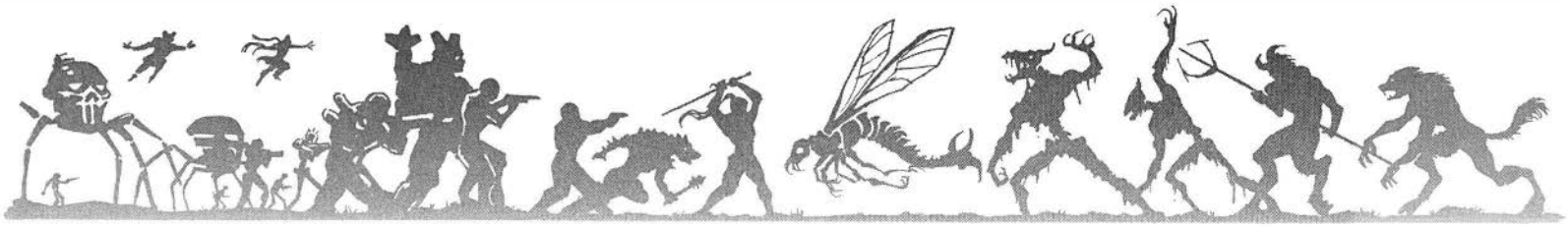
90-93% Victory. I like them and feel more confident with them fighting at our side. We are stronger together than at odds. This is the road to victory.

94-96% Common ground. After what I've seen. The things I have done. I think I respect them more than I do us. I will never think of them as the faceless enemy again.

97-00% A better way. We fight together to save our world. After this we have to find a better way. There is no going back to the way things were.

Humans are Underestimated, Use That to Your Advantage

A common failing among almost all supernatural beings is their inability to accept D-Bees and mortals in general, and *human beings* in particular, as capable adversaries. This is good news for mortals because it means their supernatural opponents regularly and consistently underestimate and misjudge what people are capable of accomplishing. While this may sound trite or insignificant, it is not. Being underestimated gives humanity a tremendous upper hand that can be used against the Minions of Hell over and over again, because they never learn. For human soldiers, it has been the way of organized warfare since the dawn



of civilization, a practice of methodical, systemized violence that we have been perfecting for generations. CS forces exploit the monsters' propensity to underestimate us on a regular basis in setting up feints, ambushes, surprise attacks, traps, and displays of faux weakness or confusion to get the upper hand on the enemy.

By contrast, Coalition soldiers are warned to NEVER underestimate the enemy, pointing out that the demons and, especially the *Deevils*, are masters of lies, deception, and trickery. In fact, except for Special Forces and Military Intelligence operatives, Coalition soldiers are told to never believe anything a Deevil or demon tells them, as it is probably all lies intended to manipulate them or the situation to the enemy's advantage. The CS has a firm, take no chances, "kill or be killed" policy when it comes to the Minions of Hell – no prisoners. All supernatural beings and monsters affiliated with either of the legions from Hell are to be exterminated with extreme prejudice. Do not imprison, interrogate, or negotiate with the enemy. Destroy them utterly. The only exceptions are when a designated special forces group or a high ranking officer says otherwise and takes possession of the enemy, but even this is exceptionally rare and discouraged.

The Human Factor is Our Strength

Another simple strategy encouraged by the Coalition Army is the ability to be adaptive and think on the fly. Humans can out think and surprise the Minions of Hell whenever we put our minds to it and find the courage to take action. They underestimate humans, but we must not make that same mistake. Do not underestimate the cunning and wickedness of demonkind. They are supernatural and magically powerful, but not unstoppable. The Coalition Army and its allies can stop this full-press invasion from Hell, provided they can muster the will and not give up.

Demonkind conquers and rules by fear, intimidation and raw physical power. Humans and most D-Bees are flexible, inventive, and empowered by a range of emotions and beliefs that go well beyond those of demons. We adapt and adjust. We recognize opportunity and seize the moment, finding a way to survive, to win, and are not afraid to challenge ourselves. We find inspiration in the words and deeds of others, in artwork, in song, in life and the people and world around us. And it makes us more powerful than the Minions of Hell would ever believe.

Coalition leaders have come to understand and accept this simple truth. (So have the warriors of Lazlo and other places.) Now, they need to make their fighting forces accept and believe it too. From officer and special forces to the lowliest Dead Boy grunt, they need to believe they have what it takes to win. To some outsiders, this rhetoric may sound like human supremacist ballyhoo used to inspire and whip up the fighting spirit – which to some degree it is – but it is also the truth. Human imagination and adaptability give us an edge over the supernatural enemies from Hell.

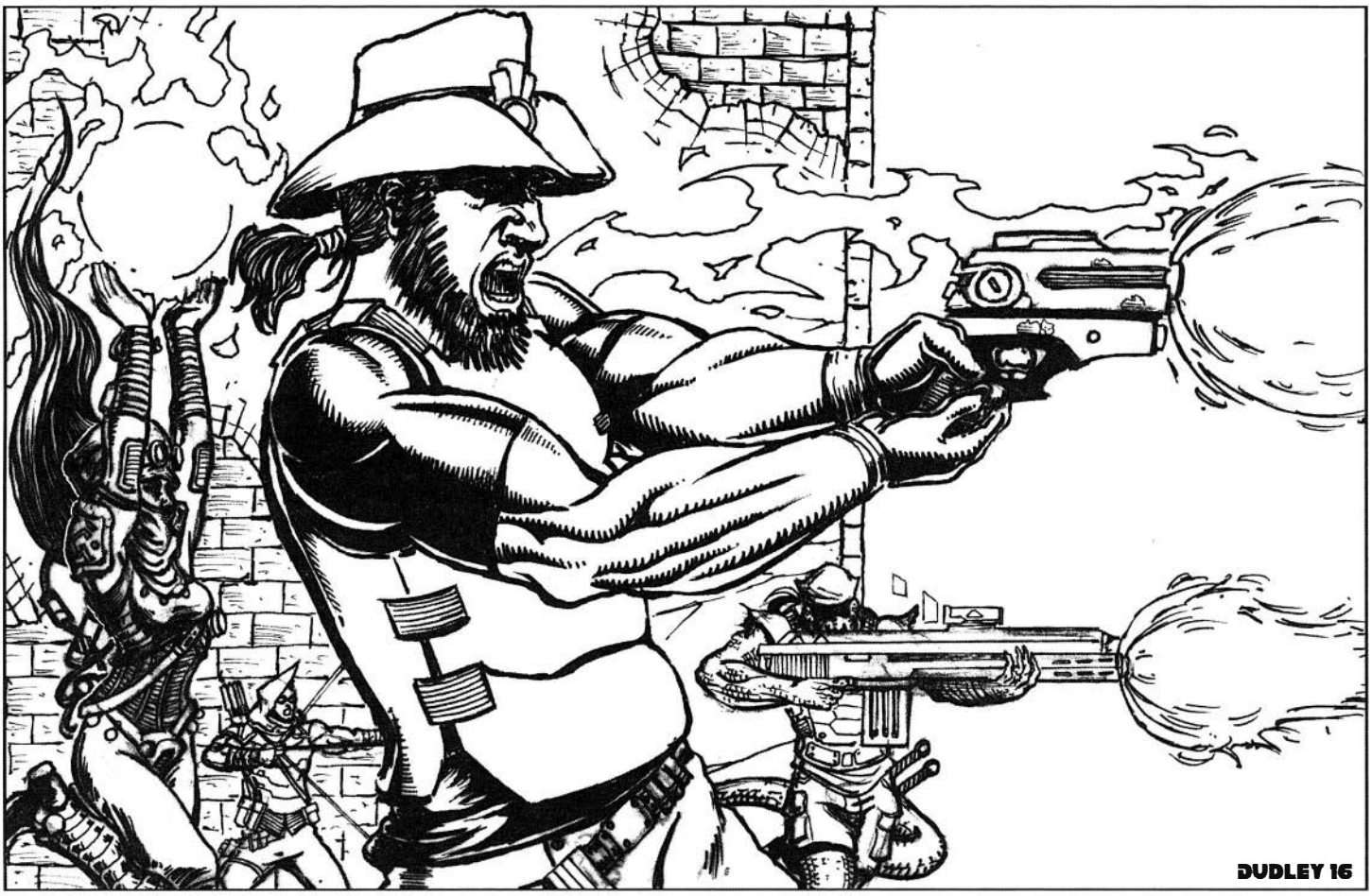
Many evil supernatural creatures, especially demons and Deevils, are incredibly cunning, terrifying, and merciless monsters, but they are rigid in their thinking and driven by instincts that get in their own way. Change, true change, is impossible for them. They are more like a chaotic force of nature than a human being. Always tormentors and destroyers, never builders, artisans or visionaries, the Minions of Hell are incapable of inspiring anything but fear and dread. They force the environment to conform to them, inevitably turning lush paradises into desolate wastelands. Scarring and destroying everything they touch. People are not enlisted or their loyalties won so much as hijacked, enslaved and forced to obey and conform, or else.

Demonkind cannot win a people's love, trust or respect. They believe respect is earned through fear and pure physical domination, so they can never understand the human spirit or our propensity – no, *unbridled need* – to imagine, build, create, explore and find joy. They hate us for it, and it is why they always underestimate humans and all mortals. Just as we can never truly understand supernatural evil, it cannot understand us. It is why mortals live and thrive and find laughter and happiness in our short life spans, while demonkind has survived for countless millennia without change, without love or happiness, and lives in the shadows, forever clinging to misery and darkness.

Campaigns of conquest and all-out war are a rarity for supernatural beings. It is out of their wheelhouse. It is not something they are good at. And though their war campaigns may last for centuries, they usually end badly for demonkind, inevitably forced to recede back into the shadows from whence they came.

All of this is why the Minions of Hell and other evil supernatural beings operate on a more primal level, and rarely use or develop advanced technology, not even weapons. Yes, they may have minions, and mortal soldiers and slaves with magic or technology, but demonkind seldom learns or uses any of it themselves. It's not in their nature. It is too alien and repugnant – the creations and tools of lesser beings such as humans. When they do, it is very limited, easily abandoned and always twisted and built upon dark magicks. Instead, demonic beings destroy and mock such invention, and force weaker creatures to bow down before them and forsake their science and culture. The vast majority of evil supernatural beings, demons and Deevils among them, are trapped in a rut, unable to think outside the box or ever truly change their ways. It is like asking a bird to forget how to fly. It can't. There are some rare exceptions to the rule, of course, but these standouts are exceedingly rare and often subjected to ridicule and either become outcast pariahs or are destroyed for failing to conform.

Humankind's ability to question the world around them, study it, learn from it, imagine new possibilities, adapt and change has always been its greatest strength. Humans learn and modify their behavior and technology to survive and transform their environment. We see this throughout human history and across the Megaverse, time and time again. And it is a trait the Coalition military encourages, not just in its officers, but within all of its soldiers. Human resilience, imagination and passion are the X-factors that may win the Minion War.

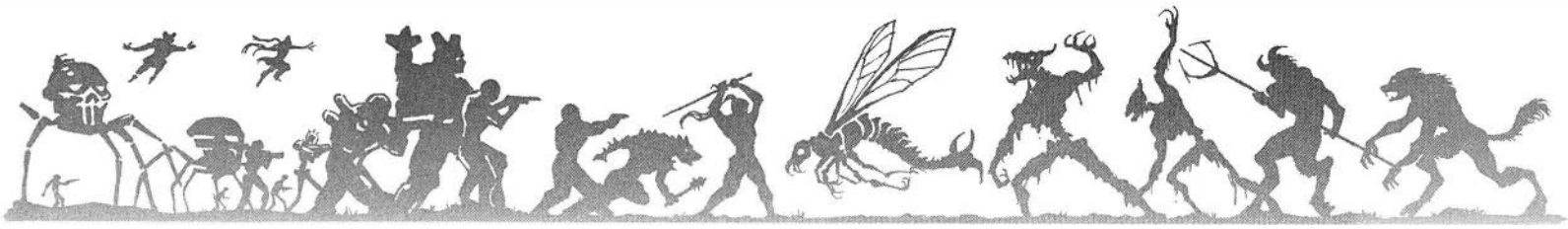


Bring the Fight to the Enemy

The Coalition and their allies have learned that the key to victory against the demonic siege upon Rifts Earth is to take the fight to the enemy. While conventional wisdom is to dig in and hold the line against demonkind, it is best to take the battle to them. For one, they are always surprised by the audacity of mortals who dare take the initiative and attack them. Thus, the defenses of the Minions of Hell are usually shabby at best. This enables small squads and platoons to slip behind enemy lines, even demon/Deevil encampments, with surprising success. It is dangerous, but doable. Defensive walls are often nonexistent and the perimeters around camps are shabbily protected by sparsely placed guard posts or lookout towers, and small patrols of 1D4+1 mortal henchmen, Sub-Demons, Host or Lesser Demons/Deevils. Patrols that can be distracted and circumvented by a careful and stealthy enemy. Such sloppy defenses are standard, including at Hell Pits which are pivotal to the successful conquest of Earth by the Minions of Hell. The arrogance of demonkind knows no bounds, and should be exploited at every possible turn. And because they underestimate mortals, the enemy never seems to learn, and repeats the same mistakes.

The arrogance and supreme confidence of demons and Deevils means they seldom recognize the true level of threat mortal forces represent. Often sending out insufficient forces to deal with the "mere mortals." This can be turned to the advantage of human and D-Bee aggressors by whittling down the enemy as well as setting traps, ambushes, and dividing the enemy force to weaken them. Similarly, while demons and Deevils are quick to answer any act of aggression, they may not recognize the true objective of an attack force. While the rest fight and lose themselves in the excitement of battle and winning, small squads (the player characters?) have a good chance of sneaking through enemy defenses and successfully engaging in targeted strikes, acts of sabotage, seek and destroy operations, rescue missions and vital reconnaissance/intelligence gathering! Bloodlust and the driving need to show up mortals makes the Minions of Hell susceptible to distraction and bait and switch tactics in one area long enough for humans to blow up parts of a Hell Pit, or assassinate a key leader, rescue prisoners, steal a magical artifact, etc., elsewhere. The monsters do not realize the true purpose of the raid until it is too late, or the espionage operation is exposed. Even then, the Minions of Hell may be slow or inadequate in addressing the new threat, and are likely to press the battle elsewhere to punish the impudent mortals rather than accomplish any real strategic objective. Such foolish bravado and pride-fueled revenge battles may further expend the demons' resources, or show their hand concerning future plans, magical weapons or secret combat troops. Likewise, the supremely confident demons and Deevils are prone to brag. Under the right circumstances, any of them, including the smarter leaders and Greater Demon/Deevils, may reveal details best kept secret, because they do not fear humans or believe they can possibly stop them.

Taking the battle to them is almost always a winning strategy, because these are all mistakes the denizens of Hell make over and over again, especially when challenged and pressed by mortal fighting forces.



Human life is precious. Fight smart ... and live to fight another day

Though unavoidable, probably the least preferred strategy is a direct confrontation with army versus army. As reprehensible as some perceive Coalition attitudes to be, the Coalition States truly cares about saving human lives. To this end, the Coalition Army tries to fight smart and not recklessly gamble lives in direct confrontations. Whenever they can, the CS uses Special Forces and specialized strike teams (the player characters?) to try to hobble the enemy before any major confrontation. The CS commits to large engagements on a regular basis, but always tries to fight smart and prevent loss of human life. The Coalition tries to use every advantage they have, starting with their superior technology, long-ranged weaponry, and air strikes and bombardment to soften up the enemy before directly engaging. Long-range bombardments target large weapons, vehicles, power plants, magic portals or rituals, and large concentrations of demonic troops, before sending in ground and power armor forces.

When the ground troops move in, they are usually preceded by legions of Skelebots interspersed with Dog Boys, Combat Cyborgs, power armor troops, giant robots and armored vehicles. SAMAS and other Fly Boys provide troop support, and cover, and clear the skies of demonic fliers such as Demon Bats, Demon Flies, Gargoyles, Harpies and others. The new Cyborg initiative includes the Hellbuster armor and new bionic systems specifically designed for fighting the supernatural. Fallen and dismembered soldiers, including Juicers and demolished cyborgs, are recovered and given the option to return to combat, rebuilt as a CS Combat Cyborg. Most choose being rebuilt and returned to combat. Never in the history of the CS has the military recycled and reissued its own men to this degree. But this is no ordinary war.

The rebuilding and recycling of troops is one of the Coalition's smartest ideas for two reasons. One, most fallen soldiers desire to rejoin their combat brethren and hand out some payback to the monsters who tried to kill them and have killed so many others. Two, immortal supernatural beings count on the attrition of war, especially when it comes to the slaughter of mortal soldiers. The Coalition's ability to rescue and quickly rebuild fallen soldiers via bionics means they can send the same soldier against the enemy two, three, or four times to keep their combat forces at maximum capacity. Moreover, those who come back, rebuilt as a Combat Cyborg, are already combat trained, and have firsthand experience and knowledge about fighting the Minions of Hell. Making them more capable and highly motivated to destroy the enemy.

Human life is precious. All human life. So the Coalition tries to avoid wholesale destruction of even nonaligned towns and villages. The Coalition High Command believes in the sanctity of human life, and also knows that all of North America, and perhaps the world, is watching them. They recognize that how they conduct themselves in this moment in history may have a profound impact on their future. As a propaganda tool used well, the Coalition's heroics could bring more human communities clamoring to join the Coalition States, and make their vision of a unified North America as a bastion of humanity a reality. Recklessly destroying towns and villages because a D-Bee was spotted is not acceptable. In fact, for the first time in a long while, the Coalition Army is concentrating on a single enemy and not trying to wipe out everyone who is not human. Unsanctioned actions where human life is in severe jeopardy will result in swift consequences from Coalition commanders. Court martial with a dishonorable discharge for most incidents of reckless conduct and unnecessary endangerment of human life, or public execution for those responsible for a massacre of humans. Collateral damage is unavoidable in war, but all reasonable caution to preserve and protect human life is to be applied. This, of course, goes hand in hand with the message of being *heroes of humanity.* A message that the overwhelming majority of Dead Boys and raw recruits have embraced completely.

The Minion War for the CS is a war of survival against an inhuman, supernatural foe. And everyone (yes, grudgingly even practitioners of magic and D-Bees) who stand on the side of the Coalition States are heroes. Every Dead Boy soldier, merc and mage believes he is a hero fighting for a just cause.

Specialized Ammunition

Ninety students filled the seats in the little lecture hall. All in their mid- to late twenties. All with the short hair of active-duty soldiers. And all staring straight ahead. Their lecturer was a grizzled sergeant from the ***Department of Special Divisions****, someone who had been just like them once, before serving a decade fighting demons and monsters on half a dozen battlefronts. He bore the scars and cybernetic replacement parts that were the hallmark of a Coalition veteran.*

"Now y'all might already be familiar with these," he held up a silver-tipped rail gun round, glinting dully under the fluorescent lights, "but did you know that some supernatural creatures are vulnerable to iron, or bone? Know the difference. Study the identification profiles your officers gave you – they'll keep you alive.

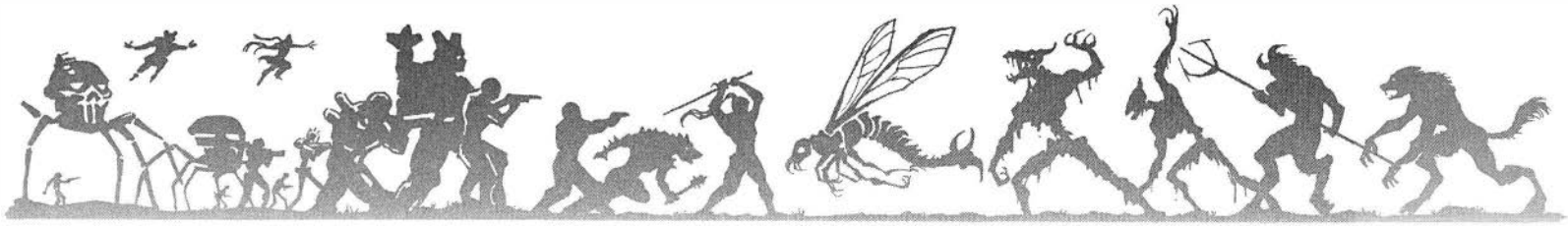
"And of course, if nothing else works, you can always just kill 'em. Sever the head, find the heart or brain and destroy it. These things are monsters. There is nothing human about 'em. They wouldn't give you a chance if they were in your place. Don't think twice about it. Kill the bastards, make sure they're dead, and move on to the next one.

"You'll know when you sent one back to the plane of Hell, 'cause as stinkin' demons, they'll discorporate. You know, their body will turn to ash, or flies or worms or bubbles, or some such. That's great. Less of a mess for us to clean up after. That ain't the case at Hell Pits, so back to making sure they are dead and stay that way.

"Study your notes on these bastards, know your ammo and special weapons, and watch each other's backs. It will get you through this.

"Remember, you are a Dead Boy. That means you are a weapon."

– Sgt. Ryan McDaniel, DSD



Every Coalition soldier is familiar with silver or wood-tipped bullets, shotgun shells and rail gun ammunition, necessary for fighting vampires and highly effective against certain other supernatural creatures. Rarer, though, are bone and iron ammunition, kept in small stockpiles for dealing with particular species of demon or Deevil.

Bone-tipped ammunition is made using shards of cattle or hog bones embedded in normal lead projectiles, while **iron ammo** simply replaces the lead bullets or individual shot with iron equivalents.

Rail guns might be high-powered, modern weapons, but they are also far too bulky to be carried as a backup. **The C-5 Pump Pistol**, however, has a range of alternative ammo that makes it effective against demons, vampires and other enemies, and also available as *12 gauge shotgun shells.* Troops are generally permitted to carry **sawed-off or military-style shotguns** as secondary weapons, especially if their officers expect to be fighting demons rather than non-supernatural enemies. Many experienced soldiers carry some kind of non-energy backup weapon no matter what their standing orders might be.

Silver-plated bullets, swords, knives and other melee weapons have been manufactured and stockpiled by both the **Coalition States** and **Northern Gun** for some time, enabling NG to continue to provide a nice supply of silver weapons and ammo to the CS without fear of interruption, while ramping up manufacturing to keep the CS and its allies well supplied in the precious metal. It will take months, if ever, before the Minions of Hell even consider stopping the manufacture of such weapons and ammunition.

Uranium rounds from Triax are on their way but it is likely to take a month before the first shipment arrives. Free Quebec, who has been trading with the NGR (New German Republic),has a fair supply on hand, but will run out within a few weeks. This weapon, though proven effective against demonkind because it is an effective countermeasure to their *bio-regenerative powers*, also has lasting and undesirable environmental side-effects.

Unconventional weapons and magic. Though the Coalition Army will NEVER sanction the use of magic and alien technology by their troops for any reason whatsoever (a court-martialable offense!), desperate times require desperate measures. CS brass, for now, have adopted a "don't ask, don't tell," policy regarding the use of such weapons. As long as the alien tech or magic items are not openly displayed or their use outspokenly endorsed, the brass is turning a blind eye to such "misconduct."

It is inevitable that some percentage of Coalition soldiers and especially special forces and small units out in the wilderness and associating with non-CS mixed troops (i.e. D-Bees and mages), away from their superiors, will resort to using Techno-Wizard devices, Splugorth magic weapons and whatever it takes to survive or win, especially if they think they can get away with it. After all, a quick-thinking Dead Boy caught with a TW gun or magic weapon can claim he wasn't using it at all, but bringing it in to his superiors to send back to the infamous *Black Vault.* Under the circumstances, the officer is likely to let the story go on face value, especially if the soldier and his squad have shown proven results. Moreover, as the Minion War goes on, many officers and troops in the field begin to harbor the belief that Coalition forces need to "fight fire with fire," and even encourage the unsanctioned use of unconventional arms – alien and magic weaponry – provided it never comes back to "the world," civilization. This happens with increasing frequency the longer the war lasts and as Dead Boys begin to feel more comfortable with D-Bees and magic. That said, some Coalition soldiers may be court-martialed and punished, even executed, for such actions back home in the States. Others may go MIA (missing in action) rather than return to civilization and face charges for "saving the world." **Note:** See **Shadow Factions** at the end of this section for important details about alien technology, magic weapons and help secretly provided by the Splugorth of Atlantis.

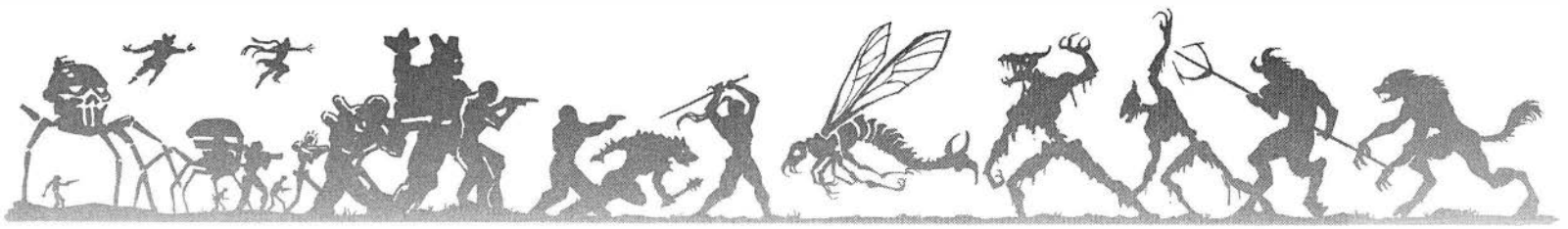
Note on Weapons of Mass Destruction. The Coalition has a fearsome arsenal of mechanized might. Few in North America can compare to the raw manpower and sheer volume of troops and materials the CS is able to field. It should come as no surprise that the Coalition has in their control a limited nuclear arsenal. Many are small-scale nukes, but the Coalition does have a few city busters at their disposal. It would seem that sending a nuke down the maw of a Hell Pit or detonating it in the midst of a massive demonic army is a *no brainer*. In fact, many of the Coalition's Generals have suggested this tactic to the Emperor.

Why then has the Coalition opted for a prolonged ground war rather than taking what seems to be the easy path to a quick victory? If only it were that easy.

First, due to the incredible bio-regenerative powers of supernatural beings, particularly Greater Demons/Deevils and Lords, it is unclear if a nuclear blast would actually destroy all the demons. Various magicks would also provide additional protection that could mitigate or negate the nuclear blast entirely. Best estimates suggest a nuclear strike would certainly annihilate the demons at ground zero, but others might survive.

Second, there is the human casualty count. Demons and Deevils use thousands of human slaves and prisoners to dig out and create the Hell Pits. A nuclear strike will certainly wipe out the human population, with deadly consequences for miles around, and remain radioactive and inhospitable for human life for decades afterward. Not only would this would create prolonged environmental damage and lasting loss of life, it would create a radiation zone that demonkind could survive and repopulate, but which would slowly and painfully kill the mortals they enslave and bring back to continue work on the Hell Pit. Thus, the demons/Deevils could continue to inhabit and build the Hell Pit while the radiation would make future sabotage and attacks on the Pit deadly for humans exposed to it without full environment protection.

Third, the more important question is, what effect would a massive release of P.P.E. from the thousands of beings, including plants and animals caught in the blast, have on the ley line nexus



where the Hell Pit is being constructed? Not just that nexus, but possibly all nexus points on the larger network of ley lines across the continent, perhaps even the globe? The last time a weapon of mass destruction was used, many believe it caused the *Great Cataclysm* and the *Coming of the Rifts.*

What might a massive release of P.P.E. do at a nexus point on Rifts Earth, today, when the ley lines are already surging with power? The answer is, nobody knows, but the consequences are too frightening to risk.

While the CS does not use magic, it has a rudimentary understanding of it. Coalition High Command knows that the energy released upon the moment of death has an impact on the flow of energy at ley lines and nexus points, and that such energy is released during some magic rituals to *open Rifts* and *summon demons.* A sudden, massive death toll in a single instant at the site of a Hell Pit, which is designed to open a dimensional portal to Hell, could very well do just that. Even if the **Hell Rift** was temporary, it could unleash many more thousands of demons/Deevils on Earth than the initial blast destroyed. And that is a best case scenario.

A worse scenario is that such a blast could spark a chain reaction along the ley line network to create a new, mini-Cataclysm with unknown effects on the nexus points, ley lines, magic and magic users, the weather and geological conditions all across the continent. It is almost certain that numerous Ley Line Storms and random Rifts would erupt with spectacular and terrible results. It might even unleash a second Great Cataclysm to sweep the globe!

In short, nobody knows what the result might be. Not even mages questioned under torture, making the use of weapons of mass destruction much too risky to even consider. Nuclear weapons are not the answer.

There are similar concerns about the use of any WMDs (weapons of mass destruction) anywhere, for fear of what the sudden surge of life energy (P.P.E.) might have even if deployed away from any nexus point or ley lines.

In traditional armed combat and gunfights, warriors may die in droves, but not at the exact same moment. Their deaths and subsequent release of P.P.E. is staggered, even if only seconds apart. They do not all die in the same instant. Those who cling to life and linger, further disperse the release of life energy, are minimizing its effects on ley lines. Even these limited bursts of battlefield P.P.E. are known to spark Ley Line Storms and random Rift activity when near a nexus (roll on the table below).

Ley Line Mass Death Table

Roll on this table whenever 500 or more people are killed/destroyed in the same moment/few seconds at a nexus point or on any ley line connected to a nexus point. **Note:** Ley Line Walkers and Rifters know how all these effects work and may be able to exploit them.

01-20% A Ley Line Storm that lasts twice as long as usual. Not only that, but a Ley Line Storm forms on each intersecting ley line on that network of ley lines and nexus points.

21-40% Massive Ley Line Storm. Damage from the various effects are double and the storm lasts for three times longer than is the norm. This storm is large and scary looking. G.M. discretion as to whether a Rift also randomly opens at the nexus point.

41-50% Energy ebbs away. The sudden release of P.P.E. causes the energy along the entire ley line (and any connecting ley lines and nexus points) to recede rather than intensify. Where this energy may be going is anyone's guess. The usual ambient energy normally found at a ley line or nexus is NOT available. Worse, the range of any spells or magical energy blasts is reduced by half. Damage is normal. It's as if the ley line (and nexus) has gone dead. The cost to open or reopen a Rift during low ebb is 50% greater than normal. Duration of the ebb is 2D6 melee rounds before the energy flow returns with a sudden surge.

51-60% Energy surge. The ranges of all spells and magical energy blasts, including those from Techno-Wizard weapons and magic items, are doubled, damage is increased by 50% and everyone (friend and foe) on the ley line is healed of 2D6 points of damage (S.D.C/Hit Points or M.D.C. as the case may be). The duration of magic spells/effects is unchanged. The cost to open or reopen a Rift during a surge is half. Duration of the surge is 2D4 melee rounds. **Note:** *Ley Line Walkers* can instantly recover 1D4x10 Hit Points/S.D.C. (or 4D6 M.D.C. if a Mega-Damage being), double for *Ley Line Rifters*, or 1D4x10 P.P.E. (1D6x10 if a Rifter), if they stop and use one full melee round (no other attack or action during that melee) to do so. *A Shifter* can summon 1D4 additional lesser beings during a ley line surge.

61-70% Pop-Up Rifts. 2D6 blue-white flashes of energy appear at random intervals along the ley line. Each lasts for 1D4 melee rounds. They shimmer for several seconds before vanishing. Anyone who steps through the shimmering wall of energy (you cannot see what lies on the other side) is instantly teleported to another location on the same ley line, stepping out of one of the other pop-up Rifts.

71-80% Transit Rift: 2D6 small Rifts appear at random intervals along the ley line. Each lasts for 1D4 melee rounds. Going through one teleports a character(s) to the next nearest ley line (01-50%) or nearest nexus point (51-00%) that is NOT actually connected to the effected ley line itself. **Note:** *Ley Line Rifters* and *Ley Line Walkers* can actually select which location the Transit Rift takes them.

81-90% Pop-Up Distortion Rifts. 1D6 large, blue-white balls of crackling energy appear at random intervals along the ley line, and affect the entire ley line and any connecting lines. Every time magic is used or a spell is cast, the effect is completely different (but something known to the spell caster; G.M. discretion) or the exact opposite of the desired result. Magic weapons and magic energy blasts inflict half damage and are the opposite of what they should be; fire/heat unleashes ice/cold, electricity/lightning is earth/dirt/rocks, ice/cold is fire, water is steam or waves of heat, lasers and other energy blasts are bolts of darkness or mist, bolts of matter are light/energy; a wall of wind or force is a wall of stone or ice, or vice versa, a spell of knowledge/sight

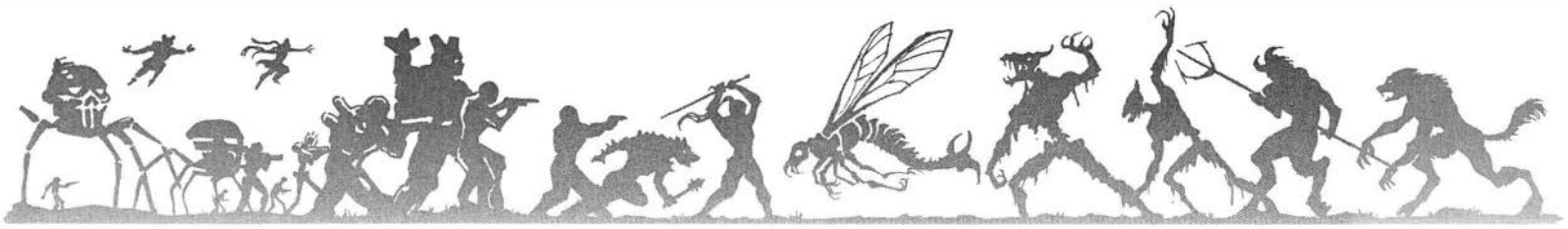
becomes confusion, a spell of healing or protection has no effect, a flight spell becomes reduced movement (10% of normal and reduce number of attacks and combat bonuses by half), a spell of pain or other harm heals (equal to half the damage it usually inflicts), and so on. Duration of the Distortion Rifts is 1D6 melee rounds. **Note:** Psychics get a clairvoyant flash of what is likely to happen next (in general) in a few minutes, or sense the greatest danger and an idea of where it is.

91-93% Rift Portal: A Rift begins to appear. If a mage works quickly, the Rift can be easily manipulated to take him and his teammates wherever he wants to go on Rifts Earth or to another world, provided it is a place he is familiar with/has been to the location before. As always with such Rifts, the final destination must be on another ley line or nexus, which may include a Hell Pit connected to the ley line or the character(s) has visited or seen (even from a distance). Costs only 100 P.P.E. to a location on the same continent or to nearby Atlantis. 200 P.P.E. to Rift to somewhere elsewhere on the globe. 350 P.P.E. to a location off-world/alien world.

94-96% Energy Exploding Rift! 4D6 Tendrils of energy erupt out of this wall of shimmering white and red energy every melee round for 1D4 rounds. The streams of energy are attracted to powerful supernatural beings and creatures of magic as if they were lightning rods; beings such as Greater Demons/Deevils, Regents and Lords, then Lesser Demons/Deevils, Host and Sub-Demons, then dragons and other creatures of magic, then mages by descending levels of power. Each tendril does 5D6 M.D. Powerful beings are likely to be struck every melee round unless they flee.

97-98% Erupting Rift! A Rift rapidly appears and disgorges 1D4x100 creatures or monsters into Rifts Earth. Game Masters, use your discretion. These creatures could be any dinosaur or monster found in the pages of Rifts® New West or Psyscape, or any of the aliens/D-Bee slave races found in either of the Atlantis World Books. Or they can be from one of the Conversion Books, Chaos Earth or something of your own design. They can all be the same, or a mixed group of creatures. Unless they are allies or enemies of either Minions of Hell, these creatures (which could be dumb animals) are not likely to hang around or attack anyone. They are likely to make a mad dash into the hills, fighting only when startled, scared or attacked first.

99-00% Time Shift Backlash: A small sphere of crackling white energy appears and rapidly grows in a few seconds when it explodes. *Everyone* within 100 feet (30.5 m) of the white energy sphere (including any immediate enemies) is exposed to a blinding flash. Suddenly, they all find themselves transported back in time 1D6 minutes before the weapon of mass destruction detonates and causes the unusual effect. They remember the events that happened before, and can *try* to take different actions this time to prevent the weapon from detonating at the nexus point or ley line, or to take some other course of action. If the WMD goes off again, re-roll on this table. If the Time Shift is rolled a second time, the heroes are thrown back 1D6+6 minutes before the weapon of mass destruction detonates, giving them yet another chance to relive the moments before detonation, and may stop or redirect it. **Note:** Though the characters are sent back in the recent past, they retain whatever damage they have sustained prior.



Secrets of the Coalition

The Coalition has its secrets just like any other nation. Secrets so damning that if Coalition citizens were to learn of them they would be demoralizing and could lead to riots and chaos. These secrets are closely guarded and thanks to the Ministry of Propaganda, most information released to the public is tightly controlled. Only high ranking military and political leaders are aware of most of these secrets and even then the information tends to remain compartmentalized and restricted to a select few. Only the Emperor, his son and a few top aides know it all.

Resource Constraints

The Coalition gives the impression that they are a world power like the old United States. The U.S. was a country with a large standing army and enough resources to supply it for decades. The Coalition military is not that lucky. Like several other nations, the Coalition does have mines to extract building materials. Some of the larger CS bases protect these assets. However, they are nowhere near the level of capacity needed to sustain the Coalition for more than the next ten years. Coalition analysts have been warning that this is coming. Some of the Coalition recent decisions have really been based around resources, but the Ministry of Propaganda would have you believe otherwise. The Coalition has been mining everything within 300 miles (480 km) of the Coalition for years. Tolkeen was in the way to North Dakota and the resources found in that part of North America. With Tolkeen out of the way, the Coalition can set up mining operations in several locations in what would have been the Kingdom of Tolkeen, but those are a few years away before they can provide a sustainable supply of materials. And the increasing number of Xiticix in the region is a real problem.

Materials in short supply are metals needed to create Mega-Damage alloys. Few people realize that after a battle, the Coalition (if they can) goes in and salvages as much material as they can. The propaganda released makes people think they are making sure advanced Coalition technology does not fall into anyone else's hands, but really they are *recycling* everything they can.

Silver is also in high demand. The Coalition has been using it for years in massive quantities and now their reserves are depleted, with only a three month supply left. This is likely to be kept in Chi-Town in case of demonic invaders.

Note: The Splugorth of Atlantis know this about silver and have made an effort to quietly let shipments of silver and other raw materials fall into the hands of the Coalition, at least while they stand as the best deterrent against the Minions of Hell. Lord Splynncryth's minions put on a good show to make it appear that Coalition troops and adventurers "take" such resources by force against their will. But it is just showmanship to cover up the truth that they are helping the humans. This is not done to help humans per se, but rather to prevent the Minions of Hell from taking North America and annexing it to Hades and/or Dyval. For political reasons beyond our planet, the Splugorth cannot openly oppose the two powers in the Minion War, so their deception is done as much to protect themselves as it is to help the CS stop the invasion. It should be noted that other than *Joseph Prosek II,* no one in the CS has any idea that Splugorth "acquired" materials come from alien worlds. And only Joseph realizes these acquisitions are staged by the Minions of Splugorth.

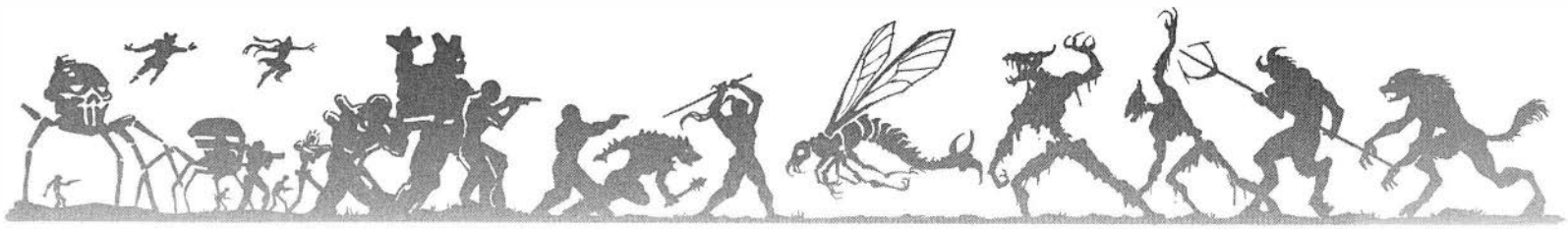
Manufacturing Overtaxed

The Coalition States' build-up to face Tolkeen and Free Quebec taxed the manufacturing capabilities of Chi-Town and Iron Heart. Too many production lines have been shut down for necessary repairs and improvements in production. Certain parts needed for the production lines need to be custom-made and sometimes to precise specifications. There are limited places where these parts can be made and if the Coalition starts shopping around, their enemies will be able to surmise there is a problem. The truth is overall manufacturing has been reduced to less than 60% of their total capacity. Estimates to get the production lines back up to full strength are 18 to 24 months. That goes well into the Minion War. Currently, only *Lone Star* is unaffected and currently carrying a lot of the manufacturing burden. The catch 22 is that time and resources in Lone Star need to be diverted to repair the Chi-Town and Iron Heart manufacturing lines. Select groups are scouting *Gold Age Weaponsmiths* as well as heading out west looking for possible locations where the *Bandito Arms Black Market* is creating its products.

To maximize what production lines are left, many of the larger robot production lines have been shut down and parts taken from them to the smaller power armors and body armor lines. This will mean larger robots will not roll off the assembly line for at least a year. Other supplies that are likely to become short are parts for the larger robots, and heavy weapon systems. Unless repaired within a year, other items will start to become less numerous, such as parts for body armor and weapons. The Coalition will not disclose this information, even going as far as lying about sending supplies when they are not.

This has made the Coalition's alliance with the independent Nations of Ishpeming (Northern Gun) and the Manistique Imperium both timely and more important than anyone realizes, including those two nations. However, reliance upon outside manufacturers makes Emperor Prosek and other leaders within the Coalition nervous in the extreme, as it leaves the CS vulnerable to its many enemies.

The shortfall in manufacturing capability, even if temporary, is one of the Coalition's most closely guarded secrets. It is also why rather than crank out massive war machines for the Minion War, the country is turning to smaller, faster, cheaper solutions. Case in point, the creation and use of Juicers and Combat Cyborgs in unprecedented numbers, as well as smaller combat units like the SAMAS, other power armors and smaller, simpler robots and vehicles. The CS is also pulling old Dead Boy body armor out of mothballs, tweaking cosmetic elements on some and cannibalizing others, and releasing them to various new combat divisions and special forces squads.



Food Shortages

They say an army moves on its stomach and the same is true of the Coalition Army. Like all Coalition manufacturin,g food production has been strained for the last ten years. The population of Chi-Town has not stopped growing. Likewise, the number of people in the Army is at an all-time high. Recruitment from the 'Burbs and surrounding independent human communities has increased to epic, undreamed of proportions, resulting in and a lot more mouths to feed! Coalition farms, greenhouses and secret, underground hydroponic farms cannot keep up with demand, requiring the CS to also ask independent city-states and supporters of the war to also contribute food, not just men and women. Still, it may not be enough.

The Coalition's poor and middle class are already feeling the pinch with food rationing. In the next year, unless something changes in dramatic fashion, there will not be enough food to support the Mega-Cities in the fashion to which they are accustomed. The Coalition is already formulating plans to raid the 'Burbs and any unfortunate kingdoms that are nearby with farming capabilities. Reconnaissance teams and Combat Couriers are assigned to locate enemy food caches and resources as the targets of Coalition raids. However, the CS fights a monstrous enemy that feeds upon humans and D-Bees like cattle, and who consumes the dead, so raiding enemy food stores is much trickier when it comes to the Minions of Hell than the usual type of enemy. As a result, the military has turned to raiding. New farms are being established in Missouri, Idaho, Illinois, and southeastern Canada as well as several secret locations outside the usual CS controlled zones, but the problem with outdoor crops is the seasons, weather and vulnerability to enemy attacks.

For now, the Coalition keeps this under tight wraps. To mitigate the food shortage they are purchasing MREs (Meals Ready to Eat) from Northern Gun and Manistique Imperium, and some food resources from Free Quebec. They are also raiding other enemies like the Minions of Splugorth (who don't know about the food shortage), Horune Pirates, the Pecos Empire and even the edges of the Federation of Magic. This keeps the troops fed, for now, and takes some of the strain off the Coalition. However, if over the next year the Coalition isn't able to supplement their food supply, or it loses many of its farms, the impact in Chi-Town and other States will be swift and terrible.

Note: It is ironic that this is such a well-kept secret, because if other factions in North America knew about it, they could help. This includes the Splugorth of Atlantis, Naruni Enterprises, Free Quebec, Lazlo, New Lazlo, and others. The Lemurians alone, could almost single-handedly solve the food shortage crisis with their Biomancy magic and massive food stores under the sea. However, the CS barely knows anything about them, just recent rumors. And though technically human, the Coalition is almost certain to question their human heritage and dismiss them as either extreme human mutations (they have gills after all) or human-like D-Bees and dangerous practitioners of magic.

Meanwhile, *Joseph Prosek II* via his super-secret *Disavowed shadow operation* is working on unsanctioned and extreme possible solutions. (See **The Disavowed sourcebook** for more details on this rogue government operation.)

Shadow Allies

Factions Helping the Coalition in Secret

All of the Coalition States' past allies and loose associates stand with the CS in the Minion War. Everyone's goal, to repel this demon plague and prevent the demonic beings from establishing a foothold in North America. Hell Pits, Calgary: The Kingdom of Monsters, Hell Lords, Overlords, demonic generals and other notable leaders and strategic locations are prime targets.

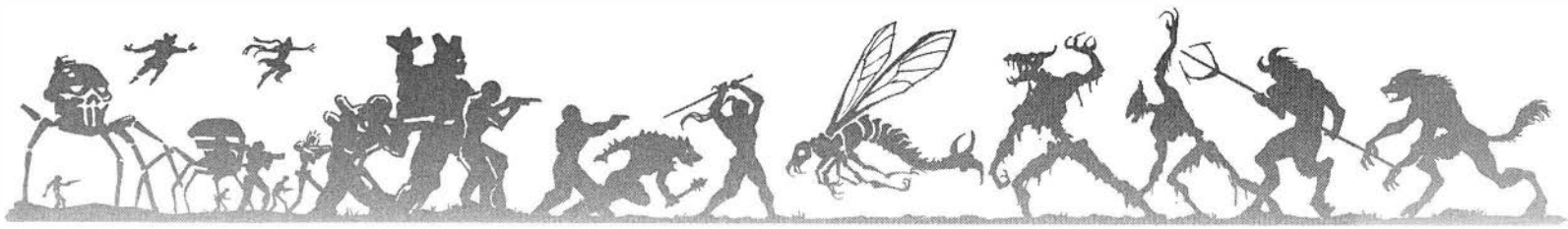
But these obvious defenders of the continent are not the only forces ready to join the battle for North America and send the Minions of Hell packing. There are several **Shadow Factions** working behind the scenes.

Whether or not the Coalition wants it, they are going to receive help from other factions in North America. In some cases this help is direct, working side-by-side with the Coalition. In others, the help is indirect and covert, with forces working in secret, from the shadows, providing intelligence, weapons and vital supplies. Six separate factions of note want the Coalition States to succeed, and have dedicated time and considerable resources to ensure that the CS and its allies are victorious on Rifts Earth. They are *Lazlo and New Lazlo* (nations of magic), *the Vanguard, Archie Three, the Republicans, Lemurians*, and the *Splugorth of Atlantis*. Each has their reasons and way of supporting the Coalition in the Minion War.

The Splugorth of Atlantis

As noted elsewhere, the **Splugorth of Atlantis** would love to send its world conquering Kittani army into the fray to wipe the demonic legions of Hades and Dyval from the face of the Earth. The Splugorth have a long-standing rivalry and disdain for the Minions of Hell, and hate what the Minion War is doing to business across the Megaverse. *Lord Splynncryth* has no intention of letting the minions of either Hades or Dyval get a foothold on Earth. However, for a number of political reasons away from Rifts Earth, the Splugorth of Atlantis are unable to send their own combat forces to fight in North America, at least not en masse nor in an *official* capacity.

As a result, the Splugorth wage a shadow war against their hated enemies. Lord Splynncryth, the Splugorth Ruler of Atlantis, sends his minions to quietly engage in a number of activities to help keep the continent from falling into the hands of the Minions of Hell. For instance, *Splugorth Slavers* and *Horune Pirates* secretly allow some of their ships and trading caravans to get found out, captured and the cargo seized by Coalition forces and other



"good guys" to help the war effort. Cargo that just happens to include much needed silver ore, other raw materials humans need for making weapons and necessities, as well as other supplies and helpful intelligence/information. To combatants the Minions of Splugorth know will use them, including CS Dead Boys and NG forces in the field willing to ignore Coalition rules, they distribute a limited number of Splugorth Rune Weapons, Bio-Wizard creations, magic items, symbiotes and high-tech weaponry (most Kittani, but some other manufacturers, like Triax, "acquired" by the Splugorth or the Horune Pirates). Considering the Coalition's stance on magic and alien tech, most items of magic find their way to non-Coalition heroes and defenders, while information, silver ore and other seemingly innocent and ordinary items are channeled to the Coalition States and Northern Gun. The Minions of Splugorth also make sure vital *strategic information* falls into the right hands to help the people of North America defeat the invasion force, and that includes the CS.

Splugorth Slavers and *Blind Warrior Women* allegedly out on slave gathering or "acquisitions" missions, as well as *Sunaj assassins, Tattooed Men, Stone Masters, dragons, runaway slaves* and *others from Atlantis,* quietly assist mortals in the war effort. Many posing as independent mercenaries, rogues, and outlaws and runaways from Atlantis. As long as Lord Splynncryth is able to claim *plausible deniability* that his minions and agents were only defending themselves against demon/Deevil aggression, or that they are traitors who have gone rogue, such small squads and individuals are able to quietly assist humans and fight the Minions of Hell. This means a Slave Barge could swoop in to rescue a group of Dead Boys or attack the band of Deevils about to finish off a mixed band of heroes. An individual, pair or small group of Minions of Splugorth might join a band of Dead Boys, a mixed group of heroes or adventurers to fight the hellspawned. Such "unofficial" and "unsanctioned" allies tend to work covertly and stay out of the limelight, offering help or coming to the rescue whenever it is feasible, or joining humans and D-Bees disguised as one of them or as a mercenary concealed under human body armor, or a mage whose true nature is covered by a mask and hooded robe. Some may also pretend to be the humans' prisoners "forced to help them," or, as noted above, pretend to be a fugitive on the run from Atlantis.

Game Note: This means a *Tattooed Man, Sunaj, Blind Warrior Woman, Kittani Warrior, Splugorth Overlord, Powerlord, Stone Master, Gargoyle,* or *supposedly runaway slave* (for a wide range of possible alien life forms, see **Rifts® World Book 2: Atlantis** and/or **W.B. 21: Splynn Dimensional Market**) *could* be made available as *player characters* in a mixed player group, or as NPC (Non-Player Character) helpers and contacts. In the case of NPCs, a Slaver and his entire Slave Barge and squad of Warrior Women, or a Conservator or Dragon could be an ally who surfaces to help at the Game Master's discretion. That's the beauty of the *Minion War/Megaverse® in Flames* setting and conflict, it enables Game Masters to bring together otherwise unlikely player options and character sets. Of course, the Game Master has the final say as to what characters, O.C.C.s and R.C.C.s he or she is willing to allow. Players, please respect their choices and decisions, and everyone, have a blast with the possibilities.

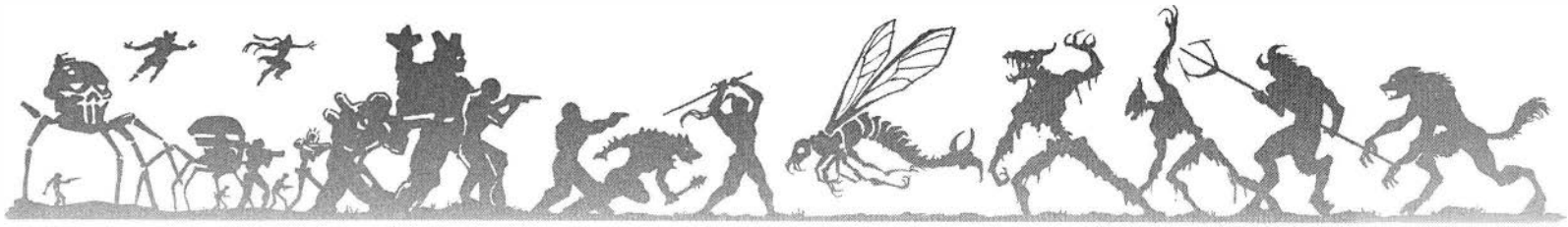
While on the subject of teams of unusual characters, many prejudices and centuries of histories between some of these characters cannot be completely put aside by them. Deeply ingrained animosity is only placed on hold, not forgotten or forgiven. Case in point, any Lemurian character will harbor considerable bad will toward the Splugorth and their minions, as well as Necromancers, Shifters and undead, and vice versa. Lemurians despise demons and are quick to join the battle against the Minions of Hell. However, they view *the Splugorth* and the dark magicks they wield, like Bio-Wizardry, with disgust and disdain. This makes Lemurians hard pressed to put aside their differences toward such beings and the minion races who serve them. This could create considerable tension and problems for any group that tries to include lifelong enemies like Splugorth Blind Warrior Women, Sunaj, Tattooed Men or Kittani with one or more Lemurian warriors and/or True Atlanteans on the same team. Role-play it out and have fun.

Lazlo and New Lazlo

The fighting forces of Lazlo and New Lazlo are not restricted to the shadows. They are out there on the front-line, fighting alongside the Coalition Army and joining forces on a small and large scale when the CS troops let them. However, both magical city-states also operate from the shadows using the Rifts, magic spells and arcane knowledge to help combat the Minions of Hell, and to assist conventional combat troops like the Coalition Army without their realizing the source of that help: magic.

Techno-Wizard weapons and magic items may be given to Dead Boys who have proven their bravery, combat skills and are known to be open to using magic items or working with practitioners of magic. Most mages, D-Bees and human warriors from Lazlo and New Lazlo are willing to join forces with Dead Boys and anyone fighting the Minions of Hell, as both advisors and teammates. CS soldiers working together with Lazlo mages, metamorphed dragons (to look human in order to be more accepted by Dead Boys), etc., benefit from having people who can erect magical walls of protection, cast spells that hurt, enslave or exorcise supernatural beings, protect the Dead Boys or instill them with temporary heightened abilities like Climb, Fly as the Eagle, Superhuman Speed, Swim Like a Fish, and much more. Mages may also provide a means of magical transportation, taking the team out of danger or magically transporting them to a target via Teleport, Mystic Portal, Open Rift, and so on. The two ideologically opposed forces are simply that much more powerful and capable when they work together than when they work apart. Together, forces that wield magic and technology have the best odds of success against the Minions of Hell. It all boils down to a matter of trust and a willingness to, at least temporarily, sacrifice ingrained beliefs, rules and laws, to work together.

Lazlo's and New Lazlo's practitioners of magic also engage in various covert, shadow operations. For instance, mages may magically heal and help Dead Boys in the field without them ever



realizing it. Working their magic from the shadows and when nobody is looking. A Dead Boy is likely to think a sudden boost in S.D.C. or Hit Points from a magical healing is the result of an adrenaline surge or pure force of will, or sheer luck. The same is true of a magically induced resistance to fatigue (or Superhuman Endurance), or feat of strength (Superhuman Strength), or not getting burnt (Resist or Impervious to Fire), or not being noticed by the enemy when hiding (when they are really obscured by a spell like Chameleon, Invisibility or Shadow Meld without their knowledge). Mages may also accidentally or secretly leave food, water and wine (magically created or purified for safe consumption) where CS soldiers can find and requisition them, rather than offer it up directly to Dead Boys who might not take it for fear of the source from which it comes.

Lazlo leaders and operatives also leak information without revealing themselves as the true source, or arrange it to appear that the CS acquired it on their own.

Not everything Lazlo and New Lazlo fighters and mages do is in support of Coalition forces. They may find themselves at odds with their "ally" or disagree with the CS plans and methods, and sneak away to take different, independent action against the Coalition's will, and without their knowledge or endorsement. If the Dead Boy leaders find out the mages or Lazlo operatives broke from their plan of action, they may feel betrayed or consider the Lazloans untrustworthy loose cannons, or even a threat. Other Lazlo agents working with the CS pay very close attention to Coalition methods, strategies and tactics for their own future reference to use against the CS should the day come that the two nations are at odds.

The Vanguard

The Vanguard, a secret society of mages loyal to the CS, has been quietly helping and protecting the Coalition States for decades. The founding members of the Vanguard were loyal Coalition soldiers back in the day before Chi-Town officially became the Coalition States. It was a time when the fledgling CS military was still experimenting with a military division that wielded magic. This branch of spell casting wizard-soldiers operated in a way very similar to Psi-Battalion, protecting Chi-Town citizens from monsters and evil sorcerers. When it was decided that magic was too "alien" and too "dangerous," and its use outlawed in the CS, the mages within the Coalition Army were asked to step down. Since they could not unlearn the arcane knowledge they had acquired, and were already tainted by sorcery, the magic using soldiers were sent away. Though some were resentful, most were not. They understood and accepted the reasoning of their leaders and left the CS. However, they could not forsake their beliefs or their loyalty to the Coalition States. The one thing they disagreed with was the idea that magic could not be controlled and used to the benefit of the Coalition States.

Their solution, to form the secret, underground society of practitioners of magic that calls itself **The Vanguard**. Its members and future generation remaining loyal to the CS and all its values, and dedicating their lives to protect and preserve them. The Vanguard, their descendants, and select chosen "friends" (humans, of course) continued to learn magic and use it to secretly protect and help the Coalition States. (See **The Vanguard Adventure Sourcebook** for more details.)

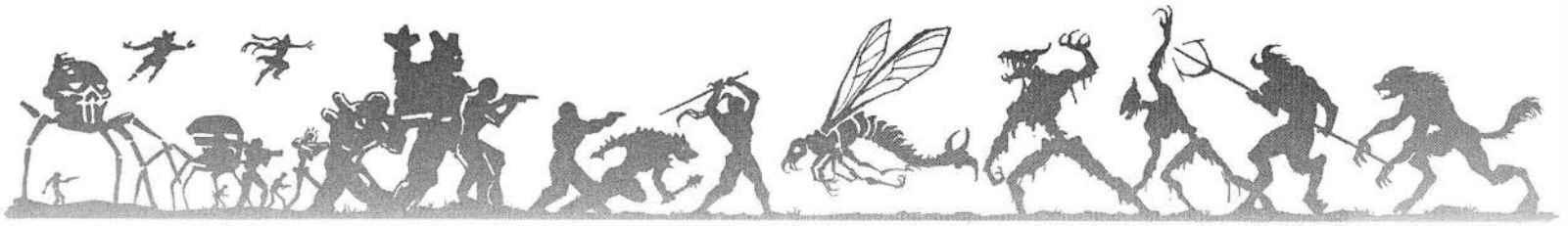
The Vanguard sees the Minion War as an opportunity to assist the Coalition like never before, by giving them that magical edge in battle and watching their backs. A bonus, for them, is that the war enables them to help in a more public manner, should they want to do so. When small Coalition units start teaming up with other groups, you can count on the Vanguard to be among them. Even groups from Lazlo, survivors of fallen Tolkeen, the Federation of Magic and the Cyber-Knights or any adventurer group *might* have a Vanguard infiltrator among them.

The Vanguard, of course, look out for the Coalition any way they can to ensure the CS triumphs and survives, even if it is at the expense of the non-Coalition groups. The Vanguard are every bit as prejudiced against D-Bees and other practitioners of magic as any Dead Boy or CS citizen. If anything, they may hold other mages with *more contempt* than the average CS soldier or citizen. They have seen how some practitioners of magic use their magic with evil intentions or reckless abandon, and know better than most how people outside the CS regard their beloved nation and Dead Boy troops. That knowledge has made many Vanguard more cold-hearted and ruthless towards D-Bees and magic users than many Coalition military leaders. They are especially wary and suspicious of all Shifters, Necromancers, survivors from Tolkeen and members of the Federation of Magic.

If the Vanguard see a way to slowly build bridges with notable Coalition leaders or officers (the player characters, perhaps?), they will do so. The lesson they hope to drive home is simple: Magic is just like any other tool, and it is the person and not the tool to be feared. They do NOT reveal themselves to anyone nor acknowledge the existence of the Vanguard – which they claim is pure myth. Nor do they share any part of their heritage or legacy as the secret protectors of Chi-Town and the Coalition States.

Like most combatants in the Minion War, the Vanguard confess to hating the supernatural and seek to destroy and repel the demonic enemy from North American soil. Like everyone else, they fight with courage and conviction. If there is anything unusual about them, it is that they are tolerant of the Coalition and their beliefs, and tend not to get too close or friendly with D-Bees or anyone who is obviously anti-Coalition. The Vanguard quietly keep a close eye on such individuals, vigilant for anyone who might betray or lash out at the CS troops. In fact, such individuals may have an unfortunate accident or just disappear.

The Vanguard ultimately end up being some of the unsung heroes of the Minion War, using all their cunning and magical talents to keep the Coalition States back home, and the troops at war, safe. Vanguard risk and sacrifice their own lives for the greater good of the Coalition and never reveal themselves. They can only hope to help their beloved nation and perhaps demonstrate to some, that magic is a force that can be used for good.



Archie Three

Archie Three has learned over the years that sometimes in order to accomplish your goals, you need to ally yourself with the enemy. Archie Three, like the Republicans, does not want to be revealed. Archie and Hagan have come up with a plan that not only accomplishes their goals of stopping the Minion War, but in some ways is an amusing prank to pull. Archie is retooling older and new robots to look exactly like *Coalition Skelebots, Combat Cyborgs* and infantry troops in *Dead Boy body armor* and sending them into combat. He is also considering creating various robots that look like SAMAS and CS combat robots that mimic the current Coalition arsenal. As far as Archie and Hagan are concerned, let the Coalition be the heroes. The Minion War is too scary and disruptive to leave unchecked or unsupported. It is best to help end the conflict sooner.

All of Archie's robots have some form of "A" or "3" designation on the armor; part of the joke to Archie and Hagan. Examples are be Alpha Unit Third Battalion, Arkansas Three, and all kinds of variations. The designations won't register in any Coalition database, but troops in the field are not likely to question the arrival of "reinforcements" joining the battle, nor check the I.D. They, just thankful more Coalition troops or Skelebots have arrived to help. They take them at face value. And Archie always makes sure his units appear in the middle or near the end of combat. CS troops take all the help they can get, and nobody questions a familiar face, or familiar suit of armor, or killer robots fighting to save them or destroy the enemy, as the case may be.

Archie and Hagan have also created several new, self-aware robots with programming that makes them seem very human. These robots look and behave like humans and can walk among Coalition troops without suspicion or seeming out of place. Although this is a risky venture, the human-looking 'Bots are very limited in number. The rest are used to fight demons/Deevils, offer support and bolster troops in battle. The combat robots disguised as Skelebots, Combat Cyborgs and Dead Boys are intended to blend in, and as such, they move and mimic people quite well. They just keep to themselves or slip away after a battle, appearing again only when they are needed. As noted, Archie's faux Coalition combat troops often show up as reinforcements during the thick of battle or to cover a retreat. Timing that makes them always welcomed and never looked at very closely. Each Archie Robot platoon has one human-looking robot with advanced A.I. as a leader in case direct questions arise. Whenever necessary, communications are jammed so that confirmation of the faux unit can't be obtained, but it seldom goes that far. The real troops are so used to Skelebots and Dead Boy companies wandering in and out on their own missions or joining battles to bolster troops before moving on, that few notice or care what unit they were, where they came from or where they went. Conversely, actual Dead Boys and Skelebots may join confrontations instigated by Archie's fake Dead Boys, cyborgs and Skelebots without ever realizing it.

The Republicans

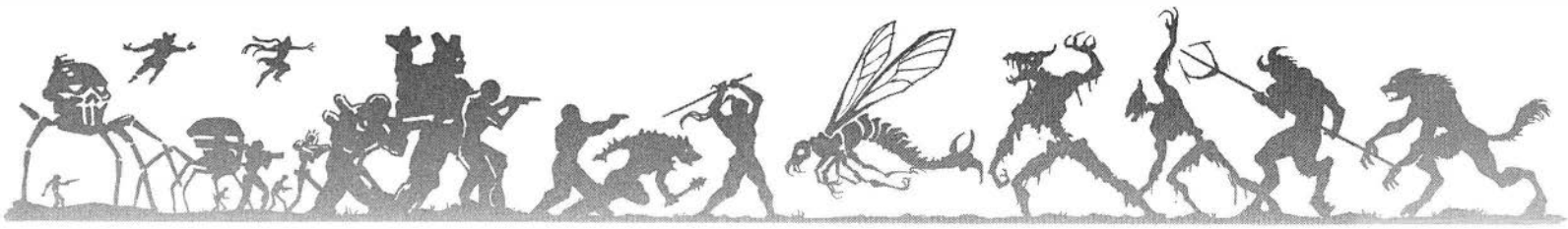
The Republicans are another secret group faced with a quandary. What to do about the Minion War? A few in their organization have wondered out loud whether this is the time to make a move to replace CS leadership. The Republicans are not pleased with the current leadership of the Coalition, but they have spent decades growing and shaping the CS into a bastion for humanity, assisting in its growth and development. Removing the leadership at this point is ill-advised in the middle of a crisis in which Emperor Prosek is displaying remarkable leadership and taking command of a dire situation.

The Minion War is another matter all together. It is too big of a threat to ignore, but what are the Republicans to do? They will support the Coalition States and its citizenry from the shadows, as always, but how far should they go this time? Do they dare to finally reveal themselves and unleash the NEMA forces that have been held in suspended animation these many centuries? Are things really that desperate? And if they did so, would it really make a difference? For now, this is a matter of considerable discussion while the group takes less extreme action to help.

The Republicans use their vast spy network to continue to gather intelligence and slip it to the Coalition States and others with whom they have made secret inroads. Meanwhile, they keep a watchful eye out for any new threats that may arise to threaten the CS while its armies are absorbed in the Minion War and far from home. The Federation of Magic is of considerable concern, but the Republicans keep an eye on many groups, large and small, including the Federation, Lazlo, Archie Three, and the Pecos Empire.

Small groups of Republicans, some disguised as non-Coalition combatants, mercenaries and adventurers, and others who have infiltrated the CS and are actual soldiers in the Coalition Army and citizens within the CS itself, are in the thick of the war. They provide support, ideas and intelligence to both the Coalition and the leaders of their secret organization. These special operatives support the war effort and the CS, while keeping tabs on all fronts. The combat units composed entirely of Republican (NEMA) soldiers tend to function as Special Forces that watch the Coalition Army's back, assist CS troops (and any fighters making inroads against the Minions of Hell) and anything else they can do to repel the demonic legions from Earth. Like the Minions of Splugorth, the Republicans do so with lone agents and small squads. Such fighting forces may appear at pivotal moments to cover a retreat, hold the line, help punch a hole through enemy defenses, provide information or weapons/supplies, and otherwise do whatever they can to help anyone (the player characters?) in their missions and heroic deeds. Republican forces may also engage in acts of sabotage, gather intelligence, and help fighters do the same, as well as try to spread the good name of the Coalition States.

At the moment, the Republicans do nothing to reveal themselves or their secret base with a small army of ancient NEMA peacekeepers. For now, the status quo remains unchanged. However, they realize the full gravity of the war, and do their best to



monitor demon and Deevil troop movements. If it looks like the Coalition may take a fatal blow that threatens the Coalition's very survival, such as Chi-Town or Iron Heart on the verge of falling into the hands of demons/Deevils, only then will the secret sleeping army be awakened. It would require dire circumstances for the Coalition in order for this to happen.

Lemurians

Lemurians are the one group to step out of the shadows at the onset of the Minion War on Rifts Earth. They have kept themselves secret for ages, only recently starting to make contact with the outside world. They see themselves as the *Protectors of Earth* and have a long-standing enmity toward supernatural evil, vampires, zombies and Necromancers. Consequently, Lemurians see the invasion of North America and other parts of the planet as something they *must* address. Stepping out of the shadows frightens the secluded people under the waves, but they see no other reasonable recourse. They, better than most, realize the Minion War's advance on North America is demonkind's first step in conquering the entire planet and annexing it to Hades and Dyval. Lemurians are not going to let that happen.

Though the Lemurians have already pledged their support to *Doc Reid* and his Rangers in their battle against the **Vampire Kingdoms**, they see the advent of the Minion War on Earth as the greater and more immediate danger. One that draws them out of the murky ocean depths and into open warfare. Lemurians do not walk away from their obligation to Doc Reid (Lemurians despise the undead above all other demons), but they divide their fighting forces on both fronts. That said, Lemuria charges into the Minion War with two-thirds of its warriors, roughly 10% join Doc Reid, while the rest are held in reserve. While entire companies of Lemurians engage the Minions of Hell directly, other Lemurians spread out among the land-based people as individuals and small groups. The idea is to augment the surface-dwellers' fighters with their firepower, knowledge and Biomancy. It is also a way for Lemurians to learn about the many diverse people and magicks of North America.

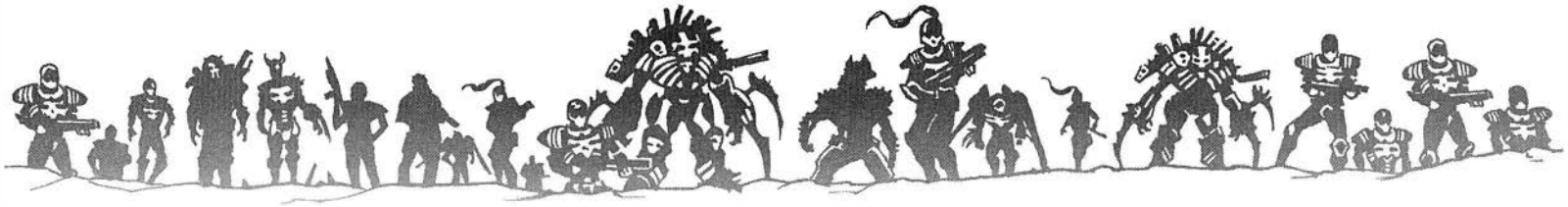
The Lemurians have been a secret aquatic civilization unknown to almost everyone. As a result, most people, not just the Coalition States, are taken aback by their unexpected appearance and wielding unknown and powerful magic technology. Speaking of appearances, Lemurian Bio-Armors and war machines look monstrous and dangerous. Unless a person knows there is an attractive Lemurian descended from human beings inside, they may very well be attacked in the mistaken belief that they are Minions of Hell or another alien invader. There are many such clashes between Lemurians and the already antsy and paranoid Coalition Dead Boys, Northern Gun troops and merc companies until word spreads that they are allies. The people of North America should quickly realize Lemurian forces are on their side and are valiant warriors with experience fighting supernatural evil, though never on this scale. However, until word spreads about them, there will be unfortunate clashes.

The Coalition Army leadership will never trust or accept Lemurians as humans or allies. For the CS, the appearance of the powerful Lemurian combat forces and magic-based weaponry, bizarre riding animals and living war-machines is affirmation that there are many hidden threats yet to be unveiled. Creatures and civilizations they know nothing or little about. Claims of human ancestry fall on deaf ears inside the Coalition States. To the Coalition leadership, Lemurians are just one more *D-Bee invader* for them to add to their Enemies List.

Matters are different on the battlefield, where Coalition Dead Boys recognize the Lemurians bravery and combat prowess. Of all the "D-Bees," Lemurians are among the most welcomed in combat. If it were not for their heavy reliance upon magic, there would be a strong movement for accepting them as *human mutants*, much like Psi-Stalkers. However, because they use magic in almost every facet of their life and society, Lemurians can never be accepted as anything but a benevolent menace that could turn on humanity at any time.

The people of other nations and city-states, D-Bees, practitioners of magic and adventurers who are more used to encounters with exotic people and magic, are quick to embrace Lemurians as a new ally. If nothing else, they fall into the category of the enemy of my enemy is my friend. However, the heroic and affable Lemurians should find quick acceptance among D-Bees and people who don't share the Coalition's world view. In fact, Lazlo and New Lazlo welcome them with open arms and see Lemurians joining the war effort as a ray of hope. Though not a discipline well known to them, they recognize Lemurians wield the life-affirming magic of *Biomancy*, and that they are one of the "good guys." As fate would have it, Lemurian ambassadors made contact with Lazlo a few months before the Minion War erupted. Still, so little is known about them that the aquatic demon slayers are regarded with caution by everyone. They are an unknown factor even to the Minions of Hell, who have heard of Lemurians, but few have ever been encountered. Nor did they know that Lemurians had returned to Earth. Only the New Navy, the Splugorth of Atlantis and the wicked Lord of the Deep have had numerous encounters and firsthand knowledge of these beings.

To the Lemurians' credit, they don't let the Coalition's bias and people's apprehension stop them from helping in any way they can. Lemurians use Biomancy magic as the technology behind their weapons and war machines and as the primary magic on the battlefield. They fight the demon hordes and protect and heal all soldiers who stand against the monsters. Surface-dwelling warriors Lemurians come to trust may be given gifts of Biomancy weapons, Bio-Armor and war steeds. Lemurians also provide what resources they can to troops in the field, including large quantities of food to troops who might otherwise starve. They also heal the sick and injured, and once they realize it, they follow the Splugorth's lead in letting Coalition forces raid anonymous supply caravans with building materials, food and other supplies the CS needs to keep the war effort going full steam.



The Coalition Army

Minion War, 110 P.A.

By Kevin Siembieda and Carl Gleba. Additional text and ideas by Charles Walton II and Alex Marciniszyn

Common CS Slang Combat Terms

Armor = Giant robots and/or armored vehicles, tanks, etc.

Bone Jockey = Skelebot Specialist, or anyone commanding Skelebots in the field.

'Borg = A general term for cyborg (any). "This guy's a 'Borg."

'Bot = A general term for robot (any).

Brains = Scientists.

Brain Buster = Psychics in general, the most powerful, Mind Melters, etc., in particular.

Brass = High Command.

Buster = Combat Cyborgs reinforced with *Hellbuster*, anti-demon body armor.

Can = Refers to ammo canister or drum, usually for a rail gun.

Clip = Refers to ammo clip/ammunition cartridge, usually for rifles and automatic weapons.

Comms = Communications officer/radio operator.

Dead Boy = Coalition Soldier/Infantry Grunt. Nicknamed by CS outsiders and enemies for the Coalition soldier's skeleton body armor and death's head motif. The grunts liked the name, kept it, and now CS soldiers are known by everyone as "Dead Boys."

Dead Boy Irregulars or **Irenes** = Terms used to describe or reference mercenaries and other combat troops who joined the Coalition Army to fight for humanity, but are NOT CS citizens born and raised in the Coalition States, nor are they officially part of the Coalition "Regular" Army. They are, in effect, skilled combat *volunteers* and regarded by most Dead Boys as "outsiders." As such, they are seldom completely trusted. The Dead Boys of the CS Regular Army and Psi-Battalion believe they are better than any *Irenes* and often treat them as second-class combat units or incompetent troops, when nothing could be further from the truth.

Dead Head = Nega-Psychic.

D-Bee = Nonhuman from another world or dimension.

D-Hunter = Demon hunters and Death Knights.

Dog Boys = The common name for Psi-Hounds; mutant, humanoid dogs created at the CS Lone Star Complex and used to combat the supernatural, magic and monsters.

Deevs = Deevil (any).

E = Refers to E-Clip/Energy Clip. "Give me an E," means hand him a new E-Clip for his weapon. "I'm out of E," means his E-Clip is empty; he is out of ammunition. E-Clips are salvaged and saved because they can be recharged and reused.

EOD = Explosive Ordnance Disposal.

Evac = Evacuate.

Friendly Fire = Being mistakenly or accidently fired upon or shelled by your own army or allies.

Fire Team = A four man team that includes a rifleman, grenadier (Terror Trooper or Super-SAMAS), muscle with additional firepower (typically a cyborg with a rail gun), and a team leader.

Firefight = An encounter with the enemy where everybody starts shooting.

Flank = Refers to one side or the other (right or left) of a combat position or troop formation.

Frag or **Frag 'em** = Use grenades.

Friendlies = Non-hostile and welcoming or supportive people, usually civilians or local militia.

Green or **Greenbeans** = New troops with minimal training and no combat experience.

Hostiles = Any adversarial force expressing hostility toward your forces; known and unknown enemies who attack unprovoked.

Hot Zone = An area of active combat and many "hostiles." Probably a smaller section of a larger area where the fighting is most aggressive and persistent. It should be considered a dangerous area where anyone who enters it should expect to fall under enemy fire.

Irenes = See *Dead Boy Irregulars,* above, for complete details. Irenes are combat troops who joined the Coalition Army to fight in the Minion War, but are NOT CS citizens born and raised in the Coalition States. They are outsiders who are not part of the Regular Army.

Iron = Power Armor (any).

Juice = Juicers. "Bring the Juice," means send in the CS Juicers.

Mage = Any spell caster/magic user.

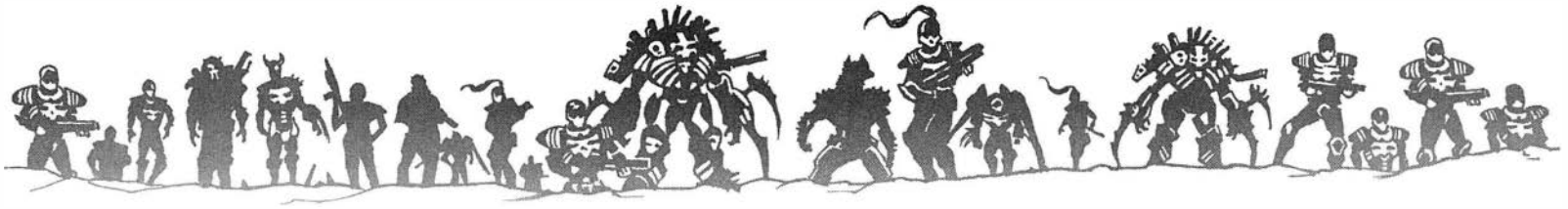
Meat Puppet = A term for someone who is possessed or mind controlled by a supernatural being or magic.

Merc = Mercenary, a soldier for hire.

Mist = Refers to the fact that many M.D. energy weapons (ion, plasma, particle beams, etc.) in effect vaporize S.D.C. materials and burn away M.D.C. materials, creating a residual mist. "Let's mist him," means to kill someone.

Muscle = Combat Cyborgs (any), may also include Dead Boy specialists with heavy weapons such as rail guns, missile launchers, etc.

Nons or **Non-Co** = Non-Qualified Combat Personnel: unrecognized combatants and unofficial allies joining a firefight or coordinated operations against a common enemy. Specifically



D-Bees, practitioners of magic, monsters, dragons and other inhuman combatants fighting against the Minions of Hell. Some take it to mean "non-Coalition" forces.

"Nons" are often willing to work with and fight alongside Coalition troops despite past hostilities, but are officially *undesirables* and *enemies of the Coalition States.* Technically, fraternization and collaboration between Nons and Coalition forces is an act of treason. However, such unofficial liaisons and undocumented field alliances happen all the time in the Minion War and with increasing frequency. "We've got friendly Nons supporting our right flank," refers to a force of non-Coalition combatants that are probably a mixed group of humans, D-Bees and mages helping to fight the enemy on the Dead Boys' flank (right side).

Sams = A general term for all SAMAS.

Sensitives = Psychics with Psychic Sensitive psionic abilities.

Skels or **Skelly** = Skelebots. "We've got Skellies taking point," means Skelebots are moving ahead of the Dead Boy infantry.

Sloogs = Minions of Splugorth.

Smiley = Smiling Jack SAMAS. "Call in Smiley," or "We need some Smileys," means send in some Smiling Jack SAMAS.

Smoke = Excessive physical work as punishment for a minor infraction by a CS soldier.

Smokers = Bursters and any psychics with Pyrokinesis or energy explosion abilities.

Target Discrimination = The ability to identify specific enemy targets from among multiple options, including civilian and strategic resources. May also apply to A.I. and guidance systems able to I.D. enemy targets.

Thunder = Super SAMAS.

Tee-Kays = Psychics with Telekinesis as a notable power.

UEL = A UEL is a "Universal Energy Link" developed by Northern Gun that cables a built-in weapon system or handheld weapon to draw power from the power supply of the power armor, robot, vehicle, etc., giving it an effectively unlimited payload, rather than having to rely on individual E-Clips or portable hip or backpack batteries. In power armor, the Universal Energy Link is concealed under a layer of forearm plating. When needed, the plate opens and extends enough for the E-Clip connector of the UEL and cable to be removed and plugged into the weapon. The plate armor snaps back into place and a thin cable runs from the back of the forearm, near the wrist, from under the armor and to the weapon in hand. **Note:** Body armor does not have sufficient energy for this use, but the nuclear power supplies of power armor, robots and cyborgs do. This is new technology first introduced in **Rifts® World Book 34: Northern Gun Two.**

Volun-told = An assignment that is technically voluntary but understood to be mandatory.

Zoom or **Zoomers** = Sky Cycles and rocket bikes. "We need zoom," or "Where are the zoomers?" refers to sending in one or more wings of Sky Cycles and rocket bikes, or combat helicopters and other *air to ground* capable aircraft. **Note:** *SAMAS* are sometimes included in Zoom Strike wings, but more often are considered a separate combat wing that may be part of a larger aerial strike force or offer support to air and/or ground forces.

Wing = The term for squadrons of aircraft, SAMAS and other fliers. A typical "wing" is 6-12 aircraft or fliers.

Zits = Xiticix insectoids.

Coalition Fire Team in the Minion War

A fire team is always four infantrymen (or specialists) trained to fight as a coordinated team.

Team Leader – A confident, young, *CS Dead Boy* or *Military Specialist (Sergeant)* who has exhibited leadership qualities, resourcefulness and a "can do" attitude. He leads by example and is the epitome of the word "grunt," as in the guy who is going to make sure his team gets things done, and done right. He is equipped with heavy Dead Boy armor, and the usual weapons and gear.

Rifleman – Any CS soldier who has undergone *Marksman* and/or *Weapon Expert Advanced Training.* Standard Dead Boy armor and gear, plus a long-range laser rifle, a second energy rifle of choice, and a heavy M.D. weapon of choice.

Iron – *Terror Trooper power armor* with its standard weapons, which include a Missile Rifle and heavy weapons. May be substituted with a Super SAMAS.

Muscle – *One Coalition Combat Cyborg (any)* armed with a rail gun and/or other heavy weapon(s), and may include a Hellbuster unless stealth or maneuverability is a mission requirement.

A 'Borg can be substituted with a *pair of Juicers.* Muscle may be required to carry extra ammunition like grenades and mini-missiles for the Terror Trooper or Super SAMAS.

Common CS Infantry Squad in the Minion War

A typical squad is 8-12 soldiers and part of a larger platoon or company.

Squad Leader – The squad leader is usually a confident, young *Dead Boy soldier, Ranger* or *CS Military Specialist (Sergeant to Lieutenant)* who has exhibited leadership qualities, resourcefulness and a "can do" attitude. He leads by example and is the epitome of the word "grunt," as in the guy who is going to make sure his team gets things done. He is equipped with standard Dead Boy armor, and the usual weapons and gear.

Point or Point Man – The first member of the group to move forward toward an objective, through a door, and down the hall or down a trail. He is expected to detect ambushes, enemies, monsters, magic, and traps in time to warn the rest of the group. In the wild and in the Minion War, the Point is often a *Coalition Psi-Stalker* or *Dog Boy* (both of which can sense supernatural evil and magic), or a *Ranger* or *Military Specialist.* Points usually possess Land Navigation and some Tracking ability, but in a pinch, a Point can be anyone willing to take the position.

Dead Boys – Two grunts with standard Dead Boy armor, weapons and gear.

Private

Corporal

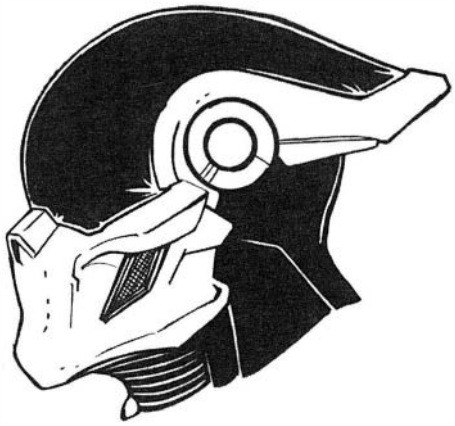
Non-Commissioned Officer

Commissioned Officer

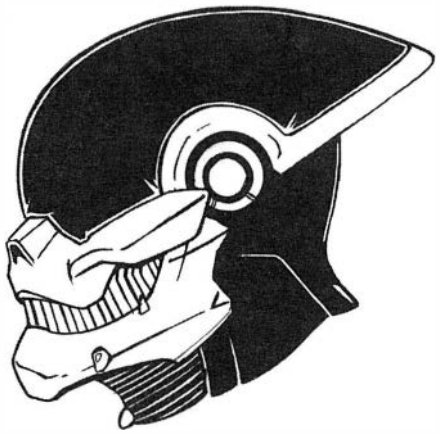
Technical Officer

Psychic Officer

Psi-Stalker



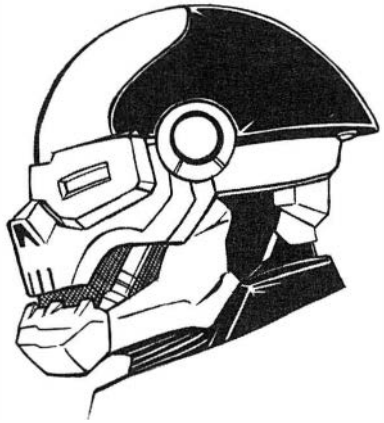
Sky Cycle Pilot



Robot Pilot

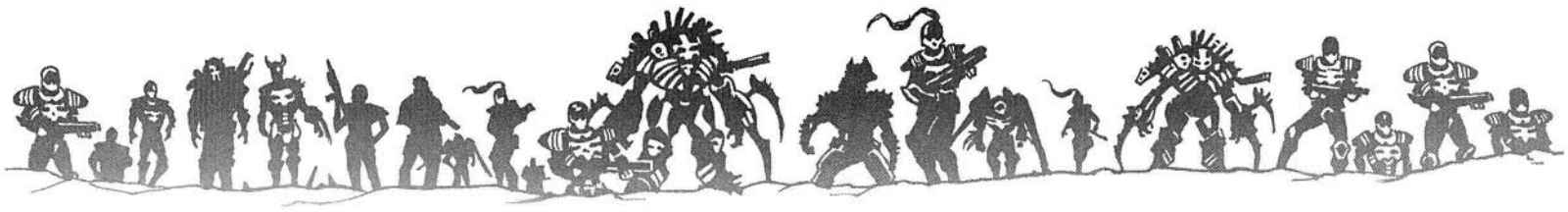
Cyborg
Strike Trooper

Juicer



Rift Control
Study Group

Imperial Officer



Dog Boy – One or two Dog Boys in full Dead Boy armor, and standard weapons and gear.

Iron – One or two power armor troops. Can be any, but the *Mauler, Terror Trooper, Glitter Boy Killer* (proven effective against demons) and *Smiling Jack (Light) SAMAS* or an *old-style SAMAS* are the most common. A *Death Knight* demon hunter can be one of the Iron, but they are often reserved for special ops and demon hunting missions.

Juice – One Coalition Juicer.

Muscle – Any Coalition Combat Cyborg, and may include a Hellbuster.

Note: A larger Squad of 10 or 12 may have one or two additional Juicers, and one or two additional Dog Boys or Psi-Stalkers, or one or two psychics (any).

Advanced Training

Militaries have a consistent way of training all of their soldiers. This makes for a uniform fighting force and allows equipment to be standardized for mass production and easy distribution to its combat forces. While this means all troops receive the same standardized "basic training," there are some personnel who get additional training in areas of specialization – communications, medical, mechanics, etc. (see Coalition Technical Officer). *Officers, special forces* (Commandos, Rangers, etc.) and *special corps or divisions* within the armed forces (communications/radio corps, tank corps/armored division, medical corps, etc.) play special roles that require additional training. And in the Coalition Army, there are battalions, divisions, and corps of *augmented humans* – Combat Cyborgs, Juicers, Psi-Battalion, power armor pilots, robot pilots, and Fly Boys with wings of SAMAS, Sky Cycles, rocket bikes, etc.

Many of these **specialized divisions** get *Advanced Training* – different or additional training and skills. Soldiers who show an aptitude in one particular area during Basic Training may be offered **AT (Advanced Training)**, but with Advanced Training comes more demands and deadlier special missions.

Advanced Training may also be made available to *experienced, proven soldiers* to enable them to become experts/specialists who perform special duties, join special units or switch areas of specialty to something different and new.

Soldiers in the Coalition Army, Free Quebec Army, some mercenary companies and armies of other nations/city-states may, at any time, *request* Advanced Training for themselves. As a rule, only applications that come with *a recommendation from a superior officer* are seriously considered. Having an exemplary record is also helpful. Soldiers with tarnished records are NOT considered valid candidates unless a commanding officer has issued a direct order for AT (Advanced Training). And sometimes being a valid candidate is not enough. There may be long waiting lists for some Advanced Training categories (G.M. discretion). The only way to bypass a waiting list is a direct written order from a commanding officer (the rank of major or higher), instructing that the cadet/soldier(s) be placed in the next available AT program as an official order. The CS is very good about recognizing the potential of its soldiers and giving them the training to make them the best they can be at their job.

CS Military Schools

Remember, these are combat schools and the skills available reflect that.

Black Talon School (SAMAS)

The Black Talon School is the Coalition equivalent to the old American Empire's *Top Gun school*. It is exclusive to the elite Coalition pilots. Typically the SAMAS pilots and RPA Fly Boy Aces are the only "recognized" Coalition pilots, but individuals with other O.C.C.s often make the cut, too, and are sent to Black Talon School for Advanced Training.

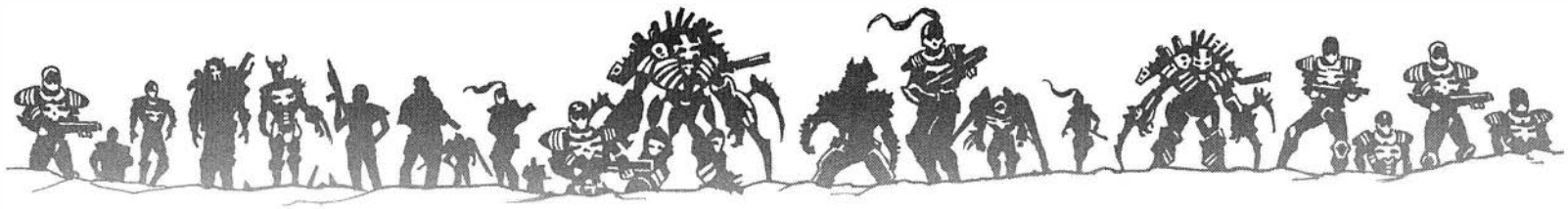
Black Talon school is ten weeks long. The first three weeks are all classroom time with the focus on history, combat techniques, and safety. The remaining weeks are a combination of simulator and actual flight time in a variety of power armor, rocket bikes and/or aircraft, where different scenarios are played out. The emphasis is on flying skills and teamwork, and improvising and adapting to ever-changing battlefield conditions. Depending on class size, teams will even go head to head in mock combat, although most of the time, pilots go head to head against more experienced trainers.

CS Officers' School

Before the Coming of the Rifts, West Point was an officers' school for high-achieving cadets who believed they wanted a career in the military. In addition to military basics and physical fitness, officer cadets are taught military history, strategies and tactics, effective communications, how to think inside and outside of the box, the responsibility of being an officer, codes of conduct, military rules, and character building exercises, methods and techniques.

CS Officers' School is a three year program, plus usually Advanced Training in other areas which can add another 3-24 months depending on selection. *The CS Military Specialist O.C.C.* and *Technical Officer O.C.C.* are both the product of Coalition Officers' School.

Non-commissioned soldiers (and established men-at-arms characters) sent to Coalition Officers' School after having seen action on the battlefield get a six month *crash course* plus Advanced Training in one or two areas. However, such individuals should already have some "real world" combat experience (probably a lot of experience) and/or exhibit qualities of a natural leader.



CS Demon Slayer School

During the Siege on Tolkeen, many Coalition units were tasked with tracking down bands of demons. Units that had been in the field longest, particularly those who had spent years in the Magic Zone prior to the Siege on Tolkeen, had developed "tricks of the trade" in hunting and fighting demons and other supernatural monsters. It took time and loss of life, but the Coalition came to the conclusion they needed to have specialized military units that were dedicated demon hunters.

By the last few years of the war with Tolkeen, combat soldiers in the field and ISS Operatives pooled their knowledge and experience to create a formal CS Demon Hunter Advanced Training program. Not just to eradicate the supernatural evil unleashed by Tolkeen, but in anticipation of similar attacks from Tolkeen Retribution Squads and potential enemies like the Federation of Magic, Atlantis, Lazlo, and threats from beyond the Rifts.

Today, these specialized soldiers are put through a demon hunter program to make them masters at hunting and slaying supernatural beings. The Coalition is very picky and careful about who they send through this school.

CS Steel Armor School (Infantry)

Steel Armor School is specifically for those who excel in piloting armored combat vehicles. Everything from tanks and APCs, to infantry power armor and manned combat robots. While classified as pilots, these individuals are specifically trained in "armored vehicles" and Robot/Power Armor Elite in one or more different types of power armor or robot combat vehicles. The school is broken down into different categories of "armored" vehicles and corresponding combat.

CS Special Forces Schools

There are a number of Special Forces Schools specialized areas of combat and espionage (Commando, EOD Specialist, Military Specialist, Nautical Specialist, Ranger, Steel Armor, etc.). They also offer Advanced Training programs that are useful to Special Forces. Usually those that have an emphasis on combat, espionage and special operations. Close Quarters Combat, Demon Hunting, Intelligence, Marksmanship, Martial Arts Expert, Nonhuman Studies, Ordnance, Spycraft, Stalking, Stealth, Survival, and others are available via these schools. Advanced Training hones, sharpens and focuses training in one or two specialized areas.

CS Military Technical Schools

These are schools which offer Advanced Training (AT) programs for areas other than direct combat or spycraft, such as Field Counter-Intelligence, Field Intelligence, Nonhuman Studies, Rescue, Salvage and Survival, as well as MOS skill packages for Technical Officers and other specialized areas of military training such as communications, electronics, mechanics, medical, robotics, and others.

CS Psi-Battalion

Psi-Battalion is a whole other animal. It has always been Top Secret and has its own set of schools exclusive to psychics and other defenders of Coalition cities from supernatural and magic-based threats. This includes everything from identifying supernatural and magical invaders, and the elimination of such threats, to counter-intelligence, monster-hunting and special operations. Much of what is being taught in the CS Army's Demon Hunter schools comes from Psi-Battalion. Just about everything about Psi-Battalion is Top Secret; training is available only to select, registered psychic CS citizens and other handpicked operatives. The rest of Psi-Battalion's training, knowledge and operations remain closely guarded secrets.

Upgrading Existing Characters with Advanced Training

Game Master Note: As always, it is up to the G.M. to decide if he or she wants to incorporate the rules for Advanced Training. We think they are a fun way to refresh old characters, and make new characters more unique.

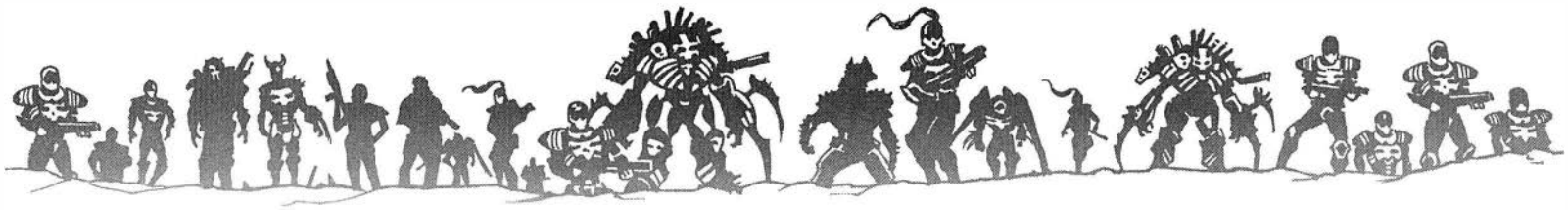
Perception Roll Note: A 12 or higher is required to succeed, unless stated otherwise in the AT description.

A good soldier never stops learning and is always training and sharpening his skills. In the context of the game, this is represented by level advancement via experience and the addition of new O.C.C. Related Skills, and sometimes, Secondary Skills. Advanced Training is a new way to do this.

The Advanced Training (AT) rules here are a fast, fun way to *upgrade* and *change men-at-arms characters.* Though these advanced training programs and combat schools have been developed by the **Coalition Army** for their own troops, similar training can be found among *some long-established mercenary companies* (other than the character's own), the *Cyber-Knights* and non-CS city-states like *MercTown, Northern Gun, the Manistique Imperium*, and *Whykin.*

Available to ANY men-at-arms characters, from Mercenary Soldiers and Combat Cyborgs to Crazies and Robot Pilots. **Also available to** *Assassins, Vagabonds* and *Wilderness Scouts*, but **NOT** professional thieves/bandits/raiders, psychics, practitioners of magic, or adventurer O.C.C.s such as *Rogue Scholars, Rogue Scientists,* and *Operators*, unless stated otherwise.

Advanced Training (AT) is a way to upgrade an *existing combat oriented character* and help make him feel fresh and unique again. Such characters stand out from the average grunt.



Advanced Training Rules for *existing characters*

Upgrading and changing a man-at-arms' skill set.

1. The character must be 3rd level or higher. Only characters who have already proven themselves are considered worthy of AT. Most armies do not waste the time and expense for AT on a green recruit (a first or second level character). The exceptions being first level characters who are *commissioned officers* (have gone through military school and officer's training, and start with a rank of Lieutenant) and *special forces operatives* (CS Military Specialist, Commando, Ranger, Black Talon/SAMAS, Death Knight/Demon Hunter, Fly Boy Ace, and Nautical Commando), all of whom can receive Advanced Training (AT) at any level, starting at level one. (See **Advanced Training when Creating a New Character**, below.)

2. The character must possess the necessary *attribute requirements* for the AT, or come close to them. If the character meets the attribute requirements, he can upgrade by selecting *one* of the AT options available under an Advanced Training program, provided he satisfies the other possible conditions. Most *military schools* offer two or more AT choices.

Cheating Attribute Requirements: If a character has attributes that are only *one or two points off* (e.g. needs a P.E. of 12 but has a 10), he can still take the Advanced Training and learn the new skill set. Determination and heart can make up for a lot. However, there are some modifiers for failing to meet all the attribute requirements, even when only one attribute falls short.

Penalties for falling short of one or more attribute requirements: Soldiers who fall just shy of any *attribute requirements* – whether it be only one attribute or several – see **ALL bonuses** from that Advanced Training (AT) *reduced by half (round up).* This includes skill bonuses, S.D.C. bonus, attribute bonuses, Perception bonuses, combat bonuses (to strike, parry, save vs Horror Factor), etc.; round up except for bonuses of one. **Example:** If a bonus was +1, the recruit who fell short does NOT receive that bonus at all. This is an exception to the round up rule. If the bonus was +2, it becomes +1. If it was +3, it becomes +2 due to rounding up, if it was +4 it is +2, +5 it is +3, +10% becomes +5%, +15% becomes +8, and so on.

Remember, the attribute requirement can only be short by as much as *two points* per each attribute required. If the deficit is greater, the character cannot select that category of AT. Sorry.

3. Trading the future for now. The character must have at least FOUR **O.C.C. Related Skills** available to trade from *future level increases.* These four *future* O.C.C. Related Skills are *forfeited* in favor of ONE *Advanced Training* skill set now! As many as TWO AT packages can be selected, each costing four future O.C.C. Related Skills (see #5 for details).

Another way! Characters who do not have four O.C.C. Related Skills available in the future may choose to sacrifice *FIVE currently existing skills* (any skills; including current Secondary Skills) for one new, AT MOS skill set.

The old skills sacrificed (probably ones the character seldom uses) are, in effect, forgotten. In a pinch, however, these *"rusty" old skills* can be attempted at the *Base Skill proficiency* listed for it, WITHOUT benefit of any bonuses the character may have acquired before his AT replaced them; not bonuses for level advancement/experience, not O.C.C. bonuses, nothing, except a bonus for a high I.Q. attribute can be applied to old skills.

4. A new skill set and/or abilities. When Advanced Training (AT) is completed, the character possesses one (or two) new, specialized AT set of skills and any bonuses and special AT abilities that *may* come with it.

New AT skills start at Level One proficiency plus any applicable bonuses, regardless of the character's previous experience. They improve with experience as normal, starting with the next level achieved. This may mean the new skills advance more slowly, but most start with a higher bonus.

Duplicate skills from Advanced Training: If Advanced Training provides one or more skills the character already knows, or which are included in another AT, the Advanced Training gives the character a deeper understanding and expanded range of information, and earns him the additional *skill bonus* provided by the AT. **Note:** When a character has to trade away skills to get Advanced Training, he cannot trade away any skill he knows is going to be duplicated. It must be kept and he gets the *skill bonus from AT as an extra bonus.* This bonus is in addition to all other applicable bonuses, which can be considerable.

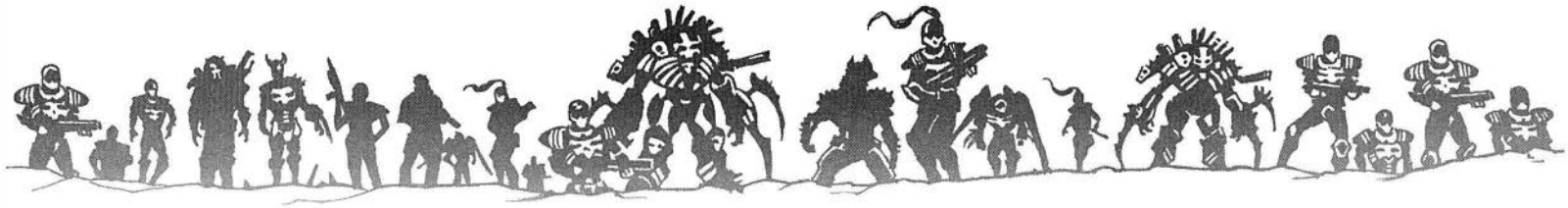
Special training, special missions: The AT skills may be very different than those possessed by other characters with the same O.C.C. As a result, characters with AT are more likely to be assigned to special operations and missions.

5. Two AT now, or one now and one later? An established character may only receive two AT choices, maximum, in his lifetime. Generally, an established character takes only one Advanced Training Program now, and saves one for the future. However, if the player so desires, and the G.M. allows it, he can choose two AT options at the same time, each adding to the length of training. This also means an additional FIVE current skills – 10 total – must be sacrificed now, in order to take two AT now. Additional Advanced Training in the future is no longer an option.

6. Rank (when applicable). Advanced Training often, but not always, raises the rank of non-commissioned soldiers to the next level. A Private becomes a Corporal, a Corporal becomes a Sergeant, a Sergeant becomes a Staff Sergeant, a Staff Sergeant becomes a Sergeant 1st Class, then Master Sergeant, and so on, stopping at Warrant Officer. Any higher rank for non-coms in the Coalition Army are field commissions and seldom go beyond Sergeant Major.

It is a different story for commissioned officers, who come out of Officers' School with the rank of 2nd Lieutenant (the lowest commissioned rank) or 1st Lieutenant whether they have had specialized Advanced Training or not.

Handling training time in the game. Pre-existing/established characters who accept AT (Advanced Training) need to



set aside a period of time to train, which could mean that one or more player characters could be out of the loop for a few game sessions. Depending on the type of Advanced Training, the learning process could take as few as 6-8 weeks or as long as 30-52 weeks. **Or the Game Master may skip ahead** and assume that training happened "off camera," so to speak, and fast forward to the point when the character's training is completed and he/she/they are ready to put that training to the test in the field of combat. We recommend the latter.

Creating *New Characters* with Advanced Training

All Coalition soldiers and most men-at-arms get the same **Basic Training**. Giving them all the same fundamental set of combat skills and military orientation per their chosen O.C.C. This includes the order of command, military etiquette, basic weapons and combat training, and getting physically fit for combat duty. Recruits not up to the current standards are washed out. Obviously, in a game we assume the character does not fail at basic training, he sticks to it and becomes that chosen O.C.C.

During Basic Training, soldiers are observed and evaluated. Those believed to have "the right stuff" or that "special quality" to be an officer, marksman, spy, demon hunter, etc., may be invited to take **Advanced Training (AT)** to expand their fighting capabilities and provide them with specialized skills and abilities. Again, in a game context, this would be AT that makes the character unique and/or more powerful.

If the Game Master allows Advanced Training, newly created characters that are **Coalition Military O.C.C.s** or other **Men-at-Arms O.C.C.s** may select Advanced Training (AT) when the character is being created.

Note: Taking AT instead of selecting the usual O.C.C. Related Skills is the player's choice. You do not have to take AT, you can build a fun, diverse character picking O.C.C. Related Skills. Advanced Training, though fun, may create a more specialized and sometimes more limited character. ("I know everything there is to know about demons." "Cool, what about intelligence operations?" "Like I said, I know everything there is to know about demons.")

Advanced Training (AT) for *new* characters:

1. Roll up the character as usual per the chosen Coalition or Men-At-Arms O.C.C., but STOP at O.C.C. Related Skills and read #2, below.

2. Trading *O.C.C. Related Skills* and *Secondary Skills* for 2 Advanced Training (AT) packages. If Advanced Training (AT) is desired, the player may select two Advanced Training/AT skill packages *in exchange for ALL O.C.C. Related Skills and Secondary Skills available now and in the future!* There are NO O.C.C. Related Skills or Secondary Skills to be selected by this character. The two Advanced Training (AT) skill packages *replace* them.

Pick two AT packages: The new recruit gets two AT choices from those described in the pages that follow, provided the character satisfies the **attribute requirements** and any other possible restrictions or requirements. The two AT selections can be from the *same AT school* (i.e. two AT packages available from say, the Demon Hunter school or Advanced Combat school), or one from one school and AT program and one from a completely different school offering Advanced Training programs, such as Demon Hunter and Communications, or Power Armor Pilot and Salvage.

The new character is first level and all skills start at Level One proficiency plus all applicable bonuses.

3. The character must possess the necessary *attribute requirements* for the AT, or come close to them. If the character meets the requirements, he or she gains the two desired AT packages of choice. Make note of special abilities and all bonuses. When the two ATs are selected, *finish creating your character.* Skip Secondary Skills as they too have been spent on AT. Move on to equipment, pay and cybernetics (if any).

Cheating Attribute Requirements: If the new recruit has required attributes that are only *one or two points off* (e.g. needs a P.E. of 12 but has a 10 or 11), he can still take the Advanced Training and learn the new skill set. Determination and heart can make up for a lot. However, there are some modifiers for failing to meet all the attribute requirements, even if only one attribute falls short by one point.

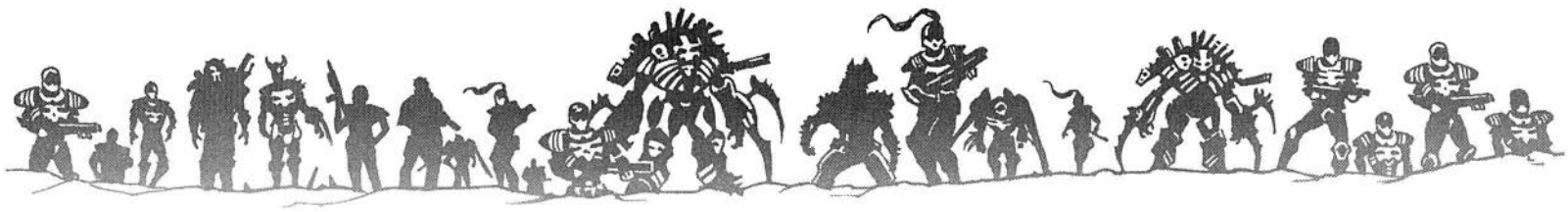
Penalties for falling short of one or more attribute requirements: Soldiers who fall just shy of any *attribute requirements* – whether it be only one attribute or several – see **ALL bonuses** from that Advanced Training (AT) *reduced by half (round up).* This includes skill bonuses, S.D.C. bonus, attribute bonuses, Perception bonuses, combat bonuses (to strike, parry, save vs Horror Factor), etc.; round up except for bonuses of one. **Example:** If a bonus was +1, the recruit who fell short does NOT receive that bonus at all. This is an exception to the round up rule. If the bonus was +2, it becomes +1. If it was +3, it becomes +2 due to rounding up, if it was +4 it is +2, +5 it is +3, +10% becomes +5%, +15% becomes +8, and so on.

Remember, the attribute requirement can only be short by as much as *two points* per each attribute required. If the deficit is greater, the character cannot select that category of AT. Sorry.

4. Two new AT skill sets and abilities. When Advanced Training is completed, the first level character possesses TWO new specialized AT sets of skills and any bonuses and special abilities that *may* come with them.

Duplicate skills from Advanced Training: If Advanced Training provides one or more skills the character already knows, or acquires from another AT, the Advanced Training gives the character a deeper understanding and expanded range of information, and gets the *skill bonus from AT as an extra bonus.* **Note:** When a character has to trade away skills to get a future AT, he cannot trade away a skill he knows is going to be duplicated. It must be kept, but receives the skill bonus, above.

Special training, special missions: The AT skills may be very different than those possessed by other characters with the same



O.C.C. As a result, characters with AT are more likely to be assigned to special operations and missions.

5. A third Advanced Training later (if wanted). Characters who receive Advanced Training as a first level raw recruit or officer cadet out of Officers' school have earned these ATs because they have shown greater potential and aptitude than the average soldier. This provides a *third AT selection* available in the future, should the player ever want it.

The future, third AT selection is not available until the character reaches *level five*. A player is not required to pick a third AT later in life if he is happy with the character as it is. The choice is entirely the player's. The third AT can be selected at any level *starting* with level five, so a player could take it then or wait until level six, or seven, or eight, or eleven, or whenever.

The selection of a third AT comes with a price: It works similar to **Upgrading an "Established" Character,** above, which means the character must give up and trade away *four existing skills* (because he has no future O.C.C. Related Skills or Secondary Skills to trade away).

New AT skills start at Level One proficiency plus any applicable bonuses.

6. Rank (when applicable). Advanced Training often, but not always, raises the rank of *non-commissioned soldiers* to the next level. A Private becomes a Corporal, a Corporal becomes a Sergeant, a Sergeant becomes a Staff Sergeant, a Staff Sergeant becomes a Sergeant 1st Class, then Master Sergeant, and so on, stopping at Warrant Officer. Any higher rank for non-coms in the Coalition Army are field commissions and seldom go beyond Sergeant Major.

It is a different story for commissioned officers, who come out of Officer's School with the rank of 2nd Lieutenant (the lowest commissioned rank) whether they have had specialized Advanced Training or not.

7. Training time. It is assumed that the newly minted warrior has undergone and passed all of his Advanced Training and is ready for action.

Note: Special AT abilities, such as Prowl to Hide, only apply to characters who have taken that particular Advanced Training.

Advanced Training Descriptions

List of Advanced Training Programs

Black Talon (SAMAS & Fliers)
- Elite Pilot
- Top Gun Ace

Close Quarters Combat
Demon Hunter
Field Counter-Intelligence
Field Intelligence
Marksmanship
Martial Expert
Nonhuman Studies (D-Bee Hunter)
Officer
Ordnance
Rescue
Salvage Expert
Spycraft
Stalking
Stealth
Steel Armor (Robot & Power Armor)
Survival

Perception Roll Note: Unless stated otherwise, to make a successful Perception Roll, the character must roll a 12 or higher.

Black Talon Combat Pilot Advanced Training

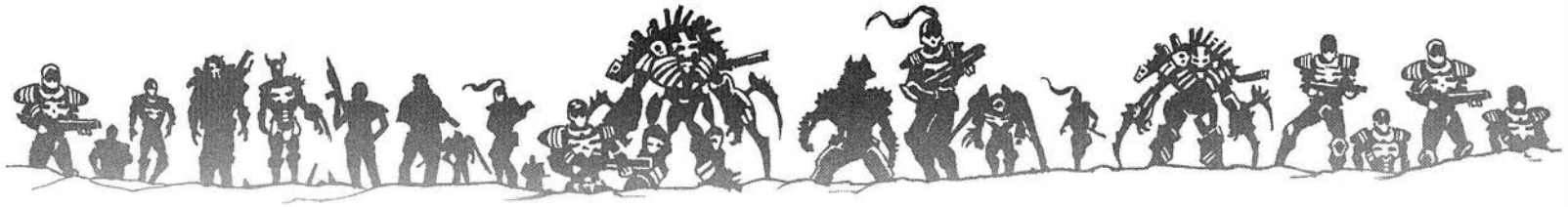
After 12 weeks of Black Talon school, the character is either considered an "Elite Pilot" or a "Top Gun Ace." Both receive the prestigious Black Talon medal. This depicts an American Bald Eagle with its wings spread behind the Coalition skull and lightning insignia. They also have patches that sew onto flight suits and the symbol is also painted on the right shoulder of the soldier's armor.

Training Period: 12 weeks.

AT Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 11, P.E. 11 and P.P. 14 or better.

AT Availability and Exclusions: Generally limited to CS Military O.C.C.s and Men-at-Arms O.C.C.s that have a reason to pilot flying power armor, jet packs, rocket bikes and combat aircraft, like the SAMAS pilot, RPA Fly Boys, Commandos, Special Forces, CS Military Specialists, Technical Officers, Robot Pilots, some Combat Cyborgs or Juicers with their Death Wing Flight Systems. **Note:** This AT is never available to the *CS Dog Boy* or *CS Psi-Stalker*, and generally not available to *Coalition Police/ISS, psychics,* or most other O.C.C.s (G.M.'s discretion).

Similar training from certain mercenary companies and kingdoms, like Lazlo, may have an equivalent AT for any Men-at-



Arms O.C.C.s of the same or similar types described above. **Note:** This AT is never available to *Cyber-Knights, Crazies, psychics, mages, Adventurer O.C.C.s,* or most others.

Skill Requirements (special): The character must have at least one flying-based piloting skill before taking Combat Pilot AT (may include Flight System Combat, Jet Pack and/or a flying power armor).

Additional Skills that come with Black Talon Combat AT: See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

Elite Pilot (special): CS combat pilots with Black Talon AT walk away with a fundamental knowledge of *all* CS aircraft, flying power armor and other flying machines. If it leaves the ground and travels in the air for more than a minute, the pilot can fly it, at least on a very basic level. Equal to the **Base Skill** required for that specific piloting skill and category of aircraft/flier, but without benefit of any bonus other than I.Q. attribute, if applicable.

Pilot: Robot Combat: *Basic* can be selected for TWO different flying power armors or manned robots, provided the pilot already has the Robot and Power armor skill.

Pilot: Robot Combat: *Elite* can be selected for ONE flying power armor or manned robot, provided the pilot already has the Robot and Power armor skill.

Other Elite Pilot Skills:

Weapon Systems (+10%) or Navigation (+15%), whichever the character is lacking or has the greatest need; pick one.

Additional Piloting: Select *one* additional Pilot skill from the following list of Piloting categories:

Pilot: Airplane (old style propeller aircraft; +15%)

Pilot: Combat Helicopter (+20%)

Pilot: Hovercylces, Skycycles & Rocket Bikes (+15%)

Pilot: Jet Aircraft (includes Death's Head Transports; +15%)

Pilot: Jet Fighter (+16%)

Pilot: Jet Packs (+16%)

Pilot: Robots and Power Armor (+16%), but limited to flying types only, like the SAMAS.

Pilot: Flight System Combat (Death Wings, Icarus, and similar vehicles). Though usually reserved for Juicers, this skill can be learned by anyone as part of the Black Talon Advanced Training program. However, the usual penalties for ordinary pilots who are not "augmented" apply (not a Juicer, Crazy, or Cyborg). Those are usually found under the vehicle description, but generally -20% for ordinary humans. **Note:** Augmented humans like Juicers, Headhunters and Combat Cyborgs get an additional +10% Flight System Combat bonus from AT. Psycho-Stalkers rarely learn to pilot Death Wings. **In the alternative** the character can select one additional Pilot skill from the list, above.

Elite AT Bonuses:

Attribute: +1 to P.P. attribute.

S.D.C.: +2D6+2

Combat: +1 on initiative, +1 to strike when using the vehicle's weapon systems and +1 to dodge when piloting *any* flying vehicle (power armor, flight system, aircraft, Skycycles and Rocket Bikes).

Stunt Flying: Penalties for stunt maneuvers, tricks, dogfighting, jinking, weaving, and evasive actions are all reduced by half thanks to the Black Talon Combat Pilot AT, but only when it come to the specific *Pilot skills* selected by the character, i.e. Pilot: Robots and Power Armor, Pilot: Jet Packs, etc.

Or the *Top Gun Combat Ace* Alternative Option!

Instead of taking the *Elite Pilot* training, above, and getting all the corresponding skills and bonuses related to it, the **Combat Ace** gets none of them. He cannot pilot everything that flies, nor does he get the extra Pilot skill or bonuses above. Instead the ace focuses entirely on mastering combat flying in one or two aircraft/flying power armors.

Top Gun Ace Bonuses and Abilities: All these bonuses apply only to the ace's one or two primary combat vehicles/power armors.

Attribute: +1 to P.P. attribute.

S.D.C.: +1D6+2

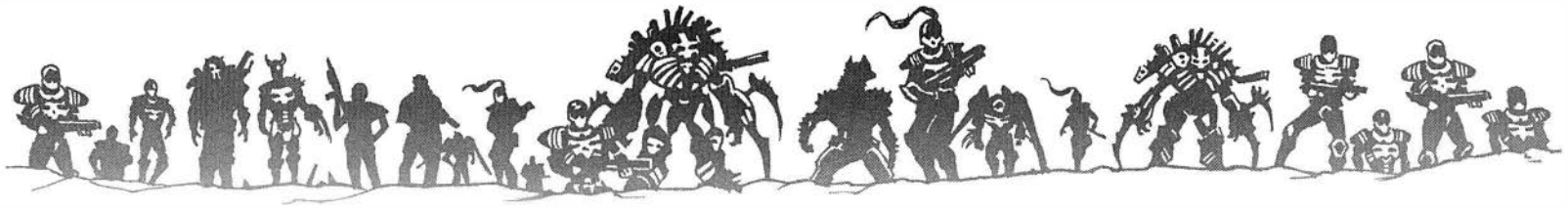
Ace Combat Bonuses:

- +2 on Perception Rolls regarding spotting enemy fliers and incoming missiles, as well as when an enemy flier is in trouble and vulnerable or another aircraft is in distress.
- Can re-roll a *strike* or *dodge* twice per melee round! There is no guarantee the re-roll will be any better, but a chance is a chance! This is a free roll and does not use up a melee attack, it replaces a prior strike or dodge. **Note:** The re-roll must happen immediately after the unwanted roll happens and must be announced.
- +2 on initiative in the one or two of the ace's primary combat vehicles/power armors only.
- +1 to strike when using the vehicle or power armor's weapon systems.
- Can push the speed and altitude of his vehicle 10% greater.
- Can push the range of the vehicle's weapons 10% farther.
- The ace is so attuned to his vehicle that he can tell when something is wrong or not working properly and avoid a problem before it gets too serious and can point this out to his mechanic, giving him a +10% skill bonus on all repairs. Likewise, the Top Gun Ace knows how far they can push their vehicle before it shuts downs or breaks apart, etc.
- +15% to survive crash landings.

Stunt Flying: Penalties for stunt maneuvers, tricks, dogfighting, jinking, weaving, and evasive actions are all reduced by two-thirds (66%) for the ace, but only when it come to flying the one or two primary combat vehicles chosen by the ace, not all aircraft/fliers.

Close Quarters Combat Advanced Training

Close quarters combat (CQC) for the Coalition Army and most warfare conditions means tactical short-range combat in a confined environment, such as city streets, alleys, inside build-



ings and compounds, tunnels/caves or hives, and involves melee combat and/or firefights between several combatants. Close quarters combat is always conducted by teams (4 troops), small squads (6-12 troops) or small units (platoon of 20-40 troops, usually divided into squads and teams). These are what most people consider to be SWAT or Commando-style raids that are fast and deadly. Whether it is a room by room or street by street sweep searching for enemy combatants, criminals, demons or monsters, surgical strike to take over a structure or vehicle, or rescue operation, the combat is always a precision, rapid assault. Fast and deadly. The goal, to eliminate the enemy and take down all "hostiles" as quickly as possible to avoid civilian casualties and collateral damage to hostages, friendlies or resources.

Combat usually takes place inside the rooms and hallways of buildings, behind barricades and other confined areas, so the strike force engages the enemy with hand to hand combat, melee weapons and compact weapons that one person can carry and use easily in tight spaces. Heavy weapons like rail guns, boom guns, grenades, mini-missiles or any ordnance with an *area affect* are NOT used in close quarters operations. Energy pistols and energy rifles with good stopping power and control are ideal – ion and plasma weapons are favored by many as particle beams may be a bit too dangerous when innocents are part of the equation – pump pistols, shotguns, Big Bore weapons and ammo (unofficial for CS use), Vibro-Blades, and bionic weapons built into the forearms, fingers and eyes are all excellent for CQC operations, as are the fast and deadly Juicers. Use of flash bang grenades may also be used to temporarily blind and confuse the enemy, giving the strike force a momentary edge. Smoke and tear gas are seldom used as they leave the enemy standing and able to shoot hostages, detonate explosive devices, and fire weapons, even if blind or partially blinded.

Range in close quarter's combat can be as short as arm's length up to 300 feet (91.5 m), and is not limited to urban settings. CQC can take place in any type of wilderness environment, anywhere, and may be directed against an outpost, base camp, stronghold, airfield, bunker, guard post, communications tower, supply depot, prison camp, transport convoy, Hell Pit, or inside a large vehicle, aircraft, ship, spacecraft, and so on.

Training Period: 12 weeks.

AT Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 10, M.E. 12, P.S. 11, P.P. 13.

AT Availability and Exclusions: Most CS Military O.C.C.s including CS Police/ISS/Psi-Battalion operatives can take this AT, with the following exceptions: RPA Fly Boy Aces and RCSG Scientists. **Note:** Yes, this AT is available to *Dog Boys, Psi-Stalkers* and *Coalition psychics* who are an "official" agent of Psi-Battalion and/or the ISS/NT-SET.

Similar training from certain mercenary companies and kingdoms, like Lazlo, may have an equivalent AT for any Men-at-Arms O.C.C.

CQC AT Special Abilities:

+5 to Friend or Foe Perception Rolls (special AT ability): Dynamic entry and snap decision making is necessary in close quarters combat. Whether it is used to clear a room, swarm a vehicle or rescue hostages, the assault is a rapid and aggressive attack using overwhelming force, the element of surprise and probably multiple entry points. And it requires making lethal force split-second decisions every step of the way.

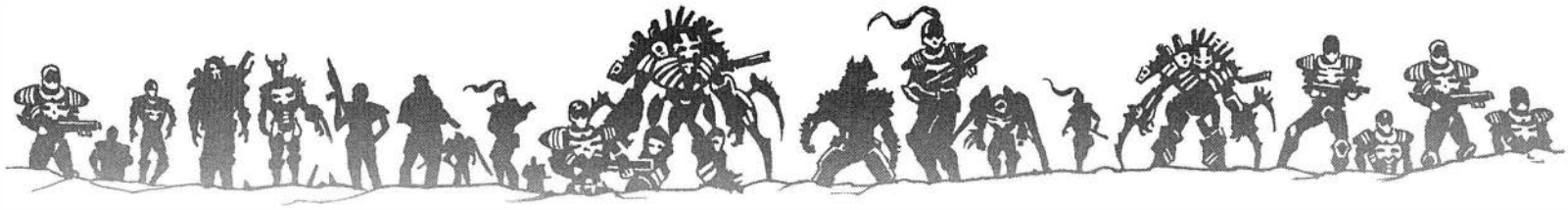
+5 to Perception Rolls to differentiate between friend and foe at a glance, within line of sight. This is the practiced ability to make a snap judgement in identifying the enemy vs teammates, hostages, civilians and other noncombatants no matter how intermingled the enemy may be among them. Commando-style raids are designed to take down all hostiles fast. Starting with the most immediate enemy threat followed by the greatest potential danger and then all the other bad guys in the room. This is a snap judgement that take considerable training and awareness of one's surroundings. Lethal force is used, so unless enemy targets drop their guns and fall to their knees or bellies, hands empty and arms outstretched, they are targeted for termination! No questions asked.

The Game Play of Friend & Foe Perception: Make a Perception Roll on 1D20 upon entering the room or scene. *A 12 or higher* is necessary to make a successful assessment of ALL visible occupants within the immediate room to I.D. and target obvious enemies; e.g. armed gunmen, demons, mages, goons threatening hostages, and so on. Standard practice: each member of the strike force takes one enemy target and engages. Remember, this is a precision, coordinated attack.

A successful roll (12 or higher) means the Close Quarters Combat Specialist has identified all obvious and visible threats. This can be two assailants or twenty-two. He is ready to attack with full bonuses and knows who is an enemy and who is not for the entire firefight, as long as it takes place inside that specific room/area. **Note:** The identifying of the enemy and the threat level each represents *does not include* enemies in disguise, metamorphed or shape-changed to look like an ordinary civilian or hostage, nor any bad guy who is not seen hiding behind cover (ducked down completely behind a hostage, hiding behind or under furniture, waiting behind a closed door), invisible or in an adjoining area.

As soon as the landscape changes; e.g. the hero enters a new room or location, he must make a new Friend or Foe Perception Roll.

A failed roll to differentiate between friend and foe means the character only I.D.s 1D4x10% of the enemy. He can attack the enemies he has identified, but is unsure of himself and confused as to who is innocent and who is a valid target. As a result, he fights with all combat bonuses (initiative, strike, parry, dodge, etc.) reduced by half and could shoot an innocent by mistake or by accident. **Note:** A combatant who fails this *Friend or Foe Preception Roll* cannot re-roll until the start of the *next melee round.* For the round he has failed to do so, he can only act upon what he does know and can attack other *obvious enemies* (a demon is hard to miss and it is usually a safe bet that a guy one of his teammates is attacking must be an adversary), but he cannot make a new assessment of the entire scene or be sure who is a bad guy and who



is not until he makes a successful roll. Another failure limits the character's judgement and actions for the next melee round. Try again next melee round. Once a successful roll is made the character can easily distinguish friend/innocent from foe.

I.D. Enemy in Disguise, Metamorphed or Shape-Changed (special AT ability): CQC specialists can, like the Demon Hunter, detect enemies and monsters in disguise or shape-changed by their behavior and reactions (see *CS Demon Hunter AT* for details). Unlike the Demon Hunter, however, the CQC specialist makes this determination via Friend or Foe Perception Roll BUT with the *reduced bonus of only +2*. Looking for visual cues that suggest the individual is not what he appears to be.

Close Quarters Combat AT Skills (special): See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

Climbing/Rappelling (+10%) or Swimming (+10%); pick one.
Detect Ambush (+15%)
W.P. Ancient: One of choice.
W.P. Modern: One of choice.
- and -

Advanced Hand to Hand: Commando for newly created characters; replaces the Hand to Hand skill listed in the O.C.C. Skills list.

Advanced Hand to Hand: Upgrade for Established Characters. An established character with a pre-existing Hand to Hand Combat skill is "upgraded" as follows: Hand to Hand: Basic becomes *Expert*, Expert becomes *Martial Arts*, and Martial Arts becomes *Commando*. No substitute for Assassin, it remains unchanged. Characters may opt out of learning the Hand to Hand upgrade and keep the skill they have if they prefer it. **Note:** The bonuses from the NEW hand to hand skill REPLACE all bonuses received from your prior hand to hand skill, equal to the character's current level of experience. They do NOT combine/stack.

CQC AT Bonuses: Advanced Training in Close Quarters Combat provides the following additional bonuses.

S.D.C.: +2D6

Combat: +2 on initiative when a rapid assault catches the enemy by surprise; which should be every raid if the CQC Specialist(s) is doing his job right.

Demon Hunter Advanced Training

This training was first devised for CS Demon Slayers, like the Death Knights, Juicers, Psi-Stalkers and Dog Boys, but since the days of the Tolkeen War it has seen been made available to special units within the CS military. The Demon Hunter AT instills an in-depth knowledge and understanding of supernatural beings that fall into the category of "demons," and includes the Daemonix, Deevils of Dyval, demons of Hades, Russian demons, Chaos Demons, Thornhead Demons, vampires and other supernatural beings. Knowledge that includes strengths, weaknesses, demonic hierarchy, demon strategies and tactics, behavior and characteristics to help identify them, the best ways to fight and kill them and so on. In short, everything discussed earlier in this book, and then some.

Upon completion of the full, 32 week course, the soldier receives the prestigious Demon Hunter medal. This is a six sided star with the Coalition Death Head and Lightning bolt. This medal identifies the soldier as a demon hunter among fellow Coalition troops. The symbol is also on the right shoulder of the soldier's armor.

Training Period: 32 weeks standard; 16 weeks crash course.

Demon Hunter AT Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 12, M.E. 13 and P.E. 13 or higher. The higher the better when it comes to M.E. and P.E.

Demon Hunter AT Availability and Exclusions: The full course (and full bonuses) are only available to the *Death Knight Demon Slayer, Military Specialist, Dog Boys, Psi-Stalker, CS Police/ISS* and psychics who are "official" agents of *Psi-Battalion* and/or *the ISS/NT-SET*.

Any CS military O.C.C., *RCSG Scientists,* and *Coalition psychics* can take the crash course, but all bonuses are *half (round down).* Similar training from certain mercenary companies and kingdoms, like Lazlo, may have an equivalent AT for their Demon Hunters and the same or similar types of Men-at-Arms O.C.C.s described above. **Note:** Ironically, the least likely O.C.C.s to get this training are the *CS Grunt* and run of the mill *mercenary*, unless they are part of a special squad, platoon, company or battalion of demon hunters.

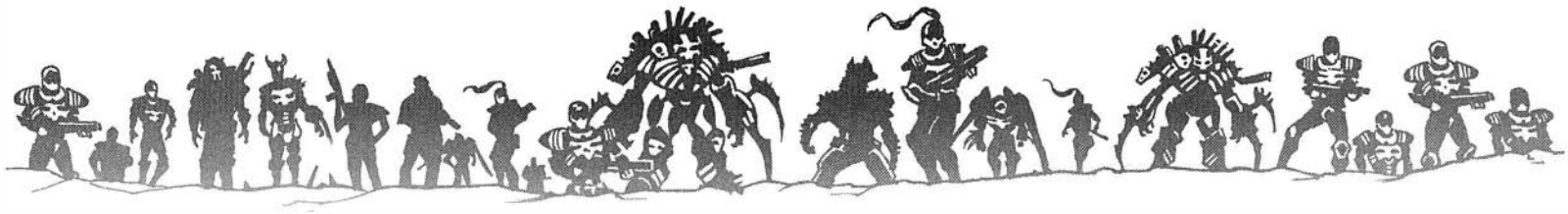
Demon Hunter Advanced Training (special):

+5 on Perception Rolls to recognize the demonic in disguise: Training and practice in learning to recognize signs and behavior that indicates when a mortal is possessed by a demon or other supernatural beings, or is an actual demonic creature disguised to look human via magic, illusion, or supernatural shape-changing ability. This involves close observation and attention to micro-expressions as well as subtle and not so subtle differences in personality, alignment and human behavior.

Humans and most mortal beings such as D-Bees share common points of experience, evolution, behavior and corresponding responses that demonkind and other evil and powerful supernatural beings do not. As a result, supernatural beings don't even realize they lack empathy or the full range of human characteristics, which can reveal them as the monsters they really are to those with a trained eye.

Such things are most evident under duress and exposure to unusual and gruesome stimuli. A human or D-Bee who does not flinch or show some measure of fear or nervousness at a startling noise or the threat of harm, injury or death, may not be mortal at all. Not exhibiting disgust or revulsion at the sight and scents of death, let alone wholesale slaughter, and other gruesome scenes, also suggest the individual may be a demon or monster in disguise.

Most people have a strong reaction to death, dead bodies, blood and gore, especially if there is a lot of it, demons do not. The stench of death and the sight of such horror produces an involuntary reaction in most people. The typical person gags and chokes, some vomit or get weak in the knees at just the pungent *smell* of blood, rotting bodies or burning human flesh without



ever seeing the actual scene of torture, blood soaked walls, pools of blood, dismemberment, half-eaten corpses or piles of bodies.

The reaction of seeing such terrible sights produces an even more profound reaction which may induce people to pray, sob, more vomiting, look away, refuse to go near it, run away and passing out. Even hardened soldiers and seasoned medical personnel used to seeing such horrors are likely to grimace, pause and close their eyes, shake or lower their heads, look away, whisper a prayer or curse words, cross themselves or make some other gesture related to faith or good fortune or revenge. Civilian family members are likely to grab hold of each other's hands, pull each other close, hug, and cover the eyes of their children.

Demons and other supernatural beings have no such reaction. They are not disgusted by such things and don't see anything horrific or terrible. In fact, demonkind finds such things delightful, amusing and attractive. To them, the smell of blood and death is pleasant and alluring; the equivalent to a human smelling a delicious meal cooking on the stove or a pie baking in the oven. As a result, the demon in disguise, or the possessed person controlled by a dark force, might smirk, smile or examine the horrific scene with fascination or admiration, or callous indifference. The cleverest of demons and those familiar with impersonating humans may try to feign a human response, but even those attempts are likely to fall short or seem stilted and unnatural – too extreme or not enough of a proper reaction.

A big reason there is no revulsion, disgust, fear or empathetic sorrow is the supernatural cannot relate. There is little or no empathy. Creatures that are immortal don't see death the same way as humans. Just as those same creatures who delight in brutality and murder are not repulsed by it. Demonkind views torture and wickedness with the same amusement and lack of empathy as a child who tears the wings from a fly or kills ants. There is no connection to the beings they so callously torture or kill, because they are so different themselves and cannot relate.

No reaction to the grotesque and disgusting is another sign that a person may be possessed by a demon or is a demon in disguise. Humans and most D-Bees have a knee-jerk revulsion or fear reaction to the dark, the unknown, and repugnant. Slime, vomit, spiders, centipedes, worms, larvae, other insects, as well as snakes, frogs, reptiles, bats, mice, rats, and similar creepy crawlers make the flesh crawl and frighten or repulse many humans and D-Bees, *but not demons.* In fact, the very things that frighten, disgust and repulse us, are pleasant, attractive and common sights to demons and other supernatural beings. Many serve as pets, familiars and minions, and are commonplace among creatures of darkness. As a result, a person not startled or frightened by spiders, bugs, snakes, rodents, slime, and similar – especially if there is no reaction whatsoever, or they walk among such things as if they were not there, or treat them as if they were welcomed pets – may very well be a demon or Deevil. Moreover, demonkind is not afraid of the dark, because they are the darkness. Nor they do have an adverse reaction to fingernails on a chalkboard, wailing, screaming, crying, screeching or strange sounds. Such sounds do not bother them in the least.

Other signs and evidence of the supernatural is fast healing (Bio-Regeneration just happens, it cannot be stopped or controlled by the supernatural creature), superhuman strength and endurance, lack of fear toward the demonic, surprising confidence or arrogance in frightening and traumatic circumstances, the use of magic and psionics, any extreme, unusual behavior and association with demons.

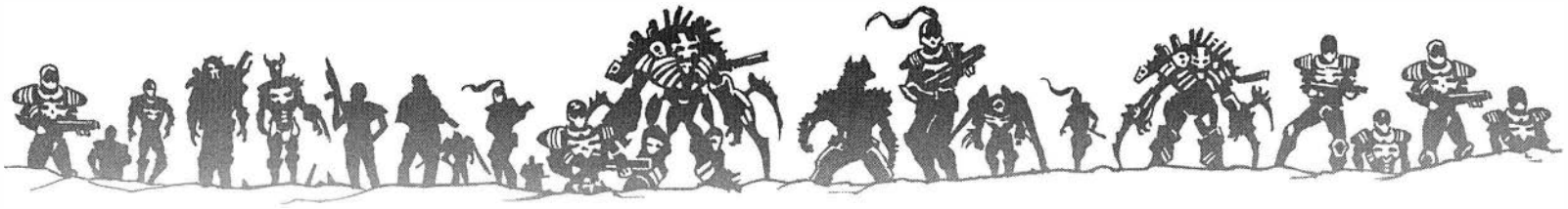
None of these things are absolute evidence of the presence of supernatural evil. Psychological and physical trauma and insanity can manifest in similar ways, so one should not jump to conclusions, but they are telltale signs that something is not right, and that the individual *may* not be human. Further investigation and proof is suggested before taking action. See Aura, Sense Evil, Sense Magic, Empathy (to pick up surface emotions), Telepathy (to pick up surface thoughts), Sense Supernatural Evil possessed by Psi-Stalkers and Dog Boys, and maybe even asking the individual to submit to an Exorcism, can help identify the supernatural in disguise.

Game Note: Recognize Possession and Demons in Disguise is something we suggest you role-play and take some time with to build suspicion, suspense and intrigue. It is *not* a superpower that can be turned on to enable the character to see demons at a glance. ("I look over at the guy in the corner. Is he a metamorphed demon? What about that guy who is being loud and bossy?") That is not how this training works. It requires observation and study of suspicious individuals and people behaving oddly. The player who has a character with this skill needs to tell the Game Master he is looking for signs of possession or demonic characteristics, and he must be focused and active about it. ("I'm suspicious of Sarah. As we pass through the rat-filled sewer, I watch carefully how she reacts." "How did Sarah react to the dead bodies that floated passed us or the spider-covered ceiling?") Have fun with this.

Recognize Signs and Trademarks of the Demonic (special skill). **Base Skill:** 64% +3% per level of experience to recognize from the full course training. Only 42% +3% per level from the crash course.

This Advanced Training goes way beyond **Lore: Demons and Monsters**. The depth of knowledge from this advanced training focuses on demonkind and provides a comprehensive understanding of demons and Deevils, their defining characteristics, behavior, society, hierarchy, strategies and tactics, and clues to their identity. The advanced training enables the Demon Slayer to recognize demons and Deevils by their footprints, claw marks, bite marks, by how it kills, the weapons and magic it uses, what it does to the bodies of its victims/prey, the parts it may eat, and what it leaves behind or takes with it, its choice in henchmen, use of strategies and tactics, as well as the symbols and markings they may use, and the symbols that represent them in religious and magic texts, including symbols used to identify and summon them in magic rituals.

"Ugh, the eyes, entrails and organs are torn out and left on display. Harpies and Dire Harpies would have eaten them, no this is the handy work of a *Fiend* trying to scare us or taunt us. Yeah,



he formed the words, 'go back' and made a smiley face with this other victim's intestines. It's the kind of sick thing a Fiend is most likely to do."

"Heads on a pike? Probably a *Baal-Rog* or *Galu Bull*, maybe a *Raksasha* or *Night Owl*, but definitely a Greater Demon. If Deevils were in the area, it could be a *Beast* or *Deevil Dragon*, but intel says no Deevils in the area."

"This man was tortured. Most like the handiwork of a *Deevil Fiend*."

"This body had been dead for a day or two before something started eating it. Small, human-like teeth marks and bites ... probably Ghouls. Nothing to worry about unless there are a large number of them."

"This body is too fresh for Ghouls to have eaten and is nearly picked clean, except for the head. It's left intact. Oh, what's this? Maggots. The body is much too fresh to have fly larva hatching in it. No, they fell off the demon that killed and devoured this soldier, a Death Demon."

"No, those cuts and slash marks on the legs, thigh and groin aren't signs of torture. Look, the slashed hamstring and the death blow by cutting the throat. These are all trademarks of the *Lasae*. They travel in pairs, trios and small packs. Be on high alert. These small demons are vicious, bloodthirsty killers. Do not be deceived by their small size. They'll cripple you and slice you to pieces at the first opportunity. They like to go for the legs, groin, throat and eyes. Listen for scratching and skittering sounds. Oh, and they like to drop down from high places, so be sharp. No one wanders off alone, stay together and move in pairs."

"Yeah, looks like he was mauled by a lion. Based on the size of the claw marks and that one bite mark, I'd say a *Raksasha* is a sure bet. Must have been angry as hell to get physical like that."

"Burn marks on the victim and on the ground – *Baal-Rog*."

"Canine teeth marks. These soldiers were killed by a pack of demon Alu or Deevil Fenry. Yes, *Fenry*. These hunters walked on all fours. Alu walk on two legs."

"Those hoof marks are much too large for Deevils or Devilkin. Gentlemen, there is a *Galu Demon Bull* in the area. Hmmm, make that two Galu and hmmm ... by the look of things, I'd say a squad of Alu ... six or eight of them."

"Look at the space between the first toe and the next three, that's a *Brek-Shall Greater Demon*."

"You're right, that footprint looks like a giant bird, *Shedim*. Several of them. Not surprising, they usually hunt in packs."

"I don't need to see the footprints. The swath of destruction, pool of drool and bodies bitten in half scream the giant demon known as a *Magot*. And boys, in case you don't already know it, Magots shoot beams from their three eye that can turn you to stone, so dodge, use zigzag movement and find cover if you can. Then target the bastard's eye stalks to eliminate the threat of petrification."

"A large Quadruped. Could be a *Netherbeast* or *War Steed*, but it sure looks like a *Taursis* to me."

"Yeah, those tracks are insect-like, but the tracks of Demon Flies would be smaller and closer together. I'm afraid we have a *Demon Locust* in the area. Probably a captain or warlord leading an elite strike force or platoon of demons. I think those rumors about a demon company operating out here is dead on.

"Damn it! That's not a bunker they're building. It's a *Hell Pit*."

Demon Slayer AT Skills: See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

First Aid (+10%)

Lore: Demons and Monsters (+15% on a wider range of knowledge about demons and supernatural beings only, no skill bonus for "monsters" that are not supernatural).

Lore: Magic

Whittling (+20% when it applies to making weapons, stakes, spears, clubs from wood, bone, ice and stone to use against supernatural beings; -10% to make sculptures and works of art).

Demon Hunter AT Bonuses:

Attributes: +2 to M.E. or +2 to P.E. attribute; pick one.

S.D.C.: +2D6+6

Combat: +1 attack per melee when facing a *supernatural opponent*; does not apply to mortals and other types of enemies.

+2 to save vs possession, mind control and illusions, because they are on guard against such attacks by demons/Deevils, and part of the training includes mental exercises and disciplines to resist possession.

Field Counter-Intelligence AT

Counter-intelligence is all about preventing the enemy from knowing your force's location, strengths, weaknesses and plans. For governments, this means a lot of eavesdropping, recording, analyzing communications and intelligence data, processing evidence, and preparing and processing reports from behind a desk or keyboard to protect against enemy or foreign espionage, intelligence activities, sabotage, and assassinations.

In the field, things are a bit different. The FCI (Field Counter-Intelligence) training involve methods and techniques to investigate security breaches, leaks, interrogation of prisoners and suspects, identifying infiltrators/spies/undercover agents, assessing defenses and pointing out vulnerabilities, and assessing information and activities to protect against enemy espionage, spying, intelligence gathering, and acts of sabotage and terrorism.

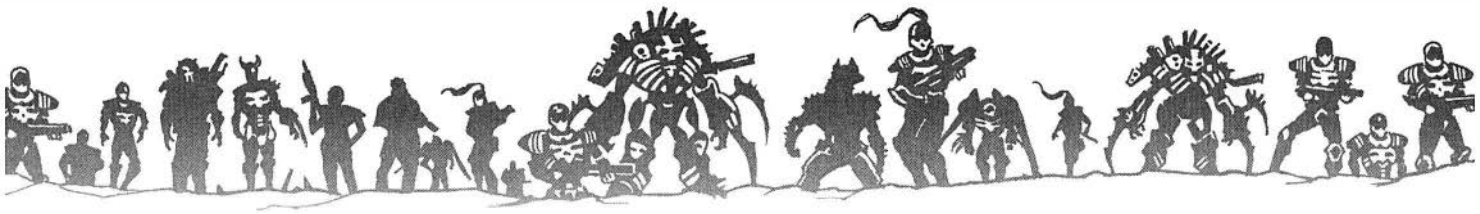
Advanced Training Period: 16 weeks for crash course; 42 weeks in for the full course; usually CS Officers' School for newly minted Military Specialists and Technical Officers.

AT Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 13 and M.E. 12 or higher.

AT Availability and Exclusions: The full course (and full bonuses) are only available to the Military Specialist, Technical Officer, Spy/Espionage agent (probably Special Forces or Military Specialist), CS Police/ISS and psychics who are "official" agents of *Psi-Battalion* and/or *the ISS/NT-SET*.

Any CS military O.C.C., can take the crash course, but all bonuses are *half (round down)*.

Similar training from certain mercenary companies and kingdoms, like Lazlo, may have an equivalent AT for Men-at-Arms



O.C.C.s, Spies (any type) and non-Coalition equivalents of Military Specialist and Technical Officer. **Note:** This is a highly specialized skill set seldom made available to most Men-at-Arms or your average grunt unless they are part of a special unit.

Field Counter-Intelligence Advanced Training (special):

+4 on Perception Rolls to recognize the suspicious: The FCI expert always tries to be aware of his surroundings, the people and activities around him, and anyone or anything that looks unusual, inappropriate or out of place (a package left unattended, a door left open or unlocked, a hole cut in the perimeter fence, etc.).

A successful Perception Roll (11 of higher, or as set by the G.M.) means the FCI notices the suspicious person, action or thing and may investigate further, raise an alarm, get help, and so on. Some people are harder to read than others.

A failed roll means he doesn't notice anything wrong.

+3 on Perception Rolls to recognize truthfulness under interrogation (special): The FCI expert can often recognize when a person is telling the truth, holding something back (has not been completely forthcoming) or lying outright. However, he can never be completely certain, only reasonably sure. He could be mistaken.

A successful Perception Roll (12 or higher) means the FCI expert is reasonably certain the individual is being truthful, mostly truthful or lying under interrogation. Game Masters, please assist on this front. However, just because the FCI expert believes the individual is holding back information or lying does not mean he can force the truth out of him.

A failed roll means he cannot tell if the suspect is being honest or not.

Note: When not using intimidation and interrogation techniques, the FCI expert is much less effective in reading people. He is NOT a human lie detector, but if suspicious and/or paying close attention to body language, micro-expressions and other telltale signs of a specific individual, he can reach an opinion as to whether or not that person is lying or truthful. However, this is done *without* benefit of the +3 Perception Roll bonus for interrogation.

+5 on Perception Rolls to read suspects and prisoners under interrogation (special): The FCI can assess suspects and determine basic information about suspects and prisoners in *face to face interrogation* (or watching an interrogation through two-way glass or nearby; within 15 feet/4.6 m) after just a few minutes via observation, body language, micro-expressions, tone of voice and how the suspect or prisoner reacts to deliberate stressors, questions, intimidation and other interrogation techniques.

A successful roll (11 or higher) provides an additional +10% bonus to the *Interrogation skill* and an accurate assessment of the person and strengths he may have to be concerned about, and possible weaknesses that may be exploitable.

A failed roll means the character cannot make a sound judgement or determination with the data or observations at hand. He needs more information and/or time for closer observation. Roll again after 1D4+4 melee rounds.

Note: We included percentile numbers in case a G.M. would like to make a random roll to determine the enemy's state of mind/condition. Once a number is rolled either pick one of the two possibilities, or roll percentile again, with 01-50% being the first one listed, and 51-00% being the other.

01-07% Calm and unresponsive, suggests drugs, mental illness or trauma. You'll get no useful information out of this suspect any time soon. No flight risk. Unknown threat level, presumably, low threat until he becomes responsive.

08-14% Professional and hard to intimidate and make to reveal info, or he will try to negotiate and cut a deal for himself. Moderate flight risk and threat.

15-21% Amateur, easy to intimidate and get to talk. Low flight risk and minimal threat.

22-28% Tough and defensive, this is a guy who has something to hide, but is not going to open up easily. This will take time. High flight risk and moderate threat.

29-35% Nervous, but uncooperative, suggesting something is about to take place soon; perhaps even at this location. High flight risk. Moderate threat.

36-42% Tough and defiant. Unless you can make him fear you more than whoever he works for, it is going to take a long time (hours and hours) to make him talk, if ever. High flight risk and dangerous.

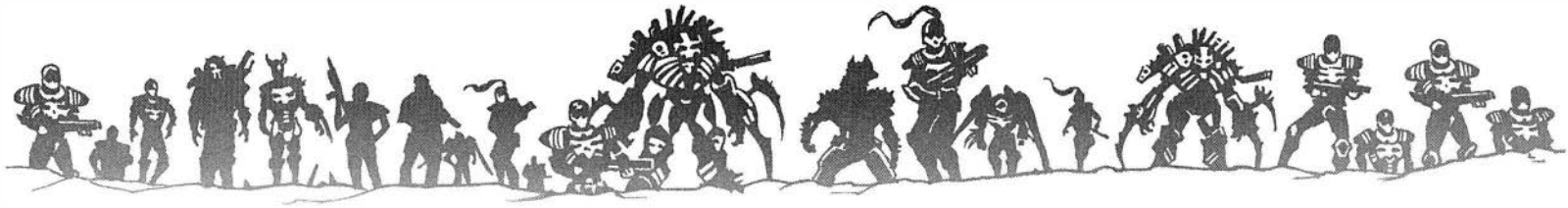
43-49% Frightened or meek. This character will break and spill his guts any minute now. No flight risk and represents little or no threat.

50-56% Calm, confident, and uncooperative. Nothing rattles this joker, suggesting the suspect will never break and give up any secrets, or expects to escape consequences for his actions. Rescued? Jail break? Or he or his boss has the authorities in his pocket. Moderate flight risk and moderate threat level.

57-63% Aggressive and confrontational, strongly implying the suspect is dangerous and likely to try to escape or attack if given the slightest opportunity. This individual is probably not going to intentionally give up secrets or information, but may be tricked or provoked into revealing bits of it to all of it in anger or through deceitful manipulation. High flight risk and dangerous in the extreme.

64-70% Emotionally or mentally unstable. Behaves in an agitated and confused manner, flopping from relative calm to high anxiety or anger. This suspect is irrational and unpredictable, which makes him dangerous. *Reduce Perception Roll* to recognize truthfulness and lies by half (round down). Flight risk high. Threat level to himself or others, high.

71-77% Hardcore zealot to the cause, whatever it is. He will not give up any information intentionally, but may be tricked or provoked into revealing bits of it or all of it through clever manipulation. High flight risk, but if he gets away, he is likely to go on a rampage of murder and destruction, and not let himself be taken again, alive. He fights to the death, causing as much destruction and mayhem as possible, and trying to take as many of the enemy to the grave with him as he can.



78-84% Sociopath who lacks empathy and normal responses, meaning the FCI expert cannot trust anything this individual is saying and cannot be certain what are lies and what is the truth. Unrealiable intel. *Perception Roll bonuses do NOT apply.* Flight risk high and dangerous.

85-91% Shill! This guy is trouble. He brought attention to himself so he could be captured with deliberate intent. The reason could be any of the following: 01-20% To create a distraction. 21-40% Feed his enemies misinformation. 41-60% To gather intelligence on his captors! 61-80% To gain access to another prison for the purpose of intimidation, intelligence or assassination. 81-00% To attack from within! Low flight risk until he completes his mission, then becomes a high flight risk. Dangerous in the extreme.

92-96% Innocent dupe tricked into doing something wrong or an innocent bystander taken into custody as a case of mistaken identity. In the alternative, a reluctant or unwilling participant (slave, forced into service against his will, intimidated/blackmailed, etc.) tricked into doing something wrong or dangerous. They spill whatever they know or witnessed, but it's not much. Still, it may help. In both cases, the character is a very low flight risk and little or no threat.

97-00% Loyal soldier to the end. He'll die before revealing anything more than name, rank and serial number.

And similar things.

The Enemy's General Level of Experience

The FCI expert can tell at a glance or gauge within 1D4 melee rounds if the enemy in front of him is a grunt or holds a position with low, middle or high level of authority. No Perception Roll necessary unless the subject is trying to hide his rank/position.

01-40% Green and inexperienced (1st or 2nd level), meaning the enemy is likely to be easy to trick, confused or get the jump on.

41-70% Has some experience (3rd to 6th level), making him a more difficult and worthy adversary.

71-00% Battle-hardened and dangerous (7th and higher), not one to be tricked, trifled with or taken down easy.

Note: Again, we provided percentile numbers for G.M.s who might want to use this data as a random table.

Skills that come with Field Counter-Intelligence AT: See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

Basic Electronics (+20%)
Camouflage (+30%)
Computer Operation (+10%)
Cryptography (+20%)
Electronic Countermeasures (+10%)
I.D. Undercover Agent (+20%)
Interrogation (+20%)
Literacy: American (+10%)
Research (+10%)

FCI AT Bonuses: Advanced Training provides the following additional bonuses.

Combat: +1 on initiative (a good observer), +1 to disarm and +2 to pull punch.

Field Intelligence Advanced Training

Field intelligence gathering is all about knowing where the enemy is located, their likely intent and movement, and determining and assessing enemy strengths and weaknesses. The latter includes analyzing enemy troop numbers, troop movement, threat assessment, operational readiness, likely evolving scenarios, and identifying weaknesses that can be exploited to undermine, stop and destroy the enemy – including holes in enemy defenses, communications, and other vulnerabilities. The most important aspect of warfare intelligence is to keep tabs on the enemy and know where and what he is doing at all times to make sure the enemy is not outmaneuvering or getting the upper-hand on CS forces and its allies.

In the field and on the ground, a specialist with Field Intel AT may be part of a reconnaissance or Special Forces squad, or regular army. Soldiers with Field Intel AT may be attached to squads responsible for harassing the enemy, finding opportunities and ways to capture or destroy enemy resources, engage in acts of sabotage, raids, surgical strikes, rescue missions, assassinations, and collect more detailed intelligence. ("We need to know if they are creating a Hell Pit under that camouflage." "We need to know exactly what we're facing.") On intel missions and raids, Field Intel is necessary to help find avenues to slip through the enemy line, get in and out of enemy installations, and gather much more detailed and specific intel.

Advanced Training Period: 16 weeks for crash course; 42 weeks for the full course; usually CS Officers' School for newly minted Military Specialists and Technical Officers.

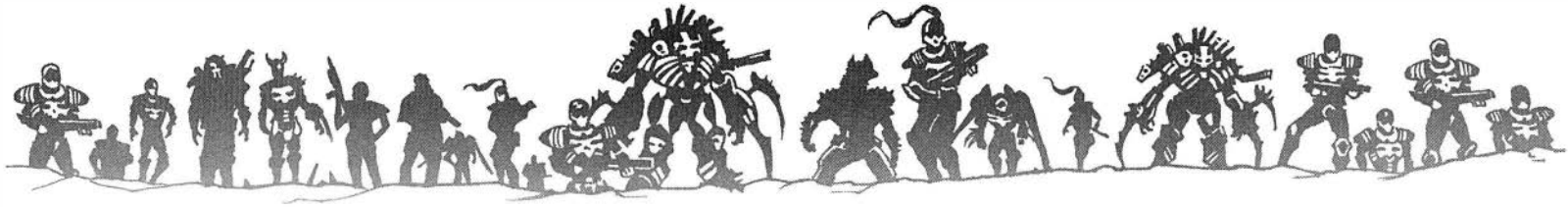
AT Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 12, M.E. 10 or higher.

AT Availability and Exclusions: The full course (and full bonuses) are only available to the Military Specialist, Technical Officer, Spy/Espionage Agent (probably Special Forces or Military Specialist), CS Police/ISS and psychics who are "official" agents of *Psi-Battalion* and/or *the ISS/NT-SET*.

Any CS military O.C.C., can take the crash course, but all bonuses are *half (round down).*

Similar training from certain mercenary companies and kingdoms, like Lazlo, may have an equivalent AT for Men-at-Arms O.C.C.s, Spies (any type) and non-Coalition equivalents of Military Specialist and Technical Officer. **Note:** This is a highly specialized skill set seldom made available to most Men-at-Arms or your average grunt unless they are part of a special unit.

Field Intelligence Training (special): Advanced Training enables the character to surmise the likely purpose of an enemy stronghold, operation or construction, and its tactical significance based on the number of troops, types of troops, activity, equipment, layout and other factors via careful and/or repeated observation. For example, is the enemy facility a supply hub, landing strip/airfield, storage, Hell Pit, manufacturing, mining, drilling,



military outpost, assembling for battle or siege, and so on. Roll under the intelligence skill (+10%).

+5 on Perception Rolls involving Strategic Assessment (AT special ability): The ability to identify "suspected" enemy officers/leaders, special forces, and other unique personnel as well as to surmise the location and purpose of likely enemy resources such as supply depots, weapon depots, communications, prison/jail/slave pen, generators, bunkers and other resources (tech or magic based), even if covered in camouflage or disguised. **Note:** To confirm suspicions, the Intelligence Specialist or members of his team may have to get a closer look.

A successful roll provides an additional +10% bonus to the *Intelligence skill* and an accurate assessment of the location, item or operation and its purpose.

A failed roll means the character cannot make a judgement or determination with the data at hand; needs more information or time for closer observation. Roll again after 1D4+4 melee rounds.

+5 on Perception Rolls to I.D. *strength* and weakness of Enemy Personnel (special AT ability): The Intel Specialist can eyeball and assess enemy personnel, *face to face,* or when observed at a distance no greater than 800 feet (244 m) away; line of sight required. It helps if he can hear the enemy even if he does not speak their language, as he can tell a lot from tone and cadence.

A successful roll provides an additional +10% bonus to the *Intelligence skill* and an accurate assessment of the person and strengths to be wary of, and possible weaknesses that may be exploitable.

A failed roll means the character cannot make a sound judgement or determination with the data or observations at hand. He needs more information and/or time for closer observation. Roll again after 1D4+4 melee rounds.

Character observations. The Intel Specialist can recognize character strengths which can provide important information and targets, and weaknesses. Character flaws/weaknesses may indicate if the enemy subject(s) is potentially easy to jump and take down, trick, cheat, confuse or turn – anything that can be exploited by the Intel Specialist or his teammates. In a role-playing game, these are all things that can be played out to help the Heroes of Humanity escape, rescue captives, sabotage the enemy, defeat their opponents, lure an enemy into a trap, and fulfill their mission.

Common character observations includes such things as whether the enemy is ...

01-10% Loyal (diligent about his job and will never betray his people or cause) or disgruntled (prone to be manipulated, tricked or turned).

11-20% Greedy or vengeful; in both cases the enemy may be vulnerable to bribery or trickery involving money or personal gain, or can be won over to help them or betray those he serves.

21-30% Confident or timid and uncertain.

31-40% Diligent and responsible or a careless goof-off.

41-50% Grunt or Officer, the latter usually being more difficult to trick and undermine, and is likely to have troops and resources he can call upon.

51-60% Smart/cunning or dumb/gullible.

61-70% Alert and vigilant or distracted, drunk or sleepy.

71-80% Cruel or kind.

81-90% A zealot to the cause or a reluctant/uncertain or even unwilling participant (slave, forced into service against his will, intimidated/coerced, etc.).

91-00% Healthy and strong or injured/sick/exhausted or in an otherwise weakened condition (may have reduced combat abilities and bonuses, Spd, and/or reduced M.D.C., etc.).

And similar things.

Note: We included percentile numbers in case a G.M. would like to make a random roll to determine the enemy's condition. Once a number is rolled, either pick one of the two possibilities, or roll percentile again, with 01-50% being the first one listed, and 51-00% being the other.

The Enemy's General Level of Experience

In person, the Intel Specialist can tell at a glance or gauge within 1D4 melee rounds if the enemy in front of him is a grunt or holds a position with low, middle or high level of authority. No Perception Roll necessary unless the subject is trying to conceal his rank/position.

01-40% Green and inexperienced (1st or 2nd level), meaning the enemy is likely to be easy to trick, confused or get the jump on.

41-70% Has some experience (3rd to 6th level), making him a more difficult and worthy adversary.

71-00% Battle-hardened and dangerous (7th and higher), not one to be tricked, trifled with or taken down easy.

Note: Again, we provided percentile numbers for G.M.s who might want to use this data as a random table.

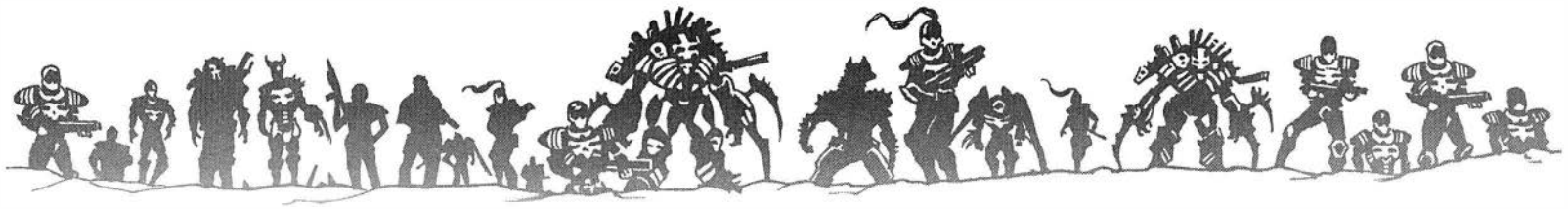
The Enemy's Morale and Preparedness

The level of morale is an indicator of the enemy's level of alertness, confidence, overall strength and readiness for combat. **Note:** Again, we provided percentile numbers for G.M.s who might want to use this data as a random table.

01-30% High morale is a gung-ho, competent, well-prepared enemy force ready for anything, anxious for action and quick to respond to any threat. Security is tight and holes in defenses are very few. Slipping behind the enemy line or in or out of a camp/outpost undetected is difficult in the extreme.

31-70% Average morale is an enemy force reasonably prepared and ready for action. Fair to good response time to any threat. But there are a few holes in defenses and carelessness and sloppiness that leave openings for an enemy to exploit. Slipping behind the enemy line or in and out of a camp/outpost undetected is challenging but doable.

71-00% Low morale is an unprepared and slothful enemy force. There are many holes in their defenses and weaknesses to be exploited. Slipping behind the enemy line or in and out of a camp/outpost undetected, and catching troops off-guard should be easy. The enemy is slow or reluctant to respond to threats and is vulnerable to all manner of attacks.



Skills that come with Field Intel AT: See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

Detect Ambush (+15%)
Intelligence (+10%)
Interrogation (+10%)
Mathematics: Basic (+30%)
Optic Systems (+20%)

Field Intelligence AT Bonuses:
Attribute: +1 to M.A.
Combat: +1 to disarm.

Marksmanship Advanced Training

Expert use of firearms, marksmanship is about more than pulling the trigger of a gun or being fast on the draw. It teaches methods and techniques for gauging and compensating for wind direction and speed, judging distances, hand to eye coordination, and shooting for accuracy. Upon completion of training the character also receives the prestigious Eagle Eye medal. This is a silver medal of an eagle holding a C-12 laser rifle. Below the rifle is the Coalition Death's Head.

Training Period: 12 weeks.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 12 and P.P. 14, or better.

AT Availability and Exclusions: Available to most CS Military O.C.C.s including CS Police/ISS/Psi-Battalion operatives with the following exceptions: Dog Boy, Psi-Stalker, RPA Fly Boy Ace and RCSG Scientist. **Note:** Yes, this AT is available to *Coalition psychics* who are an "official" agent of Psi-Battalion and/or the ISS/NT-SET.

Similar training from certain mercenary companies and kingdoms, like Lazlo, may have an equivalent AT for any Men-at-Arms O.C.C.

Markmanship (special):

Precision Sharpshooting (special): +4 on Perception Rolls to calculating all the variables in making an aimed shot and identifying the right moment to make the best shot. It requires a "Called Shot" and counts as two attacks, but the marksman is able to shoot 20% farther without penalty, is +2 to strike on a carefully aimed, Called Shot. Makes a Critical Strike (double damage) on a Natural 19-20, if he so desires.

+4 on Perception Rolls to identify the type of weapon and caliber (if appropriate) of the weapon used based on the "signature" it left behind (size of hole, blast marks, etc.).

Marksman Sharpshooting (special): +2 on Quick Draw initiative – drawing, aiming and shooting his weapon, probably from the hip, before his opponent. Roll 1D20 for QD initiative to see who draws and shoots first, then roll 1D20 to strike.

Accurate shooting from a moving vehicle or horseback (normally counts as shooting wild). However, strike bonuses are reduced by half and a Called Shot is impossible.

Additional Skills that come with Marksmanship AT: See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

Detect Ambush (+5%)
Recognize Weapon Quality (+20%)
W.P. Rifle
W.P. Targeting or W.P. of choice.

AT Bonuses:
S.D.C.: 1D6
Combat: As per bonuses and skills, above.

Martial Expert Advanced Training

A specialist in physical combat, knowledgeable in a variety of fighting styles, techniques and melee weapons. The Advanced Training hones existing skills and adds a few new ones.

Training Period: 20 weeks.

Attribute Requirements: P.P. 14 and P.E. 10, or better.

AT Availability and Exclusions: Most CS Military O.C.C.s and CS Police/ISS/Psi-Battalion operatives, including select Dog Boys and Psi-Stalkers are *eligible* for this training, but typically limited to the CS Commando, Ranger, Military Specialist and Special Forces. **Note:** The least likely O.C.C.s to get this training are the *CS Grunt* and run of the mill *mercenary* unless they are part of a special squad, platoon, company or battalion of demon hunters.

Similar training from certain mercenary companies and kingdoms, like Lazlo, may have an equivalent AT for any Men-at-Arms O.C.C.s and the same or similar types of O.C.C.s described above.

Additional Skills that come with Martial Expert AT: See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

Boxing or Kick Boxing; pick one.

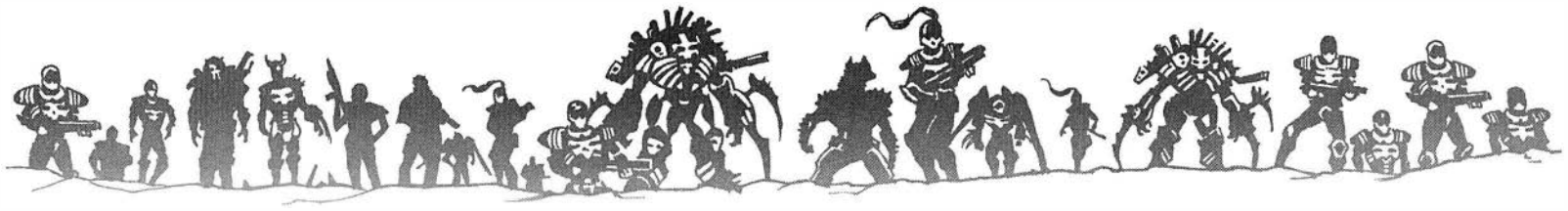
Hand to Hand: Martial Arts. **If the character already had Martial Arts**, the additional training provides additional bonuses as follows: +1D6 to S.D.C., +1 to disarm, +1 to pull punch, +1 to roll with impact, and +1D6 to damage (S.D.C./Hit Point damage if an ordinary human, or +1D6 M.D. if the character possesses Augmented, Robotic or Supernatural P.S.).

W.P. Blunt or Staff; pick one.
W.P. Knife or Sword; pick one.
W.P. Paired Weapons

Martial Expert AT Bonuses:
Attribute: +2 to P.S. attribute.
Hit Points: +2D6+3
Combat: +1 attack per melee round, +2 to damage – S.D.C./Hit Point damage or M.D. as the case may be and +1 to pull punch.

Nonhuman Studies Advanced Training

The name of this training program is deliberately innocuous and academic sounding, when it is an in-depth study and understanding of D-Bees and intelligent monsters reminiscent to Demon Hunting AT. The focus of this study is the D-Bees of North America and the Minions of Splugorth for military applications. Meaning, the D-Bees' strengths and weaknesses, special powers and innate abilities, psionics, magic, known associates and strate-



gies and tactics the creatures use against humans, and strategies and tactics CS forces can use to pacify the D-Bees.

Training Period: 32 weeks or a 16 week crash course. The Demon Hunting, Officer, Special Forces and Technical Schools all offer this Advanced Training.

AT Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 12 and M.E. 10 or higher.

Nonhuman Studies AT Availability and Exclusions: The full course (and full bonuses) are only available to the *Death Knight Demon Slayer, Military Specialist, Technical Officer, RCSG Scientist, Dog Boy, Psi-Stalker, CS Police/ISS* and psychics who are "official" agents of *Psi-Battalion* and/or *the ISS/NT-SET.*

Any CS military O.C.C., *RCSG Scientists,* and *Coalition psychics* can take the crash course, but all bonuses are *half (round down).*

Similar training from certain mercenary companies and kingdoms, like Lazlo, have an equivalent AT for any Men-at-Arms O.C.C.s and perhaps the Rogue Scientist. **Note:** Ironically, the least likely O.C.C.s to get this training are the *CS Grunt* and run of the mill *mercenary*, unless they are part of a special squad, platoon, company or battalion.

D-Bee Identification Advanced Training (special):

+4 on Perception Rolls to recognize D-Bees in disguise: Training and practice in learning to recognize signs and behavior that indicates a D-Bee is trying to conceal its true nature, usually under clothing, body armor or via magic.

+2 on Perception Rolls to recognize a D-Bee shape-shifter, dragon or other creature of magic or supernatural being disguised to look human via metamorphosis, magic, illusion, or supernatural shape-changing ability.

Both Perception Rolls involve close observation and attention to subtle and not so subtle differences in speech patterns, personality quirks, reaction to outside stimuli, likes and dislikes, movement and human (or not so human) behavior. D-Bees and other nonhumans often speak with an accent or in a different cadence, have a guttural or other inhuman quality to their voice, and may move in ways that are different than humans. The specialist in Nonhuman Studies is attuned to such behavioral nuisances and is quick to notice them as suspicious or clearly not human.

Game Note: Recognizing D-Bees in disguise and shape-changers is something we suggest you role-play and take some time with to build suspicion, suspense and intrigue. This skill and Perception Roll bonus is *not* a superpower that can be turned on to enable the character to see D-Bees and shapeshifters at a glance. That is not how this training works. It requires observation and study of suspicious individuals and people behaving oddly. The player who has a character with this skill needs to tell the Game Master he is looking for signs of D-Bees or shapeshifters, and he must be focus and be active about searching them out. ("I'm suspicious of Brandon. As we pass by him at the bar, I watch him closely.") Have fun with this.

Recognize D-Bee/Alien and Magic Weapons and Technology (special). **Base Skill:** 60% +3% per level of experience to recognize alien tech. This includes Splugorth/Kittani and Naruni weapons and technology, and even Splugorth Bio-Wizard and Rune Weapons, as well as Techno-Wizard weapons and devices, and Lemurian Biomancy creations. In the case of Biomancy, the specialist may not know the origin of the weapons, armor and technology, because little is known about the secretive Lemurians at the beginning of the Minion War, but he knows it is either alien, magical or both, and therefore dangerous contraband.

Nonhuman Studies AT Skills: See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

Lore: D-Bees (+30%)
Lore: Demons and Monsters (+10%)
Lore: Magic (+5%)
Xenology (+10%)

AT Bonuses:

Attribute: +1 to I.Q.
S.D.C.: +1D6
Combat: +2 on initiative when dealing with D-Bees, aliens and monsters, and +1 to save vs Horror Factor.

Officer Advanced Training

Training and skills that help make the officer a capable, confident and responsible leader of soldiers. Includes the ability to read and write, and an uncommon knowledge of military history.

Advanced Training Period: 16 weeks for the crash course (half bonuses); 42 weeks for the full course; usually CS Officers' School for newly minted Military Specialists and Technical Officers.

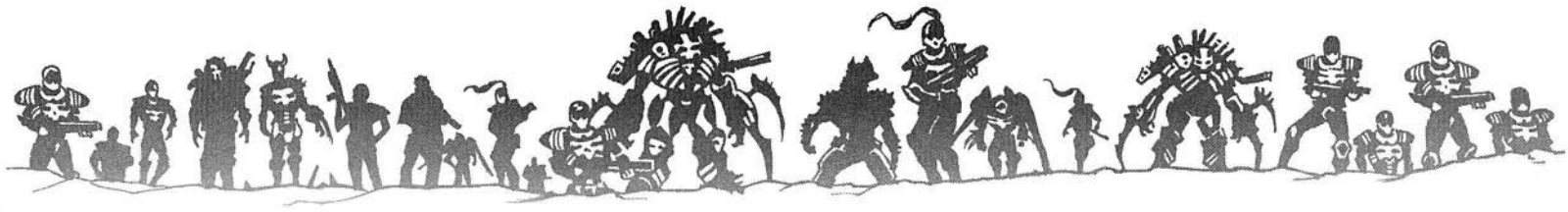
Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 14, M.A. 12, M.E. 10.

Officer AT Availability and Exclusions: The full course (and full bonuses) are only available to the *CS Military Specialist, RPA Fly Boy, RCSG Scientist, Technical Officer* and select psychics in *Psi-Battalion*, as well as candidates hand-selected by the brass for Officers' Advanced Training. Rare.

Most CS Military, Police and Psi-Battalion O.C.C.s are eligible for the "crash course," but all bonuses are *half (round down).* The crash course Officer AT becomes available only when it requested by a commissioned officer or CS brass, usually for outstanding performance in the field of duty, or a natural aptitude to lead. A soldier can also file a request for officer training, but such requests must be approved and authorized, and there is always a waiting list. The rest earn the rank of officer via field promotions, but seldom exceed 1st lieutenant. **Note:** Not available to *Dog Boys, Juicers* and *Psi-Stalkers.* At best, they earn a field rank no higher than Sergeant Major.

Similar training from certain mercenary companies and kingdoms, like Lazlo, may have an equivalent AT for their Officers and the same or similar types of Men-at-Arms O.C.C.s described above.

Rank: In the CS and many armies, Commissioned Officers are the product of Officers' School and start at the rank of 2nd Lieutenant.



Additional Skills that come with Officer AT: See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

History: Pre-Rifts (+10%; main focus is Military History)

History: Post-Apocalyptic (+15%; main focus is Military History)

Literacy (CS): American (+20%)

Military Etiquette (+20%)

Public Speaking (+15%)

W.P. Handguns

W.P. Knife or W.P. Sword; pick one.

AT Bonuses:

Attributes: +1 to I.Q., +1D4 to M.A.

S.D.C.: +1D6

Combat: +1 on Perception Rolls (all).

Ordnance Advanced Training

Specialized training that gives the soldier knowledge and skill in handling, making, reloading, repairing missiles and ammunition, and deactivating/disposing of live ammunition, missiles and explosives.

Training Period: 16 weeks.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 11, M.E. 14 and P.P. 14 or higher.

AT Availability and Exclusions: Most CS Military O.C.C.s excluding the Dog Boy, Fly Boy Ace and Psi-Stalker. **Note:** The least likely O.C.C.s to get this training are the *CS Grunt* and run of the mill *mercenary* unless they are part of a special squad, platoon, company or battalion.

Similar training from certain mercenary companies and kingdoms, like Lazlo, may have an equivalent AT for any Men-at-Arms O.C.C.s, but such a skill is rare among Combat Cyborgs, Crazies, Cyber-Knights and Juicers.

Field Ordnance (special):

+3 on Perception Rolls to determine live ordnance: From just a brief examination (probably without touching it) the character can tell if a missile, explosive device or round of ammunition is live and dangerous, or a dud, or deactivated and safe. A successful roll adds a +5% bonus to the *Demolition, Demolition Disposal* and *Field Armorer & Munitions Expert* skills of the Field Ordnance Specialist or any EOD specialist he may be assisting in.

+4 to Perception Rolls to find booby-traps: A successful roll means the character knows where a mine or trap is located and the safe passage around it. Successful perception also adds a +5% bonus to the *Trap & Mine Detection* and *Demolitions Disposal* skills of the Field Ordnance Specialist or anyone he may be assisting to locate and/or deactivate traps and mines.

Additional Skills that come with Martial Expert AT: See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

Demolitions (+5%)

Demolitions Disposal (+10%)

Field Armorer & Munitions Expert (+15%)

Jury-Rig (+5%)

NBC Warfare (+10%)

Trap/Mine Detection (+20%)

AT Bonuses:

Attribute: +1 to M.E. attribute.

S.D.C.: +1D6

Combat: +1 to roll with impact.

Rescue Advanced Training

The Rescue specialist is the guy who literally picks up the pieces and works to save lives in the aftermath of destruction; sometimes even while the destruction is occurring. This can be on the battlefield excavating debris fields in search of the wounded, cutting pilots out of mangled robots or digging survivors out of the rubble of collapsed buildings. Rescue specialists may also fight fires and assist medical personnel.

Training Period: 12 weeks.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 10, P.S. 14 and P.E. 10 or better.

AT Availability and Exclusions: All CS Military O.C.C.s and CS Police/ISS/Psi-Battalion operatives, including *Dog Boys, Psi-Stalkers* and *Coalition psychics.*

Similar training from certain mercenary companies and kingdoms, like Lazlo, may have an equivalent AT for any Men-at-Arms O.C.C.s, as well as the Vagabond O.C.C.

Rescue Ops (special):

+4 on Perception Rolls to find the living: Skill at locating signs of life and people trapped under debris, collapsed buildings, etc., as well as identify strong structural support in wreckage or debris to determine weak-spots to be avoided and places that need to be reinforced before they can excavate and dig out survivors.

+4 to Perception Rolls to ascertain the severity of injuries and wounds: The character is able to quickly determine which patients' injuries are serious and need immediate medical attention and which can wait for medical treatment. A successful Perception Roll adds a +5% bonus to the skill rolls of Body Docs and Cyber-Docs when a Rescue specialist is assisting them. Likewise, patients are +5% to save vs coma/death.

Additional Skills that come with the Rescue AT: See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

Climbing (+15% to climb, +25% to rappel)

Detect Concealment (+5%)

Excavation (+15%)

Firefighting (+20%)

Mining (+15% but only as it relates to the digging of tunnels and removal of water for the purpose of rescue, nothing about panning or mining for gems, gold and other precious metals).

Paramedic (+20%)

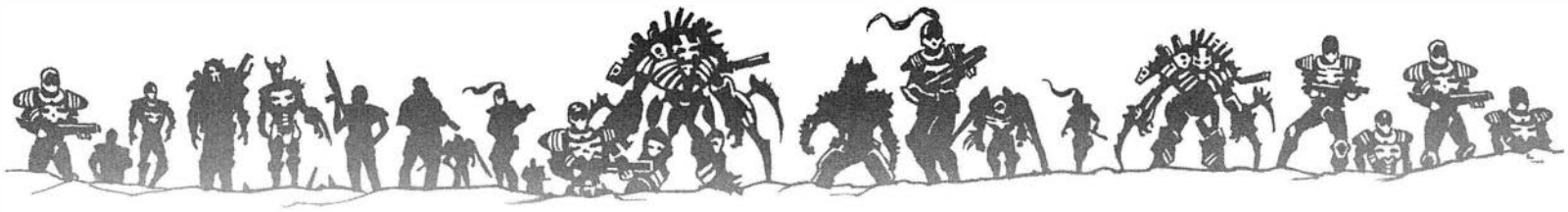
Rope Works (+20%)

AT Bonuses:

Attributes: +1 to M.A., +1 to P.S., and +1D4 to Spd.

S.D.C.: +2D6

Combat: +2 to roll with impact.



Salvage Expert Advanced Training

The Salvage Expert has evolved from the Coalition States' need to recycle resources to keep the war machine going. Salvage Experts comb battlefields, crash sites, junkyards and debris fields looking for salvageable materials. Most tend to work with the Coalition Core of Engineers who can put the materials to good use.

Training Period: 8 weeks.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 10, P.S. 14 and P.P. 10 or higher.

AT Availability and Exclusions: Any CS Military O.C.C.s, but typically CS Grunt and Technical Officers. And anyone with a strong back may be enlisted to help strip down and transport salvage. **Note:** The least likely O.C.C.s to get this training are the *CS Military Specialist, Fly Boy Ace, Scientist, Commando* and other Special Forces.

Similar training from certain mercenary companies and kingdoms, like Lazlo, may have an equivalent AT for any Men-at-Arms O.C.C.s as well as the Cyber-Doc, Operator and Vagabond.

Scrounger Abilities from the Salvage AT:

Recognize Salvage and Quality (special): Similar to Recognize Weapon Quality, the Salvage Expert can tell after looking over any machine or parts the quality of craftsmanship, any obvious damage or defects (if you know what you're looking for), and the wear and tear it has seen (new, used, rebuilt, on its last legs or junk). They can also identify the machine's general purpose and the maker of most machines and parts created, or well known, in North America – Coalition States, Northern Gun, Wilk's, Titan Robotics, Triax, Naruni, Golden Age Weaponsmiths, Splugorth/Kittani, and other manufacturers and refurbishers. This applies to machines and parts big and small. From an electric drill created in Northern Gun to a massive pre-Rifts Earth boring machine.

-30% penalty to accurately identify the purpose/use and origin of alien machines, TW devices and other magic-based machines, devices and parts. This would include such Techno-Wizard created machines as the Iron Juggernauts, biomancy creations of Lemurians, as well as Bio-Wizard devices and vehicles like the Splugorth Slaver Barge or demon war machines.

In all cases, roll under the character's Salvage skill.

+5 on Perception Rolls to recognize salvage (special): Any items of value from gems and Rifts Artifacts to machine parts, circuitry, components, etc. Of course, as a military AT, the focus is on weapons, ammo, E-Clips, bionics, electronics, fuel, fuel cells, recovery of armor and parts for power armor, robots and combat vehicles, and anything that can be salvaged and cannibalized for parts as well as scrap that can recycled and reused.

+4 on Perception Rolls to recognize contraband (special): The Salvage Expert also has a keen eye for noticing contraband items.

Additional Skills that come with Martial Expert AT: See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

Appraise Goods (+20%)
Barter (+16%)
Basic Mechanics (+10%)
Find Contraband (+12%)
Mathematics: Basic (+20%) – if he already has basic math, the Salvage Expert gets Mathematics: Advanced (+10%).
Recognize Weapon Quality (+10%)
Recycling (+20%)
Salvage (+20%)

AT Bonuses:

Attribute: +1 to P.S. attribute.
S.D.C.: +2D6
Combat: See Perception Rolls, above.

Spycraft Advanced Training

Want to be a spy? Welcome to Spycraft Advanced Training. Espionage can mean many things and have many applications. Spycraft focuses on infiltration, undercover operations and dirty tricks to get close to the enemy or behind enemy lines to gather intelligence, steal evidence, data, or resources, rescue prisoners, terminate enemy targets, perform acts of sabotage, and to otherwise harass and undermine the enemy. **Note:** Spycraft often goes hand in hand with Field Intelligence, Stalking or Stealth AT.

Training Period: 36 weeks full course, or 16 weeks for the crash course (with half the bonuses).

Spycraft AT Availability and Exclusions: The full course (and full bonuses) are only available to the *Military Specialist, Technical Officer,* and *Special Forces,* as well as select *CS Police/ISS* and *psychics* who are "official" agents of *Psi-Battalion* and/or *the ISS/NT-SET* – and a soldier from any branch of the CS Military (any Military O.C.C.) who receives a special invitation for this AT when someone higher up sees an aptitude in him or her for the spy trade. Of course, the invitation can be declined. **Note:** NEVER available to the Combat Cyborg, Dog Boy, or Psi-Stalker; extremely rare for CS Grunts, Juicers, RPA Elite, Robot Pilots and Scientists.

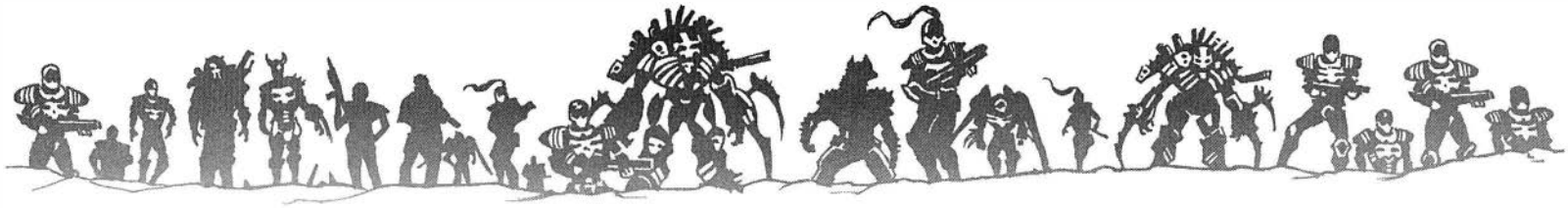
Those same CS Military O.C.C.s listed above can also take the crash course, but all bonuses are *half (round down).*

Similar training from certain mercenary companies and kingdoms, like Lazlo, may have an equivalent AT for their Demon Hunters and the same or similar types of Men-at-Arms O.C.C.s described above.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 15 and P.P. 13 or higher.

AT Availability and Exclusions: Most CS Military O.C.C.s including CS Police/ISS/Psi-Battalion operatives, are eligible for this training, but typically limited to the *CS Commando, Military Specialist* and *Special Forces*, but may be available to other. **Note:** The least likely O.C.C.s to get this training are the *CS Grunt, Scientist, Naval personnel* and run of the mill *mercenary* unless they are part of a special squad, platoon, company or battalion of demon hunters.

Similar training from certain mercenary companies and kingdoms, like Lazlo, may have an equivalent AT for any Men-at-Arms O.C.C.s and the same or similar types of O.C.C.s described above.



Spycraft Advanced Training:

Resist Interrogation and Seduction (special): The agent skilled in Spycraft is a tough customer and difficult to break. He or she recognizes and resists Interrogation and Seduction, thus the success ratio of both skills are reduced by half when used against him, and it takes twice as long to get information or clues out of this master spy, if they can get anything useful at all.

Moreover, because the master of Spycraft recognizes and understands Seduction and Interrogation, he can try to feed his seducer or interrogator convincing lies and false or misleading information. For those he is trying to deceive, they must roll under whichever skill they are using at the reduced level (half) to successfully see through the spy's deception. A failed roll means they believe the misinformation and lies and will act accordingly.

Additional Skills that come with Spycraft AT: See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

Disguise (+20%)

Escape Artist (+15%)

Impersonation (+16%)

Language: One of choice (+20%) and can include Demongogian.

Seduction (+30%)

Streetwise (+20%)

Surveillance (+20%)

Undercover Ops (+20%)

AT Bonuses:

Attribute: +1D4 to M.A.

S.D.C.: +2D6

Combat: +1 to Perception Rolls (all), +1 to disarm, +1 to pull punch, and +1 to save vs mind control and illusion whether induced by drugs, magic or psionics.

Stalking Advanced Training

Stalking is the art of pursuing a target by tailing and tracking as if you were *a ghost* – unseen and ethereal (never there). This includes the practiced skill of being forgettable – seeming to be so ordinary and unobtrusive that nobody notices or remembers you. ("Um, yeah, there might have been a guy there. Describe him? Uh, I ... don't know. Just some average guy, you know. He could have been anyone.")

Observing the enemy while remaining unseen takes practiced skill. The focus of the Stalking AT is tailing and tracking targets/subjects for the purpose of gathering intelligence on them and/or their associates – where they go, who they meet, what they do, are they hiding something, what is it, are they conspiring with the enemy, engaging in criminal enterprises, or living a secret life, etc. How this information is used may vary: intelligence, developing strategies and tactics to use against the subject or his associates, locating and confirming enemies/targets, locating hostages/prisoners, making a criminal arrest, finding evidence, planting false evidence, assassination, intimidation, robbery, kidnaping, blackmail, extortion, finding contraband and terrorist cells, and so on.

This Advanced Training does not include the Disguise skill, but while the stalker may not use elaborate disguises or Impersonation, he knows and uses clothing to "fit in," appear ordinary, and look inconspicious. AT also teaches him how to behave and carry himself in such a way as to not be obvious and fade into a crowd. Though Disguise, Impersonation and Undercover Ops are not part of Stalking Advanced Training, any of them can be of benefit.

Training Period: 16 weeks.

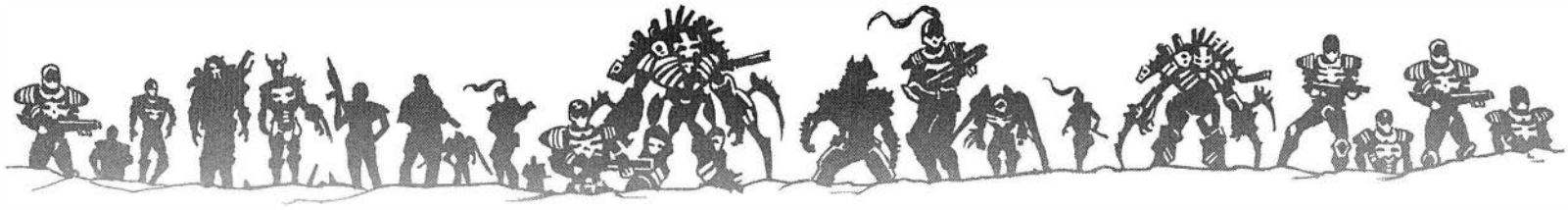
Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 14 and P.P. 14 or higher.

AT Availability and Exclusions: Theoretically, most CS Military O.C.C.s are eligible for this training, but typically limited to the CS Commando, Ranger, Military Specialist, Spies, Special Forces, and CS Police/ISS/Psi-Battalion operatives (including Dog Boys and Psi-Stalkers who are part of them). **Note:** The least likely O.C.C.s to get this training are the *CS Grunt, Fly Boy Ace, Robot and Power Armor Pilots* and *CS Scientists* unless they are part of a special squad, platoon, company or battalion.

Similar training from certain mercenary companies and kingdoms, like Lazlo, may have an equivalent AT for any Men-at-Arms O.C.C.s and the same or similar types of O.C.C.s described above.

Being a Ghost (special): "Ghosts" are ethereal and invisible unless they want to be seen. That same principle applies to the Stalking AT includes techniques and methods of covering your own trail and gathering any evidence of your having been present. The individual learns how to "wipe down" and "sanitize" a crime scene, leaving no fingerprints, footprints or trace evidence behind that indicates he was ever there, or which could incriminate him or his employer or government/organization. That means no DNA evidence (hair, blood, saliva, etc.), litter (cigarette butts, candy wrapper, dirty glass, beer bottle, fibers, etc.) or any evidence of having ever been present – unless it is left there deliberately to throw people off the Stalker's trail or to implicate someone else for a crime or act of retribution. Along those lines, forced entry may be made to look like a simple breaking and entry burglary. Preventative measures such as the wearing of gloves, a cap (to cover the hair to prevent the loss of hair follicles/DNA as well as to help conceal identity), sunglasses, hoods, etc., are also taught. Liquidating eyewitnesses is not part of this Advanced Training. **Skill Determination:** Roll under the Tailing skill to remain unseen/unnoticed. Also roll under Tailing to see if the evidence has been successfully removed. A failed roll means being seen (not recognized) or that some trace evidence was left behind.

+4 on Perception Rolls to maintain the tail: Inevitably, the stalker is going to lose sight of the subject of the tail. Losing sight of the subject(s) breaks visual contact and the target could vanish and slip away unless visual confirmation can be reestablished. Even if contact is reestablished, there may be a question of where he went, who he may have met or what he may have done while visual contact was lost for those few seconds or minutes he was gone from sight. This Perception Roll enables the stalker to notice signs or follow a hunch as to where a target may have gone in an effort to reestablish visual contact. Of course, there may be no



such signs and the hunch could be wrong. Line of sight and maintaining visual contact are an absolute must in Stalking/Tailing.

+4 on Perception Rolls to recognize clues and evidence of subject's presence: Success means the stalker is able to identify physical evidence of the subject having been present at a particular location and where he *may* have gone or what he may have done. Of course, there my be no evidence, if the subject was careful or lucky.

This bonus may also be used to notice if there is evidence the stalker needs to remove to erase his own presence at a location.

+4 on Perception Roll to realize he has been made! This is the ability of the stalker to recognize he has been "made" – identified – by his subject or somebody with or around the target subject. His cover blown, he needs to quickly fade away into the crowd or make good an escape, or risk getting captured, attacked, killed or followed himself.

+3 on Perception Roll to realize you are being tailed or watched! The stalker is able to recognize he or someone with him (though he will not know who) is being tailing/followed/watched by someone else. This ONLY APPLIES when the character with Stalking AT is actively looking around to see if he notices anyone following or watching him or the people immediately around him. Armed with this information, the character can try to pretend he does not know he or the group is being tailed and watch the watcher, mislead him, or take action against him (attack, try to get to him for capture and interrogation, etc.).

Additional Skills that come with Stalking AT: See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

Land Navigation (+10%)

Pick Locks (+20%)

Prowl (+5%)

Tailing (+30%)

Tracking (+10% to track/follow a trail and +20% to counter-tracking and covering one's own trail and any evidence of having ever been present).

Wardrobe & Grooming (+20%)

AT Bonuses:

Attribute: +1D4 Spd attribute.

S.D.C.: +1D6

Combat: Perception Roll above.

Stealth Advanced Training

The art of moving silently and unseen. Includes techniques and methods of concealment, camouflage, hiding and moving silently and unseen. May be combined with Stalking.

Training Period: 16 weeks.

Stealth AT Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 10 and P.P. 14 or better.

Stealth AT Availability and Exclusions: Most CS Military O.C.C.s and most Men-at-Arms O.C.C.s. outside the CS can take this AT (or the equivalent), with the following exceptions:

Augmented Warriors and certain D-Bees: *Partial Cyborgs, Headhunters, CS Infiltrator cyborgs, Cyber-Knights, Juicers, Crazies,* and *D-Bees* with claws that cannot retract, or have wings or a large tail, see all Prowl/Stealth AT bonuses *reduced by half* and penalties suffer an additional -20% modifier for encumbrance and hard parts that make stealth difficult. In the case of *Juicers* and *Crazies,* these penalties have as much to do with their hyperactivity and lack of patience as it does the armor they may wear; they dislike sitting still or moving slowly and carefully, but can do it with the modifiers above.

Power armor, robots, giant robots, Combat Cyborgs and armored vehicles: Though the *pilot* of power armor, a robot or vehicle may possess Prowl or Stealth Advanced Training suitable for when he *exits* his power armor or vehicle, Prowl/Stealth is NOT possible unless *the machine* is specifically designed for stealth and is so stated in its description, complete with Prowl penalties, if any; this is a rarity. The same holds true for full conversion **Combat Cyborgs, unmanned robots,** and **giants** (larger than 9 feet/2.7 m); unless clearly and indisputably stated otherwise. **Note:** *Prowl to Hide, Prowl to Vanish* and *Stealth Attack* are NOT possible.

Additional Skills that come with Stealth AT: See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

Acrobatics – AT Acrobatics focuses on Balance (+10%) and the ability to move along narrow surfaces such as the top of walls, ledges, beams, girders, cable, rope, the edge of rooftops and similar, as well as learning to conquer the fear of heights. The latter does not apply to height related insanities or phobias. Speed of movement is one third running speed when not trying to be stealthy, Spd 5 or slower to Prowl.

Camouflage (+30%)

Prowl Advanced Training (special): If the character does not already have the Prowl skill he gets *Prowl (+20%).* If the character already has the Prowl skill, add the AT bonus to it. Remember to apply any penalties as noted above.

Below are additional bonuses that may apply to characters with Stealth Advanced Training based on environmental conditions and/or location. Enjoy.

Prowl AT Bonuses (cumulative): Advanced Training in Stealth provides the following additional bonuses.

+10% to Prowl under the cover of darkness, fog or smoke. Not applicable against enemies who can see the invisible or possess infrared/thermal optics or sensors.

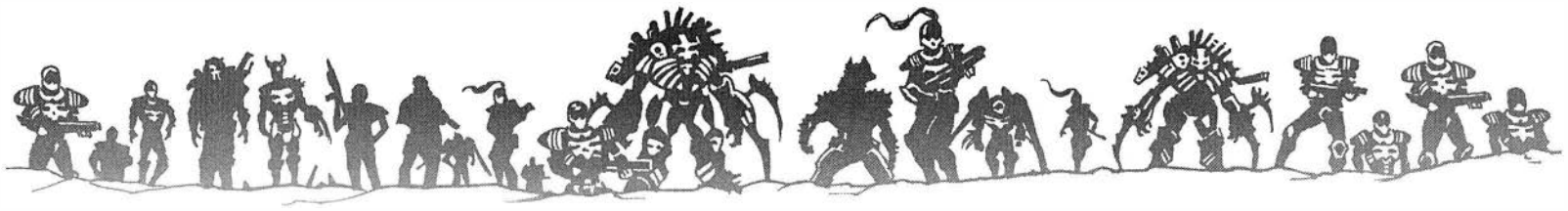
+10% to Prowl when invisible; the character still has mass and makes noise if not careful. Not applicable against enemies who can see the invisible or possess infrared/thermal optics or sensors.

+5% when using appropriate camouflage.

+5% when moving slowly and carefully at a Spd of 5 or less.

+5% when moving along an elevated position such as the top of a wall, the ledge of a building, rooftops, scaffolding, a cable or rope suspended high above the ground, in part because most people do not look up.

Bonuses are cumulative. For example, if the character is prowling at night (+10%) and moving slowly (+5%), the additional Prowl bonus is +15%. **Note:** The bonus for the cover of darkness does NOT apply against enemies who can see in dark-



ness or have nightvision optics (passive, infrared, etc.). Likewise, Prowl does not apply when moving at a speed greater than a spd of 10, or when out in the open and under well lit conditions.

Stealth AT Special Abilities: Special AT abilities, such as *Prowl to Hide*, only apply to characters who have taken that particular Advanced Training. Characters who have the Prowl skill do NOT have these expanding, expert abilities.

Prowl to Hide (special AT ability): +10% to remain unseen when not moving and deliberately hiding behind or under cover. The bonus for the cover of darkness, fog and smoke, or camouflage may apply as an additional bonus depending on field conditions and circumstance.

Prowl to Vanish (special AT ability): The person is able to quietly slip away from a group, provided nobody is directly looking at him when he does so. Nobody will realize he's gone until they turn or look in his direction or turn to address him at the spot where they last saw him and realize he is gone; or a noise or disturbance attracts their attention and they look around. Prowl to vanish is usually done to sneak away to a different location or to a nearby hiding place, or to make good an escape. Roll under the Prowl skill to succeed at quietly sneaking away. **Note:** The player may want to slip the G.M. a note that his character is attempting a Prowl to Vanish and then roll in front of the G.M., only.

Stealth Attack (special AT ability): Yes, a character with Stealth Advanced Training can sneak up behind an opponent with a garrote or knife, however it is NOT an automatic free attack or strike. The intended victim gets a chance to notice there is someone behind him about to strike; roll 1D20. No modifiers. High roll wins, defender wins ties. The outcome is to determine whether the intended victim is able to turn and parry/block or dodge (move out of the way of) the incoming attack. If he does nothing the Stealth Attacks hits and does damage.

If the intended victim wins this roll to escape a Stealth Attack he gets to *attempt* to parry or dodge the attack coming from behind. Roll to parry or dodge using the appropriate bonuses. A successful parry or dodge means no damage. HOWEVER, the Stealth attacker has initiative, and keeps initiative for that entire melee round.

If the victim fails to avoid the incoming attack from behind he takes double damage from the backstab/sneak attack and the Stealth attacker keeps initiative for the rest of the melee round. Prowl is automatically broken whenever the prowling individual engages in combat or any action other than Prowl. Once combat starts, attempting a Prowl is not possible until the next melee round, and only if no eyes are on the character trying to sneak around in silence.

Limitation: Prowl and using skills. Prowl can NOT be maintained while performing another skill or any task that utilizes a light source, tools, weapons or a lot of motion. The minute the stealthy individual does anything other than Prowl (move in silence unseen), the *Prowl skill STOPS!* Whatever he does next is likely to be noticed unless he is trying to perform the skill while hidden.

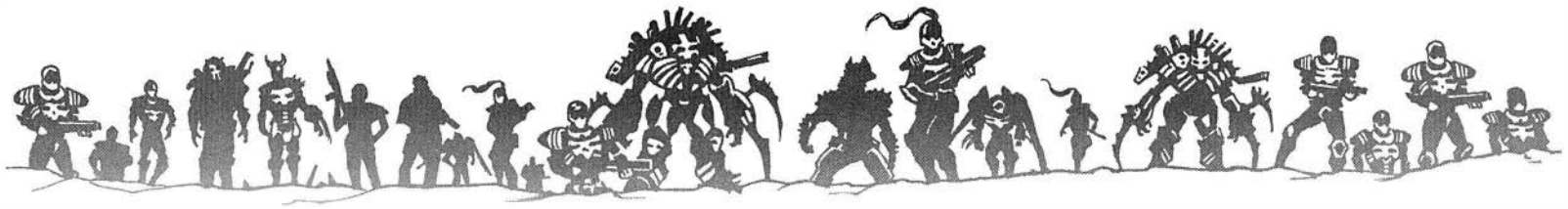
The stealthy individual can stop and *Prowl to Hide* to perform a simple, quiet skill, task or action that takes no longer than *one melee round (15 seconds)*; such as drawing a weapon, putting a dagger between his teeth, reviewing a map or instructions on a HUD display or on paper in his hands, prepping an explosive charge, picking a lock, or doing math in his head, and remain *hidden* as per *Prowl to Hide*. However, to move from his hiding place in stealth mode, a new successful roll to Prowl must be made. **Note:** Something as simple as removing an item from a backpack, tying and lowering a rope, looking at a handheld computer, whispering into a radio, picking a lock, engaging in combat, and so on, breaks the prowler's concentration and takes him *out* of stealth mode. Which is why a new Prowl roll must be made for him to continue to move or to perform a skill that takes more than one melee round.

Performing a skill that takes longer than one melee round (15 seconds), requires a new Prowl roll to be made at -10% to see if the character is able to remain silent and hidden/unnoticed while performing that skill or action over the course of an additional two melee rounds (30 seconds). Roll again for each additional two melee rounds (30 seconds) the character needs to quietly perform the skill or task. HOWEVER, the -10% penalty increases for each additional 30 seconds. So a task that takes 60 seconds/four melee rounds is -20% to maintain the Prowl, -30% the next two melee rounds, -40% for next, and so on. The longer it takes, the less likely the character can maintain Prowl to Hide. Even a simple task performed slowly and carefully creates movement. Motion attracts the eye and is likely to make sound, even if it is just the rustling of clothing or the soft clank of body armor. Likewise, armor and tools cast glints of reflected light that may draw attention to the prowler and reveal his presence.

If able to remain hidden and unseen, when the task is finished, the stealth operative must make a new Prowl roll to resume his stealthy movement to continue to move in silence and unseen. **Note:** Of course, any skill or action that makes noise or requires equipment that makes noise, or involves a lot of movement or violent action, immediately breaks the stealth of the Prowl and reveals the prowler. Noise, especially an unusual noise, is always going to attract a guard and people nearby to come and investigate.

Prowl Penalties: These penalties result from circumstance and environmental conditions. Also see **Stealth AT Availability and Exclusions**, above. If more than one circumstance is in place (heavy body armor and an open door, the penalties "stack" – accumulate, add them together.

In all cases, a failed Prowl roll means the individual has failed at being stealthy and is neither silent nor unseen. He is clearly visible to anyone and everyone who looks in his direction ("Hey, who's that over there?!") and he is likely to have made a noise that attracts people to his location. **G.M. Note:** When a character fails his Prowl roll, I always have him stumble or drop something that makes a noise. A) That's how he knows he is not prowling, and B) that's what happens when you fail to Prowl, you make noise and are visible.



No penalty to Prowl in poorly lit environments where there are still plenty of dark corners, long shadows and physical cover to hide behind, like a dimly lit warehouse at night, a street or parking lot with only a few working streetlights, or a battlefield with plenty of debris, fallen soldiers, craters, etc. HOWEVER, the bonus for cover of darkness does NOT apply, because there is poor/partial lighting.

-30% to Prowl, Prowl Hide and Prowl Vanish whenever the prowler is being actively sought after, or a location is being carefully searched even under the cover of darkness, etc. Increase that penalty to *-70% to Prowl, Prowl Hide* or *Prowl to Vanish* if the area becomes moderately illuminated and/or many people are searching for the character or an unknown intruder. Time to make a run for it.

-20% to Prowl in a moderately lit environment or a location but has a good amount of cover to hide behind.

-20% to Prowl when a few people are hanging around, working or congregating a short distance away, within 60-200 feet (18.3 to 61 m).

-40% Prowl penalty when a few people are hanging around NEARBY, as close as 15-50 feet (4.6-15.2 m) away. In this situation, the character must re-roll his Prowl to slip by unnoticed.

-40% to Prowl past any character(s) with heightened sense of smell, hearing or hawk-like vision. In this situation, the character must re-roll his Prowl to pass by unnoticed.

-30% to Prowl past an open door with one or two people inside. In this situation, the character must re-roll his Prowl to pass by unnoticed.

-40% to Prowl past an open door with more than two people inside. In this situation, the character must re-roll his Prowl to pass by unnoticed.

-50% to Prowl behind and past one or two people looking in another direction as close as four feet (1.2 m) away. In this situation, the character must re-roll his Prowl to pass by unnoticed.

-70% to Prowl unseen in a well lighted area or location that is moderately to heavily populated (an office building or store during business hours, for example). Under such a circumstance, the character must roll to preserve his Prowl and unnoticed status frequently, such as every time he turns a corner, enters a new room or area, opens a door, stops to performs a skill, or for every 150 feet (45.7 m) traveled.

-95% to Prowl unseen in locations of high-security with monitored camera systems and/or motion detectors.

Prowl can NOT be performed when out in the open in well lit conditions such as an open field, desert, the middle of a gymnasium and similar.

Prowl can NOT be performed when moving at speeds that would be considered jogging or running; generally, greater than a Spd of 10.

Prowl can NOT be done when engaged in combat, running or while in front of people. If the character is seen/visible, had just been speaking or doing something in front of others, he must first move out of sight before he can Prowl to Vanish, or sneak away.

Body Armor Prowl penalties: Characters in *full body armor* and *medium* or *heavy body armor* as well as any *D-Bee with a hard-shell*, rock-hard hide and/or massive claws, spines or appendages suffer penalties to Prowl as listed in the description of said armor or R.C.C. If no Prowl penalty is listed, the default penalty to Prowl is -30%; penalties are cumulative.

Characters in *partial armor* and *light body armor* suffer penalties to Prowl as listed in the description of said armor. If no Prowl penalty is listed, the default penalty to Prowl is -10%; penalties are cumulative.

Steel Armor Advanced Training

Armored Vehicles and Infantry Robots & Power Armor

The school is 12 weeks long and includes the intricacies of coaxing the most out of their giant war machines. The remaining eight weeks is spent on learning tactics in squad combat and formations. Teamwork and coordination are often one of the major challenges for robot and power armor pilots. While flying power armors can nearly mimic those lessons learned by aviation pilots (see Black Talon Combat Pilot AT), not all combat is limited to the air and pilots need to be quick thinking and adaptable for the different types of terrain. The class breaks down into four weeks of piloting training, simulation and exercises, two weeks of air combat, two weeks of water combat (under and above), two weeks of ground combat, and the last two weeks focusing on combining all three elements in mock combat engagements using simulators and actual vehicles.

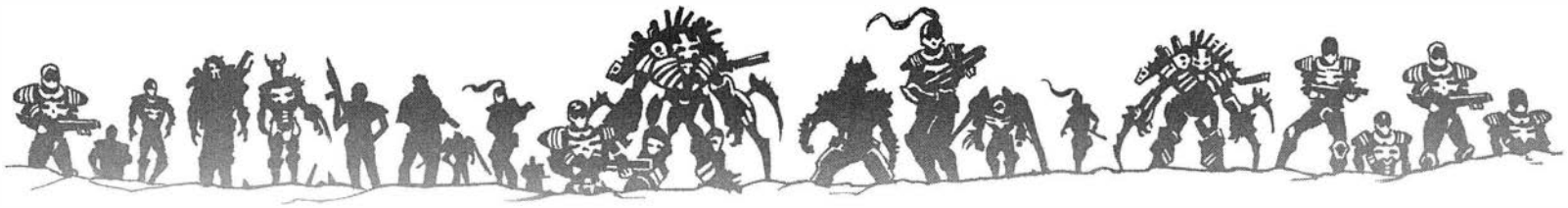
After 12 weeks of Steel Armor school, the character is considered to have "Elite" piloting skill and receives the prestigious Steel Fist medal. The medal is shaped like a shield with a pointed bottom. On the shield is a pair of C-40R rail guns crossed above a skull. They also have patches that sew onto flight suits and the symbol is also painted on the right shoulder of the soldier's armor.

Training Period: 12 weeks.

AT Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 10, P.P. 11, and P.E. 10 or better.

AT Availability and Exclusions: Generally limited to CS Military O.C.C.s who have a reason to pilot ground-based power armor, robots, tanks and other armored vehicles, like CS Robot Pilots, Military Specialists, Technical Officers, Commandos and Special Forces.

Similar training from certain mercenary companies and kingdoms, like Lazlo, may have an equivalent AT for any Men-at-Arms O.C.C.s and the same or similar types of O.C.C.s described above, like Merc Soldiers, Headhunters, Robot Pilots and Special Forces. *Crazies* and *Juicers* never pilot armored vehicles, power armor or manned robots because they are interested in speed, and gravitate toward fast combat vehicles like hovercycles, rocket bikes and Death Wings. **Note:** This AT is never available to *CS Dog Boys, CS Psi-Stalkers, CS Fly Boys, psychics, mages, Cyber-Knights, Crazies, Juicers* or most other O.C.C.s.



Skill Requirements (special): The character must have at least one ground vehicle piloting skill before taking Steel Armor Pilot AT.

Additional Skills that come with the Steel Armor AT: See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

Elite Pilot (special): CS combat pilots with Steel Armor AT walk away with a fundamental knowledge of *all* CS infantry armored vehicles, ground power armor and manned combat robots. If it is a military armored vehicle, the pilot can drive it, at least on a very basic level. Equal to the **Base Skill** required for that specific piloting skill and category of military armored vehicle/ground power armor/robot, but without benefit of any bonuses other than I.Q. attribute, if applicable.

Robots and Power Armor (+12%; ground units only).

Weapon Systems (+10%) or Navigation (+15%), whichever the character is lacking or has the greatest need; pick one.

Additional Piloting Skills: Select *three* Pilot skills from the following list of Piloting categories:

Pilot: Combat Driving

Pilot: Tanks and APCs (+20%)

Pilot: Hovercraft (Ground) (+10%)

Pilot: Robot Combat: *Elite* – this can be selected for several different types of power armor. Each Robot/Power Armor Combat: Elite selected counts as one piloting skill, so if UAR-1, Hellraiser, and Glitter Boy Killer were selected, they would count as *three* piloting skills.

AT Bonuses:

Attribute: +1 to P.S. attribute.

S.D.C.: +2D6+4

Combat: +1 on initiative, +1 to strike when using an armored vehicle's weapon systems (power armor, manned robots, tank, APCs), Critical Strike on a Natural 19–20 (double damage!) when using the vehicle's weapon systems, and +1 to dodge in the armored vehicle, provided it has the capability to dodge piloting any armored ground vehicle.

Survival Advanced Training

Training in extreme methods of survival and hardening yourself to the rigors of the elements and the wilderness. Knowledge includes navigating the wilderness, how to make quick, simple shelters and stay warm, make fire, protect self from the sun and weather, prevent dehydration, find food, attract rescuers, etc. Training also helps to develop a strong stomach able to eat and digest insects, grass, bark and vegetation most people would not realize are edible or would be unwilling to eat.

Training Period: 12 weeks.

AT Attribute Requirements: M.E. 12 and P.E. 14 or higher.

AT Availability and Exclusions: Any CS Military O.C.C. and Men-at-Arms O.C.C. can take this AT. Most common among Commandoes, Dog Boys, Psi-Stalkers, Rangers/Wilderness Scouts and Special Forces. Least common among *Coalition psychics* and agents of Psi-Battalion and/or the ISS/NTSET/police.

Survival Advanced Training (special):

+5 on Perception Rolls to recognize changes in weather and dangerous conditions in the wild. This includes approaching storms, loose rocks, bogs, quicksand, rapids, and other hazards, as well as escalating dangerous conditions that could result in rivers overflowing and flooding, flash floods, mud slides, landslides, avalanches, tornadoes, and so on. This training and bonus also applies to recognizing what should be a relatively safe place to hole up and remain safe while the weather or danger passes.

A successful Perception Roll gives the character the opportunity to try to move out of the danger zone and seek or make shelter (move out of a flood plain, avoid areas likely to be prone to flash flood or landslide, and so on).

A failed roll means he is oblivious to the danger and could be in for trouble.

+5 on Perception Rolls to recognize plants, roots, and insects that can be eaten to provide nourishment. Advanced Survival Training helps to develops an eye for insects, animals, grass, bark, roots, nuts, berries, mushrooms and other vegetation and things that can be eaten to provide the protein and nutrition to survive in the wild (and in captivity). Many are things most people would not realize are edible or would be unwilling to eat (worms, larvae, etc.). Survival AT also helps to the individual to develop a strong stomach able to eat and digest such raw and exotic food.

A successful Perception Roll helps the character to notice and recognize edibles and prepare them (if applicable).

A failed roll means he is oblivious to the food source and walks right past it.

+3 on Perception Rolls to recognize animal aggression: The survival expert recognizes when an animal or monster feels cornered, threatened and aggressive, and preparing to attack.

A successful Perception Roll gives the survival expert the opportunity to try to move away and out of the dangerous situation without the animal attacking. If it does attack, he is ready for it and is +1 on initiative and +2 to dodge the animal.

A failed roll means he is oblivious to the danger and is about to get mauled.

Skills that come with Survival AT: See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for the full skill descriptions.

Astronomy and Navigation (+20%)

Dowsing (+20%)

Fishing (+20%)

First Aid (+10%)

Identify Plants and Fruits (+10%)

Outdoorsmanship (provides bonuses)

Wilderness Survival (+10%)

Whittling (+20% when it applies to making weapons, stakes, spears, snares, and tools for survival, -10% to make sculptures and works of art).

Survival AT Bonuses:

Attributes: +1 to M.E. and +1 to P.E. attributes.

S.D.C.: +2D6 S.D.C.

Combat: +1 to roll with impact, +1 to save vs disease and exotic and unpleasant food (tough stomach).

New Coalition O.C.C.s

CS Combat Courier

By Kevin Siembieda, inspired by Carl Gleba

The CS Combat Courier is part intelligence officer, part reconnaissance operative, part war correspondent and part courier. They ultimately answer directly to the **Department of Propaganda (DoP)** overseen by *Joseph Prosek II*, who gets most (but not quite all) Combat Courier sensitive battlefield intelligence and combat film footage even before the brass of the Coalition States Military High Command or the Emperor, himself! Of course, the Combat Courier also works within the chain of command, and is usually assigned to a specific unit with whom the Courier shares information and video that directly relates to current and immediate combat operations and missions. However, Combat Couriers possess Top Secret Clearance and the authority to withhold any information or film they (the Combat Courier) have deemed to be Top Secret for DoP evaluation only. Thus, a Combat Courier is going to report a weakness in the enemy line or an enemy advancement to his Commanding unit officer so that the Commanding officer can respond accordingly. But certain information about the presence of a specific leader, or certain demons and monsters, or magical device, or activity and even enemy troop build-up, strange weapons, etc., is likely to go directly to the Department of Propaganda. There, a corps of communications and intelligence officers (a small army in and of itself) assesses and distributes data to the Military High Command and other CS brass, accordingly.

Remember, there is a chain of command for a reason. Information is not shared with everyone. Leaders get the data first. And someone (usually the DoP) needs to determine who that is to be and the priority level of that information. Joseph Prosek II and his Department of Propaganda (DoP) sort the material and classifies it (DoP Ultra, Top Secret, Secret, Classified, or Restricted) before disseminating it to the appropriate channels. Who in turn issue orders to their commanders in the field. Who in turn structure their military response with combat troops and special forces. The grunt in the field, and that includes most special operatives, Juicers, Combat Cyborgs, Rangers, Commandos, armored forces, aerial forces, and support personnel, seldom have full knowledge of what's going on or what they are about to face. They receive mission briefs and follow orders, trusting and hoping High Command and their battlefield officer know what they are doing and use the sensitive information they have to the best effect. That puts Combat Couriers in a unique and rare position: They have sensitive, often scary, information that they can NOT share with their fellow soldiers, friends or family. The Combat Courier, arguably more than any other soldier, must follow the chain of command and get that information into the right hands.

In that regard, Combat Couriers are the "trusted" eyes and ears of the Coalition Military. The Courier and the DoP see, monitor and truly control the flow of information, with Joseph Prosek II, ultimately deciding what gets passed along, to whom, what is kept secret, and what is kept Ultra Secret (the DoP Ultra classification is his eyes only). This makes Joseph Prosek II the master of spies and information as well as propaganda. He and the DoP select, edit and pass along video for the purposes of military training, combat assessment and target acquisition as well as public dissemination. All of this makes the Combat Couriers some of his most valuable assets, whether they realize it or not. **Note:** It is important to make the distinction that Joseph Prosek II does not devise military or political strategies, tactics, or policies for the CS – though he can offer his opinion and make suggestions should he care to do so – but rather it is he who decides what data gets passed along to whom. It is the military and government leaders who ultimately decide what to do with it. Of course, things are never that cut and dried, and Joseph Prosek knows how to play people and manipulate the reactions and results that he would like to see.

Coalition States Combat Couriers (CSCC) are typically commissioned officers who have undergone specialized training, but some have risen through the ranks with the Coalition Army. Among them, some are Mercenaries, Wilderness Scouts and adventurers who have earned the trust of CS brass or field commanders, and are hired by the CS to do the job. The latter may be considered "Native guides," if you will, who can either help Combat Couriers get to where they need to go or serve as Combat Couriers themselves.

The CS Combat Courier designation is a deliberate misnomer to make them sound less important and less formidable than they really are. It is the CSCC who often plays a vital role in the actual acquisition of strategic information and film footage in the first place, which means they often work with, or within, Rangers, Commandos, Special Forces and Intelligence units. Then, delivering the information to the appropriate relay station (almost always a mobile relay station or giant robot like the *NG Bigfoot* with communications and relay capabilities), and *personally* see to its transmission. Truly dangerous and sensitive Top Secret information may be personally, hand-delivered by the Courier to a specified Commanding Officer, General, or to the Department of Propaganda. However, most information is sent out via mobile relay stations to the army of intelligence and communication experts at the DoP. As noted earlier, it is they who weed through the data and images, and pass along the most vital of the information (at least in theory) to the *Coalition Military High Command*. The military leaders further analyze and assess the data, and use it and film to study the enemies, ascertain their strengths and weaknesses, and formulate battle plans, strategic strikes, combat operations, and issue battlefield orders to the appropriate field commanders. All of it as close to *up to the minute info* as possible in this communications challenged world.

That is another thing that makes the Combat Courier so important and unique, his data has *top priority*. The CS High Command only knows what its boots on the ground tell them. That's a ton of information coming in from all over the war front. Information that may be filtered through the eyes and temperament of the officers in charge and their own ambitions and viewpoints. In war, everything flows through the chain of command. During active combat, video and radio transmissions are often contradictory, fragmented, based on opinion and confusing. Who decides which reports and data have priority, or are most accurate? The Combat Courier is trained to be focused and identify the most critical and core information, prioritize the importance of said information, and send out critical data when it is most important. Thus, his transmissions have top priority and almost always supercede anything in front of him. **Please Note:** The Combat Courier's data and video is not the only data being exchanged between combat units and the Coalition military brass. Field commanders and their own intelligence and communications teams are constantly transmitting updates and information directly to the CS brass in the chain of command. The elite Combat Courier is the specialist who, like an investigative reporter or spy, digs down deep, and worms his or her way beyond enemy lines to gather deeper, darker secrets, plans, and intelligence about the enemy. That's why they are often attached to, or work with, military Special Forces, Intelligence and Reconnaissance units.

The Coalition Combat Courier is one of the unsung heroes of the Minion War. They are the ones who risk their necks to *sneak behind enemy lines* and deep into enemy territory – even right into enemy installations to film breaches in their defenses and fortifications, ways in and out of enemy territory, ferreting out the locations of Hell Pits, demonic leaders, weapon depots, secret enemy weapons and other covert enemy installations and operations, and getting all kinds of other critical data and video of strategic importance. Memorializing combat and being able to show the courage and heroics of CS troops battling monsters from the pits of Hell is the other aspect to their job. The former is arguably the most important for the war effort, but it is the latter that is the most gut-wrenching. It brings the war home in a very real way, and keeps support for it strong. This is not a war of politics or values, it is a war between good and evil, humans and true monsters. And the footage from the war front has been left shockingly genuine, making Combat Couriers the unsung heroes who provide windows to the world beyond the ivory towers of the Coalition States.

All Coalition Combat Couriers are soldiers with the same training as a Dead Boy Grunt. Though capable fighters, the job of the Combat Courier is not to fight, but rather to observe, gather vital information, and memorialize (record, film, etc.) the war. More than that, their footage and firsthand observations are used to evaluate troops in the field, and combat strategies and operations of allied forces and the enemy. The vital data is sent back to Headquarters as quickly as possible for further assessment and implementation. The data is transmitted along mobile relay stations or delivered by the very same Courier who filmed the footage. CS Combat Couriers are the secret eyes and videographers whose diligence and skill could make or break the Coalition's efforts in the war.

If caught by the enemy, the Combat Courier is on his own. Disavowed as anything except being a Dead Boy at war. Under interrogation, the CSCC plays innocent and dumb. "I'm just a grunt who got separated from his company. Shows you how stupid I am. I thought I was headed back to my troops, not deeper behind enemy lines." "A spy? I wish. Then maybe I could help my nation defeat you and send you back to whatever pit you crawled out of." "The camera(s)? Just a hobby. Something to show my kids when I tell them about how we kicked your ass."

These are brave men and women, with nerves of steel and cunning required (M.E. 15 or higher, a good I.Q. and a high M.A. helps). A Coalition States Combat Courier may work alone, in a small group of other CSCCs, or with CS Rangers, Reconnaissance teams, Commandos, Special Forces, or any mixed group of combat personnel (including non-CS personnel; the player group, perhaps). Though they may be authorized to operate undercover (i.e. dressed as something other than a Dead Boy and perhaps operating with a mixed adventurer group of mercenaries, D-Bees, mages, etc.), the vast majority do not, and look like any other **Dead Boy**. As per their job, they tend to let others do the actual fighting while they film or plot ways in and out of enemy territory and trouble. Think spy or recon scout with a camera and an intelligence gathering agenda.

Remember, as noted earlier in the section on communications, there are no sustainable satellite networks, nor national broadcast systems, cable system or telegraph. None of them can be maintained. Three-quarters of all news is spread by word of mouth and as such, becomes subject to serious miscommunication, personal bias, exaggeration, half-truths and lies. Advanced kingdoms with strong armies like the Coalition States and Northern Gun, have robots, vehicles and mobile command bases that can transmit ra-

dio and video hundreds of miles and bounce such transmissions of each other to create a network of mobile relay stations that can receive and send coded data across the country. It is the job of the Combat Courier and his team to personally get such data to such communication relay stations and send out reliable data to the Department of Information and Propaganda (DoP). Of course, such mobile relay stations all have targets on their backs. The first rule of war is to disrupt lines of communications and supplies. When a part of a communication grid goes down, or becomes compromised, it is the Combat Courier who is responsible for delivering messages from one position or base on the front lines to another, as well as delivering all sorts of critical, often top secret, data from the front back to key military outposts/commanders in the war front or to any city of the Coalition States. This gives them one of the most important and thankless jobs in the army. See **Communication in North America**, page 25, for more details about communications on Rifts Earth.

Combat Courier O.C.C. Special Abilities:

1. Field Intelligence Advanced Training: See page 89.

2. Literacy: The very abilities to read and write make this CS soldier unique and dangerous as far as the Coalition is concerned. Combat Couriers are kept under close watch by CS superiors and the Department of Propaganda. The ability to write in an illiterate world helps keep ordinary notes a secret from most people. See skills, below.

3. Travel Documents: The Combat Courier (and his team if there is one) needs to be able to come and go across borders and almost anywhere, including many secured areas, Coalition Military High Command and CS fortress cities. To that end, all Combat Couriers are, in effect, bonded, and have an almost all-access travel card. And as an extra layer of security, the DNA of Couriers are on file for verification and a tiny I.D. chip is implanted under the skin. It should be noted that a Courier can get his teammates across borders and into cities, but never into secure offices with high ranking personnel and intelligence centers where the secrets are kept. They have to wait in a designated holding area far away. When they get to a secured location, the CSCC is likely to be examined by psychics and Dog Boys or Psi-Stalkers to sniff out any indication as to whether or not they may be possessed or enchanted by magic. The CS is nothing if not cautious to the level of paranoia. **Note:** This means the Combat Courier has access to all mobile relay stations within the CS and its allied combat forces such as Northern Gun and the Manistique Imperium. As a special operative, security protocol dictates that a Courier's data files are NOT handed-off to anyone else until he has personally transmitted the data. Moreover, the Combat Courier has the position and authority to deny handing over data to anyone with a rank lower than General. He can even refuse a General if the data is deemed to be too sensitive or DoP Top Secret. In that case, the General and other officers should be making certain the CSCC and his data gets to the DoP, whether it is transmitted via secure communications or hand delivered.

4. CC-2020 Bio-Camera Eye (New): Designed specifically with the Combat Courier, Special Forces and espionage agents in mind, the CC-2020 Bio-Camera Eye has a different purpose and functionality than the standard Cyber-Camera used by the CS military (see page 50 of **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**). First, it is designed for human operatives with minor cybernetic enhancements, not a partial 'Borg or Combat Cyborg. Consequently, the CC-2020 looks even more natural and lifelike than anything short of a Bio-System eye. Its mechanics are even concealed inside an actual biological casing – eyeball – making it look completely real, not mechanical.

The CC-2020 is able to snap and store 2,400 still images plus 15 minutes of video. Image files can be downloaded via the headjack to a portable computer, external hard drive or video camera (and onto the data storage disc inside the camera). Wireless capabilities are NOT available for security reasons. Unlike the CT-2000 Cyber-Camera Eye intended for partial and full conversion cyborgs, the CC-2020 does not have active transmission capabilities unless the Bio-Camera Eye is built into a partial cyborg and connected to a cybernetic broadcast system. It is not recommended for Combat Cyborgs as it cannot take the punishment heavy combat units endure.

5. O.C.C. Bonuses: +2D6 S.D.C., +1 to M.E. and P.E. attributes and +1D6 to Spd. +1 to Perception Rolls (any) at levels 2, 5, 8, 11 and 15. The Combat Courier is trained to be very observant and has a good eye for when something seems out of place, suspicious, or dangerous, or when something is about to go down/happen; +1 to dodge.

Warning One: Because the Combat Courier plays such a dangerous and vital role in intelligence gathering and communications, they are held to the highest standards of conduct. Dereliction of duty, serious infractions/wrongdoings can get the character stripped of his *Combat Courier status*, his travel documents and high clearance revoked, cybernetic systems removed (specifically the *Universal Headjack and Ear Implant, Radio Ear*, and the *CC-2020 Cybernetic Eye*), and busted down to *Technical Officer*. A Technical Officer with a black mark, and kept under scrutiny.

Warning Two: Because Combat Couriers have such high security clearance and can refuse to share information that they, and they alone, deem to be too sensitive or Top Secret (data to be sent to DoP only), Combat Couriers sometimes incur the ire and resentment of ambitious (or incompetent) officers. Likewise, fellow soldiers sometime become distrustful of the CSCC, believing he or she may be holding back information.

Coalition States Combat Courier Stats:

Alignment: Any, but usually Principled (25%), Scrupulous (50%), and Unprincipled (20%); though their loyalty to the Coalition States is what is paramount. Most tend to be young and idealistic, with an unwavering loyalty to the Coalition States and its leaders. They may not agree always with them or their policies, but they will not do anything that compromises or hurts the CS and always follow the chain of command. Only rogues (selfish or evil) may consider leaking information or video footage to the outside world without permission. This may be done in order to try to make a name for themselves in the growing media industry at Chi-Town and other major cities, or to use as leverage (i.e. blackmail) to gain promotions and wealth, to further their own agenda, or for some perception of a greater good or free press. If discovered, such actions are considered treason, punishable by loss of citizenship and expulsion from the CS, imprisonment, or execution.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 12 and M.E. 15 or higher, ideally much higher when it comes to M.E. A high M.A. and P.E. is also recommended, but not an absolute requirement. A good P.S. for schlepping around equipment is also helpful, but not mandatory. **Note:** The Combat Courier usually works

in a team, though he or she may sneak off from time to time. The members of that team are expected to keep him safe and help him with his intelligence gathering missions in enemy territory.

Starting Rank: Lieutenant for commissioned officers (the majority). Sergeant for non-commissioned officers.

O.C.C. Skills:

Computer Operation (+15%)
Creative Writing (+15%)
Electronic Countermeasures (+10%)
Intelligence (+12%)
Land Navigation (+16%)
Language: Demongogian (Special, +20%)
Language Native: American at 88%.
Literacy Native Language: American at 90%.
Math: Basic (+20%)
Photography (+20%)
Pilot: Hovercycle (+15%)
Prowl (+10%)
Radio: Basic (+20%)
Research (+10%)
Surveillance (+10%)
T.V./Video (+25%)
W.P. Energy Rifle
W.P.: One of choice.
Hand to Hand: Basic; can be changed to Expert at the cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill, or Martial Arts for the cost of two.

O.C.C. Related Skills – or – Advanced Training (pick one): Since the Coalition War Campaign and the Siege on Tolkeen, the CS Army has established military schools that offer focused and specialized combat training.

Instead of the character taking the traditional O.C.C. Related Skills, he or she may opt to take **Advanced Training (AT)**. To do so, the character trades away *O.C.C. Related Skills and Secondary Skills* in favor of special training and bonuses in TWO areas of *Advanced Training* with a *third AT option* in the future. These are in addition to the Field Intelligence AT, above.

If **Advanced Training is chosen,** make note of Standard Equipment, Money and Cybernetics, below, but do NOT select *O.C.C. Related Skills* or *Secondary Skills.* Instead, go to the **Advanced Training section** of this sourcebook and select two AT (Advanced Training) programs. AT provides a soldier with highly focused, specialized areas of training, abilities and bonuses. He or she may not be as versatile as a character who takes O.C.C. Related and Secondary Skills, but is often more proficient and specialized in one or more areas of military expertise. *CS Officer, Nonhuman Studies (D-Bee Hunter), Spycraft, Stalking, Stealth* and *Survival* are most common for the Combat Courier O.C.C.

If **O.C.C. Related Skills** are desired, make your selection from the Skill Categories below, as usual. The advantage of O.C.C. Related Skills is the player can create a warrior with exactly the skills he may desire, often giving the character a broader range of knowledge, and probably more skills. When done selecting O.C.C. Related Skills, go on to select Secondary Skills.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select five skills to start, plus select one additional skill at levels 3, 6, 9 and 12. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

O.C.C. Related Skills (not applicable if AT is selected):
Communications: Any (+10%).
Cowboy: None.
Domestic: Any (+5%).
Electrical: Basic only (+5%).
Espionage: Any (+5%), except Sniper.
Horsemanship: General only.
Mechanical: Automotive and Basic only.
Medical: First Aid and Paramedic only (Paramedic costs two skill selections).
Military: Camouflage, Military Etiquette, and Naval History only.
Physical: Any, except Acrobatics and Wrestling.
Pilot: Any, except Flight System Combat, Jet Aircraft, Jump Bike Combat, Jet Fighters, Tanks & APCs, Warships & Patrol Boats, and Robots/Power Armor.
Pilot Related: Any.
Rogue: Any.
Science: Mathematics and Astronomy only (+10%).
Technical: Any (+10%).
W.P.: Any.
Wilderness: Wilderness Survival (+5%) only.

Secondary Skills (not applicable if AT is selected): The character also gets to select one Secondary Skill at levels 1, 2, 5, 9 and 13, from the Secondary Skill list in **Rifts® Ultimate Edition.** These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get any bonuses other than the bonus for a high I.Q. All start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: CA-3 Light Coalition "Dead Boy" body armor with a special helmet camera, choice of energy rifle and energy side arm, four extra E-Clips for each, survival knife, silver-plated knife or short sword, two canteens, utility belt with many pockets, backpack, surveillance pack, binoculars with passive nightvision, PC-3000 handheld computer, two (small, digital) handheld video cameras with editing capabilities, portable language translator, PDD audio recorder and external hard drive for storing and editing video and audio footage, with enough storage for 336 hours (14 days) of continuous video, plus each camera can store 48 hours of video on separate disks the size of a thumbnail; has 16 additional disks. Also provided is a Coalition dress uniform, two pairs of fatigues, and one set of professional clothes tailored for public appearances.

Money: The character gets a roof over his head, food, clothing, and all other basics provided free as part of his pay, as well as access to military facilities. His monthly salary starts at 1,400 credits, plus combat pay. Starts off with 1D6x1000 credits. All Coalition Combat Couriers begin at the rank of Lieutenant for commissioned officers and Sergeant for non-commissioned officers.

Cybernetics: No obvious cybernetic enhancements that could change their looks, but all Combat Couriers do have the following: *Gyro-Compass, Clock Calendar, Universal Headjack and Ear Implant, Radio Ear (basic)*, and the new *CC-2020 Cybernetic Eye* (described above). The CC-2020 is a lifelike camera eye capable of storing 2,400 still photographs plus 15 minutes of video (it does not have transmission capabilities unless built into a partial cyborg). Via the headjack, images and video from the CC-2020 Cybernetic Eye can be downloaded to a portable computer, portable video camera, an external hard drive and similar devices.

Death Knight

Coalition Army Demon Slayer O.C.C.

By Kevin Siembieda, inspired by Charles Walton II

Demon Slayers and various types of demon and monster hunter training have existed in the Coalition Army, Psi-Battalion, and ISS/NT-SET for decades. They are an absolute necessity to safeguard any Coalition city, but have been kept secret and under wraps; primarily the jurisdiction of *Psi-Battalion* and the *ISS/NTSET*.

During the Coalition's war on Tolkeen, special units of "demon slayers" became a much larger part of the regular army. A direct response to Tolkeen's sorcerers unleashing the ancient Daemonix, Brodkil and other demons and monsters against CS forces. However, even during the Tolkeen War there was no official designated demon slayer unit or O.C.C. – until now. With the advent of the Minion War, the Coalition Military has made public the establishment of a Demon Hunter school (which has quietly existed for decades prior, but has undergone dramatic expansion in the last three years) and the **Death Knight Demon Slayer**.

While other O.C.C.s such as Juicers, Psi-Stalkers, Dog Boys, NTSET Protectors and psychics can all become adept at fighting demons – some of them literally born to the task – the **Death Knight** is the new, official and very public face of the Coalition's war on the demonic invaders. Their answer to the Minion War, the Death Knight is a menacing and powerful figure clad in an ominous-looking special suit of power armor.

This warrior is every bit "the knight," complete with a massive, bladed shield and a concealed, large Vibro-Sword. It is the Coalition's intention to make the Death Knight as iconic (and feared by demons) as the SAMAS or Dead Boy armor of the Coalition Army. An armored division of demon slaying experts trained to battle demons with weapons and armor designed for that express purpose. *Juicers, Psi-Stalkers, Dog Boys, Combat Cyborgs* and *psychics* may be recruited for the job of demon slayers, and may be every bit as capable as the Knights, but it is the Death Knights who stand front and center, and take lead in the Minion War. They are especially adept at killing Greater Demons/Deevils and armed with heavy weapons, silver weapons, and power armor capable of going toe to toe with these demonic juggernauts in individual combat and in pairs.

There is no secrecy about the Death Knights. They are the poster child of the Coalition Army's stance in the Minion War, and are being trained and unleashed by the tens of thousands. Half are green recruits filled with high ideals and courage, but the rest are more pragmatic and seasoned veterans recruited from NTSET, Psi-Battalion and past wars and conflicts against mages and demons. All officers in the Death Knight division have real world experience, and keep an eye out for the new recruits. As do experienced Dog Boys, Psi-Stalkers and others who may be part of their support team or mixed combat squad. They may go into combat as a squad (6-10) of all Death Knights, or a mixed squad with 1-4 Death Knights and 6-8 other O.C.C.s with demon hunting experience or capabilities, like Dog Boys, Psi-Stalkers, Juicers, Combat Cyborgs, SAMAS, psychics and others.

The creation and public display of Death Knights is done in part to quiet the fears of CS citizens. The CS Army brass want people to know that when they see a Death Knight they are in good hands and can feel safe; whether it is true or not. The other reason is to give notice to the Minions of Hell that the CS forces as not afraid and are prepared to take them on. Using one of the demons' own tactics, the Death Knight Demon Slayer is designed to strike fear in the hearts of demonkind. The Death Knight armor is exclusive to this branch of the Coalition Army/O.C.C. and given only to authorized Death Knight Demon Slayers.

Recruits need to be in prime physical condition and show certain aptitudes like patience and problem solving skills, and no hesitation to slay demons. Teamwork is also essential as small teams of Death Knights or mixed groups of combatants usually take on one or more demons/Deevils at a time. Group attacks on the larger, supernatural enemy have proven to be extremely effective. These swarming, tag-team tactics don't always sit well with some soldiers, but they are essential against supernatural opponents, Greater Demons/Deevils in particular. Besides, there is no arguing about the positive results of double-teaming the enemy, and nothing is fair in warfare, especially against supernatural evil. Thus, it is not uncommon to see a Death Knight Demon Slayer or two, in a squad with a couple of Juicers, a Combat Cyborg (or two), a Psi-Stalker (or two) and/or a Dog Boy (or two); or pair, trio or quartet of Death Knights and an equal number of power armor troops (SAMAS and others) or Combat Cyborgs, or psychics.

Demon Slayer O.C.C. Special Abilities:

1. Demon Hunting Advanced Training: The full course, with full bonuses. These guys are experts on demons, their habits, strengths, weaknesses, strategies and tactics, etc. See page 85 for complete details about this AT, but includes a bonus of +1 attack per melee when facing any *supernatural opponent*; does not apply to mortals and other types of enemies.

2. Death Knight O.C.C. Bonuses: The following bonuses are all *in addition* to those gained from the Demon Hunter AT.

Attributes: +1 to M.A. and +1D6 to P.S.

Hit Points: +2D6 Hit Points!

Combat Bonuses: +1 on initiative when battling the supernatural at levels 2, 5, 8 and 11, and +1 to strike and dodge.

Saving Throw Bonuses: +1 to save vs Horror Factor at levels 2, 4, 7, 9, 12 and 15, +1 to save vs possession and mind control, +2 to save vs insanity, +10% to save vs coma and death. **Note:** High M.E. and P.E. attributes offer additional saving throw bonuses vs mind control, psionic attacks and magic.

Skill Bonuses:

+10% for a successful Exorcism when a Demon Slayer assists with the Exorcism (psionic or magic).

+10% to Tracking skill when following the trail of Brodkil, Thornhead, sub-demons and demons of Hades, Host and Deevils of Dyval, and their monstrous war steeds and war machines.

+10% to Intelligence skill (if applicable) when trying to identify key personnel, leaders and evidence of demonic beings operating in the area. Knows their flags, banners, symbology, and other evidence that mark the presence of supernatural evil.

Death Knight Demon Slayer O.C.C. Stats:

Alignment: Any.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 13, M.E. 14, P.E. 15 or higher.

Starting Rank: Lieutenant for commissioned officers, and sergeant for non-commissioned officers (the majority).

O.C.C. Skills:

Land Navigation (+6%)
Language: Demongogian (Special, +20%)
Language Native: American at 88%.
Lore: Demons & Monsters (+20%)
Mathematics: Basic (+20%)
Optic Systems (+15%)
Pilot: Robots & Power Armor (+15%)
Pilot: Robot Combat Elite: Death Knight Power Armor
Prowl (+10%)
Radio: Basic (+20%)
Running
Tracking (people +10%, to track demonkind +20%)
W.P. Heavy M.D. Weapons
W.P. Shield
W.P. Sword
Hand to Hand: Martial Arts or Commando, pick one!

O.C.C. Related Skills: Not applicable, see Advanced Training, below.

Advanced Training: In the case of the Death Knight, instead of the demon slayer getting the traditional O.C.C. Related and Secondary Skills, he or she selects TWO **Advanced Training (AT)** programs. This eliminates all *O.C.C. Related Skills and Secondary Skills* in favor of special training. A *third AT option* is available in the future at or after level five. These two AT packages are in addition to the Demon Hunter AT provided under Special O.C.C. Abilities, above.

Close Quarters Combat, Field Intelligence, Marksmanship, CS Martial Expert, Stalking and Stealth are among the most frequently selected AT programs by Death Knights, but any can be chosen.

Standard Equipment: Death Knight power armor with Skull Shield and Skull Vibro-Sword, particle beam rifle, 10mm automatic pistol with four extra ammo-clips containing silver bullets, CA-3 Light Coalition "Dead Boy" body armor with a special psi-blocker helmet (optional), choice of an extra energy side arm and four extra E-Clips, silver-plated knife (1D6 S.D.C. but does M.D. to certain supernatural beings), dagger made of bone (1D6 S.D.C. but does M.D. to certain supernatural beings; the bone is rumored to be made from the bone of demons, but is really probably made from large M.D.C. monsters/animals), standard Vibro-Knife (1D6 M.D.), canteen, utility belt with many pockets, backpack, 1D4+2 wooden stakes (1D6 S.D.C.), wooden cross (the size of stapler), small silver cross worn around neck with dog tags under the armor, pocket mirror, and some person items. Also provided is a Coalition dress uniform and three pairs of fatigue. See *Death Knight Power Armor*, below.

Money: The character gets a roof over his head, food, clothing, and all other basics provided free as part of his pay, as well as access to military facilities. His monthly salary starts at 1800 credits, plus combat pay. Starts off with 1D6x1000 credits. All Demon Slayers begin at the rank of Lieutenant for commissioned officers and Sergeant for non-commissioned officers.

Cybernetics: None to start, though many go on to get one or more of the following: *Gyro-Compass, Clock Calendar, Universal Headjack and Ear Implant,* and *Radio Ear (basic).*

CS Death Knight Power Armor

By Kevin Siembieda and Charles Walton II

If there was one power armor that the CS was anxious to unveil, it was the **Death Knight**. According to one popular rumor, the engineers wanted to create a visage of power and confidence that would make Death itself tremble in fear.

From the start, the Death Knight "Slayer" armor, as it has been dubbed, needed to be as much a symbol of human defiance and hope, and as an effective and deadly Coalition power armor. As a result, the design team combined the Coalition States' skull/death's head motif with the imagery of a knight in shining, black armor. A suit of armor designed to evoke powerful, positive emotions from humans, and fear from the demonic. The symbology and mythology of the knights of old is that of noble heroes who fought and slew evil dragons and monsters, as well as the enemies of the kingdom they served. A knight protects the innocent and represents honor, nobility, fighting prowess, sacrifice and exceptional loyalty to the nation state to which he has sworn allegiance. All elements the CS wants the Death Knight to epitomize. Indeed, these concepts are drilled into the soldiers selected and trained to become Death Knight Demon Slayers. Leaving the Death Knight armor the final element to make these warriors feel like true heroes of humanity. Coalition Death Knights walk out of training convinced they embody the virtues of new age knights.

If the Death Knight was to be the embodiment of defiance, power, hope and virtue, the power armor would play an important part in the symbology, but also had to deliver on the battlefield. The engineers nailed it. Though impressive and fierce looking, the power armor designers never lost sight of functionality. From top to bottom, the Death Knight power armor is designed for fighting and slaying demons and monsters.

The PA-DK-500 Death Knight "Slayer" is well armored, with additional external protection where the soldier inside needs it most, in the shoulders and around the neck and head. A heavy cowl protects the back and side of the pilot's head and neck while allowing complete freedom of movement and good visual acuity. The silver-plated spikes in the shoulders are not just ornamentation or extra protection, but armor piercing (i.e. demon hide piercing) mini-missiles that first impale the demon, doing stabbing projectile damage before exploding to do more damage! Mounted on the back are the main thrusters of a Northern Gun designed *jump jet system.* Mounted over it are additional *mini-missiles* for taking down demonic warlords and Greater Demons/Deevils fast. Built into each launcher is a camera that records and feeds data to the HUD in the pilot's helmet and helps to alert him to incoming attacks; 180 degree arc of vision.

The primary weapon is a particle beam rifle for heavy-hitting power suitable for combating Greater Demons/Deevils, but there are a also a pair of light, short-range lasers, a side arm, and a big, nasty silver-plated Vibro-Sword as additional armaments. Even the massive "skull shield" is a deadly weapon, with silver-plated blades along its edges, making it capable of slashing and stabbing as well as blunt strikes, body blocks, pushing and protection.

Perhaps one of the cleverest design elements, borrowed from Northern Gun's combat playbook, is the incorporation of a hover *jump-jet system.* Greater Demons/Deevils as well as the Gargoyle sub-demons and some Netherbeasts and War Steeds are gigantic. For a normal six foot (1.8 m) human to effectively battle a 10-25 foot (3 to 7.6 m) demon in melee combat, he needs to be able to leap

or fly. And that's exactly what the jump-jet system offers, the ability to perform leaps and hovering attacks to strike at the monster's head, neck, chest and shoulders, as well as to dodge out of the way, and leap over and past Lesser Minions to get to demonic leaders and other strategic targets. The leaping and hovering style of attack gives the Death Knights something of a hornet or hummingbird appearance in movement, especially when locked in hand to hand combat. Here again the weapon shield can be used to great effect, blocking claw strikes, bites, breath attacks and energy blasts. In turn, the Death Knight can retaliate with clobbering blows from the shield or slashing strikes from the shield's silver blades, followed by attacks with the other arm, be it via particle beam rifle or Vibro-Sword. The pilot can leap into the air, hover and attack or leap onto the back or shoulders of the demon to strike at its head and chest. Like Juicers, the Death Knights can charge in, leap, strike, and then leap or jet away to avoid the monster's retaliatory attacks. In fact, the Death Knight power armor is so fast and agile, the pilots come close to keeping up with Juicers and Combat Cyborgs, and make a good team when partnered with them.

The jump-jet system also makes the Death Knight well suited for combat in Xiticix hives and urban environments to engage in street combat, riot control, rescue missions, prison breaks, and commando raids. The same leaping abilities enable the Death Knight to leap from rooftop to rooftop, rocket up and down elevator shafts and access tunnels, go up or down a flight of stairs in a single bound, leap through windows from outside in, and dive out of windows and hover down to the ground. On the street, the Death Knight can run, leap and bounce off *the sides of buildings* and window ledges, dodge by leaping up or through a window, leap over roadblocks and bound over debris, vehicles, and burned out giant robots. The Death Knight can run upright like a humanoid and use its large shield to body block enemies, push back rioters, and plow through enemy lines. Only the Northern Gun *Mantis, Lynx* and *Cougar* are more nimble.

Death Knight "Slayer" Power Armor

Model Type: PA-DK-500
Class: Strategic Armor Demon Slayer Assault Suit.
Crew: One.

M.D.C. by Location:

** Head – 90
Slayer Particle Beam Rifle (1, handheld) – 50
* Forearm Lasers (2, light, concealed) – 15 each
* Shoulder Demonbuster Mini-Missiles (4 per arm) – 20 each missile
* Back Mini-Missile Launchers (2) – 70 each
Skull Shield (1, large) – 225
* Skull Vibro-Sword (1, large) – 100
Shoulder Plates (2) – 120 each
* Arms (2) – 90 each
* Hands (2) – 40 each
* UEL Cable, Reinforced – 12
Legs (2) – 170 each
* Leg Thrusters (4; two per lower leg) – 25 each
Back-Mounted Vertical Thrusters (2) – 70 each
*** Main Body – 250

* A single asterisk indicates a small or difficult target to hit. They can only be struck when the attacker makes a "Called Shot," and even then the attacker is -4 to strike.

Destroying the head/helmet eliminates all forms of optical and sensory enhancement, leaving the pilot to rely on his own human senses without any of the bonuses granted to him by the Power Armor Combat skill. If the helmet is destroyed underwater, the wearer suffers from exposure to deep sea pressure at depths greater than 220 feet (67 m), and takes 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage per melee round and all bonuses are reduced by half.

Destroying one thruster reduces leaping speed and distance by 30%. Destroy both and speed and distance are reduced by 60% and underwater rocket speed is eliminated; must physically swim.

** The head is a small target and difficult to hit due to the additional, thick cowl that protects it from behind and on the sides. To hit the head from behind, that part of the cowl would have to be depleted first (90 M.D.C.). Because the head rests inside the cowl, attackers need to make a "Called Shot," and are -6 to strike.

*** Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body shuts the power armor down completely, rendering it useless.

Speed:

Running: 50 mph (80 mph) running at top speed. The act of running at top speed tires out the operator, but at 25% of the usual fatigue rate thanks to the augmentation of the robot exoskeleton. However, running at 35 mph (56 km) or less, the operator tires at only 10% of the usual rate. Also see **Power Jumping Travel**, below.

Leaping: A leap unassisted by any thrusters can reach 15 feet (4.6 m) straight up or across; increase by 50% with a running start.

A leap assisted by the leg thrusters only, is limited to 20 feet (6.1 m) high or across; increase by 50% with a running start (30 feet/9.1 m). The main thrusters on the back must be engaged for greater height. See VTOL Leaps Upward for details.

VTOL Leaps Upward: The main thrusters on the back are designed for straight up and down or slightly angled leaps. The leg thrusters provide additional control and lift, especially when hovering.

A full jet thruster assisted leap from a stationary position or a running start can propel the Death Knight power armor upward 200 feet (61 m); straight up or at a slight angle. To arrange a more sharply angled or horizontal leap, the wearer must engage the back-mounted main thrusters *after* he has leaped at the desired angle or prone position, a la Superman. Once hurling upward or forward, the Death Knight cannot easily stop or change direction. Greater height can be attained by bouncing off neighboring buildings and structures, or even other giant demons, rather like a ricocheting pinball or leaping grasshopper. A leap straight up or at a slight angle or bouncing off other structures can be used to leap up onto rooftops, on top of vehicles or to snare low-flying opponents.

Power Jumping Travel: 90 mph (144 km). The integrated jet thrusters with VTOL capabilities give the Death Knight good speed and versatility.

Also known as "jet propelled running," power jumping travel requires the power armor pilot to run, jump (soaring upward and forward), land, and repeat. During high-speed travel, the height of the leap is controlled by the pilot and generally ranges between 20-50 feet (6.1 to 15.2 m). By leaping, landing, and continuing to run several yards/meters and power jumping again – like a Jackrabbit – the Death Knight can maintain a good ground speed

of 50 mph (80 km), even through light forest and across uneven ground. Reduce speed by 50% when traveling through dense vegetation, deep mud or snow, very rocky or unstable ground, vertical inclines and similar hazardous and extreme terrain. This speed can be maintained for hours; until the power armor pilot needs to stop and rest.

Directional control by the pilot is only fair, as once the wearer of the Death Knight power armor commits to a leap, it is difficult to stop or change trajectory without considerable acrobatic twisting, turning and tumbling.

The only possible downside to Power Jumping Travel is the noise the power armor makes crashing through the underbrush like a lumbering bear. There is no way around it. Running and leaping through trees and underbrush makes a lot of noise, alerting predators and the enemy to the character's location and direction of travel. It also reduces the pilot's vision and awareness. (**Penalties:** -3 on initiative, -3 on Perception Rolls, and -1 to strike, parry and dodge due to obscured vision, noise and rate of travel. **Note:** This penalty does NOT apply to leaping down open streets, across rooftops or bouncing off of buildings.) Even just running across open ground, the power armor sounds like the thundering hooves of one or more horses. Just like anyone else, to be stealthy, the wearer of Death Knight power armor must move slowly and deliberately to be quiet.

Cat-Like Landings from Great Heights: The thruster jet system is able to slow the wearer's descent from considerable heights of up to 800 feet (244 m) and land on its feet like a cat. Anyone carried in the suit's arms also lands safely and unharmed, and if the arms are empty, other than its particle beam rifle and shield, the Death Knight can hit the ground running or leaping.

Drops from heights greater than 800 feet up to 1,200 feet (244 to 366 m) are trickier. The power armor is likely to survive the landing but may take damage. **Roll 1D20** to determine the success of the landing. **On a roll of 1-10** the suit hits the ground hard, takes 1D4x10 M.D. and the operator loses 1D4 melee actions/attacks before he is back up on his feet. **On a roll of 11-20** the pilot sticks the landing, and can continue to move/jump/run without damage or delay.

Drops from greater heights are not possible without potentially life-threatening damage: 3D4x10 M.D. to the power armor, 1D4x10 S.D.C./Hit Point damage to the wearer inside the armor, and the operator is stunned for 1D4 melee rounds before he recovers from the fall and is able to take action again.

Flying: Not possible. The Death Knight is a running and leaping machine, it is not built for flight and cannot fly. It can, however, leap into the air and hover above ground for 1D4 melee rounds (15-60 seconds) before the suit becomes wobbly and drifts down to the ground. This gives the Death Knight the ability to gain a height advantage (30 feet/9.1 m above ground) and be able to maintain a hovering position to get a better shot at giants, ground troops and low fliers for 1D4 melee rounds before needing to drop to the ground and leap back into action or make other moves. While hovering in the air, the Death Knight can turn and aim in all directions, upward, downward, sideways, etc. All bonuses to parry and dodge are HALF while in hover mode. The Death Knight is most difficult to hit while in motion, not hovering stationary. Note that while the Death Knight can leap as high as 200 feet (61 m), it cannot stop and hover at such heights.

Water: The Death Knight is not designed for use in the water and cannot swim. However, it can travel underwater using its jet thrusters at 10 mph (16 km/8.6 knots) or walk along the bottom at 5 mph (8 km/4.3 knots). Maximum depth is 800 feet (244 m). Leaping underwater is not possible.

Special Bonuses of the Death Knight Power Armor: +1 on initiative, +1 to strike when leaping with the purpose of hitting or ramming an opponent with the shield or striking with the sword or shield, +2 to dodge when running or involved in Power Jumping, and +1 to roll with impact.

Statistical Data:

Height: Man-sized at 6-7.6 feet (1.8 to 2.3 m).

Width: 3 feet (0.9 m) from shoulder to shoulder. 4.6 feet (1.4 m) with the shield attached.

Length: 3 feet (0.9 m).

Weight: 604 lbs (272 kg). The shield alone weighs 90 pounds (40.5 kg).

Physical Strength: Robot P.S. of 30.

Cargo: None. Belts with pouches that may be worn at the waist.

Power System: Nuclear; average energy life is 15 years.

Cost: Not available on the open market; exclusive to the CS.

Weapon Systems:

1. **C-60 Heavy Particle Beam Rifle with UEL with Reinforced Cable (1):** For more heavy-hitting power, the primary weapon is a heavy particle beam rifle. Particle beam weapons are not often deployed due to their limited range, and the massive amount of energy required to power them. Particle beam weapons burn through E-Clips and even hip or backpack batteries in no time. The Death Knight armor is different, because it is the first Coalition Army power armor to utilize Northern Gun's breakthrough UEL technology – a cable that links directly to the power armor's nuclear power supply, giving the weapon an unlimited payload! Point and shoot.

   If there is a disadvantage, it is the weapon's comparatively short range. However, since the Minions of Hell prefer close combat, the range of the weapon is more than sufficient.

   Primary Purpose: Demon Slayer and Anti-Monsters.

   Secondary Purpose: Anti-Personnel and Anti-Power Armor.

   Range: 1,200 feet (366 m).

   Mega-Damage: 1D6x10 M.D. per single blast.

   Rate of Fire: Each blast counts as one melee attack.

   Payload: Effectively unlimited.

2. **Forearm Light Lasers (2):** Each forearm contains a small, concealed, short-range laser intended as a light backup weapon and cutting tool. Point and shoot.

   Primary Purpose: Assault and Anti-Personnel.

   Secondary Purpose: Cutting Tool.

   Range: 1,000 feet (305 m).

   Mega-Damage: 1D6 M.D. per blast, or 2D6 M.D. per double blast from both arms fired simultaneously at the same target.

   Rate of Fire: Each single or dual blast counts as one melee attack.

   Payload: Effectively unlimited.

3. **Side Arm (1):** Each Death Knight carries a personal side arm/pistol into combat. This may be an energy pistol such as the C-18 Laser Pistol, an ion blaster or "unconventional" weapon (NG, Wilk's, Triax, etc.), however, in most instances it is a 10 mm automatic pistol that fires silver-plated S.D.C. rounds, which inflict M.D. to those supernatural beings vulnerable to silver. One to four additional 15 round ammo clips are usually carried on the Death Knight's person. Slug-shooting pistols are also handy in close combat and against S.D.C. opponents.

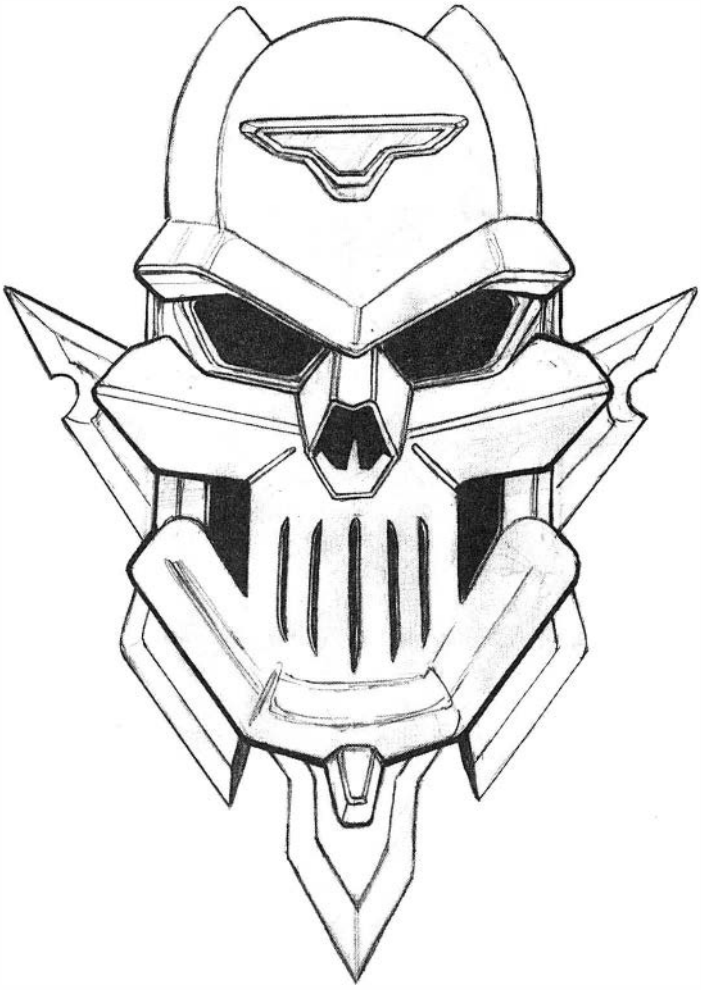
CA-115 S.D.C. 10mm Automatic Pistol Stats:
Primary Purpose: Anti-Supernatural.
Secondary Purpose: Assault and Self-Defense.
Range: 400 feet (122 m).
Damage: Fires conventional or silver-plated S.D.C. bullets. Each does 5D6 S.D.C./M.D. per single bullet. Controlled burst of three rounds does 1D6x10 S.D.C./M.D. A burst of six rounds inflicts 2D4x10 S.D.C./M.D. (**Note:** The more rounds fired in a burst the less accurate and the fewer number of rounds that hit, unless at point-blank range.) Remember, silver-plated bullets inflict the S.D.C. equivalent of M.D. to demons and supernatural beings vulnerable to silver. In some cases, damage may be double or triple, depending on the particular monster. On the other hand, if the creature is NOT vulnerable to silver, the bullets bounce off without harm to an M.D.C. creature or armor.
Rate of Fire: Each single shot or burst counts as one melee attack.
Payload: 15 rounds per clip is standard.

5. **CDK-8 Demonbuster Mini-Missiles (8; four per shoulder):** Silver-plated, spiked armor-piercing heavy explosive mini-missiles (4) – 2 on each shoulder. Nicknamed "Monster Busters." Their warheads are engineered and designed with alloy armor to take a lot of punishment and to still stay intact and not detonate until activated by the Death Knight power armor. Once activated they will launch and slam deep into a supernatural target (heavy armored or not). The Demonbusters are specifically designed for deep penetration before direct focus detonation. Takes two melee actions (8 seconds) to lock onto a target and activate the missile(s), launch and to hit and penetrate the tough hide of demons; 1D4 seconds (one melee action) delayed detonation. Demonbuster mini-missiles are reserved for dealing the grievous damage to the most formidable targets in the battlefield, ideally the largest monsters, demonic leaders, Demon Lords, and so on.

Primary Purpose: Demon Slayer.
Secondary Purpose: Anti-Armor, Anti-Aircraft, Anti-Missiles and Assault.
Range: One mile (1.6 km).
Mega-Damage (standard issue): Silver-plated, armor piercing mini-missiles that inflict 1D4x10 M.D. per missile against normal targets and 1D6x10 M.D. per missile to creatures vulnerable to silver (double or triple damage if the vulnerability to silver is extreme). Any type of mini-missile may be substituted if the CDK-8 Demonbusters are not available.
Rate of Fire: One at a time or in volleys of 2 or 4.
Payload: 8 total, four per each back launcher. Can be reloaded by hand if extra mini-missiles are brought along. It takes one melee round to reload four mini-missiles; two melee rounds to reload both launchers.

6. **CDK-44 Mini-Missile Launchers (2, back):** A little something to give the Death Knight a bit of explosive power. Located behind the shoulders.

Primary Purpose: Demon Slayer.
Secondary Purpose: Anti-Armor, Anti-Aircraft, Anti-Missiles and Assault.
Range: One mile (1.6 km).
Mega-Damage: Armor Piercing (1D4x10 M.D.) or High Explosive (5D6 M.D.), but any type can be used. May be substituted with Northern Gun HEX/anti-supernatural rounds.
Rate of Fire: One at a time or in volleys of 2 or 4.
Payload: 8 total, four per each back launcher. Can be reloaded by hand if extra mini-missiles are brought along. It takes one melee round to reload four mini-missiles; two melee rounds to reload both launchers.



7. **Heavy Skull Shield (1):** A large, heavy, riot shield with bladed edges for slashing and stabbing, plus a large, silver-plated Vibro-Sword sheathed behind the shield for close quarters melee combat. The shield is designed to offer additional protection, cover and hitting power as well as a psychological weapon to evoke fear and spit in the face of the demon hordes.

   The massive shield is emblazoned with a large CS death's head, and has many applications in combat. The Death Knight can use the weapon like a riot shield to smash into the enemy and push his way through throngs of combatants, block and parry incoming attacks, and it is large enough to provide cover from magic energy bolts and weapon blasts, bursts of flame, incoming mini-missile salvos, and other attacks. When charging forward, the shield can be used to slam into the enemy as well as for running or leaping body blocks and ramming attacks. The edges of the lower half of the shield are sharpened, silver-plated blades, and the bottom ends in a wide, pointed blade. This gives the Death Knight the option to slash and stab with his shield and even perform a downward leap with a two-handed power stabbing or chopping attack (power strikes do double damage). Such attacks can plunge the shovel-like blade in the chin of the death's head shield into the body of large demons or to sever limbs, or chop through rope, cable and barbed wire, or the chains of slaves. The large blade at the

bottom, in the chin of the Death's Head, is ideal for chopping attacks, and can also be stabbed into the ground to provide cover for the Death Knight or other troops or civilians.

The Skull battle shield is made of an advanced dual alloy composition that makes it durable and yet light enough to be wielded with ease by a Death Knight. To assist with overall balance, the shield contains an advanced gyro-stabilizer system that connects to the Death Knight Power Armor with a mounting on the forearm and back. This proprietary interface enables the Death Knight to effectively run, maneuver through heavy weapons fire and intense combat, without having to be distracted by compensating for a shield and its weight or position on his body. The internal gyro-stabilizers and the swivel interface on the power armor's elbow help keep the battle shield in an upright position to provide maximum protection.

The stabilizer settings can be switched from "auto" to "mirror" which literally mirrors the position of the Power Armor's spine. Or it can be switched to the "manual" setting where the pilot can position the shield as he sees fit. The "lock" setting simply secures the shield in a stationary, fixed placement. To detach the battle shield, the pilot simply switches the shield to "unlock" and the interface disconnects (one melee action), allowing the Death Knight to use the Skull Shield in combat or defense (strike, parry, disarm, etc.). Reconnecting takes a bit longer (2 melee actions) for the shield to interface and calibrate to the Death Knight's power armor gyro stabilizer. It is because of the sophisticated gyro interface between the power armor and the battle shield, that the shield is labeled as special equipment designed only for the CS Death Knight Demon Slayer. All knights go through rigorous training and drill practice to master this weapon.

Primary Purpose: Close Combat.

Secondary Purpose: Defense and Riot Control.

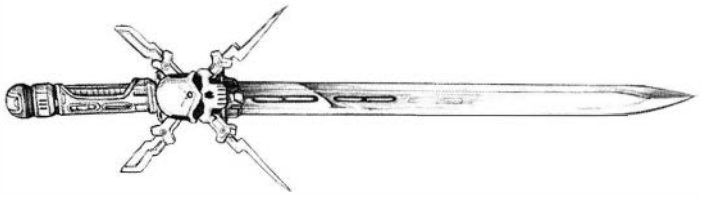
Range: Melee combat.

Mega-Damage: 2D6 M.D. on a full strength blunt attack (includes Robotic P.S.); 3D6+3 M.D. from a power punch or charging body slam, but counts as two melee attacks.

Shield Blade Slash: 2D6 M.D.

Shield Blade Stab: 2D6+3 M.D. or 4D6+6 from a stabbing power punch or power/running body slam with the blade end of the shield extended outward, but counts as two melee attacks. This is often a two-handed attack.

Skull Shield Special Feature: Auto-Block: When set to Auto-Block, the shield interface is able to utilize the dual sensor clusters mounted behind each shoulder to identify and track thermal and motion within a 20 foot (6.1 m) radius. The computer system within the Skull Shield and gyro-system then calculates and swivels to block incoming objects or physical blows (+2 to parry up to 1D4 attacks per melee round from the shield side without the soldier taking any direct action himself). This can include rocks, shrapnel, claws, tails, fluid or energy coming at the Death Knight on the side that the shield is mounted. Magical energy that does not register any heat or create any physical form or motion does not register and is not blocked. **Note:** An Auto-Block does NOT use up an attack or action of the Death Knight. This helps a Death Knight charge through the thick of a battlefield and enemy fire without having to worry about attacks from the shield side. When the shield is activated in the Auto-Block mode setting, it can rotate 180 degrees on the elbow of the Death Knight to block incoming attacks facing the shield. All other directional incoming attacks should be treated as normal. Any attack that is blocked does NO damage to the shield or power armor.



8. Heavy Skull Sword (1; shield): The Death Knight can pull out and wield the Vibro-Blade sword as needed. It is particularly handy for engaging demons in melee combat and when the demon slayer has exhausted all his other weapons. The Skull Sword is so well-protected and out of harm's way inside the shield, that most opponents do not realize it is even present until the Coalition Death Knight draws it from the housing. Of course the inclusion of a sword is deliberate to complete the iconic imagery of "the knight."

Held in a scabbard on the back of the shield is a large, silver-plated Vibro-Sword the Death Knight can draw for melee combat. The blade is especially handy when the mini-missiles are gone and the power cord to the particle beam rifle has been cut. Armed with the shield and Vibro-Sword, the Death Knight can continue to engage demons and Deevils in melee combat. And demons/Deevils love melee combat.

Primary Purpose: Close Combat.

Secondary Purpose: Defense and Riot Control.

Range: Melee combat.

Mega-Damage: 3D6 M.D. on a full strength attack (includes Robotic P.S.); 6D6 M.D. from a power punch or charging body slam, but both count as two melee attacks.

9. Skull Sword Throwing Daggers (2): The hilt of the Skull Sword looks like the classic Coalition Army skull and lightning bolts, but the lightning bolts are silver-plated daggers that can be slid out and used as throwing knives or blades for combat.

Primary Purpose: Close Combat.

Secondary Purpose: Defense.

Range: 100 feet (30.5 m) and takes into consideration the Robotic P.S. of the power armor.

Mega-Damage: Silver-plated throwing blades inflict 1D6 S.D.C. to mortals, but does 1D6 M.D. to certain supernatural beings.

10. Silver-Plated Knuckle Spikes: Four small, silver-plated spikes line the back of the Death Knight power armor's hand.

Primary Purpose: Close Combat.

Secondary Purpose: Defense.

Range: Melee combat.

Mega-Damage: A normal punch for a Robot P.S. of 30 is 1D6 M.D. The silver-plated knuckle spikes add 1D4 M.D. to creatures vulnerable to silver, but only 1D4 S.D.C. damage to other opponents.

11. Handheld Weapons & UEL: The wearer of Death Knight armor can use any available handheld weapons. This may be a necessity if the UEL cable is severed.

UEL – Universal Energy Link (2, one in each forearm): The Death Knight has one Universal Energy Link concealed inside an armored compartment in each forearm. When needed, a plate opens and extends enough for the E-Clip connector of the UEL and cable to be removed and plugged into any equip-

ment or weapon that takes an E-Clip. The plate armor snaps back into place, leaving a reinforced cable running from the back of the arm to the weapon in hand. If the cable is severed, the Death Knight must resort to available E-Clips. The standard issue particle beam rifle burns through E-Clips (six blasts per clip), so the weapon may be stowed or abandoned, with the Knight relying upon his Skull Shield, Skull Vibro-Sword, lasers and other weapons, including anything that might be available on the battlefield.

12. **Hand to Hand Combat:** Rather than use a weapon, the pilot can engage in Mega-Damage hand to hand combat. See *Basic* or *Elite Ground-Based Power Armor Training* on page 351 or 352 of **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**. Damage is based on the Robotic P.S. of 30.

    Restrained Punch – 1D4 M.D.

    Full Strength Punch – 1D6 M.D.

    Power Punch – 2D6 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks.

    Kick – 2D4 M.D.

    Leap Kick – 2D8 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks.

13. **Sensors and Special Features of Note:** In addition to the standard power armor features, the Death Knight armor comes with the following.

    a) Standard Shoulder/Back Cameras (2, top of mini-missile launchers behind each shoulder): A pair of simple, low-profile, "dash-cam" style digital cameras that see whatever the pilot sees or points his weapon at. No special features beyond the ability to tape 96 hours of video and take 4,000 still photos.

    b) LED Flashlights (2): Built into the particle beam rifle; points wherever the pilot turns his gun. 500 foot (152 m) range.

    c) Nightvison Optics: Passive light amplification that allows the pilot to see in the dark as long as there is at least some ambient light. 2,000 foot (610 m) range, but is completely useless in total darkness.

CS Skelebot Specialist

By Carl Gleba and Kevin Siembieda

The Coalition Robot Specialist is not new for the Coalition Army, but it is a position that has been kept under wraps, and a role that was often given to the Military Specialist or Technical Officers. Over time, a specific set of protocols, skills and parameters were developed that made the Skelebot Specialist a separate and distinct O.C.C.

The position came into its own during the Siege on Tolkeen. Prior to that, Coalition Technical Officers and Military Specialists were responsible for deploying, repairing, and supervising squads of Skelebots. The Coalition Robot Specialist evolved from these robot wranglers to become Skelebot squad and platoon leaders. While the robots have artificial intelligence that lets them function as hunter-killers, they tend to engage enemies with very basic strategies and tactics, and lack the imagination and adaptability of humans. They win most battles through swarming numbers and raw firepower. Moreover, most CS human troops have trouble relating to these hunter-killer machines and report being rather "creeped out" by them. By adding a human leader who is not "creeped out" to command them, Skelebot units perform at a much higher level of effectiveness.

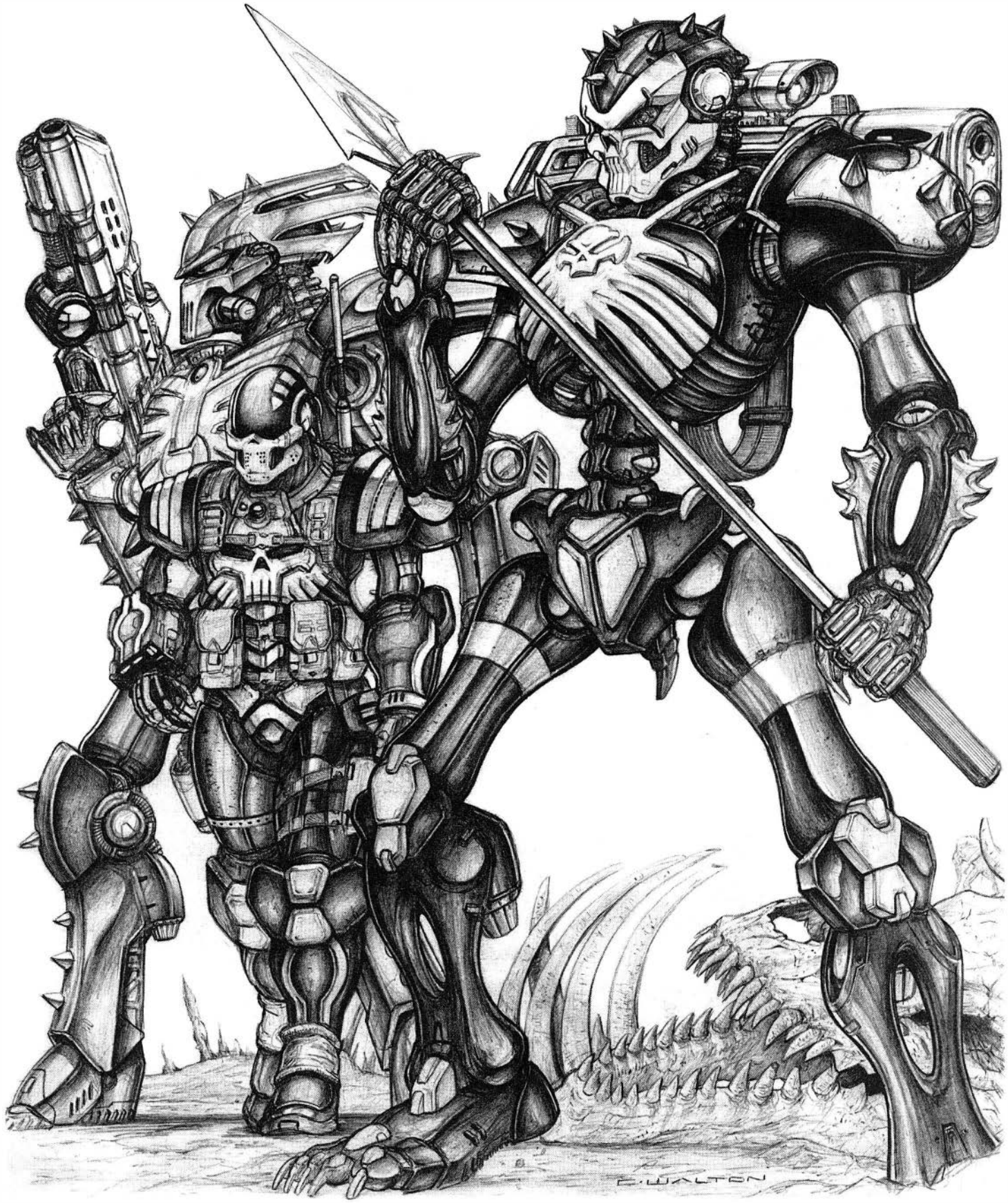
Skelebots are particularly effective against the denizens of Hell, because they cannot be scared or intimidated, cannot (generally) be possessed, nor imitated by shapechangers, and the use of A.I. driven robots limits the loss of human life. Skelebot Specialists know how to give specific commands to achieve results while keeping battlefield damage to a minimum and maximizing the robots' performance. Junior officers are given command of a small squad of Skelebots, typically 2-4, to see how well they manages their 'Bots in the field. As the Specialist increases in experience he is assigned additional Skelebots. For certain missions, extra or specialized Skelebots may be placed under his supervision and control.

Skelebot Specialists are an asset in the combat theater, but Coalition Command has recognized that these officers can excel in small squad tactics and not just large scale battles. For the first time, a Skelebot Specialist and a small number of Skelebots are being paired with small squads and Special Forces units. Skelebots and their Specialist teamed with Death Knights, Juicers, Combat Cyborgs, Dog Packs, Psi-Stalkers and psychics and demon hunting squads and platoons have proven extremely effective.

Ultimately, the idea is to use Skelebots under human command to make the robots more flexible and efficient in combat. For example, Skelebots are generally programmed to seek and kill all nonhumans, indiscriminately. Even when programmed specifically to attack demons and Deevils, the machines do not employ any significant strategies and tactics. With a human to direct them, the robots can be sent to attack specified positions and targets, such as demonic leaders or a particular demon or mage who is tearing up the troops with magic, while ignoring other, easier or more immediate targets. The end result should mean focused attacks, more victories and fewer human causalities for the Coalition Army. The use of Skelebots helps preserve human life.

As a rule, the junior Robot Specialist commands and controls his Skelebots to strike targeted enemies – for example, sending 2-4 of them to engage one supernatural enemy, with him hanging back and using a ranged weapon from a distance, or watching enemy reinforcements, while the rest of the squad or platoon engages other enemies or operations. In the role of troop support, the Skelebot Specialist and his robots may hang back to cover a flank or rear position, and charge in like the proverbial cavalry to rescue individuals on the verge of being overwhelmed by the enemy, rescue captives and pull the wounded from the battlefield. Skelebots and their human leader may also be sent on perimeter patrols, guard duty, escort duty, and all manner of operations, particularly those where stealth is not required. Skelebots may be capable automated fighting units, but are not stealthy. Skelebots are sometimes dispatched to test the enemy line and draw out enemy combatants (though demons and Deevils are getting wise to that tactic), and are frequent participants in straight-up infantry combat, sieges and assaults on fortified positions.

"Bone Jockeys," as they have been nicknamed, are expected to deploy their Skelebots with caution and care, but Skelebots are seen as expendable, and Bone Jockeys are not punished for burning through Skelebots, especially if the Specialist's actions help win a battle, achieve a vital objective or save lives. His Skelebots destroyed in the line of duty are replaced with new ones, usually in less than 24 hours; one third of that time if he is part of a large army or near a base of operation or manufacturing facility like Lone Star or Iron Heart. In addition, the Skelebot Specialist can skim 2-4 Skelebots from any group he may encounter that numbers 24 or greater.



CS Skelebot Specialist O.C.C. Special Abilities:

1. Command Skelebots: The Skelebot Specialist trains with a pair of specific Skelebots. Over time, the Bone Jockey is able to communicate using both verbal and non-verbal commands that the Skelebots recognize. When using verbal commands the Skelebots are +1 to strike, parry, and dodge and +1 to strike with their ranged weapons. **Base Skill to Command Skelebots:** 70% +2% per level of experience. Players should roll under the character's skill every time a new command is issued to one or more of the Skelebots. On a failed roll, the Skelebots follow their orders to the best of their

ability, but do not have the benefits of the bonus. Additionally, where stealth is required as well as radio silence, the Bone Jockey can communicate using non-verbal commands. Roll under half of the Command Skelebot skill. On a failed roll the Skelebot did not understand the command and continues to follow its previous command. Each command to Skelebots uses up ONE of the Skelebot Specialist's attacks that melee round. So if the Bone Jockey is involved in combat, but is still relaying commands to the Skelebots, he loses one attack for every command to one or more Skelebots. **Note:** Unless the Bone Jockey specifies (Unit L-500 and L-501 do this, 'Bot M-29 do that), all the Skelebots assume he is directing them ALL to do the same thing ("Lay down cover fire." "Attack the Galu Demon Bull," etc.).

2. Repair Skelebots: The Skelebot Specialist has been working with Skelebots for years and is very familiar with their inner workings and mechanics and is able to make basic battlefield repairs. This includes being able to salvage a working or less damaged limb from a destroyed or severely damaged Skelebot and use it to replace a limb (leg or arm, or hand) on one of his Skelebots. He can also patch armor, repairing damaged M.D.C. at a rate of 10 M.D.C. per hour to a maximum of 30 M.D.C., assuming materials are available or can be salvaged. A failed skill roll means only 1D6 M.D.C. are restored within the one hour window. **Base Skill to Repair Skelebots:** 64% +3% per level of experience.

3. Skelebot Virtual Monitoring: The Skelebot Specialist can follow his specific Skelebots via electronic markers, a tracing device that lets him know where each Skelebot is located and heading, as well as the vital statistics of each unit (M.D.C. level, loss of a weapon system or limb, reduced speed due to damage, and so on). All data appears on the HUD of his helmet and/or portable computer. He can also see what is happening by tapping into the optics system of any one specific Skelebot. Maximum range is 4,000 feet (1,219 m); half when on a ley line or when there is another type of interference or signal jamming involved. In fact, if transmissions are jammed, the Bone Jockey could lose track of his 'Bots unless he has them in his line of sight.

4. Number of Skelebots: The Bone Jockey gets two standard Skelebots to command at level one. Think attack dogs that are humanoid robots with a laser rifle and extendible, silver-plated Vibro-Blades. +1 Skelebot at levels 3, 5, 8, 11 and 14. May be assigned more Skelebots for special missions.

5. Skelebot Repair Assistant: One SRA-Bot (Skelebot Repair Assistant). This is a basic Skelebot programmed with Skelebot salvage and repair skills and also doubles as something of a pack mule and personal assistant to the Skelebot Specialist. It can fight when necessary, of course, but usually stays at the Bone Jockey's side.

6. O.C.C. Bonuses: +1 to I.Q., +I to P.S., +1D6 to Spd, +2D6 S.D.C., +I to Perception Rolls regarding Skelebots and robots in general, and mechanical repairs, as well as identifying potential weak spots, vulnerabilities and damage on robots, at levels 2, 5, 9 and 12, and +1 to save vs Horror Factor at levels 2, 6, 10 and 14.

Skelebot Specialist O.C.C. Stats:

Nickname: Bone Jockey.

Alignment: Any.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. and M.E. of 11 or higher, a high P.S. and/or P.P. are helpful but not required.

O.C.C. Skills:

Language: Native (American; starts at 88%)
Literacy: Native Language (American; +20%)
Basic Math (+20%)
Basic Electronics (+20%)
Computer Operation (+20%)
Computer Programming (+10%)
Jury Rig (+10%)
Mechanical Engineer (+5%)
Radio: Basic (+10%)
Salvage (+10%)
W.P. Energy Rifle
Hand to Hand: Basic

O.C.C. Related Skills – or – Advanced Training (pick one): Since the Coalition War Campaign and the Siege on Tolkeen, the CS Army has established military schools that offer focused and specialized combat training.

Instead of the character taking the traditional O.C.C. Related Skills, he or she may opt to take **Advanced Training (AT)**. To do so, the character trades away all *O.C.C. Related Skills and Secondary Skills* in favor of special training and bonuses in TWO areas of *Advanced Training* with a *third AT option* in the future. These are in addition to the O.C.C. Skills and Special O.C.C. abilities, above.

If **Advanced Training is chosen,** make note of Standard Equipment, Money and Cybernetics, below, but do NOT select *O.C.C. Related Skills* or *Secondary Skills.* Instead, go to the **Advanced Training section** of this sourcebook and select two AT (Advanced Training) programs. AT provides a soldier with highly focused, specialized areas of training, abilities and bonuses. He or she may not be as versatile as a character who takes O.C.C. Related and Secondary Skills, but is often more proficient and specialized in one or more areas of military expertise. *CS Officer, Demon Hunter, Field Intelligence, Nonhuman Studies (D-Bee Hunter), Marksmanship, Rescue, Salvage* and *Survival* are most common for the Skelebot Specialist O.C.C.

If **O.C.C. Related Skills** are desired, instead of Advanced Training, make your selection from the Skill Categories below, as usual. The advantage of O.C.C. Related Skills is the player can create a warrior with exactly the skills he may desire, often giving the character a broader range of knowledge, and probably more skills. When done selecting O.C.C. Related Skills, go on to select Secondary Skills.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select four skills to start, plus select one additional skill at levels 3, 6, 9 and 12. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

O.C.C. Related Skills (not applicable if AT is selected):

Communications: Any (+10%).
Cowboy: None.
Domestic: Any.
Electrical: Any (+10%).
Espionage: Intelligence and Wilderness Survival only (+5%).
Horsemanship: None.
Mechanical: Any (+10%).
Medical: None.
Military: Any.
Physical: Any, except Acrobatics, Gymnastics, or Wrestling.
Pilot: Any except Robots and Power Armor (+10% to Automobile, Motorcycles and Hovercycles).
Pilot Related: Any.

Rogue: Computer Hacking and Pick Locks only (+5%).
Science: Any, but uncommon.
Technical: Any (+10%).
W.P.: Any.
Wilderness: None.

Secondary Skills: The character also gets to select four Secondary Skills from the Secondary Skill list plus one additional Secondary Skill at levels 2, 5, 8 and 12. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get any bonus, other than possible bonuses from a high I.Q. All secondary skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Coalition CA-3 Light "Dead Boy" body armor, Coalition energy rifle of choice, four extra E-Clips, two smoke grenades, three signal flares, survival knife (1D6 S.D.C.), pocket computer, portable tool kit, full-size tool box with drill and a multitude of interchangeable tool-heads, utility belt, flashlight, wooden cross, air filter, gas mask, uniform, combat boots, canteen, and assigned two FASSAR-30 Skelebots and one Skelebot Repair Assistant.

Additional Skelebots, or specialized Skelebots can be requested from a commanding officer and may be made available if it is within the mission parameters. Additional Skelebots may also be assigned to the Specialist for special ops.

Money: Monthly salary is 2,200 credits. Starts off with one month's pay and gets a roof over his head, food, clothing, and all other basics provided free as part of his pay, as well as access to military facilities. Pay increases to 2,400 at the rank of lieutenant, and to 2,800 at captain.

Starting Rank: Corporal.

Cybernetics: The Skelebot Specialist starts with a Clock Calendar, Gyro-Compass, Universal Headjack and Skelebot Cybernetic Interface implants. Additional cybernetics and bionics *may* be authorized for exemplary service or to replace limbs lost in combat.

Skelebot Cybernetic Interface (Special): This piece of cybernetics connects to a built-in cyber radio that translates voice commands into coded transmissions to the Skelebot. This allows the Robot Specialist to order any Skelebots under his command without the need for specialized external equipment. Range is limited to 1,000 feet (305 m). This piece of cybernetic equipment is Top Secret, only made by the Coalition and is available only to the Skelebot Specialist (and Military Specialist or Technical Officers serving in the same role) assigned to command Skelebots.

SRA Skelebot Repair Assistant

The SRA Skelebot Repair Assistants do not come from an assembly line, but rather are modified FASSAR-20 "old style" or FASSAR-30 "new style" Skelebots. The Robot Specialist often works alone in the battlefield, with only his squad or platoon of Skelebots to keep him company. Being in the field also limits what tools the Bone Jockey can carry. It soon became apparent that he could use an assistant, and what better than a modified Skelebot to serve as a pack mule and helper? Need to repair that SAMAS, but don't have a hydraulic lift that can hoist that 340 pound (153 kg) power armor? Well the Skelebot can do so no problem. Need an extra pair of hands? Need tools that require a nuclear power supply to keep running? A modified SRA Skelebot carries everything the Bone Jockey needs and more. You can even tune into your favorite Coalition Army approved radio broadcast and listen to all your favorite tunes. Finally, leave the Skelebot to clean up your mess while you go grab some chow after a hard day of repair work or combat.

The Skelebot assistants have proven so helpful that medics, mechanics and others are lobbying Coalition High Command to mass produce this new Skelebot variant. Their goal is to have enough so that all field armies can have a dozen on hand to help with repairs and other areas that can keep the field army on the move. Even with the support of some high ranking officers, this will take some time to get pushed through.

Coalition Skelebot:

Robot/Artificial Intelligence

Model Type: FASSAR-20 or FASSAR-30 with the additional indication of SRA for Skelebot Repair Assistant.

Class: Fully Automated Self-Sufficient Assault Robot.

Crew: None, artificial intelligence.

M.D.C. by Location: As per the type of Skelebot (see above) being modified.

SRA Modified FASSAR-20 (old style Skelebot)
- Hands (2) – 10 each
- Arms (2) – 30 each
- Finger LED Lights (5) – 1 each
- Electric Power cable (2) – 2 each
- Air Drill – 2
- Air Grinder – 2
- Air Impact Drill – 5
- Air Hammer – 4
- Air Tank – 10
- Vibro-Cutters – 2
- Legs (2) – 50 each
- * Head – 40
- ** Main Body – 130

SRA Modified FASSAR-30
- Hands (2) – 22 each
- Arms (2) – 30 each
- Finger LED Lights (5) – 1 each
- Electric Power cable (2) – 2
- Air Drill – 2
- Air Grinder – 2
- Air Impact Drill – 5
- Air Hammer – 4
- Air Tank – 10
- Vibro-Cutters – 2
- Legs (2) – 70 each
- * Head – 60
- ** Main Body – 150

* Destroying the head of the robot eliminates all optics and sensory systems. In most cases the Skelebot shuts down as a safety feature. However, in some cases, about one in ten, the robot continues to operate. Under these conditions, especially if in combat, the Skelebot has no combat bonuses to strike, parry, or dodge and shoots wild. However, there is plenty to salvage from a headless Skelebot, and replacing the head returns the unit to full fighting function.

The head is a small and difficult target to hit, especially on a moving target. Thus, it can only be hit when a character makes a "Called Shot" and even then the attacker is -2 to strike.

** Depleting the M.D.C. of the Main Body effectively destroys the robot, shutting it down completely and there is nothing viable left to salvage.

Skelebot Statistics:

As per the specific model of Skelebot. See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** or **Rifts® World Book 11: Coalition War Campaign** for complete details on both.

Running: 90 mph (144 km) maximum. The act of running does not tire out the robot and maximum speed can be maintained indefinitely. However, an encumbered Skelebot carrying a heavy load or loose equipment may not be able to run any faster than 45 mph (72 km).

Leaping: The robot legs, although very strong, are not designed for leaping. Leaping is limited to 6 feet (1.8 m) high or across.

Flying: Not possible.

Range: The nuclear power pack gives the Skelebot approximately four years of life if not used for combat. Repair 'Bots are much less active than combat robots and are not firing energy weapons.

Underwater Capabilities: The repair Skelebot has not been modified for underwater duties, but that could be coming in the future. For now they walk along the bottom of a body of water at 25% of their normal running speed. Maximum Ocean Depth is 1,000 feet (305 m).

Statistical Data:

Height: 7 feet (2.1 m).

Width: 3 feet (0.9 m), from shoulder to shoulder.

Length: 2 feet (0.6 m), but loading up the cargo rack on the back could more than double that.

Weight: 390 pounds (175 kg), not counting tool kits, spare parts, salvage, etc., that may be carried by the Skelebot.

Physical Strength: Robot P.S. of 30.

Cargo: Carries numerous tools, bolts, and common parts. The Skelebot has several compartments for small pieces. It also has various hooks and clips for well over a hundred different tools. Robot P.S. enables the Skelebot Repair Assistant to lift and carry approximately 750 pounds (337.5 kg), and can pull or push double the weight when it is on a cart/wagon, but speed is reduced by half and loose cargo and uneven road conditions could drop speed down to as slow as 20 mph (32 km).

Power System: Nuclear, average life span for a non-combat Skelebot is four years.

Market Cost: Three million for a fully equipped standard Skelebot. Add another 450,000 credits for a modified Skelebot Repair Assistant with extra parts, tools and programing.

Tools/Weapon Systems:

1. **Skelebot Repair Assitant Tools and Features:** The typical Skelebot Repair Assistant has all the following modifications, tools and features, some of which can do damage to an opponent if necessary. However, since the robot is not suited to using them as weapons it is -1 to strike and parry with these tools. The tools are attached to different limbs, with things like the grease gun and drill attached to the waist and carried in a holster on a large, snap-on tool belt. In most cases the Skelebots uses the tools as directed by the Bone Jockey. Many can also be used by the Skelebot Specialists as long as the Skelebot is standing nearby. All power tools are connected by conduit/cabling that draws upon the power supply of the SRA.

Primary Purpose: Repair tools for Skelebots and power armors, but could be used for just about anything.

Range: Melee combat. Precision laser is close-range, 10 feet (3 m).

Air Drill: The drill has access to three dozen of the most common drill bits, screwdrivers, and sockets. They are stored in various compartments on the bot. The drill can be used as a weapon, but only does 1 M.D. on a single strike or 2D6 M.D. if held in place for a full melee round (15 seconds).

Air Gauge: Measures the amount of air pressure in tires.

Air Grinder: This is used to file down pieces of M.D.C. metal. It has the potential to do Mega-Damage in a pinch; one M.D. per strike or 1D4+1 M.D. if held in place for a full melee round.

Air Hammer: An air hammer can have numerous attachments on the head. It can be a hammer or chisel of different configurations. As a weapon it only inflicts 1D4 M.D. on a single strike or 4D4 M.D. if held in place for a full melee round.

Air Hose: This is used for putting air in tires as well as emitting blast of air to blow away dust and grime from machine parts. No damage.

Air Impact Drill: The impact drill is often used to loosen or attach armored panels on robots. Unlike a normal drill, the impact drill provides more torque. It has a dozen different attachments. As a weapon, it can inflict 4D6 S.D.C. damage or 1D6 M.D.

Cargo Rack: Cargo rack on the back of the robot where supplies, salvage, spare parts and extra E-Clips and tool kits can be tied down and stored.

Flashlight: A flashlight with four different settings for the desired level of illumination is built into one arm. Point and illuminate.

Grease Gun: There is a 15 foot (4.6 m) hose attached to a five gallon (19 liter) tank of industrial grease. No damage, but the grease can be squirted in the eyes or helmet/face plate requiring a full melee round (15 seconds; double when squirted into eyes) to clean off the gunk. Victims are blind (-10 to strike, parry, dodge, etc.) until the grease is cleaned off the visor/goggle/helmet. Grease can also be sprayed on the ground (using up one gallon/3.8 liters). Anyone moving with a speed greater than 10 has a 01-50% chance of falling per melee. The grease patch covers a three foot (0.9 m) radius, per gallon (3.8 liters). Range is 5 feet (1.5 m).

Hooks and Attachments: Hooks on various locations on the upper arms, legs and body for holding and tying down tools and lights.

Plasma Torch: The standard cutting tool for M.D.C. material. With three M.D. settings: 1D6 M.D., 2D6 M.D. and 3D6 M.D.; range is arm's reach.

Power Conduit (2): Two plugs for connecting lights, power supplies and generators to the Skelebot's nuclear power supply.

Precision Laser: Can't reach with the Vibro-Cutters? Get better reach with a precision laser. It has multiple Mega-Damage settings: 1D4, 1D6, 2D6, and 3D6 M.D.; 10 foot (3 m) range.

Vibro-Cutters: Essentially Mega-Damage scissors or wire snips. 1D4 M.D. for a slash, stab or snip.

Rate of Fire: Varies.

Payload: Unlimited for any powered system connected to the Skelebot's power supply.

Note: Some customized Skelebot Repair Assistants have additional features. The combinations are endless.

2. Repair and Salvage Program and Diagnostic Computer Interface: The combat programs are replaced with diagnostic programs. The Skelebot Repair Assistant can plug into different Coalition Skelebots, power armor and light vehicles such as hovercycles, rocket bikes and Death Wings, and interface with the onboard computers to access schematics and a complete read out of all systems (onboard systems are likely to indicate trouble areas). The information and schematics can also be relayed via a wireless relay from the Skelebot to the Bone Jockey's HUD or a Coalition handheld computer (range is 100 feet/30.5 m). The Skelebot is also capable of helping with the actual repairs, installation, disassembly, salvage, etc., by providing an extra set of steady hands, as well as performing easy and routine tasks.

Robot Repair and Salvage Programs: Basic Electronics 80%, Basic Mechanics 90%, Computer Operation 90%, Computer Repair 80%, Electricity Generation 70%, Automotive Mechanics 80%, Robot Electronics 50%, Robot Mechanics 50%, Salvage 80%, and Weapons Engineer 70%. These skills only apply to Coalition manufactured robots, armor and vehicles; -30% penalty to work on other manufacturers. Since the Skelebot Repair Assistant relies on pure programming for repairs, it has difficulty adapting to different and foreign devices. There is a -15% penalty when dealing with non-Coalition Earth technology and -30% when dealing with alien technology.

Programming and memory enables the Skelebot to identify all Coalition State military ranks, uniforms, insignias, soldiers, dog pack, robots, power armor, vehicles, weapons, equipment, generals and the Emperor and his son. CS data also includes the location of current Coalition territory and major military bases.

Memory for various enemies, different races, enemy uniforms and insignias is wiped clean from the robot as is all combat programming. However, it will defend itself and can be ordered to fight by the Skelebot Specialist it is assigned to.

3. 18 inch (0.45 m) Vibro-Blade (2): Hidden within the slot of each skeletal forearm is a retractable Vibro-Saber that swings out and down, locking into close combat position. The only limitation is no other weapon, tool or item can be held/used in the hand from which the Vibro-Saber is extended. The blades can be used simultaneously or independently. The Vibro-Sabers were kept as a basic weapon and because they can be used for repairs, rescuing pilot from vehicles and in carving up salvage.

Primary Purpose: Assault & Defense.

Weight: 2 lbs (0.9 kg).

Mega-Damage: Vibro-Saber: 2D4 M.D.

Range: Hand to hand combat with about a 5.6 foot (1.7 m) reach.

Rate of Attack: Five (5) per melee; hand to hand combat skill.

Payload: Not applicable.

4. Energy Rifles: in a pinch, the Skelebot can pick up and use any type of energy weapon, but without any bonus to strike.

5. Hand to Hand Combat Modifications and Penalties: The Skelebot has a very basic ability as most combat programs are removed in favor of the mechanical programs. Hand to Hand is limited to some basic defensive maneuvers to prevent the bot from being damaged. *Three attacks/actions per melee round.*

Combat: Fewer attacks and no bonuses. Basic, only *three attacks per melee round* and none of the Skelebot's usual combat bonuses. In fact, it is -1 to strike with all handheld tools and even with its famous Vibro-Blade in each arm. +2 to parry and dodge, including attacks from behind because of the motion sensor. Impervious to poison, gas, and biological agents, as well as possession, psionic and magic mind control, charms, Bio-Manipulation, and all S.D.C. attacks. See sensors for optical capabilities.

Damage:

Controlled, S.D.C. Punch: 2D6+15 S.D.C.

Restrained Punch: 1D4 M.D.

Full Mega-Damage Punch, Elbow, Knee, or Body Block: 1D6 M.D.

Kick or Head Butt: 1D6 M.D.

Vibro-Saber: 2D4 M.D. +3 M.D. for its Robot P.S.

Prowl Penalty: The robot is horrible for sneaking around and makes a ton of noise even before modification: -35% to Prowl unencumbered and -60% with loose tools, spare parts tied to it and/or cargo strapped to its back.

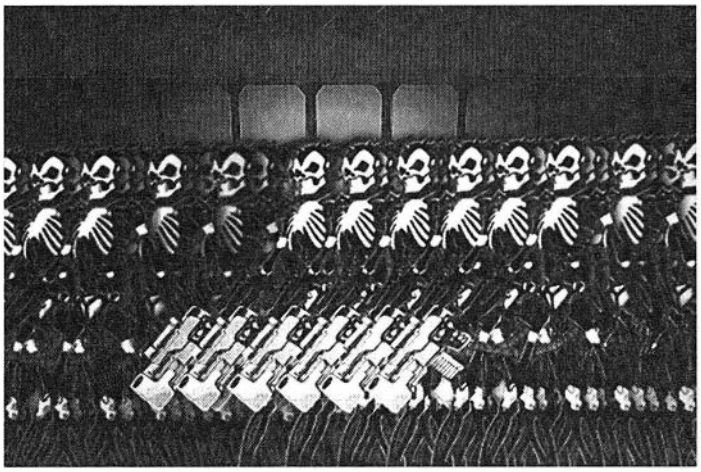
6. Other Skelebot Features of Note:

Optics: Standard. The Skelebots have full optical systems, including the visible light spectrum, infrared, ultraviolet and polarization, passive nightvision (light amplification), and thermal imaging. Modification: The telescoping optics function is removed in favor of a magnification function which allows the robot to view and display small objects like circuit boards and micro-circuitry. It can magnify small objects up to 50 times.

Radar: Standard, kept intact.

Motion Detector: Standard, 100 foot radius (30.5 m), add to parry and dodge. See bonuses.

Radio Communications: Standard, medium-range directional radio for coded messages between Skelebots. Range: 10 miles (16 km). Can also scan and communicate via code on conventional radio channels/frequencies; same range. Understands English, Spanish, and Techno-Can languages; can identify all others but cannot understand or communicate in them.



Operation Hellbender

It was General Jericho Holmes, the hero of the Siege on Tolkeen, who broke the silence that followed the impressive presentation.

"That's an ambitious and rather extreme plan, but it makes sense. How fast do you expect to start implementation?"

"It is in progress, General," replied a smug Colonel Lyboc.

"Which part?"

"All of it."

"All of it!? How do we know any of this will even work?" inquired Senate Leader J. Brown.

"We learned a lot from the Tolkeen Campaign. **Operation Hellbender** will work. I guarantee it."

"Strong words from someone I don't recall being there, Colonel," said General Holmes.

"No, General," said Lyboc in an annoyed tone of voice. The two men had never liked each other, and the Hero of Tolkeen had apparently taken umbrage at Colonel Lyboc's confidence in the plan laid out before them. "I was involved with other affairs of the State during the Tolkeen Campaign."

"Is that what you call them? I heard you were almost court-martialed and close to being executed for your role in those 'affairs.'"

"Cleared of all charges, General, or I would not be standing here presenting you and these other, um, distinguished leaders of the Coalition States, with Operation Hellbender. Would I?"

The two men exchanged looks of disdain. This time it was Colonel Lyboc who broke the stalemate.

"The plans are based on your own brilliant observations, strategies and tactics in the Tolkeen Campaign, General." Lyboc struggled to choke down the words he knew he had to present.

"Your journals and logs regarding Tolkeen are the foundation for this plan, Sir. Without them, we would be lambs waiting for slaughter. Before the Tolkeen Campaign, our research and strategies were largely theoretical. But you, General Holmes, you put them to the test. You almost singlehandedly rewrote the playbook on how to combat a supernatural and magical enemy, en masse on the field of battle. Your astute firsthand observations, clear, unbiased representations, and brilliant recommendations regarding countermeasures, strategies and tactics against such an enemy are inspired genius. Everyone recognizes that, General. And they are the blueprint for Operation Hellbender. We could not have formulated this plan without you, General Holmes. In a way, you are the architect of what we hope will be our salvation. We just never imagined having to implement it all so quickly."

General Holmes sat back in the plush, black leather chair and couldn't help but smile. As a consummate strategist and tactician, he knew when he had been outmaneuvered. If this was a fencing match, Colonel Lyboc would be saying, "touche," instead of standing there feigning respect and admiration. It was no wonder why the Emperor, or someone high up, had selected the sly, silver-tongued Colonel Lyboc to present Operation Hellbender. The Colonel had just pinned him in the corner. One he could not walk out of without discrediting his own work and reputation.

"It was a nice touch," thought General Holmes, that Lyboc or his superiors maneuvered things so that he didn't actually have to endorse the Operation, but it would still carry his name and reputation on it. He was, as the Colonel stated, firmly and prominently the "de facto architect" of Project Hellbender. And with his name attached to it, under these dire circumstances, nobody would dare to question, challenge or refuse to sign off on it. Nobody. Brilliant. Almost too brilliant for Colonel Lyboc. No. The Colonel was the slick carnival barker drawing them in and selling them on the plan. Someone else was responsible for the Operation. General Holmes thought he could see the signature moves of the Head of Propaganda. The son of Emperor Prosek, *Joseph Prosek II.* "The kid is good," thought the General. "Really good." He wondered if the Emperor realized just how skillful the young man had become at the art of manipulation, and wondered where Joseph's aspirations lay. There was too much skill and talent on display to keep the lad happy as just the Head of Propaganda. Joseph was heir to the throne, and for the first time, General Holmes realized that was the target Joseph was shooting for. It made him wonder what the future would hold for them and the CS, but there were more immediate concerns. Colonel Lyboc had asked him a question.

"So tell us, General Holmes," said Lyboc. "How confident are you about your strategies and tactics? Will they work? Does it give us a fighting chance against the demon hordes?"

All eyes fell upon the General, he nodded in the affirmative and said, "Yes. Most definitely, but we have never faced demons in such great numbers or variety. And you know what they say about even the best laid plans. And good intentions. Victory will depend on the proper execution of all elements in Project Hellbender. That and the fighting will of our troops. There are a lot of ifs and luck involved in this plan."

"Please don't tell me you are doubting yourself, General?" asked Colonel Lyboc.

"In the veracity of my observations and proven strategies and tactics, no. But I do have some concerns about Operation Hellbender's reliance on so many Combat Cyborgs and Juicers. Never in the Coalition States' history have we ever relied so heavily upon augmented soldiers. It is a dangerous precedent. I thought the Emperor was always against creating an army of supermen."

"The Emperor is more against being annihilated or our species being enslaved and dragged into the pits of Hell, General. It's that, 'desperate times require desperate measures,' moment," quipped Colonel Lybok. "So unless any of you distinguished Gentlemen and Ladies have a better plan ..."

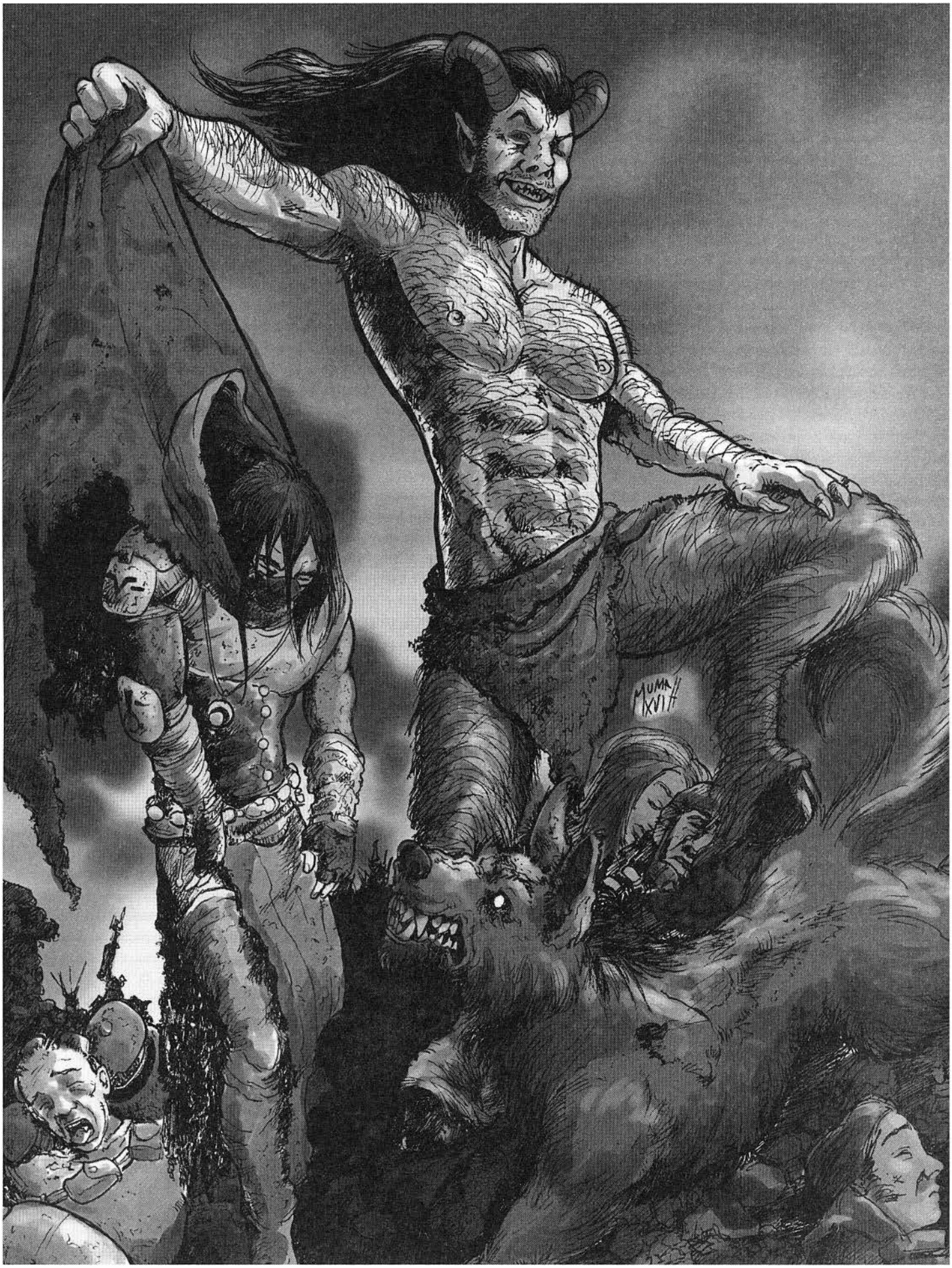
A moment of silence.

"No? Very well, then. I thank you for your time. I trust the Emperor can count on your full endorsement and support as we move forward with complete implementation."

The Purpose of Operation Hellbender

The ulitmate purpose of Operation Hellbender is the creation and mobilization of troops capable of facing a supernatural enemy in the Minion War. Followed by the implementation of the most effective strategies and tactics against the demon hordes.

The Coalition Army needs soldiers fast. Not just any soldiers, but troops who can stand toe-to-toe with warring demons from


MUMM
XVII

two different planes of Hell and have a reasonable expectation of success. In most instances, the demons of Hades and infernals of Dyval are larger than humans, towering 7-12 feet (2.1 to 3.6 m) tall, bristling with muscle and wielding magical and supernatural powers. Some, like Gargoyles, tower 20 feet (6.1 m) and larger. This makes each supernatural foe the equivalent of a suit of power armor or a giant robot – and one that heals in minutes, requiring CS soldiers to lay on the firepower and fight until the damned creature discorporates and vanishes from the face of the planet. This is why combat troops are advised to fight in groups of several humans against one demon or Deevil.

An unprecedented reliance upon troops who have undergone **human augmentation** is a huge, necessary part of the equation outlined in *Operation Hellbender*. It is the only way for humanity to survive against the legions of demonic invaders, but there are many components to the plan. Accelerated, albeit shortened, basic training for recruits is just one part of it. There is the tactical mobilization of CS forces against the enemy, anti-demon strategies and tactics, demon hunter troops, Advanced Training, specialized military schools, dissemination of information about the demonic enemy to all active personnel, mass production of demon slaying weapons from simple silver-plated blades and ammunition to demon slayer power armor, cyborgs and robots, to increased production and deployment of Skelebots equipped with anti-demon weaponry, as well as new anti-demon combat forces and bionic systems, new combat vehicles, and for the first time in CS history, the field deployment of Psi-Division against the massing supernatural enemy.

Troop Deployment

Emperor Prosek's impassioned speeches from the heart have raised the biggest national army in the post-apocalyptic history of North America. Literally millions of volunteers are rushing to join the Coalition Army in defense of North America. While it is a wonderful show of unity and commitment against a global threat that has chosen the old American and Canadian Empires as its beachhead, there is no way the CS can train and make the multitude of volunteers combat ready in the short time necessary. Strength in numbers is not enough. The Coalition High Command knows it must not squander this opportunity if it is to have any hope of winning the Minion War in America. Not against a supernatural enemy like this. Which is why Emperor Prosek and Coalition Military High Command have signed off on the implementation of **Operation Hellbender**. A plan to utilize *augmented human fighting forces* and anti-demon countermeasures on a scale never before seen. It is the only way to counter the supernatural powers and magic capabilities of their demonic enemies.

It's a good plan. Maybe even a great plan.

First, the throng of volunteers are divided into two camps: those *with prior combat experience* (adventurers, mercenaries, gunfighters, outlaws, even wilderness scouts, hunters, and explorers), and those with *none*.

Those with experience are given a *one week* crash course in fighting the supernatural before being equipped with Coalition Dead Boy armor and basic gear, assigned rank and sent into the field. In another of many unprecedented moves, the Coalition Army is allowing *experienced combatants* to keep and use any non-magical weapons they have brought with them. This lets the fighters use familiar gear they are already expert in using, and it helps supplement the Coalition's own finite resources.

Equally unheard of, the CS is allowing many established mercenary combat units to remain intact – particularly small squads to company-sized troops – groups of as few as 6-12 combatants in a squad, up to 160 soldiers in a company. 1D6+1 Coalition special troops (Juicers, Psycho-Stalkers, Striker Cyborgs, Commandos, Death Knights, psychics, Military Specialists, etc.) are assigned to the units larger than a dozen as "advisors." Squad-sized units get only one or two "advisors." As long as these groups follow CS directives and orders, their unit is given a considerable amount of autonomy. Groups that show results may be given even more freedom to take action against the enemy or used to lead and/or advise the new, inexperienced troops being deployed in the field. Only a group without a strong, competent leader is assigned a Coalition officer to lead them. (An officer accompanied by twice the number of CS "advisors" to assist and protect him.)

Letting experienced combat groups and mercenary companies stay together as a unit preserves the group dynamic and optimizes their combat effectiveness. Keeping well-oiled fighting forces together preserves their established rapport, keeps morale high, and provides role-models and stability for the inexperienced troops. Everyone in an established unit knows the combat routines and tactics of the group, feels comfortable with each other, and trusts their leaders. This established work pattern as a cohesive fighting force makes them more effective in combat than breaking them up or forcing new commanding officers on them. And the CS needs every advantage it can get.

There are some risks with this approach. Non-Coalition combatants tend to be much less disciplined, unorthodox, unruly and unfamiliar with the Coalition's methodology of doing things. There is also the question of loyalty. Where does the loyalty of these rogue forces truly lie? Yes, they have joined the CS to fight for humanity's survival against invading demons, but are they loyal to the Coalition States? Many are. Others are not. And the rogue warriors who are loyal to the CS do not share the same level of loyalty (or indoctrination) as true citizens born and raised in the Coalition States. Might the rogues turn on the CS at any time? Or desert if things get too rough? The answers to these questions are yet to be seen.

The Coalition leadership is too smart to leave "the barbarians at the gate," so to mitigate the unruliness and questionable background and uncertain loyalty of these units, they are immediately deployed to the *battlefront* where the most intense fighting is taking place; far from the borders of the Coalition States. The deployment of experienced rogue troops also bolsters the inexperienced green troops and provides role-models to help teach them the ropes and bring them up to speed under combat conditions.

Human volunteers with no combat experience, and who are not CS citizens, are given very condensed *basic combat training* over a *3-4 week period* before being sent to the battlefront.

Coalition citizens and those on the waiting list for citizenship are given a slightly longer, *five weeks* of basic training, but even that is half the time the CS used to train its troops before the Minion War. (8-16 weeks was the norm, depending on the type of training and MOS.)

Soldiers in both camps of *green recruits* who would normally have washed out are given a passing grade, provided they are not a complete liability to their brothers-in-arms and have a real commitment to the fight. This is war. Every able-bodied man or

woman with the will to fight is a candidate for the CS Armed Forces, trained and sent off to the battlefront. The hope is that the green recruits learn and improve quickly in the field, or at least take down a Minion of Hell before they are killed. (**Note:** Also see *Advanced Training*. For the select few who get it, AT adds another several weeks of specialized training.)

The sad reality for the Coalition Army is that it does not have the luxury of time on its side. It must mobilize the massing army of spirited volunteers as fast as possible without sending them out like sacrificial lambs with little chance for survival. Fast turn around is necessary not just to throw troops at the enemy, but to make room for the tens of thousands who continue to arrive at Chi-Town to join the army every day. 1.3 million of them just to start!

This is where **Operation Hellbender** comes into play.

Three to five weeks of "very basic" training is not so bad if those troops are *augmented humans*. Though the Coalition High Command is not willing to fight fire with fire – meaning the use of magic and nonhumans (at least not officially) – it possesses the knowhow to manufacture **superhumans**. In the case of the Coalition States, that's *Juicers* and *Combat Cyborgs* supplemented with *Skelebots (combat A.I.s)*, genetically engineered *Dog Boys*, *Psi-Stalkers* (mutant humans), *Psycho-Stalkers* (Psi-Stalker Juicers) and *psychics*. Psychics are not "manufactured," per se, not like Dog Boys, Juicers, Cyborgs and Skelebots, but are certainly groomed and trained by the CS to fit specific protocols as one of their secret weapons in the defense of the Coalition States and its cities.

The purpose of Operation Hellbender is to create and deploy Coalition troops who have a fighting chance to be victorious. First, by making many of them more than human.

Second, by giving many of them more than one chance to live and fight the enemy.

Third, by establishing schools for Advanced Training to give elite soldiers the skills and knowledge to defeat superhuman enemies.

Coalition Juicers

"So many Juicers. Is that wise?"

"What? Using superhuman soldiers that come with an expiration date? It's pure genius," chuckled Colonel Lyboc.

"What about the Juicer Uprising?"

"Bad decision making on the part of a weak link, and ancient history.

"Ancient ... it was only five years ago and ... and ..."

"And most people don't even know it ever happened or that the CS had any involvement in the matter. Um ... let's say we have learned from that unfortunate incident and we are moving forward."

"Is this your idea, Colonel?"

"Mine? Oh, no. Let's just say it was a plan I could endorse."

"And if the Juicer army turns against us?"

"First, the men and women volunteering to get 'juiced' are patriots. They are not going to turn on the nation they are sacrificing their lives to protect and preserve.

"Second, these are front-line troops being sent out specifically to engage demons. Let us be realistic, if more than one-quarter of them survive this war it will be a miracle. And those who do will be sent back out over and over again."

"You don't think they'll be opposed to this death sentence?"

"Please. I thought you were much smarter than this," said Colonel Lyboc, turning from smug to stern and dark.

"Don't fool yourself, Senator Mumah. We're all under a death sentence. If their sacrifice doesn't help us win the war, we are all dead. Or worse. Every soldier who steps outside the walls of Chi-Town knows they are putting their life on the line so that the rest of us back home have a chance. Just a chance, of surviving this. They fight, bleed and die for assholes like you and me. Never forget that. It's what good soldiers do. So no, these heroes do not see this as a death sentence. They see it as a chance for victory and a glorious, heroic death. A death that matters and means something."

"And if our forces vanquish the enemy quickly and we have hundreds of thousands of Juicers returning home? What then?" grunted Senator Mumah.

"I pray this war ends so quickly that Juicers become our concern. You are delusional if you think that's going to happen. But if it should, there are plenty of other enemies we can pit them against. The Xiticix. The Federation of Magic. Vampires. The Splugorth. Besides, like I said, they are supermen with an expiration date. Four. Maybe five or six years of life, max. Dead men don't represent much of a threat, Senator. So stop worrying about nothing, and sleep well when you go to bed. Let the real heroes of the Coalition States keep you safe."

– A conversation with Colonel Lyboc

For decades the Coalition States had been vocal opponents of the Juicer augmentation process and all its implications. CS Propaganda has made it a point to show how stupid and dangerous tampering with one's body through chemicals was, and how counterproductive it was to condemn a healthy man or woman to an early grave by cursing him with this chemical addiction. In most cases, these beliefs were shared by the common people and most government officials. The Coalition had long adopted an official policy of no Juicers in their armies, and declaring the very process to be *illegal*; the creation of Juicers punishable by death.

However, support for Juicers in the military had existed and grown within the Coalition military and government, especially since Chi-Town had been sitting on the secrets of creating Juicers since before the political formation of the Coalition States. **General Marshall Cabot** had been a proponent of Juicer technology for years, and quietly lobbied for the formation of a Juicer Division long before the Newtown incident or the Siege on Tolkeen. The situation remained a stalemate for years until the Coalition States finally passed a law making the use of Juicer technology legal under the *exclusive* jurisdiction of the Coalition military in 104 P.A. This was done to implement the ill-fated **Operation Phoenix** that would result in the Juicer Uprising of 105 P.A. If it were not for the masterful whitewashing and lies of **Colonel Lyboc,** who pinned the blame for the entire Juicer Uprising squarely on the shoulders of D-Bees and alien invaders in Newtown, the Coalition's use of Juicers might have ended with the Uprising. In an ironic twist of fate, the Juicer Uprising is what made Emperor Prosek acquiesce to the Coalition Army's persistent desire to create a **CS Juicer Army Division**. He simply could not deny the power and effectiveness of these augmented *humans*. And since Colonel Lyboc's alien conspiracy absolved the CS of any com-

plicity or wrongdoing, the CS was able to readdress the Juicer issue under more controlled circumstances.

The first "official" Coalition Juicers were fielded in the Tolkeen Campaign by the end of 105 P.A. They performed admirably, prompting the Coalition Army to carefully expand their Juicer program. With the advent of the **Minion War** and the skillfulness of the sly Colonel Lyboc, the clout of General Cabot and the influence of Joseph Prosek II, the magnitude of the Juicers' role in the war is about to expand to epic proportions.

Note: For more information about Operation Phoenix, different types of Juicers, Last Call, and more, see **World Book 10: Juicer Uprising™**.

The CS Juicer Program Under Operation Hellbender

In the past, Emperor Prosek and many leaders of the Coalition States have been hesitant to build an army of supermen through artificial and spectacular means. They held onto three concerns: One, the danger Juicers might represent to ordinary humans. Two, the potential danger they might pose to the CS government. Three, the Coalition's extreme view of what is human. *Augmented humans* fall into a gray zone that leans toward the "not quite human" column.

It has been important to Emperor Prosek that all humans remain, more or less, equal. One human should not be inherently more powerful or more important than another. Creating any kind of *superman-class* human creates a disparity among the people. Emperor Prosek is concerned about creating an elite warrior caste that is stronger and more dangerous than ordinary humans. Superhumans – a lot of them – could, over time, threaten the social, political and military power structure within the CS, particularly if they rebelled against their makers. However, this seems an unlikely scenario considering the indoctrination methods the Coalition uses on its citizens and would-be citizens in waiting.

The use of power armor exoskeletons and robots has long been favored, because when the soldier takes off his armor or a pilot steps out of his robot or tank, he is just like any ordinary human. His power resides inside the artificial machine he controls, not inside of himself.

Juicers and **Combat Cyborgs**, on the other hand, are physically different, and arguably "superior" due to their augmentation. The Emperor wants people to feel united, not divided by powers and differences that can be quantified. The same is true of psychics, which is why all psychics must register with the government and the most powerful are quietly recruited and kept under wraps as special operatives within **Psi-Battalion** and the **ISS police force**.

Emperor Prosek and other opponents against the reliance upon *augmented soldiers* have changed their tune in light of the immediacy and urgency of the Minion War and the demonic enemy they face.

The problem with power armor, giant robots and combat vehicles is they cost money and take time to build. *Juicers*, on the other hand, are incredibly cheap and easy to make. Requiring only a full or partial suit of body armor, a few weapons, a Juicer rig and a regular supply of the chemicals and nano-systems to keep the super-soldier operating. A paltry few thousand credits to manufacture and keep one Juicer fielded, compared to the hundreds of thousands to millions of credits it costs to make a single suit of power armor, giant robot or armored combat vehicle. So easy and inexpensive that the CS can field several armies of Juicers in the first few months of the war and keep them coming the entire time.

CS expectations are to have 350,000 to 500,000 Juicers ready to field within the first two months of the Minion War.

CS Juicers, 110 P.A.

Of all the augmented humans the Coalition can manufacture, **Juicers** are by far the easiest, fastest and least expensive to create. Best of all, they can be combat ready in a few days. This makes Juicers (and the more well kept secret of Psi-Stalker Juicers known as "Psycho-Stalkers") the most ideal form of augmentation, followed by Combat Cyborgs.

Every new, green recruit is given the choice to receive one of two types of augmentation: *Juicer* or a *Combat Cyborg*. A surprising half of them agree to receive augmentation. Of those willing to be augmented, 70% select **Juicer augmentation.** The reasons are simple:

1. Juicers are the glamorous bad boys of human augmentation. The daring heroes who laugh in the face of death and move as quick as lightning.

2. The Juicer conversion is fast and (mostly) painless, and the effects are immediate. In less than six hours, you are reborn with augmented strength, agility and confidence you never knew you had in you.

3. You retain your humanity, all your body parts and still look like yourself – on steroids. In a few weeks you are your idealized, Greek god, version of you, rippling with muscles and bursting with confidence.

4. Should you live long enough, there is the promise of returning to normal via a *detox program* offered to ALL Coalition Juicers starting at the end of year three. What recruits do not consider when they accept Juicer augmentation is that few Juicers ever want to come off the juice. Preferring to live fast, fight hard, and die as heroes.

5. Many of the volunteers joining the Coalition Army to fight in the Minion War know they probably are not coming out of it alive. "Getting juiced" gives the recruits real power and a real fighting chance. Being a Juicer means they should have the opportunity to take down a lot of demons and Deevils before they meet their own end. And how often does anyone get a chance to make a real difference in life or war? And this is a "good war." One worth dying for. A way to live and die like heroes as they and their allies kick the Minions of Hell off the planet and save their loved ones back home. So, yes, they agree to augmentation.
Note: A Juicer has five years +4D6 months before the chemicals and nano-systems that power him destroy him. Even before the Minion War, most Juicers never lived long enough to reach that point. Their lifestyle of continual combat, heroics and daring ends most Juicers in half that time. In the Minion War, the life expectancy of the average Juicer is less than 18 months. But they do make a profound difference in the war and many get a second, third and fourth chance to fight if they want it. See the **CS Combat Cyborg**, elsewhere in this section.

For green recruits who are frightened, first-time soldiers with no combat experience, *Juicer augmentation* or *Combat Cyborg conversion* seems like a way to hedge their bets and come out of the war alive. The enhanced abilities offsetting their limited basic training and inexperience. It also gives the Coalition Army *heavy*

hitters who can stand toe to toe against monsters and supernatural opponents. When a lone Lesser or even Greater Demon is engaged by a team of augmented humans in a coordinated attack (as recommended in CS strategies and tactics), Juicers and 'Borgs fare very well. Even as green recruits, both of these augmented soldiers make formidable warriors. Two, four or six against one demon may not sound fair, but it is one of the most effective ways to win against a supernatural foe that is the *living equivalent of human power armor* or a *tank*. And right now, the Coalition's forces outnumber the enemy, so now is the time to use weight

of numbers to their advantage. This tactic works extremely well. With each successful defeat of a demon, these tag-team tactics win more and more favor among the Coalition's fighting forces.

The leaders of the Coalition States also prefer the "human" aspect of these two types of human augmentation. CS artificial intelligences (A.I.s) are limited. Robot drones like the **Skelebots** can be extremely effective, and are being unleashed in vast numbers and in new ways as part of **Operation Hellbender**, but CS robots are methodical and predictable. Skelebots lack creativity, while augmented human warriors are imaginative, inventive, clever, and able to think on their feet, adapting to changing battlefield conditions and seizing opportunities a robot may not recognize. Likewise, a robot cannot bluff or intimidate the enemy.

The Emperor and CS brass also firmly believe the *human aspects* of Juicers and Combat Cyborgs make them highly motivated to fight to save humanity, and ordinary troops can still identify with and rally around them as "humans." It is this human passion, drive and camaraderie that gives CS fighting forces the edge over superhuman monsters. Indeed, human warriors throughout history have accomplished seemingly impossible feats of courage. Juice them up or give them machine bodies with built-in weapons, and the impossible seems even more attainable.

So far, the Coalition Army only creates the classic Juicer and so-called Psycho-Stalker (juiced up Psi-Stalkers), not the Hyperion, Titan and other variants, though there is some discussion about adding a few on a trial basis to see how they work out. Up till this point, however, Emperor Prosek had rejected the idea, leaving the Juicer variants the domain of non-Coalition mercenary troops and other kingdoms.

Coalition Juicers are fast and deadly

One tactical advantage Coalition leaders expect to exploit against demonkind is their superior speed, mobility and long-range weaponry. Many demons and their war mounts are slow compared to modern vehicles, and even cyborgs, Juicers, SAMAS and many types of power armor.

Juicers are famous for their daredevil stunts on hovercycles, rocket bikes, and CS Death Wing Air Assault Armor (first revealed in the pages of **Rifts® World 13: Lone Star**) and similar flight systems. The Death Wing was originally designed literally as a "wing" to provide flight capabilities for any soldier in Dead Boy armor, but cyborgs and CS power armor troops in particular. However, it has been **Coalition Juicers** who have taken to the Death Wing better than any other. In the hands of the Coalition Juicer, the Death Wing has proven to be capable of daring low-altitude raids and acrobatic maneuvers never imagined by the original designers or the troops they were intended for. Since Juicers in the Minion War are front-line, close combat assault units who target and engage Greater Demons, demonic Warlords and other leaders, a smaller version of the Death Wing has been designed specifically for Coalition Juicers.

The J3-W Falcon Death Wing is smaller, lighter and more suitable for navigating close to the ground and accommodating Juicer midair dismounts and re-attachment to the wing via leaping off the ground into the air or from the top of buildings to reconnect to the wing and fly away. CS Juicers are quickly becoming famous for hit and run attacks and ambushes that involve zooming in on a Death Wing or Falcon Death Wing, leaping off the winged flight system in midair to literally land on top of a Greater Demon, or several Juicers landing in the midst of the enemy to exchange blows for a melee round or two and leaping back onto the Death Wing when it makes an autopilot return pass, before zipping around and coming back for another melee round or two of combat.

Another popular Coalition Juicer tactic is to use the J3-W to land on the back or shoulders of Greater Demons and other giant-sized enemies, to battle the behemoths in pairs and small groups of 4-6. Using their acrobatics and speed to dodge attacks while they whittle the monsters down. To help in the fight, they *remote control* the Death Wing to also attack from the air. When the fight doesn't go well, or the Juicer team is victorious, they leap back onto the Death Wings and find a new target. Leaping off and on a Death Wing gives the CS Juicer frightening speed, range and versatility in combat that adds to their deadly combat capabilities and growing mythic reputation.

These hit and run, tag team tactics work extremely well at keeping the enemy off balance and taking down demonic forces. Staying on the move, bobbing and weaving, and leaping off and back onto the Wings, is beyond the capabilities of most ordinary human combatants, and even most Combat Cyborgs. However, more cyborgs and power armor troops are starting to use the Falcon Death Wing as well.

It takes a Juicer a short amount of time to adjust to his enhanced abilities and learn how to manage new levels of agility, speed, and strength. Adrenaline boosts, painkillers, nerve-blockers and other chemical compounds enable the Juicers to push their bodies and physical capabilities well beyond those of normal humans. Learning to rein themselves in, and knowing when to stop, can be the hardest part of being a Juicer. In fact, many become so caught up in the rush of combat and daredevil antics, that they become thrill-junkies who do not fear death. Even when *Last Call* begins to kick in, most Juicers push themselves to go out in a blaze of glory. Juicer culture dictates if death is coming, make it a good one, and die on your own terms. As a result, there are many tales of Juicers sacrificing their own lives to save other soldiers or innocent civilians, or perishing in a blaze of glory such as a kamikaze-style suicide run that takes down a vital enemy target, opens up a path in the enemy line, enables prisoners to escape and so on.

Availability of volunteers. All of these tales of courage, daring and heroics add to the glamour and appeal of becoming a Juicer, especially among impressionable, patriotic young men and women who want to make a real difference in the Minion War. The idea of becoming a sort of superman and dying as a hero in a blaze of glory – maybe even as a legend – is a siren call many young people cannot resist. There is never a shortage of volunteers begging to become a Juicer.

Of course, the reality of war and death is a different matter, but once the soldiers have undergone Juicer augmentation and have been shipped off to the reality of the front line, it is too late. Besides, the "hero-youth" culture prevalent among Juicers is so compelling and intense, that most do not fear or think about death. It is all about combat, fighting like a hero and dying as one. All of which serves the CS perfectly.

Built-in Failsafe. As Colonel Thaddius Lyboc put it, rather coldly, "Juicers come with an expiration date." The chemical augmentation that ramps up a Juicer's metabolism takes a terrible toll on the warrior's body, burning it out in a matter of 5-7 years.

Theoretically, these chemically enhanced warriors can "get off the juice" before it is too late, but that seldom happens. Most

Juicers become so addicted to the drugs and thrill of combat that they cannot give it up, even when death is the only inevitable outcome. Moreover, to escape what Juicers refer to as "Last Call," the young warriors must do so at the peak of their power and combat prowess around three years after becoming a Juicer. A choice most refuse to make. Adrenaline junkies, an estimated 87% of those who get off the juice go back on it within a few weeks because they hate feeling slow and ordinary. They miss the power and speed of being enhanced and the rush of combat.

The longer someone is a Juicer, the more addicted they become to death-defying challenges. Juicers also become increasingly aggressive, violent and quick to action — sometimes too quick. In peacetime, it makes them dangerous and unpredictable, like a caged tiger that longs to be released into the wild where it can hunt and kill and live like the predator it was born to be. This is a good reason to keep the number of Juicers in the Coalition Army minimal, but in the current situation, the CS needs as many Juicers as it can unleash.

If by some miracle, the Minion War unexpectedly ends quickly, hundreds of thousands of hyperactive, combat-hungry Juicers could be a problem. The good news is, they'll ALL be dead in another 3-4 years. Being rid of "the problem" is a simple matter of waiting.

If warranted, there are plenty of enemies the Coalition brass can send a Juicer army to fight against, giving the enhanced warriors something to keep them busy until they reach Last Call. And as a last result, the CS could give them a resupply for their drug harnesses that contains a lethal dose of poison, and problem solved. Heartless? Perhaps, but it would be a quick end to any "Juicer problem." A lethal injection is an extreme measure that would be taken only under the most dire of circumstances. Emperor Prosek and most leaders of the Army of the Coalition States truly seek to protect and preserve humanity, and value the men and women within their fighting forces, so such a tactic is unlikely. Besides, it did not work so well the last time it was attempted (see **Rifts® World Book 10: Juicer Uprising™** for details).

Combat Choices for Juicers

Juicers often enjoy playing the game of "wolf in sheep's clothing" and take full advantage of looking enough like regular army to blend in with the rest of the CS troops. It is only when they get within range of a demonic adversary that they "turn on the juice," and attack with the speed and fury of a Juicer.

Juicers are so versatile that they can serve many combat roles, from support and infantry to Special Forces and Special Ops/Surgical Strike Teams. Against the Minions of Hell they are quickly making a name for themselves as monster fighters and demon slayers, especially when the strike team consists of all or mostly Juicers. The aggressive and hyper nature of Juicers makes them ideal for all sorts of combat missions, and anything that keeps them busy and challenged. Left idle or stuck with conventional troops, Juicers become agitated and impatient towards anyone who cannot keep up with them. As a result, it is best to team Juicers with other Juicers, Psycho-Stalkers, Combat Cyborgs, power armor troops, Dog Boys, Commandos, Strike Teams, and other Special Forces that see a lot of action. Entire squads of Juicers on the ground and in the air with Death Wings or jet packs are a common sight in the Minion War.

Most Coalition Juicers are very respectful toward the Combat Cyborgs in the Coalition Army, understanding better than most what these warriors have sacrificed to be mechanically augmented via bionic conversion. They are also fully aware that an increasing portion of these large, powerful brutes used to be Juicers who were either at Last Call or mortally wounded, and chose to stay in the war and keep fighting as full conversion Combat Cyborgs. It takes great heart and courage to agree to a process that makes you more machine than human in order to return to the horrors of war and support your brethren in arms. This second chance at life to fight alongside comrades, new and old, is the ultimate sacrifice for Juicers who live large and in the fast lane, because they give up a noble death in a blaze of glory to keep fighting. Many Juicers have begun to look at bionic conversion as a default for their next phase in life. Some even pick out their favorite CS 'Borg chassis and let their commanding officer and buddies know their intentions to come back and the choice for their new body as a machine man.

Coalition Juicer

"Nobody is braver than the Juicer. Nobody is more powerful than the Combat Cyborg, or more heroic than our SAMAS pilots. None are more dedicated to the protection of our citizens than the ferocious Dead Boys and their loyal Psi-Hounds. And no power on Earth is more feared by the enemies of humanity than the Coalition Army. Join today."

– Hype from a popular CS recruitment advertisement

CS propaganda and the Juicer military orientation of the Coalition Army have framed the Juicer as heroic, demon-slaying supermen leading the charge in the war. Indeed, the Juicer's high P.E. attribute gives them a greater ability to save vs magic, and their boosted metabolism and various drugs make them highly resistant to mind control and Horror Factor (see #6, below). All of which, when combined with their Augmented Strength, agility and speed, makes them extremely well-suited to battling demons and other supernatural and magic-based threats. Moreover, the majority of idealistic recruits who volunteer to become Juicers live and die by the heroic and high standards set by the Coalition Army. Fighting with a tenacity and courage that is truly inspiring and only adds to the mythic status of the Juicer.

What more is there to be said about the iconic Juicer other than the Minion War has compelled the CS to create them by the hundreds of thousands?

CS Juicer O.C.C. Abilities and Bonuses:

1. Super Endurance: +1D4x100 to S.D.C., +1D4x10 to Hit Points, and +2D6 to P.E. attribute. Can lift and carry four times more than a normal person of equivalent strength, and can last five times longer before feeling the effects of fatigue. Juicers also remain alert and operate at full efficiency for up to *five days* (120 hours) without sleep. Normally needs only three hours of sleep per day.

2. Super Strength: +2D6 to P.S. attribute; considered *Augmented P.S.* **Note:** Minimum P.S. is 22, if lower adjust to 22.

3. Super Speed: +2D4x10 to Spd attribute; can leap 30 feet (9.1 m) across after a short run (half that from a dead stop) and 20 feet (6.1 m) high (half without a short running start).

4. Super Reflexes and Reaction Time Bonuses: +2D4 to P.P. attribute. Minimum P.P. attribute is 20, if lower adjust it to 20. Combat Bonuses: +2 attacks per melee round, +2 on Perception Rolls, +4 on initiative, +2 to disarm and pull punch, +4 to roll with impact, and +1 to automatic dodge at levels 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 14. An automatic dodge means the act of dodging does not use up a melee attack/action for a Juicer as it does for most people, and the CS Juicer can even parry or dodge attacks from behind/surprise. The bionic hand (see #5 below) means the Juicer can parry attacks from M.D.C. and magic weapons with that hand without fear of injury.

5. CS Cybernetic and Bionic Implants: The vast majority of Juicers being cranked out for the Minion War have no cybernetic augmentation. In the mad rush to create hundreds of thousands of CS Juicers in only a few months, the bionics and cybernetic implants that were once a staple for all Coalition Juicers are now limited to roughly 20% of them. Coalition Juicers who are ranking officers (Captains and higher), or who are members of *special forces* or *special operations* (including most who take *Advanced Training),* receive a handful of bionic and cybernetic implants with the intention of making them better, more versatile warriors. The implants for these special operatives and advanced soldiers include *cyber-armor* (A.R. 16, 50 M.D.C.; in addition to the soldier's CA-5J Dead Boy armor), *a bionic hand* (12 M.D.C.) with a *laser finger blaster* (1D4 M.D.; 300 foot/91 m range) for assassination and covert ops, and a *climb cord* (30 feet/9.1 m length) in the wrist of the bionic hand).

Top Secret: What recruits do not know is that a small *explosive device* is *secretly implanted* in the skulls of all CS Juicers. A safety measure in case the Juicer goes AWOL, mutinies, or becomes a danger to himself and others. The tiny device can be detonated by a high ranking officer or sometimes a trusted Robot Specialist, killing the Juicer instantly. Removing the device requires a roll on the Medical Doctor skill at -20%, or M.D. in Cybernetics skill (no penalty), and requires surgical facilities. A failure on the roll to remove it safely causes the device to detonate, killing the patient and inflicting 1D6 M.D. to a 10 foot (3 m) radius!

Here again, with so many Juicers being created, CS surgeons running low or between shipments of the explosive chip that goes into the skull, make judgement calls about leaving the chip out and which Juicer recruits are the best candidates for exclusion from the process. Recruits who are already aggressive or boisterous are "chipped" – code for the explosive skull implant – while those who seem most stable are given a pass, but only when necessary. The recruits never know who has been chipped and who has not, as the explosive is implanted while the recipient is knocked out and undergoing the Juicer augmentation process. In other cases, the overworked Cyber-Docs may accidentally overlook or deliberately skip a few Juicers as they struggle to keep up with demand.

The end result is that 12% of Coalition Juicers are not implanted with the explosive device. For player characters, roll percentile dice: 01-12% means they are one of the "lucky ones" without the explosive safety measure buried in their skulls. **Note:** The explosive implants are a secret, so the G.M. may want to make this roll without revealing its result to the player.

6. Saving Throw Bonuses: +4 to save vs psionics, +6 to save vs mind control (psionic and chemical), +8 to save vs toxic gases, poisons and other drugs, and +4 to save vs Horror Factor. Saves vs magic as per applicable P.E. attribute bonus.

7. Enhanced Healing: Heals four times faster than normal, +20% to save versus coma/death. Virtually impervious to pain, as per the normal Juicer.

8. Low Life Span: 5 years plus 4D6 months is the "official" life span, but in a war against supernatural monsters, the life expectancy of the average Juicer in the Minion War is less than 18 months. Of course, everyone expects to beat the odds.

9. Juicer Vulnerabilities/Penalties: Same as all Juicers, insomnia, restlessness, impatience, hyperactivity, and crave stimuli and challenges to keep them busy or they become irritable, discontent and even mutinous. The supremely confident Juicers enjoy combat and are quick to volunteer for most combat missions. They so buy into the "superman hero" image and "live fast, fight hard and die young" philosophy, that they take daring – some would say insane – death defying risks on a regular basis. They are not show-offs, necessarily, they are just that bold and fearless. Of course, a lot of this has to do with the drugs that ramp up their energy level and physiology, making them more impulsive and aggressive. In fact, over time, the frequent use of adrenaline, steroids and other drug cocktails makes many Juicers thrill-seeking junkies and/or hot-tempered and ready to fight at the drop of a hat, especially those going through Last Call. Some also develop a variety of insanities, particularly obsessions and issues involving anger and self-control.

Coalition Juicer O.C.C. Stats:

Alignment Requirement: None. Most Coalition Juicers start off as idealistic heroes of Principled, Scrupulous and Unprincipled alignment. Many stay within that alignment spread, while a quarter slide to Anarchist over time, but only a few become evil.

Attribute Requirements: None.

Coalition Juicer O.C.C. Skills:

Intelligence (+10%)
Language: American at 98%.
Mathematics: Basic (+12%)
Hovercraft (+15%)
Pilot: Flight System Combat/Death Wings (+15%) or Jet Packs (+16%); pick one (most Juicers take the Flight System Combat skill so they can pilot the Death Wings and Icarus flight systems.)
Radio: Basic (+10%)
Sensory Equipment (+10%)
W.P. Energy Pistol
W.P. Energy Rifle
W.P. Knife
Hand to Hand: Expert or may be changed to Hand to Hand: Martial Arts (or Assassin, if evil) at the cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill.

O.C.C. Related Skills – or – Advanced Training (pick one): Since the Coalition War Campaign and the Siege on Tolkeen, the CS Army has established military schools that offer focused and specialized combat training. Instead of the Juicer getting the traditional O.C.C. Related Skills, he or she may opt to take **Advanced Training (AT)**. To do so, the Juicer trades away *O.C.C. Related Skills and Secondary Skills* in favor of special training and bonuses in TWO areas of Advanced Training with a third AT option in the future.

If **Advanced Training is chosen,** make note of Standard Equipment, Money and Cybernetics, below, but do NOT select *O.C.C. Related Skills* or *Secondary Skills.* Instead, go to the **Advanced Training section** of this sourcebook and select two AT (Advanced Training) programs. AT gives a soldier a highly focused, specialized area of training, abilities and bonuses. He or she may not be as versatile as a character who takes O.C.C. Related and Secondary Skills, but is more deadly and expert in one or two specialized areas of combat.

If **O.C.C. Related Skills** are desired, make your selection from the Skill Categories below, as usual. The advantage of O.C.C. Related Skills is the ability to create a warrior with exactly the skills you desire, often giving the character a broader range of knowledge, and probably more skills. When done selecting O.C.C. Related Skills, go to select Secondary Skills.

The traditional CS Juicer selects seven O.C.C. Related Skills at level one, plus one additional skill and one W.P. at levels 3, 6, 9 and 12 from the categories below. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

O.C.C. Related Skills (not applicable if AT is selected):
Communications: Any (+5%).
Domestic: Any.
Electrical: Basic Electronics only.
Espionage: Any (+10%).
Mechanical: Automotive only (+5%).
Medical: Paramedic only.
Military: Any (+15%).
Physical: Any.
Pilot: Any (+10%); except robots, power armor, tanks, APCs and combat aircraft skills.
Pilot Related: Any (+5%).
Rogue: Any.
Science: Math and chemistry only.
Technical: Any (+5%).
W.P.: Any.
Wilderness: Any.

Secondary Skills (not applicable if AT is selected): The character also gets to select five Secondary Skills from the Secondary Skill list in the **Rifts®** core rule book. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get any bonuses other than the bonus for a high I.Q. All start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Coalition CA-5 Juicer Dead Boy Armor (125 M.D.C. main body) with *CAJ-5 Weapon Arm* or *FIWS weapon built into forearm.*

Standard issued weapons include a choice of the new CP-40 laser rifle, C-50 "Dragonfire," C-29 "Hellfire" or the old C-14 "Fire-Breather" or C-27 Heavy plasma cannon, plus Vibro-Knife or Saber, energy pistol side arm (typically the old C-18 pistol), 8-10 E-Clips per weapon, 4 reloads for the grenade launcher (48 grenades) or anti-demon weapons of choice with corresponding ammo, three signal flares, survival knife, distancing binoculars, robot medical kit, utility belt, uniform, dress uniform, bio-comp and bio-monitor implants, drug harness (drugs must be added every 6-12 months), and food rations for two weeks.

Equipment Available upon Assignment: CS Juicers on missions may be assigned a vehicle (usually something that is light and fast), the original *J1-W "Condor" Death Wing* (just the wing without the Air-Assault Armor) or smaller *J3-W "Falcon" Death Wing*, special equipment, and additional food and supplies for deep reconnaissance and special ops. They may even be given non-military issue for special missions. However, CS Juicers are *never* given access to power armor, robot vehicles, jet fighters or Death's Head transports. Most Juicers have a low security clearance.

Bionics & Cybernetics: It is a matter of Juicer pride to be as "natural" as possible. ("I ain't no 'Borg!"). Many feel the addition of cybernetics demeans being a Juicer. That said, Juicers with advanced training, officers and those assigned to special operations receive a bionic hand and a few cybernetic implants designed to make them better warriors. See Number 5, above.

Money: Food, clothing and basic services are provided for free, plus a monthly salary of 3,000 credits. Starts with one month's pay.

CS Cost to Create a Juicer: The Coalition's cost to create, outfit and arm a Juicer is approximately 500,000 credits.

CS Juicer Gear of Note

CA-5 Juicer "Dead Boy" Armor

Juicer armor is a slightly modified, heavier suit of standard armor with a heavier, horned helmet and features to distinguish it from the standard troops. The heavier weight has no effect on Juicers. The right or left forearm also comes with a modular forearm weapon. Any of the weapon systems that can also be used with CA-6 heavy armor can be used by Juicers. (See **World Book 11: Coalition War Campaign™** for details.)

CS Juicer Construction Distinction: Unlike the standard Juicer harness and tube configuration, the CS Juicer harness and tubes are more fitted and fastened (borderline grafted) to the body so that they do not accidentally snag, puncture or get pinched when the Juicer places the specialized CS Juicer body armor on.

CS Juicer Special Helmet: The helmet of the Coalition Juicer is slightly different than the typical Dead Boy helmet features.

1. Additional HUD Features: A plug in the back is able to interface into the neck Injection-Collar's Bio-Comp, providing the Juicer all of the necessary bio-readings and fluid conditions. This frees the Juicer from having to worry about or review an external Bio-Comp. The HUD is also calibrated for the Juicer's reflexes and visual acuity, thus allowing the Juicer to acquire targets and adversaries as fast as his speed and reflexes allow, which is greater than the speed of a normal human. **Note:** This is calculated into the Super-Reflexes and Reaction Time Bonuses of the CS Juicer.

2. Horns: Juicers also have an intra-guild hierarchy based on the specialized CS Juicer Dead Boy helmets and the size and shape of the helmet horns. The larger or sharper the horns, the more seasoned and experienced the Juicer, and more likely to be an officer. The horns are also used in close combat for head butt attacks and even to gore an enemy (1D4 M.D.)!

3. Mandibles: The mandible-like shape of the mouth/jaws of the CS Juicer helmet is a stylistic design element, not a working maw. It is rumored that the design represents just how close the Juicer is to actual death, much more so than the average Dead Boy, and that their "jaws" represent the jaws of Death coming to claim the enemies who perish at their hands and nipping at the Juicers, themselves.

Class: CA-5 Coalition Juicer body armor.
Size: Human equivalent.
Weight: 30 pounds (13.5 kg).
Mobility: Good for Juicers; -5% to Climbing and -20% to Prowl, Swimming, perform Acrobatics and similar physical skills/performance.

M.D.C. by Location:
Head/Helmet – 80
Arms – 70 each
Legs – 85 each
Main Body – 125

Black Market Price: Not generally available; exclusive to the CS military.

Special Weapon Systems or Features: A detachable forearm weapon system: Typically the CAJ-5A weapon arm, below, or CAJ-5B, CAJ-5C or the FIWS. The CAJ-5 multi-weapon system is a menacing weapon in the hands of a Juicer. The weapon barrel is that of an ion or plasma blaster. The small barrel is a light laser used primarily as a cutting tool. Three wicked Vibro-Blades protrude from the forearm to extend beyond the fist to serve as a close combat weapon. The blades can be partially retracted so that the points of the blades end at the knuckles and can still be used in backhand strikes without extending them to their full length. At full extension, the blades are used like a triple-bladed sword to parry, slash and stab. Silver-plated for front-line troops.

CAJ-5A Standard Weapon Arm

This is a signature weapon mounted onto one of the CS Juicer's forearms and serves not only as a powerful weapon to engage enemies from afar but also to battle close quarters with the Vibro-Blade Tri-Claw.

Since the arrival of the Minion War, some of these Vibro-blades may be dipped and silver-plated for delivering maximum damage towards these hellish creatures. Two new prototype CAJ-5 Class Weapon Arms have also been introduced for field trials, but may not be as reliable or as versatile as the CAJ-5A. Also see the FIWS, below, a predecessor to the CAJ weapon arms that is being reintroduced.

Weight (overall): 15 pounds (6.7 kg).
Black Market Price: Not available; exclusive to the CS military.

1. Ion Blaster or Plasma (same stats for either): Short-range, heavy combat weapon; single blast.
Range: 800 feet (244 m).
Mega-Damage: 4D6 M.D.
Rate of Fire: Each blast counts as one melee attack.
Payload: 10 shots per standard E-Clip or 50 when connected to a UEL or portable energy hip or backpack (10 lbs/4.5 kg).

2. Light Laser Tool: Suitable for light combat, hunting, and as a cutting tool.
Range: 800 feet (244 m).
Mega-Damage: Three settings: 4D6 S.D.C., 1D4 M.D. and 1D6 M.D.
Rate of Fire: Each blast counts as one melee attack.
Payload: 40 shots per standard E-Clip.

3. Vibro-Blade Tri-Claw: Silver-plated for troops in the Minion War.
Range: Arm's length melee weapon.
Mega-Damage: 3D6 M.D.

CAJ-5B Electro-Shield Weapon Arm

Weight (overall): 15 pounds (6.7 kg).
Black Market Price: Not available; exclusive to the CS military.

1. Double-Barreled Plasma Blaster: Short-range, heavy combat weapon.
Range: 800 feet (244 m).
Mega-Damage: 4D6 M.D. per single blast or 1D4x10 for dual barrel blasts.
Rate of Fire: Each single or double blast counts as one melee attack.
Payload: 10 single shots or five double blasts per standard E-Clip or 50 single shots or 25 dual blasts when connected to a UEL or portable, energy hip or backpack (10 lbs/4.5 kg).

2. Shock Shield: This small forearm shield works as a nice parrying and blocking mechanism against sharp horns, claws, teeth and stingers, even flying shrapnel, but its embedded metallic ring is its hallmark. The Juicer can charge the shield so that upon contact, it delivers a powerful electric shock to an adversary. The jolt is only a quick release of electrical current and must be recharged for one full melee round (15 seconds) before it is able to be discharged again. This has helped Juicers stun larger or quicker quarry that might otherwise be too difficult to handle alone or an opponent that is ready to teleport.
Damage against Mortal Opponents: The stun pulse requires physical contact and has the same effects as the infamous Neural Mace. Spell casters are unable to finish casting any spell they may have been in the process of conjuring when struck (roll initiative to see if the mage gets the spell off before his attacker hits; high roll wins). A stunned mage has trouble focusing and concentrating and is unable to cast any magic more complex than a level three spell. **Note:** The shield is *ineffective* against full environmental M.D.C. body armor, power armor, and Combat Cyborgs and vehicles, but is effective against partial cyborgs/Headhunters, non-environmental suits of armor and EBA without a helmet (not fully environmental without the helmet attached).
Damage against Supernatural Opponents: A stun strike does no damage and has only a slim chance of actually stunning the monster for a moment. To save vs stun, the supernatural needs only an 8 or higher (half of what it is for mortals), which means they are seldom stunned. If the stun should work, the penalties are half (only -4 to strike, parry, dodge, etc.) and the duration of the stun is only one melee round (15 seconds). Oh, and when a demon/Deevil snaps out of being stunned it is mad as hell and out for blood. However, a stun strike is enough to disrupt any demon attempting to teleport or Dimensional Teleport, preventing the teleportation for that melee action.

WARNING! There is a 5% chance (01-05% on the roll of percentile dice) that every stun use of the shock shield may short out the power supply connector, preventing the plasma weapon from firing and knocking out the stun function of the shield! Only the silver-plated Vibro-Blade can still extend and retract with full power. Any Operator, Cyber-Doc or Techno-Wizard is able to fix the problem in less than two minutes (6 melee rounds); half that if taken to a CS mechanic.

3. Retractable Vibro-Saber: A single blade, silver-plated Vibro-Saber is sheathed under the protective shield and can be extended to slash targets or parry melee attacks.
Range: Arm's length melee weapon.
Mega-Damage: 2D4 M.D.

CAJ-5C "Stinger" Weapon Arm

Weight (overall): 10 pounds (4.5 kg).
Black Market Price: Not available; exclusive to the CS military.

1. **Dual Projectile Blaster:** A dual projectile blaster is inside an armored forearm housing. The weapon fires special, anti-demon shafts half the size of arrow bolts. It can be loaded on the fly with various cartridges that the Juicer can alternate between the ammo types (up to two types maximum). Interchangeable projectiles are of five types: Bone, iron, silver-plated, stone and wood.

Range: 500 feet (152 m).
Mega-Damage: 2D6 S.D.C. against mortal opponents, 2D6 M.D. or more against demons/Deevils vulnerable to such materials.
Rate of Fire: One shaft or both per melee round.
Payload: Four cartridges can be loaded into the forearm at one time, and may be all the same type of ammo or two different kinds. Each cartridge contains two projectiles.

2. **Dual Mini-Lasers:** Medium-range, double-barreled laser system.

Range: 1,200 feet (366 m).
Mega-Damage: 2D6 M.D. per single blast or 4D6 M.D. per dual blast.
Rate of Fire: Each blast counts as one melee attack.
Payload: 20 single shots per standard E-Clip, 10 dual blasts, or 90 single shots and 45 double blasts when connected to a UEL portable energy hip or backpack (10 lbs/4.5 kg).

3. **Vibro-Blade Tri-Claw:** Silver-plated for troops in the Minion War.

Range: Arm's length melee weapon.
Mega-Damage: 3D6 M.D.

FIWS-J10 Juicer Weapon Arm

Forearm Integral Weapon System

This special CS Juicer weapon was the predecessor of the CAJ-5 and is similar in concept and design. It was developed for Chi-Town Special Forces based on concepts by Colonel Lyboc, the officer once in charge of the Coalition's **Juicer Study Program**.

The FIWS looks like a thick, heavy forearm plate. Over and under the wrist are two thick-barreled particle beam weapons and a thinner targeting laser. Three Vibro-Blades can spring into action at the flick of the wrist, providing the wearer with a lethal close assault weapon. A Long E-Clip powers the particle beam projectors. This fearsome weapon is meant for heavy combat, as the particle beam weapons are very powerful but relatively short-ranged and drain energy quickly. The early prototypes also had a tendency to overheat. Combat trials had shown that a team of FIWS equipped Juicers who managed to get within 500 feet (152 m) of a tank were able to destroy the vehicle before it could eliminate more than one third of them.

The FIWS was replaced by the CAJ-5 for its improved range, energy efficiency, larger payload and the addition of the light laser. However, for the Minion War, the FIWS-J10 is being pulled out of mothballs and manufactured for Juicer special forces and hit squads sent to take down Hell Lords, Overlords, and other Greater Demons and Greater Deevils as the FIWS inflicts heavier damage faster against a powerful, high M.D.C. target. Comes standard with the heavy energy hip or backpack battery.

Weight (overall): 10 pounds (4.5 kg).
Black Market Price: 24,000-50,000 credits. For a brief while, around the time of the Juicer Uprising, some were available on the Black Market. Rumor had it that Colonel Lyboc allowed the blueprints for the weapon to be "stolen" by the Black Market for his personal gain, and pirated FIWS were said to be available from them in North America. However, this appears to have been incorrect. The FIWS sold during and after the Juicer Uprising are now reported to have been stolen from the Coalition Army, and never actually manufactured by the Black Market. There is another, less circulated rumor that suggests Colonel Lyboc was somehow able to coerce the Black Market into stopping the manufacture of the weapon system.

1. **Dual Particle Beam Weapon:** Short-range, heavy combat weapon.

Range: 500 feet (152 m).
Mega-Damage: 5D6 M.D. per single blast, or 1D6x10 M.D. per double blast.
Rate of Fire: Each single or simultaneous dual blast counts as one melee attack.
Payload: 5 single shots and two double blasts per standard E-Clip. 12 single shots or six dual blasts with a Long E-Clip, or 46 single shots or 23 dual blasts when connected to a portable energy hip or backpack (10 lbs/4.5 kg). Comes standard with the heavy energy hip or backpack battery.

2. **Vibro-Blade Tri-Claw:** Silver-plated for troops in the Minion War.

Range: Arm's length melee weapon.
Mega-Damage: 3D6 M.D.

C-58M "Rock Thrower" Variable Bore Cannon

The C-58M Variable Bore Cannon is a man-portable version of the NG-C58 cannon built into Northern Gun's *Thundercaster* combat robot (see **World Book 33: Northern Gun One** for details). This versatile piece of heavy equipment can be used by a three- or four-man fire team of ordinary human soldiers by mounting the portable C-58M canon on a tripod and aimed like a heavy machine-gun. It can also be mounted to trucks and jeeps. Juicers can carry and wield the heavy cannon with two hands and flip-down the bipod to place on the ground or ledge for stability when aiming and shooting. Combat Cyborgs can wield the cannon with one hand, but even Juicers and 'Borgs with the C-58M operate the weapon in two-man teams. The second man being the "loader" (can be an ordinary human) to provide and feed the unconventional ammunition into the hopper or pushed down the barrel of the weapon, while the Juicer or cyborg aims and fires it.

The C-58M Variable Bore Cannon is attractive in a war against the demons of Hades and Dyval because it can fire all sorts of unconventional "improvised ammo" like branches, pieces of wood, large bones, slices or chunks of stone, and other materials that inflict extra damage to different types of demons. A Juicer or cyborg can use a Vibro-Blade to easily create ammunition from almost anything to fire at the enemy. The beauty of the C-58M Variable Bore Cannon has always been that the operator can use debris, scrap and materials around him as ammunition; in theory, never running out of ammo on the battlefield. Against demons it has the added benefit of being able to customize the ammo to whatever common S.D.C. material does damage to the monster.

Many demonic beings are vulnerable to wood and stone, for example.

C-58M Improvised Ammunition: The cannon is an air-pressure powered tube able to launch a wide range of "improvised" ammunition and objects. One might think of it as a giant 'potato gun,' as the variable bore weapon can fire rocks, bricks, shaved pieces of concrete, pieces of metal, pieces of fence posts, tree branches and logs that have been cut down to roughly the size and shape of mini-missiles. This is an easy task for a soldier with a Vibro-Blade, because the M.D. weapon slices through S.D.C. trees, stone and bone like a hot knife through butter. Carving down and shaping M.D.C. scrap takes a bit longer.

Just about anything ranging from the diameter of two human-sized fingers to the maximum diameter of a man's fist or grapefruit can be placed inside the cannon and fired. The idea is that even in the wilderness, far from civilization, the fire team can find ammunition. Moreover, when facing supernatural or magical creatures that may be vulnerable to wood, rock, iron, silver, salt, bone, etc., such unconventional materials can be placed inside the cannon and fired at the monster. These projectiles are launched with great velocity and inflict considerable damage.

The gun uses a small laser to scan the projectile placed inside the barrel before it is fired. The barrel mechanism then contracts or expands to fit around whatever is going to be launched, and a computer adjusts the burst of high-pressure air based on its size and estimated weight. The C-58M can fire grenades, but it is intended for "improvised" ammo created by the user and his team.

The loading is the tricky part. There is a sort of "hopper" into which as many as eight improvised rounds/objects of similar size and shape are placed for firing; eight wooden stakes or similar sized shards of stone, for example. Each one is cycled into the firing chamber a moment after the previous one has been fired. If the ammo is very different in size and shape from one to the other, only a single projectile can be hand-loaded into the cannon and fired before another projectile can be dropped in. In this regard, it is rather like loading cannons of old, except that the projectile is dropped in the top-mounted hopper toward the back of the weapon. A single long object such as a spear or long, narrow branch or piece of scrap can be pushed into the barrel from the front. It can hang out of the barrel, but such extra long projectiles have *half the range* and add another penalty of -2 to strike. It typically takes the equivalent of two melee actions (5-6 seconds) for a prepared loader or loading crew (2-3 people) with ammo handy, to load the C-58M cannon with a new projectile to fire. Otherwise, load, aim and shoot.

While some critics insist it is more of a toy than a real weapon, forces in the Minion War using it against demons and Deevils are quite happy with it.

C-58M Man-Portable, Variable Bore Projectile Cannon Stats: A bipod or tripod mounted heavy M.D. weapon.
Primary Purpose: Anti-Demon and Assault.
Secondary Purpose: Troop Support and Defense.
Range & Penalties: 1,000 feet (305 m) for projectiles the size and shape of mini-missiles or thick stakes, but -1 to strike at distances greater than 500 feet (152 m).

600 feet (183 m) for smaller objects that are not as aerodynamic, including hand grenades, round stones the size of softballs and crooked branches or spears sticking out of the barrel; -2 to strike at distances greater than 200 feet (61 m).

Weight Limit: The object being fired cannot weigh more than 20 pounds (9 kg).
Mega-Damage: Varies. Against mortals and the natural world, S.D.C. items do S.D.C./Hit Point damage (2D6 and 3D6 S.D.C. for most items) and M.D.C. items inflict Mega-Damage (most do 2D6 or 3D6 M.D.). Against the supernatural, ordinary S.D.C. objects may inflict Mega-Damage to the monsters, and some inflict greater damage.
Rate of Fire: One projectile at a time. Each shot counts as one melee attack.
Payload: Eight improvised projectiles of similar size and shape can be placed in the hopper and fed into the cannon by an autoloader. Additional ammo can be created on site as needed or in advance and either carried by members of the fire team or hauled by a vehicle, rolled on a cart, etc. Longer, spear-like *improvised ammo* must be loaded by hand by pushing down into the muzzle of the barrel. Takes one melee action/attack to load the weapon per one round, which is why two loaders are standard. Two melee actions to load long, spear-like projectiles.

Note: See the *NG Thundercaster Combat Robot* for the artillery version, **NG-C58 Variable Projectile Cannon (Rifts® W.B. 33: Northern Gun One,** page 182-183).

Juicers and Vibro-Blades

Juicers enjoy close combat and love Vibro-Blades, as well as chainsaws, shotguns and other short-ranged weaponry. Juicers being sent to the front in the Minion War, or deployed as "demon hunters," are assigned silver-plated Vibro-Blades and other demon-killing weapons and ammo.

All Vibro-Blades are blade weapons surrounded by an invisible, high-frequency energy field that gives them Mega-Damage capabilities.

The Ancient Weapon Proficiency skill and bonuses apply to all Vibro-Blades. Vibro-Claws fall into the W.P. Knife category. Sabers and large swords fall under W.P. Sword.

Black Market costs are included. Add 1,000 to 2,000 credits for silver-plated weapons. Price varies with the size of the weapon.

Handheld Vibro-Blades (Melee Weapons):

Vibro-Knife: 1D6 M.D. **Cost on Black Market:** 7,000 credits.

Vibro-Saber (short sword): 2D4 M.D. **Cost on Black Market:** 9,000 credits.

Vibro-Sword (large, one-handed sword): 2D6 M.D. **Cost on Black Market:** 11,000 credits.

Giant-Sized Sword: 3D6 M.D.; usually used by oversized power armor suits or by giant robot vehicles, but some Juicers like to use it as a two-handed sword, its scabbard hung on the back or over the shoulder. **Cost on Black Market:** 18,000 credits.

Vibro-Forearm Claws: 2D6 M.D., usually two or three hooked blades attached to a forearm gauntlet or protective plate. Great for parrying and slashing. **Cost on Black Market:** 11,000 credits.

Vibro-Blade Vambraces

Coalition Juicers like to use the same Vibro-Blade handguards and vambraces as *Coalition Dog Boys,* with Vibro-Blades large and small.

Short, Spiked Blade Handguard: Two short, sharp Vibro-Blades with serrated edges. Ideal for slashing and stabbing attacks, as well as sawing/cutting or chipping through light M.D.C. wire, plastic, and ceramics, or S.D.C. metal and concrete; does 2D4 M.D. **Cost on Black Market:** 9,000 credits.

Triple-Bladed "Cat's Claw" Handguard: Three curved, claw-like Vibro-Blades the length of knives; sharp on one or both sides, serrated or not, do 3D4 M.D. **Cost on Black Market:** 11,000 credits.

Dual Long-Blade Handguard (2): A pair of long, sharp Vibro-Blades that are partially retractable (half length), maximum length is 10 inches (0.29 m). Ideal for slashing, stabbing and parrying. Inflicts 2D6 M.D. **Cost on Black Market:** 11,000 credits.

Hooked Forearm Vibro-Blades (2): The vambrace or forearm plate has a pair of hooked Vibro-Blades that are partially retractable (half length), maximum length is 20-24 inches (0.5 to 0.6 m). Excellent for slashing, parrying and hooking weapons and disarming opponents. They are also suitable for climbing (+5% to Climbing skill). Inflicts 2D6 M.D. and is +1 to parry and +2 to disarm. **Cost on Black Market:** 14,500 credits.

Dual Sabre Forearm Vibro-Blades: The vambrace or forearm plate has a pair of straight Vibro-Blades that are partially retractable (half length), maximum length is 24 inches (0.6 m). Excellent for slashing, stabbing and parrying. Inflicts 2D6+2 M.D. and is +1 to parry. **Cost on Black Market:** 16,000 credits.

Note: Having armor or a vambrace with both forearm and handguard blades does not increase the overall damage, because only one set of blades can be used at a time; hand or forearm.

Non-CS Juicer Weapons

See **Rifts® World Book 10: Juicer Uprising™** for more Juicer Chainsaws and other special weapons for and details about Juicers.

J1-W "Condor" CS Death Wing

The Original CS Death Wing

The Death Wing is a multi-purpose, light air to land assault and reconnaissance system designed at the **Lone Star Complex**. Not originally intended to be a combat weapon, it was designed to track runaway mutants from the air and recover them, as well as observe runaways, D-Bees and animals in the wild for behavioral studies and research purposes.

Some suspect that the Vallax Aliens, under the guise of Ultra-*Tech Industries (UTI)* at *NewTown* – before they were found out and destroyed during the Juicer Uprising (see **World Book 10: Juicer Uprising™**), stole the idea for the *Icarus Flight System* from Lone Star's flying Wing. Ironically, the Death Wing, although slower than the Icarus, proved to be a good countermeasure against the Icarus Flight System, and it was one of many reasons the CS decided to increase the production and distribution of the Death Wing to its troops.

Though originally intended as a full power armor suit similar to the SAMAS, the "wing" portion of the CS flight pack is detachable. The flight pack is attached to the pilot's armor by a special magnetic seal, and can be removed in a matter of seconds (detaching from the Death Wing counts as one melee attack/action). The moment the magnetic seals lock, connectors from the wing to the body or power armor automatically engage, linking the armor to the onboard computer of the wing. This instant connection gives the pilot complete control over the entire wing, its engines, speed, weapons, cameras – everything. The computer responds to verbal commands and codes as well as an emergency, manual override.

The Death Wing flight system is not just detachable; the Wing and its built-in weapon systems can be placed on autopilot to circle and make passes to continue to target and fire upon the enemy. Moreover, it can be remote controlled by its designated user. Experienced pilots can direct the flight system/Wing by remote control from the ground, sending it to attack designated targets while the pilot detaches from it and drops to the ground to fight the enemy, rescue captives, engage in sabotage and conduct other operations.

While pilots clad in the amped up Death Wing Power Armor (or other armor, including ordinary Dead Boy body armor) love the concept, control and firepower of the Death Wing, the majority of CS pilots usually stay "jacked-in" to the flying wing the entire time. They report it is difficult to maintain control over the Death Wing at speeds greater than 300 mph (480 km), especially at low altitudes, so they seldom put the vehicle through its paces. Given the choice, most Fly Boy Aces and RPA pilots prefer to fly any model of SAMAS, rocket bikes, Sky Cycles and aircraft. The Death Wing is just too much machine and speed for most pilots. Understandable, really. After all, the pilot, clad in a thin suit of power armor or Dead Boy armor, straps himself to what is essentially 20 feet (6.1 m) of wing and roaring jet thrusters capable of speeds that approach Mach One! It is little wonder then that the Death Wings have been hijacked by the flamboyant Coalition Juicers.

Whether it is the rocket-fast **J1-W "Condor" Death Wing** or the smaller and more maneuverable **J3-W "Falcon" Death Wing,** Juicers are built for these one-man flight systems. Their enhanced bodies are able to handle the G-forces of fast dives, sudden twists and turns, aerial acrobatics, vertical and horizontal flying, and gymnastic dismounts to the ground as the wing flies off, continuing to fire at the enemy. Power armor design specs are made for ordinary human tolerances. Juicers exceed those tolerances and while Combat Cyborgs can handle the G-force, their large, heavy bodies and bulkiness add weight and create drag that slows the Death Wings down and makes them more "wobbly" and difficult to control than they already were (-10% to piloting skill). And even Combat Cyborgs don't have the Juicer's quick, instinctive reflexes. That's why Juicers can out-perform any pilot on a large or small Death Wing; bobbing and weaving through swarms of demon fliers, scooting through the arms of giant Gargoyles, and diving below treetop level, all the while strafing the enemy and racing down prime targets on the ground.

Demons, and most enemies for that matter, are used to enemy fliers like the SAMAS, Samson and Triax Predator that zoom in, lay down suppressing fire or target armor and fliers, before zooming away back into the heavens for another sweep. In that regard, troops in jet packs, SAMAS, and other flying power armor function a lot like combat helicopters, right down to hover capabilities and vertical landings and takeoffs.

Juicers on Death Wings are a completely different animal. Nobody is ready for a manned flier to dismount from the flight system to leap into combat on the ground, fight and then leap back into the air to reattach to the flying wing. After diving in

on a strafing run, or delivering focused fire from the air, Juicers on Death Wings come in fast and low. So low that they may be forced to weave between and around giant robots, tanks, buildings and debris. Too low and fast for most missile systems, aircraft and artillery to get a bead on them. Or in the case of the Minions of Hell, too low and fast to be hit by spells or targeted by the few heavy guns and Soul Cannons they possess. The Death Wings' superior speed also enables Juicer piloted Death Wings to outmaneuver Gargoyles, Demon Flies, Demon Bats, Harpies and troops riding monstrous winged steeds in aerial dogfights where the Juicers are likely to be outnumbered 20 to 1. Where SAMAS, though fast and maneuverable, are in effect, stopped by demonic fliers, like two cavalry armies of old clashing in the middle of a battlefield, the speed, agility and firepower of the Death Wings enable Juicers to punch through flocks of monsters so thick they block the sun. "Threading the needle" as they weave through the flock to pass them, or punching through them, lasers blasting, like winged lightning. Yes, some percentage of Juicers are caught and slain, or knocked out of the sky, their wings destroyed, but the majority make it through the cloud of monsters intact to treetop level.

Once below the fray in the sky, the Death Wing Juicer troops can focus on ground targets. Most Juicers leave aerial combat to SAMAS and the Fly Boys; it is enemy infantry Juicers like to tear up. A Juicer piloted Death Wing can ride as close as two feet (0.6 m) above the surface at high speeds to avoid being targeted as they rush in. At the right moment, Juicers love to take the Death Wing higher – 50-100 feet (15.2 to 30.5 m) above the heads of their adversaries – blast them with ranged weapons and missiles, before making leaping dismounts, detaching from the Death Wing at speeds as great as 100 mph (160 km; though 50 mph/80 km is the norm). As the Death Wing, itself, flies away, either out of harm's way or continuing to fire upon the enemy in a set pattern, the Coalition Juicer drops down on top, or in front, of his target to engage in close quarters combat. Now the slashing, silver-plated Vibro-Blades and handheld weapons come out, and a deadly dance begins. Many eyewitnesses say the Juicer leaps, spins and pirouettes around his adversary, striking when he can, and dodging attacks directed at him like a dancer. As per Coalition protocol, 2-4 Juicers typically engage a single demonic enemy, which makes the combat look all the more like a troupe of dancers locked in a macabre dance of death. Others have likened the spectacle to a group of matadors skillfully working together to put down an enraged giant bull.

Indeed, the Juicers' speed and ability to dodge often frustrates and infuriates Greater Demons/Deevils who like to dig in and duke it out like heavyweight boxers. When unable to do so, the enraged demon becomes more savage and reckless, sometimes forgetting to use magic and special abilities in its arsenal as it strikes out in anger. This works to the Juicers' benefit and adds to the demon's frustration while making the creature intent on killing the leaping, stinging human insects annoying him so grievously. Perfect for distracting a Greater Demon/Deevil/Warlord from effectively commanding his demonic troops or from other details and events happening on the battlefield. With luck, the Juicers and anyone who might join them in battle, defeat their demon opponent. Of course, despite all their skill, agility and fire-support from the Death Wings, the Greater Demon and/or his legions may prove to be more than the Juicers can handle. War is nothing if not brutal and unfair.

J1-W "Condor" Death Wing Stats

Model Type: J1-W Death Wing, Combat Wing Models PA-101W (combat) and PA-102W (reconnaissance).
Nickname: Condor
Class: Wing Combat Flight System; the *Flight System Combat* skill is required to pilot this vehicle. Those with Pilot: Jet Pack skill can attempt to fly a Death Wing Flight System, but reduce his Jet Pack skill by half(!) and he suffers an additional -40% skill penalty when taking evasive action, stunt flying or performing trick maneuvers.
Crew: One.
M.D.C. by Location:

*** Wings (2) – 210 each
Main Thrusters (2; center, near pilot's body) – 100 each
Directional VTOL Thruster Pods (2; center near pilot) – 60 each
Secondary Thrusters (2; wing tips) – 130 each
* Twin Lasers (2; in Secondary Thrusters) – 22 each
* Top-Mounted Weapon System (1; rail gun or missiles) – 80
* Robot Weapon Arms (2) – 40 each
** Main Body of Wing – 290
* Pilot – M.D.C. varies with the body armor or power armor of the pilot. CS Juicers typically wear standard CA-5 Juicer Dead Boy Armor (125 M.D.C.).

* A single asterisk indicates a small or otherwise difficult target to hit. They can only be hit when an attacker makes a Called Shot, and even then he is -3 to strike.

The pilot of the Death Wing is in the open, and can be targeted by a Called Shot. However, he is a small target protected by the jet ports, wing and robot armor, making him a difficult target to hit: -4 to strike on a Called Shot and -7 when flying faster than 400 mph (640 km) or when a Juicer pilot is taking evasive action or engaged in dogfight acrobatics. The pilot's M.D.C. body armor protects as normal. Killing the pilot causes the Death Wing to switch to autopilot and return to its base of origin at maximum speed. The Wing's computer constantly monitors the pilot and knows when he is severely injured or dead. The same happens if the pilot activates a homing command (return to base) or falls unconscious.

** Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body causes the Wing to crash.

*** Destroying one side/half of the wing (210 M.D.C.) will cause it to spin and crash.

Destroying one of the Secondary Thrusters has no obvious effect, but destroying both reduces speed by 10% and inflicts a penalty of -1 to dodge.

Destroying one of the main thrusters reduces speed by 25% and inflicts a penalty of -20% to the Pilot: Flight System Combat skill and -2 to dodge. Destroying both main thrusters reduces speed by 50% and inflicts a penalty of -40% to the Pilot: Flight System Combat skill and an additional -4 to dodge and -3 on initiative/response time.

Destroying one of the directional thrusters reduces speed by 15%; loss of both jets reduces speed by 30% and makes precision maneuvers difficult; -25% to the Pilot: Flight System Combat, -2 to dodge and -2 on initiative.

Penalties are cumulative.

Speed:
Ground: Not possible.

Flying: The rocket propulsion system provides the Condor VTOL capabilities, but it cannot hover stationary. Its speed is enough to match some jets with a maximum flying speed of 600 mph (960 km). Cruising speed is considered to be 300-400 mph (480 to 640 km). Juicers, however, are likely to maintain a speed of 500 mph (800 km) or greater most of the time, slowing down to cruising speed only when flying low to the ground and around obstacles. Must slow down to 100 mph (160 km) or less to perform a leaping detachment from the Wing without killing themselves. VTOL capable.

Maximum Altitude: 16,000 feet (4876.8 m)! Can fly as low as two feet (0.6 m) above the ground with the pilot in a prone/flat position. Sensors enable the J1-W Condor Death Wing to follow the contour of the ground while adjusting and maintaining the two foot (0.6 m) height even at maximum speed, though most pilots seldom dip below four feet (1.2 m). Flying in the prone/flat position or sideways as a vertical sliver, both make the wing and the pilot a difficult moving target to hit.

Flying Range: The nuclear power system gives the Condor Death Wing five years of life, but the jet rockets get hot and need to cool after a maximum of 9 hours of continuous combat or flying at speeds greater than 500 mph (800 km). Can fly indefinitely with brief rest stops along the way every four hours.

Statistical Data:

Height: 5 feet (1.5 m) at its center mass in a horizontal position including main thrusters, and weapon system. Roughly 7 feet (2.1 m) in a landing position with the pilot in a standing position.

Wingspan: 20 feet (6.1 m) full wingspan; capable of Vertical Take-Off and Landings (VTOL).

Disassembles into 3 pieces, so the modular wing section of the flight system can fit in the bed of a pickup truck, allowing for easy transport, storage and concealment.

Length (horizontal): 5 feet, 5 inches (1.65 m).

Weight of Wing: 1.2 tons, fully loaded.

Cargo: None.

Power System: The Wing has its own, independent nuclear power supply; average energy life is five years.

Market Cost: 4.3 million credits. Not available on the Black Market. **Note:** Northern Gun, Manistique Imperium and Lone Star manufacture Death Wings.

Weapon Systems:

1. **High-Powered Laser Wing Guns (2):** A pair of double-barreled lasers are built into both of the wingtips where the Secondary Thrusters are located. These weapons point forward, but can be raised and lowered in a 25 degree arc of fire. They are used to strafe ground targets and engage in aerial combat.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Aircraft and Enemy Fliers.

Secondary Purpose: Anti-Personnel and Ground Vehicles.

Range: 4,000 feet (1,219 m).

Mega-Damage: 3D6 M.D. per single blast, 6D6 M.D. per simultaneous double blast from one wing, and 1D6x10+4 M.D. from a quadruple blast from both pairs of lasers on each wing. However, in the latter case, the target must be at least 22 feet (6.7 m) wide (or tall when flying vertically) for both wing guns to hit. **Note:** The original AAA-PA 101W and 102 Death Wings utilized experimental high-powered lasers that would overheat, seize-up and stop working after a very short while of prolonged combat, sometimes even catching fire and inflicting damage to the wing and secondary jet thruster. The current weapon system maintains the superior range while offering excellent firepower that can be sustained indefinitely even in the fiercest and longest periods of combat.

Rate of Fire: Each single, double or quadruple blast counts as one melee attack.

Payload: Effectively unlimited.

2. **Robot Weapon Arms with Medium-Range Lasers (2):** A pair of robotic weapon arms fire lasers in dog fights, strafing runs and precision targeting. The arms can be raised and lowered, point up, down, forward, to the sides and even turned backward 300 degrees, providing a tremendous arc of fire. **Note:** Each housing has a gun camera which serves as a pair of additional eyes for the pilot (images sent to the HUD in the helmet) and assists in observation and reconnaissance.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Aircraft and Enemy Fliers.

Secondary Purpose: Anti-Personnel and Ground Vehicles.

Range: 2,000 feet (610 m).

Mega-Damage: 2D6 M.D. per single blast from one arm or 4D6 M.D. from a simultaneous double blast from both arms.

Rate of Fire: Each single or double blast counts as one melee attack.

Bonus: The pair of robot weapon arms adds one extra melee attack per round.

Payload: Effectively unlimited.

3. **Top-Mounted Weapon System (1):** This can be either a rail gun or a mini-missile launcher. Both can turn side to side 180 degrees and up and down in a 45 degree arc of fire. This is a main battle weapon ideal for anti-aircraft, anti-missile and Dogfights. Pick one: Rail gun is standard, or missile launcher option.

   CAAA-60R Rail Gun (1): This is standard equipment for the Death Wing, but can be substituted with a mini-missile launcher.

   Primary Purpose: Anti-Armor and Monsters.

   Secondary Purpose: Anti-Aircraft and Missiles.

   Weight: Gun: 150 lbs (67.5 kg), built-in Ammo-Drum: 250 lbs (112.5 kg).

   Mega-Damage: A burst is 40 rounds and inflicts 1D4x10 M.D., one round does 1D4 M.D.

   Rate of Fire: Each burst counts as one melee attack.

   Range: 4,000 feet (1,219 m).

   Payload: 6,000 round drum for 150 bursts. Reloading a drum requires flying back to base and takes 5-10 minutes and requires a small crane or SAMAS power armor.

   Mini-Missile Launcher Alternative: Used in place of the rail gun.

   Primary Purpose: Anti-Armor and Monsters.

   Secondary Purpose: Anti-Aircraft and Missiles.

   Range: About one mile (1.6 km).

   Mega-Damage: Varies with missile type, but standard is armor piercing (1D4x10 M.D. each) as plasma/napalm/heat/fire are not as effective; many demons are resistant or impervious to heat.

   Rate of Fire: One at a time, or in volleys of 2, 4, or 6 mini-missiles.

   Payload: 18 total.

4. **Handheld Weapons:** As per pilot, but is usually some sort of energy rifle or weapon system(s) built into the armor and Vibro-Blade(s).

5. Sensors and Features of Note:

a) Enhanced Radar: While airborne, the Condor's radar system can identify and simultaneously track up to 96 different targets. Range: 10 miles (16 km).

b) Gun Cameras in Weapon Arms: Each weapon arm has telescopic lenses with a range of 2 miles (3.2 km) and 12x magnification. Can store 36 hours of video and 3,000 still images.

6. Bonuses: In flight and while attached to the Death Wing: +2 on initiative, +1 to strike, +2 to dodge, +1 attack per melee round (from robot arms).

7. Penalties:

Absolutely no stealth capability: The approach of a J1-W "Condor" Death Wing sounds like a jet coming in for a landing. The roar of its jet thrusters is thunderous. It mostly only functioned in a reconnaissance/observation role at high altitudes until the Coalition Juicers got their hands on it.

Poor handling: -20% to the Pilot: Flight System Combat skill for ordinary military personnel who are not physically augmented when flying faster than 300 mph (480 km) and whenever engaging in evasive or stunt maneuvers, *in addition to* any of the usual penalties for such maneuvers. -5% for Juicers and -10% for Cyborgs. The Condor Death Wing is difficult to handle.

J3-W "Falcon" Death Wing

The J3-W "Falcon" Death Wing is specifically designed with Juicers in mind and the type of air to ground engagements they excel at. The Falcon is much smaller, lighter, quieter, and more maneuverable in urban environments, battlefield combat, and the ways Juicers use the Death Wings. It sacrifices some of the speed and altitude of its larger predecessor, but offers much more control and fewer piloting penalties than the massive Condor Death Wing. In fact, the smaller size means they have a much easier time weaving around obstacles and enemies to strike and evade, and strike again. And since it is a much quieter machine, especially in the din of combat, there is a better chance of surprising the enemy when piloting the Falcon. This all makes the Juicers' famous acrobatics, low altitude flying and leaping dismounts from the wing to drop on top of, or in front of, enemy targets much easier than with the Condor Death Wing. (See descriptions of this and the Juicers' dance of death under the description of the J1-W "Condor" Death Wing, above.)

In the Minion War, one of the Coalition Juicer's primary jobs is to take down demonic leaders, Greater Demons/Deevils, and other high-priority targets. As noted elsewhere, Lesser Demons and Deevils need strong leaders. Take down the leaders and you have a good chance of routing the rest of their army. And that's exactly what Coalition Juicers and Psycho-Stalkers on Falcon Death Wings, along with Death Knights, Combat Cyborgs and others, charge in to do. To that end, the Falcon Death Wing might be thought of as the small package that packs a big wallop.

The two guns mounted on top of the wing are lasers, and concealed inside each jet thruster is either a high explosive short-range missile or five mini-missiles. This gives each Falcon Death Wing some heavy hitting power to take down the Greater Demons/Deevils fast. The standard attack method is to get in close, deliver some serious damage with one or two missiles and while the enemy is still reeling from the missile strike(s), hit it with laser fire before a leaping dismount from the Death Wing to finish the monster off in close combat. It may sound crazy, but it has proven incredibly effective, particular when the monster is attacked in small groups.

J3-W "Falcon" Death Wing Stats

Model Type: J3-W Death Wing, Combat Wing Model PA-109W (combat).

Nickname: Falcon.

Class: Wing Combat Flight System. The *Flight System Combat* skill is required to pilot this vehicle. Those with Pilot: Jet Pack skill can attempt to fly a Death Wing Flight System, but reduce his Jet Pack skill by half(!) and he suffers an additional -40% skill penalty when taking evasive action, stunt flying or performing trick maneuvers.

Crew: One.

M.D.C. by Location:

*** Wings (2) – 145 each

* Sensor Cluster (1; top) – 20

* Main Thrusters (2; rear center behind pilot) – 60 each

Wing Thrusters (2; one each wing; VTOL) – 100 each

* Wing Thruster Missile Launchers (2; concealed) – 30 each

* Twin Lasers (2; center, top) – 50 each

* Short-Range Missile Launchers (2; concealed in each thruster) – 25 each

** Main Body of the Death Wing – 180

* Pilot – M.D.C. varies with the body armor or power armor of the pilot. CS Juicers typically wear standard CA-5 Juicer Dead Boy Armor (125 M.D.C.).

* A single asterisk indicates a small or otherwise difficult target to hit. They can only be hit when an attacker makes a Called Shot, and even then he is -4 to strike (includes the pilot).

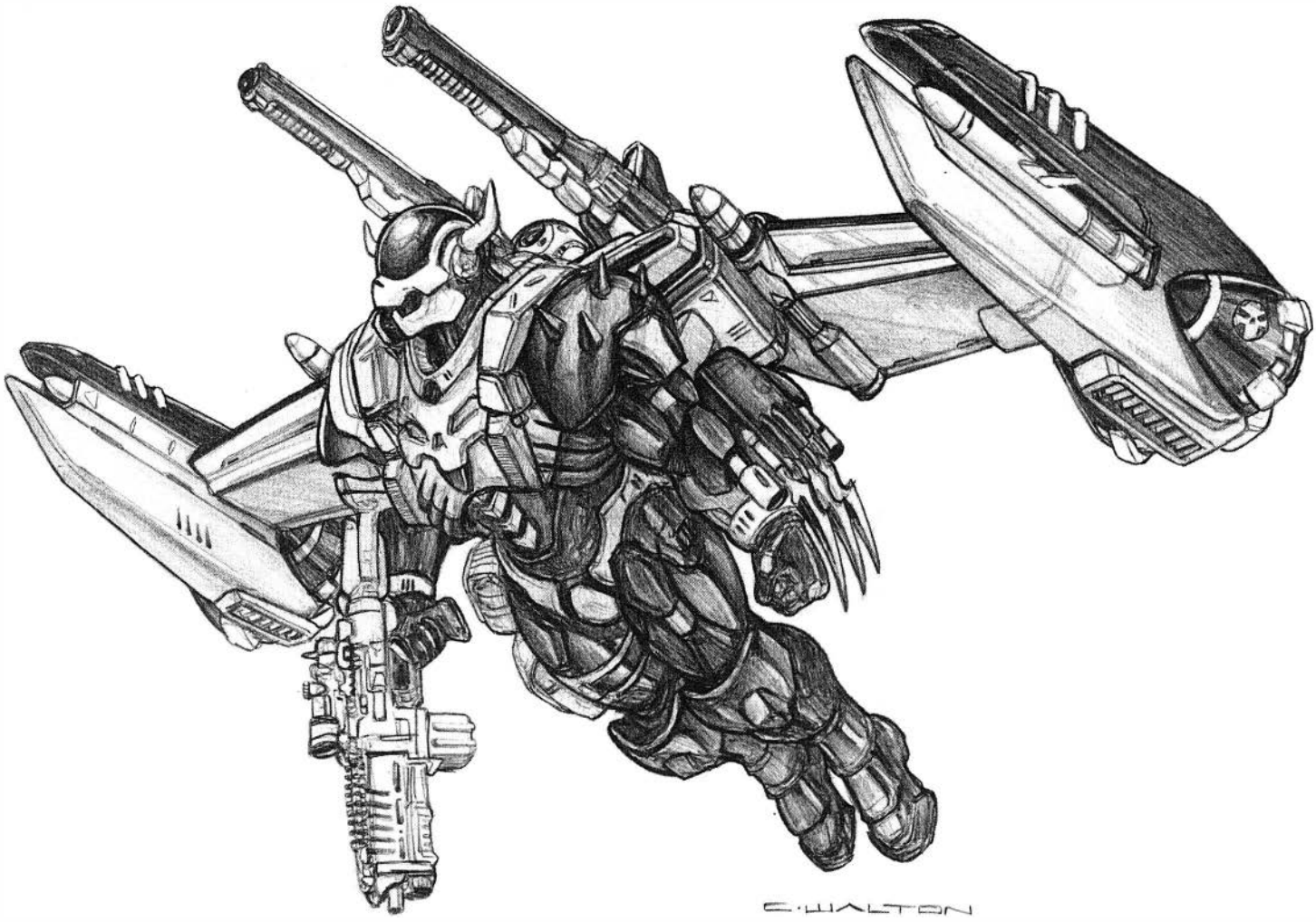
The pilot of the Death Wing is in the open, and can be targeted by a Called Shot. However, he is a small target protected by the jet ports, wing and robot armor, making him a difficult target to hit: -4 to strike on a Called Shot and -7 when flying faster than 400 mph (640 km) or when a Juicer pilot is taking evasive action or engaged in stunt and dogfight acrobatics. The pilot's M.D.C. body armor protects as normal. Killing the pilot causes the Death Wing to switch to autopilot and return to its base of origin at maximum speed. The Wings computer constantly monitors the pilot and knows when he is severely injured or dead. The same happens if the pilot activates a homing command (return to base) or falls unconscious.

** Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body causes the Wing to crash.

*** Destroying one side/half of the Falcon Death Wing (145 M.D.C.) causes the jet thruster to fall away and the entire flight system is compromised. Reduce speed by 30%, -25% to piloting skill, -2 on initiative, -1 to strike and -4 to dodge.

Destroying one of the Wing Jet Thrusters (while the rest of the wing is intact) has the effect of reducing speed and maximum altitude by 30%, -15% to piloting skill, -2 to dodge and -1 on initiative.

Destroying both of the Wing Jet Thrusters (while the rest of the wing is intact) has the effect of reducing speed and maximum altitude by 60%, -30% to piloting skill, -4 to dodge and -3 on initiative. However, it can continue to limp along in a wobbly manner via the many thrusters.



Destroying one of the main thrusters (vulnerable to attacks from behind only) reduces speed by 20% and inflicts a penalty of -10% to the Pilot: Flight System Combat skill and -1 to dodge. Destroying both main thrusters reduces speed by 40% and inflicts a penalty of -20% to the Pilot: Flight System Combat skill and an additional -3 to dodge and -2 on initiative/response time.

Penalties are cumulative.

Speed:

Ground: Not possible.

Flying: The rocket propulsion system provides the Falcon VTOL, but it cannot hover stationary. Maximum flying speed is 410 mph (656 km), but cruising speed is considered to be 200-300 mph/320 to 480 km). However, Juicers may maintain a speed of 300-400 mph (480 to 656 km) most of the time, slowing down to cruising speed only when flying low to the ground and around obstacles. Must slow down to 100 mph (160 km) or less to perform a leaping detachment from the wing without killing themselves. VTOL capable.

Maximum Altitude: 10,000 feet (3,048 m). Can fly as low as two feet (0.6 m) above the ground with the pilot in a prone/flat position as well as vertical flight. Sensors enable the J3-W Falcon Death Wing to follow the contour of the ground while adjusting and maintaining the two foot (0.6 m) height even at maximum speed, though most pilots seldom dip below four feet (1.2 m). Flying in the prone/flat position or sideways as a vertical sliver, both make the wing and the pilot a difficult moving target to hit.

Flying Range: The nuclear power system gives the Falcon Death Wing five years of life. The wing jets and main thrusters need to cool after 24 hours of continuous combat or flying at speeds greater than 350 mph (560 km). Can fly indefinitely with brief rest stops along the way every four hours.

Statistical Data:

Height: 4 feet (1.2 m) at its center mass in a horizontal position including main thrusters, and laser guns. Roughly 7 feet (2.1 m) in a landing position with the pilot in a standing position.

Wing Span: 10 feet (3 m) full wingspan. Capable of Vertical Take-Off and Landings (VTOL). Wings can fold up to fit inside a pickup truck.

Length (horizontal): 7 feet (2.1 m).

Weight of Wing: Half ton fully loaded.

Cargo: None.

Power System: The Wing has its own, independent nuclear power supply; average energy life is five years.

Market Cost: 1.6 million credits. Not available on the Black Market. **Note:** Northern Gun, Manistique Imperium and Lone Star manufacture both Death Wings.

Weapon Systems:

1. **High-Powered Lasers (2):** A pair of lasers are built into the center of the Falcon Death Wing flight system. They may fire independent of one another or fire-linked to fire at the same target simultaneously. Both have a 30 degree up and down arc of fire and can turn right and left 45 degrees. They are used in

focused fire, dogfights, strafing runs and to shoot down missiles.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Aircraft and Enemy Fliers, Anti-Missile.

Secondary Purpose: Anti-Personnel and Ground Vehicles.

Range: 4,000 feet (1,219 m).

Mega-Damage: 3D6 M.D. per single blast and 6D6 M.D. per simultaneous double blast from both weapons at the same target.

Rate of Fire: Each single or double blast counts as one melee attack.

Payload: Effectively unlimited.

2. Wing Thruster Missile Launcher: Built into each of the wing thrusters is either a short-range missile launcher with one missile or a mini-missile launcher with five mini-missiles.

Short-Range Missiles:

Primary Purpose: Anti-Armor and Monsters.

Secondary Purpose: Anti-Aircraft/Fliers and Anti-Missiles.

Range: Five miles (8 km).

Mega-Damage: Varies with missile type, but standard is medium high-explosive (2D6x10 M.D. per missile).

Rate of Fire: One or two at a time.

Payload: Two total short-range missiles. One per each thruster launcher.

Mini-Missiles (alternative):

Range: About one mile (1.6 km).

Mega-Damage: Varies with type. Against the Minions of Hell, armor piercing (1D4x10 M.D.) or high explosive (5D6 M.D.) are typical.

Rate of Fire: One at a time or in volleys of 2 or 4 mini-missiles.

Payload: 10 total; five mini-missiles per each thruster launcher; one launcher in each wing thruster.

3. Handheld Weapons: As per pilot, but is usually some sort of energy rifle plus any weapon system(s) built into the armor and Vibro-Blade(s).

4. Sensors and Features of Note:

a) Enhanced Radar: While airborne, the Falcon's radar system can identify and simultaneously track up to 96 different targets. Range: 20 miles (32 km).

b) Sensor Cameras: Telescopic lenses with a range of 2 miles (3.2 km) and 12x magnification. Can store 36 hours of video and 3,000 still images.

5. Bonuses: In flight and while attached to the Death Wing: +2 on initiative, +1 to strike, and +2 to dodge.

6. Penalty: -10% to Flight System Combat skill for ordinary military personnel who are not augmented when flying faster than 300 mph (480 km) and when engaging in evasive or stunt maneuvers, *in addition to* any usual penalties for such maneuvers. No penalty for Juicers and -5% for Cyborgs. The Falcon is rough to handle, but not as difficult as the larger Condor.

CS Psi-Stalkers

Among the people who rally behind the Coalition States are the Psi-Stalkers. Tens of thousands join the Coalition Army, whie hundreds of thousands more fight the invading demon and Deevil hordes on their own terms. For many Psi-Stalkers, with their instincts to hunt and destroy the supernatural – feeding upon the release of their foes' P.P.E. – it is as if they were born for the Minion War. In a way, they were. Psi-Stalkers are humans mutated by magic and dimensional energy from the Rifts and ley lines during the Two Hundred Year Dark Age that followed the Great Cataclysm. Somehow, they evolved into instinctive monster hunters with psionic abilities that help them recognize and find their inhuman prey.

The Psi-Stalkers who join the Coalition Army are used as demon hunters, squad leaders of Dog Packs, Special Forces and in Psi-Battalion for various combat roles. Though it is a tremendous potential sacrifice for Psi-Stalkers to submit to Juicer augmentation, thousands agree to do so for the greater good.

Psycho-Stalkers

Juicer Psi-Stalkers

The so-called **Psycho-Stalker** has been one of the Coalition States' best kept secrets. Though they surfaced around the time of the Juicer Uprising, the tiny handful of people who may have heard of them believe Psycho-Stalkers were part of Colonel Lyboc's experiments with Juicer Technology, and discontinued. They are wrong. Lyboc's experiments proved Psi-Stalkers are still human enough that they can be turned into Juicers, with dramatic and favorable results. For one thing, Psi-Stalker Juicers can use their psychic power of bio-feedback to temporarily turn themselves into *Mega-Damage creatures!* For a another, they exhibit a larger range of psionic abilities while on the juice. This combined with their other powers and abilities to sense and track the supernatural makes them ideal for fighting the supernatural and creatures of magic. To that end, trusted Psycho-Stalkers have been part of the ISS and Psi-Battalion since 105 P.A., but deemed too dangerous to produce in great numbers – until the Minion War.

Juicing Psi-Stalkers is more controversial than making true humans into supermen. Again, however, the desperateness of the situation with the Minion War has superceded any concerns of the CS Brass. The result is Psi-Stalkers turned into the so-called Psycho-Stalkers by the thousands. But much fewer than the conventional Juicer; approximately 40,000-50,000 are slated for the enhancement.

Psycho-Stalkers have been one of Psi-Battalion's little secrets, and even in the Minion War, few realize the full extent of their powers. And the CS would like to keep it that way. That said, Psycho-Stalkers are too valuable to keep completely hidden, so they are being dispersed among Dead Boy troops, packs of Dog Boys, and conventional Juicers, as well as continuing Psi-Battalion operations and the defense of the Coalition's fortress cities. In many Juicer squads and Dog Packs, one or two are Psycho-Stalkers.

The first CS Psycho-Stalker was created by accident by a mad genius working under the instruction of the ambitious Colonel Thaddeus Lyboc. They are dubbed "Psycho" Stalkers, in part because the first Psi-Stalker, when successfully turned into a Juicer, went berserk and smashed through a wall to escape, never to be seen again. But also because if a Psycho-Stalker does not detox by year three of being a Juicer, he or she becomes more and more obsessed with hunting supernatural evil and all manner of monsters and mages. Any Psycho-Stalker who does not detox becomes lost to bloodlust and madness. (See #10, below.) Until the madness, Psycho-Stalkers are dedicated hunters and slayers of all things demonic and supernatural evil. The madness consumes

all Psycho-Stalkers who do not detox, an event preceded with the Psi-Stalker burning out his psychic powers, which is why submitting to Juicer augmentation is a tremendous sacrifice for those who do so. The fear of losing their psychic abilities, which are second nature to them, is so great that 40% successfully detox in their third or fourth year. Even after the madness sets in, Psycho-Stalkers usually remain allies of humans and take their aggression out on supernatural evil, monsters and the mages who associate with them.

O.C.C. Abilities and Bonuses

1. Super Endurance: Add 2D6x10+100 to S.D.C., +40 to Hit Points, and +3D4 to P.E. attribute. Can lift and carry four times more than a normal person of equivalent strength, and can last 5 times longer before feeling the effects of exhaustion. Can remain alert and operate at full efficiency for up to five days without sleep. Normally needs only three hours of sleep per day.

2. M.D.C. Transformation Special Bio-Feedback Power: By refocusing psychic energy (I.S.P.), the Psycho-Stalker can temporarily become an M.D.C. creature! Change all S.D.C. and Hit points to M.D.C. This process costs 25 I.S.P. and lasts four melee rounds (one minute) per level of experience. However, during this period as a Mega-Damage being, the Psi-Stalker cannot use any of his psychic abilities.

The transformation also burns up Potential Psychic Energy and makes the Stalker *hunger* for a minimum of 20 P.P.E. points. The hunger pangs/cravings are intense, and make the mutant irritable and distracted; -3 on initiative until he feeds.

3. Super Strength: Add 2D6 to P.S. attribute. Note: Minimum P.S. is 22, if lower adjust to 22. When using the Bio-Feedback Power (see #2, above), Juicer augmented strength becomes *Supernatural P.S.*, and punches, kicks and bites inflict their S.D.C. equivalents as M.D.!

4. Super Speed: Add 3D4x10 to Spd attribute. Can leap 30 feet (9.1 m) across after a short run (half that from a dead stop) and 20 feet (6 m) high (half without a short run).

5. Super Reflexes and Reaction Time Bonuses (includes Juicer and Psi-Stalker bonuses): +5 on initiative, +4 to roll with punch, fall or impact, automatic parry or dodge on all attacks, even from behind/surprise; add two extra attacks per melee round, and add 2D6 to P.P. attribute. Minimum P.P. attribute is 20, if lower adjust it to 20. **Penalties:** Same as normal Juicers, insomnia, restlessness, impatience, plus the range of natural Psi-Stalker powers are half.

6. Saving Throw Bonuses: +4 to save vs psionics (do not add M.E. bonuses), +5 to save vs mind control (psionic and chemical), +1 to save vs illusions, +1 to save vs possession, +6 to save vs Horror Factor, and +6 to save vs toxic gases, poisons, and other drugs.

7. Psi-Stalker Powers: All the powers of the Psi-Stalker R.C.C. apply to the Psycho-Stalker, with the exceptions of physical and saving throw bonuses (already taken into account above). Among these powers are the ability to sense psychic and magic energy, sense supernatural beings, nourishment (lives on P.P.E., usually 50 to 100 P.P.E. a week; does not need food or water!), and psionic empathy with animals (see **Rifts® Ultimate Edition**, page 154). **Note:** Reduce the usual range for these powers by *half*. For reasons unknown to most researchers, the Juicer process seems to interfere with (sometimes completely destroy) psionic powers.

8. Amplified Psionic Powers: +1D6 to the M.E. attribute. Choose six psionic powers from the *Sensitive Category* (as per all Psi-Stalkers) *and four from the Healing Category*. Again, for reasons unknown, Psycho-Stalkers develop a handful of extra psionic powers ordinary Psi-Stalkers do not possess. It is speculated that the chemicals stimulate some portion of the Psi-Stalker's brain that causes a few additional psionic abilities to manifest. The most common are Bio-Regeneration (self; 6), Detect Psionics (6), Exorcism (10) and Healing Touch (6), but any of the Healing powers can manifest.

I.S.P. Base: M.E. attribute number +1D6x10 I.S.P., plus 10 I.S.P. for each additional level of experience. Reduce sensing range by half. Psycho-Stalkers are a Master psychic and need only a 10 or higher to save vs psionic attack.

9. Enhanced Healing: Heals four times faster than normal, +20% to save versus coma/death. Virtually impervious to pain, as per the normal Juicer, and those with *Bio-Regeneration* heal at double the usual rate!

10. Low Life Span and Insanity: Same as normal Juicers: 5 years plus 4D6 months. During the last two years of life, the Psycho-Stalker becomes ravenously hungry for P.P.E. energy, requiring as much as 150 to 250 P.P.E. per week to subsist. Psycho-Stalkers often become obsessed with hunting and destroying evil supernatural beings and beings affiliated with them, including Daemonix, Black Faeries, Witchlings, Brodkil, Worm Wraiths, vampires, Witches, Necromancers, Shifters, Minions of Splugorth, Horune Pirates, werebeasts and creatures of magic.

Worse, Psycho-Stalkers lose *ALL* psionic powers, usually in their fifth year as a Juicer, but sometimes in year four. The loss includes their natural abilities to *sense* the supernatural and magic, and their empathy with animals! This is akin to a human losing his sense of sight or hearing and many Psycho-Stalkers go insane without them. Part of the madness involves becoming aggressive and violent, lapsing into berserker rages and becoming completely obsessed with finding and feeding upon supernatural beings and other beings strong with P.P.E., like practitioners of magic, Faerie Folk, dragons, etc. Many becoming psychotic murderers consumed with hunting, killing and feeding, without distinction between good and evil. Hence the name Psycho-Stalker. In the past, the CS had made detox for Psycho-Stalkers mandatory at the end of year three or beginning of year for (and executed the ones who refused!), but with the Minion War and so many new Psycho-Stalkers, keeping track of them all will be impossible.

Optional: Insanities and personality quirks: Use the table found under Cyborgs, elsewhere in this book, or as the G.M. deems fit.

Psycho-Stalker – Juicer Psi-Stalker Stats

Alignments: Any, but most are Scrupulous, Unprincipled or Anarchist.

Attribute Requirements: None, other than must be in good health and a Psi-Stalker.

O.C.C. Skills: Same as the Coalition Juicer.

O.C.C. Related Skills – or – Advanced Training: Same as the Coalition Juicer.

Secondary Skills: Same as the Coalition Juicer.

Standard Equipment: Same as the Coalition Juicer.

Money: Pay is 2,500 credits a month plus room and board. Starts with one month's pay.

Cybernetics: None, ever, except Bio-Systems if absolutely necessary.

CS Cyborg Program, 110 P.A.

"Combat Cyborgs?"

"Yeah, cyborgs. When a soldier gets torn apart or half his body is disintegrated, he's angry as hell. He wants to go back out there and kick the ass of the enemy that has done this to him. Giving those soldiers a new cyborg body is the perfect plan for recycling fallen warriors and keeping our fighting forces replenished. Plus they are already trained and have combat experience. They know the enemy and are highly motivated to dish him some serious payback.

"And after the war? What then? What if this legion of cyborgs turn on us?"

Colonel Lyboc rolled his eyes, took a deep breath, and wondered how many times he would have to have this ridiculous conversation with frightened, armchair generals about Coalition Cyborg and Juicer combat forces.

"Not an issue."

"Not an issue?! Not and issue, Colonel? How can you say that with such casual disregard?"

"Because I'm not worried about men and women willing to fight for us, almost die, and go back out there after sacrificing their own humanity to keep us safe. It's pretty simple math from where I'm standing."

– An excerpt of a Conversation with Colonel Lyboc

Implementor, Colonel Thaddius Lyboc

"Why Lyboc? Why is that piece of garbage presenting Operation Hellbender?"

"I heard he has the confidence of some powerful people upstairs."

"Not the Emperor?"

"I don't know. I hope not. But, yeah, maybe."

"I heard the Brass was handing him an olive branch after that court-martial affair and him being found innocent."

"Innocent my ass. That man is as dirty as they come."

"Yeah, more like he knows where the skeletons of somebody high up are buried."

"I've never been able to figure out what his motives are."

"Does it matter?"

"Not really."

"He's not the one in charge of the Operation is he?"

"No. I heard he's already been reassigned. I would imagine General Holmes or General Talbot will be running the show. Maybe, Ross Underhill."

"Lyboc is what, then? The architect of this plan?"

"No, I heard they brought him in to sell it."

"Lyboc?"

"Sure, nobody can pitch all the angles like he can."

"I guess."

"I don't know about that. I heard Operation Hellbender came down from on high, but I can see Lyboc's fingerprints all over it. Fast and dirty, like him."

"Ugly and scary, if you ask me."

"You know what they say, 'All's fair in love and war.'"

"And nobody loves getting down in the dirt more than Lyboc."

"How does he get away with his crap and keep his commission?"

"He's Colonel Thaddius Lyboc, that's how."

"Yeah, an alley cat with nine lives and who knows how to play in the garbage and come out smelling like a rose. There's nobody else quite like that bastard."

"Thank god. One is too many, for my taste."

"Someone has to do the dirty work."

"And his name is Lyboc."

– A conversation about Lyboc and Operation Hellbender

Operation Hellbender is the Coalition States' response to the demonic invasion forces unleashed by the Minion War across North America. There are many facets to the operation, but there are two strong areas of focus, one, deploying troops quickly, and two, giving troops a fighting chance against a supernatural enemy, which means human augmentation programs.

Juicer augmentation and power armor troops are two forms of augmentation. **Combat Cyborgs** are another. All three are being used on a magnitude never before dared by the Coalition States.

Combat Cyborgs

Coalition Technology is such that making cyborgs is routine and comparatively cost efficient when compared to power armor, aircraft, and armored vehicles. And it is a technology that the CS has mastered and excels in. As with Juicer augmentation, the creation of Combat Cyborgs is fast, and the recipient of the bionics is combat ready within a few days after surgery – a few hours if absolutely necessary. In a war like this, where the superhuman enemy could strike, en masse, at any time, you need to crank out combat troops as fast and inexpensively as possible. And not just green recruits, but soldiers who stand a chance against giant, supernatural beings that wield magic, use psionics and possess other paranormal abilities.

Coalition Cyborg Troopers. When it comes to fielding a mechanized army in North America, few can come close to rivaling the Coalition States. The CS has had a standing army for decades, and with this comes experienced soldiers. Even with the massive influx of new, inexperienced recruits, the top military brass and most officers have years of experience under their belts. As a result, the demonic legions of Hell are about to clash head on with a fierce, mechanized Coalition army that is not intimidated by their giant size, ferocity or supernatural powers. A mechanized army of Combat Cyborgs, Juiciers, SAMAS and other power armor and robot troops who know a thing or two about fighting the supernatural. And those who don't are fast learners. Even the green recruits and newly minted Combat Cyborgs and Juicers are ready for battle and eager to learn from the veterans among them. And there are many battle-tested veterans from the Siege on Tolkeen who have learned how to fight these creatures, and know that with the right weapons and a level head, the Coalition Cyborg Trooper can hold its own against any Minion of Hell.

Many Coalition Combat Cyborgs are being modified for the war against the demonic. To this end they are being outfitted with silver-plated melee weapons and wield heavy energy weapons. Demons and Deevils love to engage in melee combat, and CS troops will be ready for them.

Project Rebirth

"The longer I sit here half a man, the longer my brothers and sisters are still out there dying. They need me. I need to get back out into battle. So do whatever you have to do to get me back in action. I'll sign off on full cyborg conversion. Let's do it."

– A common sentiment from Soldiers volunteering to become a Combat Cyborg after a serious injury has sent them back home.

Medical achievement within the Coalition States is such that soldiers who have suffered the most grievous wounds and injures can survive. A soldier who has lost two-third of his body in battle can be stabilized and returned home. In the chaos and cacophony of battles past, victims of such terrible injuries were mercifully, left to die. Not anymore. They are stabilized, brought to a mobile hospital, base camp or facilities in Chi-Town, Lone Star, and a large number of CS locations, and offered *a second chance.*

The choice is entirely their's to make. The soldier can be allowed to die in quiet dignity, or be patched up in the best and most humane way possible and sent home, or they can be converted into Combat Cyborgs and sent back on the front-line for a second shot at the enemy. 11% choose death. 7% go home an invalid (unless they have the resources to purchase cybernetics, if they even want cybernetics). 82% chose full bionic conversion to become a Combat Cyborg and return to battle. That number is 97% among fallen Juicers, SAMAS and Death Knights. To expedite the process, Coalition Soldier are being asked before they go into the field if they want extraordinary measures used to save them for the explicit purpose of being reborn as a Combat Cyborg and sent back into battle. The answer is placed in their files and indicated on their dog tags.

Project Rebirth is the brainchild of Joseph Prosek II. In his position as Head of Information and Propaganda, Joseph has developed a deep understanding of human psychology, and how to manipulate and motivate people. He knows that fallen warriors want a second chance to live and avenge their fallen comrades and to rejoin the living left on the front-line. Others want a second chance to prove themselves worthy or to get revenge; vengeance is always a powerful motivator. And in a war like this one, where the fate of the Coalition States and all of humanity hangs in the balance, it is human nature to want that second chance more than anything in the world. Most soldiers take it without hesitation. How many times does a person get a second chance in life? And in this instance, the fallen soldiers rise like the Phoenix from near death with a new body of Mega-Damage steel and fury to bring it to the enemy again, as a Coalition Combat Cyborg. Sometimes, again and again.

The newly minted Combat Cyborgs are ready for action as soon as they come off the operating table. Having undergone combat training and already possessing at least some combat experience, only a few days of instruction and dry runs with their new bionic bodies and built-in weapon systems are necessary. A week after full bionic conversion, the Juicer or Dead Boy is ready for redeployment, this time as a Combat Cyborg, anxious for the chance to face the enemy and make them pay.

Combat Cyborgs are in the thick of the bloodiest combat, so their bodies take a beating. When one is torn apart or turned into a junk pile from the punishment endured, the odds are that the human brain, heart and vitals inside the wreckage still beats. Nine out of ten fallen Coalition Cyborgs want to be rescued, salvaged and placed inside a new bionic body and sent back out into battle a third, fourth, fifth, as many times as it takes to destroy the supernatural invaders – or die trying. According to Combat Cyborgs who have almost died and come back as a Combat Cyborg more than once, "Dying and getting reborn after the second, third or fourth time is easy. After that first conversion into a cyborg, it's a piece of cake to do it again and again. When you lay out there in pieces, you pray your boys recover what's left of you so they can put you in a new tin can, and you can come back smarter and meaner the next time around."

Fellow Coalition Combat Cyborgs know this about their bionic brothers, and keep an eye out for each other. They always make sure that fallen 'Borgs are recovered so they can be given another chance to prove themselves. *Juicers* know becoming a Coalition Cyborg Strike Trooper is a likely fate them (that or death), so they too keep an eye out for fallen 'Borgs and have the utmost respect for them. On the battlefield, Juicers are often seen fighting alongside Combat Cyborgs.

2nd Life Combat Cyborgs. These CS troops are converted into Combat Cyborgs after having suffered severe wounds in the field of battle and would have perished without major bionic reconstruction. Such cyborg conversions are designed for heavy combat and demonbusting assaults. They are usually given a heavy core frame chassis that is further enhanced with a wide variety of modular components, weapons systems and armo. This standard chassis is not as sophisticated as a some Combat Cyborgs, but it makes up for it with the versatility of quick and easy, modular "lock-and-load" technology. Such units are combat ready and their modular nature makes them suitable for a range of weapons and armor, including the massive **Hellbuster armor**. The beauty of the Hellbuster armor is that it fits over heavy Combat Cyborg armor, so when the Hellbuster armor is destroyed, the cyborg can continue to fight at full strength, as if shedding an *outer skin.* With the right weapons and motivation, a level-headed Coalition Cyborg Strike Trooper can hold its own against most individual Minions of Hell. Take on the demon in pairs or groups of 3-4 Combat Cyborgs vs one demon, and the odds are in the cyborgs' favor.

Many cyborgs are being modified for the expected hand to hand combat that always seems inevitable when fighting demons. To this end they are being outfitted with silver weapons as one option. They can already wield heavy weapons and with advice from the NGR Military, even their Cyborg bodies are being rebuilt with demonbusting combat in mind.

The Psychological Consequences

For Emperor Prosek and the Coalition military leaders, Operation Rebirth is the smart move to make. Hell, it is brilliant. There is a war to win. Life as we know it hangs in the balance. Fight to win now, worry about the fallout later. This is not callous, it is the practical reality of the Minion War. Nothing matters if humanity loses this war.

The true psychological price of Project Rebirth is yet to be known, but it is likely to be a terrible one. As you might expect, to nearly die and be brought back to life as a cyborg, is a traumatic experience. Most soldiers who suffer horrific, life threatening injury receive their wounds in the most gruesome manner – being torn in half by a demon, or ripped into pieces, or being partially eaten alive, or mauled by a Netherbeast, or tortured and mutilat-

ed, or ravaged by magic. A near death experience is hard enough, to then sacrifice your humanity to become a man-machine and face the same enemy again — well, it takes its toll on the human psyche.

Reborn Cyborg Psychology Table (Optional)

Having nearly died once, or perhaps several times, combined with the horrors of war and the brutality of the near death experience(s), being *reborn* as a Combat Cyborg may take its toll on the soldier and result in serious emotional trauma and insanity. Roll on this table the first time the character is "reborn" as a Combat Cyborg. Roll again (or on any of the *Insanity Tables* found in the **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** or the **Rifts® Bionics Sourcebook**) for each subsequent near death experience, especially if the cyborg must be rescued and his bionic body is rebuilt, before he is sent back into the combat. Cyborgs can almost die many times. As long as the shattered cyborg body is recovered with his brain intact, odds are he can be rebuilt and redeployed. Which is what most dedicated soldiers want, but it still takes its toll.

01-10% No insanity this time. Still well grounded. It may sound ironic, but having nearly died and being able to return to battle as a Combat Cyborg has saved this soldier's sanity. It has given him a sense of purpose and has helped keep him emotionally strong, focused and grounded. This character is likely to see himself as a humble protector of the innocent and destroyer of evil. Though he does not see himself as a hero, odds are he is very much one.

11-15% Supreme Arrogance: His experiences, raw strength and combat prowess makes the character feels increasingly detached from humanity, and superior to most other people except, perhaps for fellow Combat Cyborgs and war veterans. Tends to dismiss, ignore and disregard everyone else. He may be a braggart or just an arrogant snob with that haughty air that rubs many people the wrong way. The soldier's attitude sometimes borders on insubordination when dealing with superior officers and he has no trouble fighting and killing inferior beings, which is most people, be they human, D-Bees or demons. This character is also likely to welcome being rebuilt over and over again and sent back into action.

16-20% Loves Magic: Though a cyborg, the character is convinced magic is the ultimate source of power and/or humankind's salvation. He is fascinated with magic spells even if he cannot use magic himself, as well as practitioners of magic, dragons, creatures of magic and magic items. This warrior will try to collect and wield magic weapons, use magic items and potions, and if possible, maybe even consider submitting to magical reconstruction. He trusts mages more than anyone else.

21-25% Hates Magic: This warrior is convinced that magic is the source of evil and human suffering. Practitioners of magic, creatures of magic and all magic items are never to be trusted. This includes demons and supernatural beings, and any creature who uses magic, including fellow humans. Such beings should be used and manipulated to your advantage when the opportunity arises and wiped from the face of the Earth whenever possible!

26-30% Hardened and Cruel: Hardened by war, this gruff, tactless warrior tends to be merciless in combat, distrusting of strangers, and cold-hearted in most matters. He watches out for Number One, himself, and those comrades who have proven themselves to be loyal and capable, and not too annoying. Everyone else is just collateral damage waiting to happen. The character tends to be secretive and self-serving. Lacks empathy toward others and tends to see the world in cut and dried them or us, live or die, terms. "That's too bad, kid. Be happy you're alive. Now get outta my way." As for demons and other evil supernatural beings, they are vermin that need to exterminated. This attitude may extend to D-Bees and mages, too, or not.

31-35% Cannot Die. Invincible: This warrior has cheated Death so many times that he has decided he is indestructible and cannot be killed, or that he cannot be killed by demons/Deevils, or until he fulfills an unknown destiny. As a result, he is a daredevil and a risk taker who always believes he can be at the odds. Some may actually covet and seek immortality, one way or another. Bonus: +20% to save vs coma and death!

36-40% Thrill Junky: Loves challenges and lives to fight. War is in his blood and the battlefield is home. Away from the action or safe at home or at base, he cannot sleep more than 1D4 hours a night, feels nervous and antsy, useless and depressed. Reduce Perception Rolls and all combat bonuses by half, until the Thrill Junky gets involved with something that gets his adrenaline pumping; brawls, racing, dangerous missions, combat, field action, etc. When bored out of his mind, this character is likely to volunteer for anything. +1 to save vs Horror Factor.

41-45% Phobia: Death: He has seen too many good people, innocent people, die. He hates death and fears it. On one hand, this individual tends to be cautious and conservative, avoiding risk for himself and especially for innocent bystanders. Scenes of brutal murder and many bodies, including battlefields, makes the character nauseous and forlorn for 1D4 hours. During which he has no Perception Rolls or initiative (last to attack), -1 melee attack, and is -2 on all combat rolls. -2 to save vs Horror Factor when it involves mass murder and senseless slaughter.

On the other hand, when faced with cold-hearted, senseless or cruel murder, death and destruction, especially of women and children or prisoners who cannot fight back, the cyborg becomes a determined, avenging angel hellbent on bringing them justice; +1 on Perception Rolls, +1 on initiative and +1 on all saving throws!

46-50% Technology is the answer. Thankful for a second chance at life as a cyborg, this soldier wants to make his second chance count. He tries to be as good and heroic as possible, and believes that technology will be humanity's salvation. He loves being a powerful cyborg, and tends to be a tech-obsessive, constantly seeking upgrades to his body and weapons, and loves gadgets. Maybe even alien tech despite the Coalition's warnings against it. Fears being decommissioned.

51-55% Humanity Lost: Humans ain't nothin'. This augmented warrior no longer relates to his own people. Being human and frail is foolish and dumb. He cannot understand why everyone doesn't submit to full cyborg conversion. Those who do not are chumps and sissies not worthy of his respect. Juicers, Crazies and partial cyborgs are better than the average schmoe, but they are still flesh and blood and therefore, cowards and inferior. This character only respects other cyborgs and powerhouse beings. This lack of empathy toward his own kind can lead to betrayal and victimization of them (robs, cheats, abuses, intimidates, enslaves them, etc.). This character may feel more at home with D-Bees and monsters, and other cyborgs or robots and machines. Hyper-critical of humans and the CS. Might become a willing

servant of someone like Archie Three or other machine aliens or deity.

56-60% Super-Competitive: Everything is a challenge/competition and he needs to win. The character may become addicted to betting and gambling, especially on himself, and takes everything as a competition. He wants to be the fastest, strongest, best at everything. Some individuals may become moody, grumpy and spiteful, perhaps even vindictive when they lose or are shown up, whether it is deliberate or unintentional. These guys are not good sports when they lose.

61-65% Obsession – Demon Slayer: Obsessed with demon slaying and protecting the innocent from such evil supernatural beings and other, truly monstrous-looking and wicked creatures. As long as the character has this purpose he is reasonably stable. The day there are no demon or inhuman monsters to fight, is the day the character falls apart and gives up on life. He or she is likely to take a suicide mission or even commit suicide. He needs that purpose and belief that he is doing something good or is making a difference, otherwise everything he has sacrificed is for nothing.

66-70% Obsession – Human Superiority: The soldier sees humanity as truly superior to all other races. As a result, he does not like or trust D-Bees or anyone with a monstrous appearance. All D-Bees, aliens, creatures of magic and supernatural beings are invading monsters regarded with suspicion and he is quick to assume the worse of them.

71-74% Obsession – Eradication of Humaniy's Enemies: Anyone the Coalition declares as an enemy of the state is something the character is obsessed with eradicating. This includes magic users which are seen as enemy number one, followed by D-Bees. The soldier adopts a shoot first, ask questions later attitude and will show no mercy to the Coalition's enemies.

75-78% Obsession – Humanity's Savior. The character is convinced that he or she is the savior of humanity. No matter the mission, he must succeed. Failure is not an option. However, if this individual fails to protect the innocent or friends and allies, he is shattered and falls into depression for 1D6 days. During which, reduce all combat bonuses and skill proficiencies by half.

79-82% Megalomania. The soldier slowly becomes a megalomaniac and craves power and glory for himself. There is no such thing as too much power, and soon the character is willing to do anything to acquire more, even if it means using, cheating or betraying friends, loved ones, allies, country and high ideals. This character may slowly turn evil.

83-86% Am I a Cold Machine? The soldier wonders if he is still human or just a machine. Everything feels different. Too mechanical and wrong. Can he truly love and feel human emotions? Is his humanity slipping away? Would he realize it if it was? These questions haunt this character. Ironically, because they do haunt him, he is likely to try hard to retain his humanity and tends to be compassionate, merciful and feels things deeply. Perhaps too deeply, sometimes.

87-90% Boy Scout. The character believes in humanity and doing right by people more than ever. He may even be willing to give D-Bees and magic users the benefit of the doubt, and doesn't turn his back on anyone who means well. Open-minded and caring.

91-95% Demonic Philosophy: If you can't beat them join them. Maybe demons have the right idea? Might makes right. Take what you want. Greed is good. Do as you please and do onto others, before they do it to you. Life is short, live it to the fullest and at the expense of others. To Hell with high ideals and morals that will get you killed. It is time for the strong to reign.

96-00% Evolutionary Superiority. The soldier is convinced that he is the next evolution for humanity. That means he is even superior to other humans who are seen as weak, frail and in need of strong leaders. The soldier remains loyal to the Coalition, but may come to believe that he should lead or rule over humans. If he learns of Archie Three and the Republicans, he will perceive them to be rivals and dangerous to human existence. Does not trust nonhumans or alien technology, including the Splugorth and Lemurians.

CS Cyborg Notes

Coalition Combat Cyborgs

Due to the invasion of the *Minion War*, General Charles Reed Baxter and his supporting officers finally got what they had been petitioning for; an entire **Cyborg Army Corps (CAC)**. The Coalition States Cyborg Division (CC Division) consists primarily of the standard Cyborg Strike Troopers which are produced in two common varieties, the *Light CS Cyborg* and the *Heavy CS Cyborg* (see **Rifts® World Book 11: Coalition War Campaign**, page 69). These units make up the vast majority of the Cyborg Division under the auspices of the **Department of Special Divisions (DSD)**. The Strike Troopers are among the most versatile of the CS Cyborgs, but with rising concerns there has been an immediate need to supplement certain niche functions with more specialized cyborg types. The newest additions are a nice compliment of full conversion cyborg chassis types that fill special roles in the field against certain threats and perform more specialized tasks. These units are described in **Rifts® Heroes of Humanity: Arsenal.**

Typical Full Conversion Features of Note

Below are the standard features common to Light and Heavy CS Combat Cyborgs. Different and additional bionics are usually limited to Cyborg officers and special units. (See **Rifts® World Book 11: Coalition War Campaign** for complete stats and information about Coalition Cyborgs and many other O.C.C.s, armor, weapons, robots and vehicles.)

Light CS Combat Cyborg: Emphasis is on speed and agility and use for espionage and seek and destroy missions. Typically comparable to human in size (6.6 to 7 feet/1.95 to 2.1 m), P.S. 22, P.P. 22, Spd 176 (120 mph/192 km) and can leap 12 feet (3.6 m) high or lengthwise from a standing position or 4x that distance with a running start.

Standard cybernetic and bionic features include: Built-In Language Translator, Built-In Radio Receiver and Transmitter, Uji-versal Headjack, Molecular Analyzer, Modulating Voice Synthesizer, Bionic Lung, Multi-Optic Eyes, Garrote Wrist Wire, Climb Cord, one Retractable Silver-Plated Vibro-Blade, Concealed Ion Rod in one leg, and one Large Secret Compartment in the other leg.

Heavy CS Striker Combat Cyborg: Emphasis is on strength and firepower and use for espionage and seek and destroy missions. Typically 7 to 8 feet (2.1 to 2.4 m) tall, P.S. 26, P.P. 24, Spd 132 (90 mph/144 km) and can leap 10 feet (3 m) high or

lengthwise from a standing position or 2x that distance with a running start.

Standard features include: Built-in Language Translator, Built-in Radio Receiver and Transmitter, Universal Headjack, Bionic Lung, Multi-Optic Eyes (both), Energy-Clip Hand and Arm Port (both), one Forearm Blaster (typically plasma or particle beam), retractable silver-plated Vibro-Blade (1) or Concealed Arm Laser Rod, Concealed Ion Rod in one leg, and one Large Secret Compartment in the other leg. 10% have an extra appendage that provides +1 attack per melee round.

Cyborg Optics Note: All CS cyborgs have Multi-Optics Eyes which provide the following capabilities. Though sometimes listed under the helmet/faceplate, the optics are a permanent part of the cyborg, not part of the helmet/faceplate.

Passive Nightvision (2,000 feet/610 m range).

Telescopic (4-8x30 magnification; 6,000 feet/1829 m range).

Macro-Lens (2x to 20x magnification).

Thermal-Imager (2,000 feet/610 m range).

Light Filters to reduce glare.

Additional filters and optics may be available from some faceplates.

Weapon Note: With the Minion War, all bladed and spiked weapons are *silver-plated*, including newly issued Vibro-Blades. Most Coalition Combat Cyborgs are equipped with either a retractable, silver-plated Vibro-Blade or a silver-plated sword and/or dagger that is part of their standard equipment and worn on a belt or strapped to an arm or leg. Some also have a small to medium-sized wooden cross. (A silver knife and cross may be concealed inside a secret leg compartment). Since S.D.C. silver weapons inflict M.D. to many supernatural beings, weapons intended for use against them do not need to be "Vibro" weapons, saving on cost and manufacturing time.

Likewise, Cyborgs with any type of claw, spike or blade weapon(s) are getting them silver-plated for use against the Minions of Hell.

Coalition Cyborg Rank

Full Conversion Cyborg Strike Troopers may range from *Private to General.* However, cyborgs are typically not afforded a commissioned officer's position. Thus, rank typically starts as Private and tops out as a non-commissioned officer. However, while that tends to be the general rule, there are commissioned Cyborg Officers of high rank. The latter usually start out as a Military Specialist or other commissioned position who either becomes a Combat Cyborg by choice or by circumstance. Meaning they lose body parts in combat and receive partial or full bionic conversion. Moreover, experienced Combat Cyborgs who rise through the ranks as non-commissioned officers, but prove themselves to be truly exceptional leaders, are sometimes allowed to advance to ranks beyond those of non-commissioned officers, but their service must be stellar.

Underneath the Mask

Full Conversion Cyborgs, or Combat Cyborgs as they are known, are fierce, steel behemoths who stand 7-9 feet (2.1 to 2.7 m) tall and look more machine than human. However, this is a bit of an illusion. There is still a human heart beating in the chest and a human brain locked inside all that metal, along with human internal organs and the soldier's human face. That human face and those surviving body parts are built into a robotic combat chassis that serves as the basic, fundamental body frame of the cyborg. On top of that are attached the cyborg weapon systems and outer cyborg combat armor that gives the bionic soldier the additional bulk and robotic appearance.

The head is covered in a helmet with a machine or CS Death's Head faceplate to make the man-machine look fierce and intimidating, as well as to provide critical protection. Remove that faceplate and there is a very human-looking face looking back at you. The face is almost always the unmodified original appearance before bionic conversion and may include the actual skin of the soldier or be made of a life-like synthesized replication. Real skin is often weathered, wrinkled or pruned with a pale looking skin tone, and is imprinted with a bar code tattoo in ultraviolet ink (visible only under black light).

The face and head is always well-protected and fully covered by special cyborg faceplate helmets. The various helmet faceplates are interchangeable, each offering a suite of features that connect to the cyborg and tie into his cyborg's own bionic and cybernetic body components, providing enhanced or additional capabilities such as language translator or laser targeting. This enables the Combat Cyborg to utilize the specials sensors and features of each Helmet Faceplate with a *universal interface system.* A cyborg can get quick, different types of augmentation by simply swapping out helmets and faceplate for a different one. That said, most helmets and faceplates are reserved for different mission parameters. The faceplate locks right into the cyborg's skull casing to protect and environmentally seal the human face and head, and links to the overall onboard cyborg system.

CS Cyborg Helmet and Faceplates with Combat Enhancements

CA-5C Coalition "Citizen" Helmet and Faceplate

This faceplate is designed to give the Combat Cyborg a much more "human" and attractive appearance. It is the helmet and faceplate selected by cyborgs who interact a lot with other people, such as law enforcement officers, which is why this style of faceplate has the nickname of *Peacekeeper.* It is designed to resemble a more friendly, human-looking aesthetic with sculpted features that include a nose, moveable lips and human symmetry. The eye lens panels are even shaped to be visually appealing and less threatening.

Special Features of the CA-5C Cyborg Helmet: The Citizen or Peacekeeper helmet provides the following additional features to supplement the Combat Cyborg's own internal bionic systems (noted elsewhere):

Citizen/Peacekeeper Helmet & Faceplate M.D.C.: 75

1. HUD Multi-Screen: A Heads-Up Display (HUD) that can project data, charts, maps, transmissions, etc., on the visor of the helmet for the wearer to see. As many as six HUD different viewing sections/images can be projected at the same time without impairing the vision of the wearer.

2. Computer & Video Link: The helmet can be patched into computers, televisions, cameras, monitors and sensory equipment. This means video transmissions and encoded audio or video signals can be displayed directly on the HUD. This requires "plugging in." A Universal Headjack is located in the ear section

of the helmet. The helmet also contains a secondary computer for holding and accessing such data.

3. Sound and Voice Analyzer: Fundamentally the same as the bionic system of the same name. It is capable of listening to and temporarily recording sounds to match with its voice and sound database of more than 34,000 sounds. Analysis results and information can be sent directly to the cyborg's bionic ears and/or to the HUD. It takes 1D4+1 hours to run a specific voice or sound through the entire program, but most sounds can be isolated to a particular category such as voice, animal, demon, machine, etc. and scanned and identified in 4D6+4 minutes with reasonable accuracy.

4. Laser Distancer: Measures and indicates the exact distance of a target or item. Effective range: 1,000 feet (305 m). Maximum range: 2,000 feet (610 m) with a 20% margin for error.

5. Built-in Loudspeaker: Amplifies the loudness of the cyborg's voice like a bullhorn to about 80 decibels.

Optional, Criminal I.D. Recognition System (special; for law enforcement only): The Criminal I.D. Recognition System is reserved exclusively for cyborgs working in *law enforcement*. The CIDR system is a new and experimental system created by Northern Gun for the Coalition States, and seems to work very well, with an 89% success ratio. The recognition system is part of the computer and linked to the cameras in the armor and gun camera. This facial recognition system database can identify as many as 250,000 known criminals, wanted fugitives, Black Marketeers, terrorists, enemies of the State, and people with bounties on their heads, as well as identifying marks such as tattoos, scars and other distinctive physical features, known gang insignias, emblems, patches and "colors." If desired, it can include recognition of suspects wanted for questioning (provided his or her face is known and on record) and dangerous D-Bees, monsters, and, well, anybody who has been photographed or who can be photographed and programmed into the system.

CA-6C Strike Trooper "Dead Boy" Cyborg Helmet

This helmet and faceplate is available to both the *Light* and *Heavy Strike Trooper Cyborgs*. It is a standard part of the *CA-6C Heavy "Dead Boy" Armor* that belongs to the new aesthetic of the Coalition States. It is the most common helmet seen in the field and designed on purpose to make it hard to distinguish CS Cyborgs from other CS Dead Boy troops. The following optical and sensor capabilities are built into the CA-6C helmet and linked to the secondary computer and HUD system of the cyborg.

Special Features of the CA-6C Cyborg (and heavy Dead Boy armor) Helmet: The Strike Trooper helmet provides the following additional features to supplement the Combat Cyborg's own internal bionic systems (noted elsewhere):

Strike Trooper Helmet & Faceplate M.D.C.: 100.

1. HUD Multi-Screen: A Heads-Up Display (HUD) that can project data, charts, maps, transmissions, etc., on the visor of the helmet for the wearer to see. As many as six different HUD viewing sections/images can be projected at the same time without impairing the vision of the wearer.

2. Computer & Video Link: The helmet can be patched into computers, televisions, cameras, monitors and sensory equipment. This means video transmissions and encoded audio or video signals can be displayed directly on the HUD. This requires "plugging in." A Universal Headjack is located in the ear section of the helmet. The helmet also contains a secondary computer for holding and accessing such data.

3. Laser Distancer: Measures and indicates the exact distance of a target or item. Effective range: 1,000 feet (305 m). Maximum range: 2,000 feet (610 m) with a 20% margin for error.

4. Laser Targeting: Adds a +1 strike bonus at an effective range of 1,000 feet (305 m). Maximum range is 2,000 feet (610 m), but offers no bonus to strike.

5. Air Filtration System: Functions like a gas mask to prevent contaminated air, gases and toxins from affecting the cyborg.

CA-7C Shadow Ops Helmet

This helmet is similar in styling to the Dead Boy and to the CA-6C Strike Trooper but has a different array of sensors and features designed for espionage, sabotage, raids and surgical strikes.

Special Features of the CA-7C Cyborg Helmet: The Shadow Ops helmet provides the following additional features to supplement the Combat Cyborg's own internal bionic systems (noted elsewhere):

Shadow Ops Helmet & Faceplate M.D.C.: 100

1. HUD Multi-Screen: A Heads-Up Display (HUD) that can project data, charts, maps, transmissions, etc., on the visor of the helmet for the wearer to see. As many as six different HUD viewing sections/images can be projected at the same time without impairing the vision of the wearer.

2. Advanced Computer and Video Link: A small computer is built into the helmet to hold and retrieve data including maps, *Friend and Foe I.D. system* (see #4, below) tied to the helmet camera, and is even able to indicate priority targets. In addition, the cyborg can jack into other computers and video camera systems to download and upload data and images directly to the computer. The cyborg can also send and receive video to a specified company leader, HQ or mobile base.

3. Audio Amplification System: Similar to the Amplified Hearing bionic system to hear soft noises, like the click of a safe's tumblers or an approaching adversary. A series of tiny sound amplifiers, microphones and receivers are built into the helmet which transmits sounds directly to the cyborg's bionic ear, enabling the character to hear almost any soft sound otherwise inaudible at up to 360 feet (110 m) away.

At 75 feet (22.9 m), sounds as quiet as one decibel, softer than a whisper (10 decibels), can be heard.

At 150 feet (45.8 m), sounds as quiet as a whisper or quiet conversation (10-20 decibels), can be heard clearly.

At 360 feet (110 m), sounds in the normal conversation (30 decibels) can be heard as if the character was standing only a few feet (one meter) away. This is the maximum range for eavesdropping on conversations. Only sounds of 70 decibels (e.g., the sound of heavy traffic) or louder can be accurately heard and the location pinpointed from 500 to 1,000 feet away (152.4 m to 305 m).

40 decibels is light traffic.

50 decibels is a loud conversation.

60 decibels is shouting or a blaring radio.

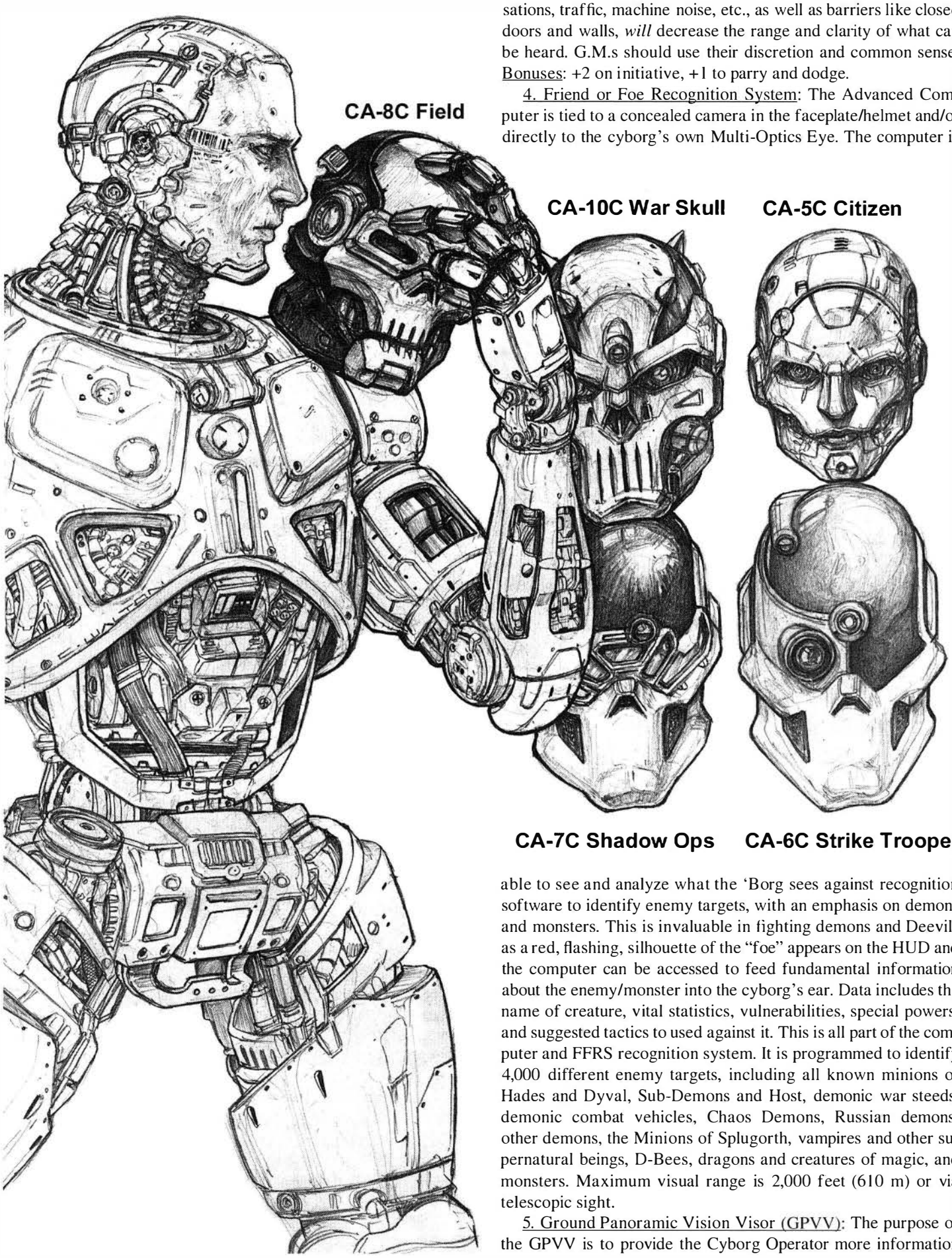
70 decibels is heavy traffic or automatic gunfire.

90 decibels is very loud noise, like thunder or an explosion.

The Amplified Hearing also enables the character to accurately estimate the distance and location of the sound source, and recognize specific sounds and voices at a base skill of 35% plus 5%

per level of experience. Background noise, such as other conversations, traffic, machine noise, etc., as well as barriers like closed doors and walls, *will* decrease the range and clarity of what can be heard. G.M.s should use their discretion and common sense. Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +1 to parry and dodge.

4. Friend or Foe Recognition System: The Advanced Computer is tied to a concealed camera in the faceplate/helmet and/or directly to the cyborg's own Multi-Optics Eye. The computer is



able to see and analyze what the 'Borg sees against recognition software to identify enemy targets, with an emphasis on demons and monsters. This is invaluable in fighting demons and Deevils as a red, flashing, silhouette of the "foe" appears on the HUD and the computer can be accessed to feed fundamental information about the enemy/monster into the cyborg's ear. Data includes the name of creature, vital statistics, vulnerabilities, special powers, and suggested tactics to used against it. This is all part of the computer and FFRS recognition system. It is programmed to identify 4,000 different enemy targets, including all known minions of Hades and Dyval, Sub-Demons and Host, demonic war steeds, demonic combat vehicles, Chaos Demons, Russian demons, other demons, the Minions of Splugorth, vampires and other supernatural beings, D-Bees, dragons and creatures of magic, and monsters. Maximum visual range is 2,000 feet (610 m) or via telescopic sight.

5. Ground Panoramic Vision Visor (GPVV): The purpose of the GPVV is to provide the Cyborg Operator more information

with the visors, allowing him to more quickly move through the OODA Loop (Observe, Orient, Decide, Act) procedures. The most striking feature of the GPVV is the presence of the sleek image intensifier visors, oscillating on a command sensor suite combined with separate objective lenses arrayed in a panoramic orientation. The center two visor lenses point forward, giving the Cyborg more depth perception, while two more visors point slightly outward from the center to increase peripheral view. The two visors on the right and the two on the left are spliced at the eyepieces. The Cyborg sees the two center visors somewhat overlapping the two outer visors to produce an unprecedented 140 degree Field of Vision (FOV). This is an absolute game-changer for the Coalition States Armored Forces infantry. They can also be easily removed and operated as independent handheld viewers or discarded if damaged to avoid visual inaccuracies with a damaged visor. The other visors can easily be re-calibrated within 1D4 melee actions utilizing the cyborg's own optics interface. These visors give cyborgs the ability to do more while using the same visual FOV he has during the day, at night or in adverse weather conditions. The GPVV is an extraordinary feature in optic applications, giving the Coalition Combat Cyborgs more combat options and increasing their lethality. **Bonuses:** +1 on Perception Rolls regarding enemy aggression and troop movement, +5% to Detect Ambush, Intelligence, Land Navigation and all Piloting skills.

6. Laser Distancer: Measures and indicates the exact distance of a target or item. Effective range: 1,000 feet (305 m). Maximum range: 2,000 feet (610 m) with a 20% margin for error.

7. Radio Signal Booster: A small power supply built into the helmet to boost the strength/signals of computer and communication implants; increases the clarity of sound and increases range by 25%.

CA-8C Field Cyborg Helmet and Faceplate

The Field cyborg helmet is used by *Light Combat Cyborgs*. If the individual agrees to the process, the Coalition Army often converts field scientists, officers and other important personnel and advisors who are severely or mortally wounded in the line of duty into full conversion, light cyborgs in order to save their lives and retain their valuable skills and services. Field cyborgs who are scientists or technical officers may be assigned to the *Rift Control Study Group* branches or other support roles, which is why the faceplate resembles the CS RCSG helmets. Cyborg scientists may be assigned to elite CS squad and platoons, and sent on special missions where their expertise can be put to use. It is also not unheard of for some of the cyborg scientists to embrace their new bionic forms and become inspirational influences and trusted sources of guidance within the CS infantry. The Field cyborg helmet and faceplate is not geared towards combat, but rather designed for scientific and support functions.

Special Features of the CA-8C Cyborg Helmet: The Field helmet provides the following additional features to supplement the Combat Cyborg's own internal bionic systems (noted elsewhere):

Field Helmet & Faceplate M.D.C.: 80

1. Air and Surface Temperature Reader: Fundamentally the same as the bionic system (described in the *Rifts® Bionics Sourcebook*, page 35). It precisely measures hot and cold temperatures emanating from objects or areas. May be linked to sensors in the cyborg's hand for 100% accurate "touch readings" or by looking and placing one's head close to the subject; maximum distance is two feet (0.6 m) and accurate within 1D6+86%. Touch sensors are 100% accurate.

2. HUD Multi-Screen: A Heads-Up Display (HUD) that can project data, charts, maps, transmissions, etc., on the visor of the helmet for the wearer to see. As many as six different HUD viewing sections/images can be projected at the same time without impairing the vision of the wearer.

3. Computer & Video Link: The helmet can be patched into computers, televisions, cameras, monitors and sensory equipment. This means video transmissions and encoded audio or video signals can be displayed directly on the HUD. This requires "plugging in." A Universal Headjack is located in the ear section of the helmet. The helmet also contains a secondary computer for holding and accessing such data.

4. Cyber-Camera Studio: A tiny, built-in, concealed camera system that functions the same as the Bionic Cyber-Camera Studio Eye, only it is built into the faceplate/helmet. Can record and store 48 hours of video and take 8,000 still photographs.

5. Language Translator: A miniaturized translator without it being built inside the cyborg itself.

6. Laser Distancer: Measures and indicates the exact distance of a target or item. Effective range: 1,000 feet (305 m). Maximum range: 2,000 feet (610 m) with a 20% margin for error.

7. Sound and Voice Analyzer: Fundamentally the same as the bionic system of the same name. It is capable of listening to and temporarily recording sounds to match with its voice and sound database of more than 34,000 sounds. Analysis results and information can be sent directly to the cyborg's bionic ears and/or to the HUD. It takes 1D4+1 hours to run a specific voice or sound through the entire program, but most sounds can be isolated to a particular category such as voice, animal, demon, machine, etc. and scanned and identified in 4D6+4 minutes with reasonable accuracy.

CA-10C War Skull Cyborg Helmet & Faceplate

The War Skull is a reinforced helmet that pays homage to the Death's Head design motiff of the original Dead Boy armor. It is designed for battlefield operations, special forces and elite infantry combat units. The War Skull Helmet provides the following additional features to supplement the Combat Cyborg's own internal bionic systems (noted elsewhere):

War Skull Helmet and Faceplate M.D.C.: 115

1. HUD Multi-Screen: A Heads-Up Display (HUD) that can project data, charts, maps, transmissions, etc., on the visor of the helmet for the wearer to see. As many as six different HUD viewing sections/images can be projected at the same time without impairing the vision of the wearer.

2. Advanced Computer and Video Link: A small computer is built into the helmet to hold and retrieve data including maps, *Friend and Foe I.D. system* (see #4, below) tied to the helmet camera, and is even able to indicate priority targets. In addition, the cyborg can jack into other computers and video camera systems to download and upload data and images directly to the computer. The cyborg can also send and receive video to a specified company leader, HQ or mobile base.

3. Air Filtration System: Functions like a gas mask to prevent contaminated air, gases and toxins from affecting the cyborg.

4. Friend or Foe Recognition System: The Advanced Computer is tied to a concealed camera in the faceplate/helmet and/or

directly to the cyborg's own Multi-Optics Eye. The computer is able to see and analyze what the 'Borg sees against recognition software to identify enemy targets, with an emphasis on demons and monsters. This is invaluable in fighting demons and Deevils as a red, flashing, silhouette of the "foe" appears on the HUD and the computer can be accessed to feed fundamental information about the enemy/monster into the cyborg's ear. Data includes the name of creature, vital statistics, vulnerabilities, special powers, and suggested tactics to used against it. This is all part of the computer and FFRS recognition system. It is programmed to identify 4,000 different enemy targets, including all known minions of Hades and Dyval, Sub-Demons and Host, demonic war steeds, demonic combat vehicles, Chaos Demons, Russian demons, other demons, the Minions of Splugorth, vampires and other supernatural beings, D-Bees, dragons and creatures of magic, and monsters. Maximum visual range is 2,000 feet (610 m) or via telescopic sight.

5. Laser Distancer: Measures and indicates the exact distance of a target or item. Effective range: 1,000 feet (305 m). Maximum range: 2,000 feet (610 m) with a 20% margin for error.

6. Laser Targeting: Adds a +1 strike bonus at an effective range of 1,000 feet (305 m). Maximum range is 2,000 feet (610 m), but offers no bonus to strike.

7. Sound Filtration System: The filter automatically reacts to diminish potentially damaging sounds with filters and/or earplugs. Sounds are muffled to protect the character from deafening or disorienting levels of sound such as gunfire, explosions, heavy machinery, and painful sound waves.

8. Third Eye Laser (1): This is an light laser in the forehead of the faceplate. It draws its energy from the cyborg's internal power supply rather than any sort of E-Clip.

Purpose: Assault and Defense.
Range: 1,000 feet (305 m).
Mega-Damage: 2D6 M.D. per single laser blast.
Rate of Fire: Each blast counts as one attack.
Payload: Effectively unlimited.
Bonus: +1 to strike.

Coalition Hellbuster

Heavy Cyborg Battle Armor

The concept behind the Hellbuster armor has proven simple and effective, a heavily armored suit of armor that can be mounted on top of a Combat Cyborg already wearing the heavy cyborg armor! In effect, giving the formidable Heavy Combat Cyborg an additional layer of armor over its usual armor. A true walking tank that can go head to head with Greater Demons and Deevils or help punch through the line of Lesser Minions of Hell.

Emphasis is on armor and firepower, to extend the combat prowess and survivability of Heavy Combat Cyborgs on the battlefield. The Hellbuster armor fits over heavy Combat Cyborg armor, so when the Hellbuster armor is destroyed, the cyborg can continue to fight at *full strength*, as if shedding an *outer skin*. The big, bulky armor and demonbusting weapon systems adds to the cyborg's weight and reduces the 'Borg's speed by half. However, most Minions of Hell are slow compared to modern vehicles, cyborgs and power armor, so the Hellbuster is still fast enough to deal with the hellspawned enemy. In fact, this rather works to the cyborg clad in Hellbuster armor's advantage, because when he sheds the destroyed battle-torn armor, the Combat Cyborg still possesses all of his usual bionics, weapons and heavy armor, and is back to his full speed; twice what it was when he was clad in Hellbuster armor. Time and time again, this boost in speed and mobility catches the Minions of Hell off-guard. Most monsters, demons and Deevils are totally shocked or horrified to see what they figured was a hulking, demolished robot or power armor, shed the bulky outer shell to unveil a fully intact and ready to go Heavy Combat Cyborg – roll to save vs Horror Factor 13. A failed roll, 1-12, means the monster(s) fighting the Hellbuster is momentarily stunned, as per H.F. rules. To them it seems like the enemy should be dead! Instead, he just got smaller, faster and is just as committed to fight as a moment before. This is not something they have ever encountered before.

A formidable armored juggernaut, Hellbuster clad cyborgs have proven formidable against monsters like the giant Gargoyles and Gurgoyles, demons and Deevils of all shapes and sizes, war steeds and netherbeasts, and other large adversaries. Though it has not been thoroughly tested, Hellbuster clad Combat Cyborgs *should* also fare reasonably well against conventional military troops, rival cyborgs, and slow moving armored vehicles and robots. Fast power armors, robots, vehicles and adversaries are another story, and will get the upper hand on the lumbering Hellbuster, especially in one-on-one where the Hellbuster is just too slow. However, the Hellbuster remains viable in the role of troop support and even as an advancing, front-line force when supported by the much faster, aerial wings of SAMAS, Death Knights, Sky Cycle or rocket bike pilots, Juicers on Death Wings and other fast troops as a combined force.

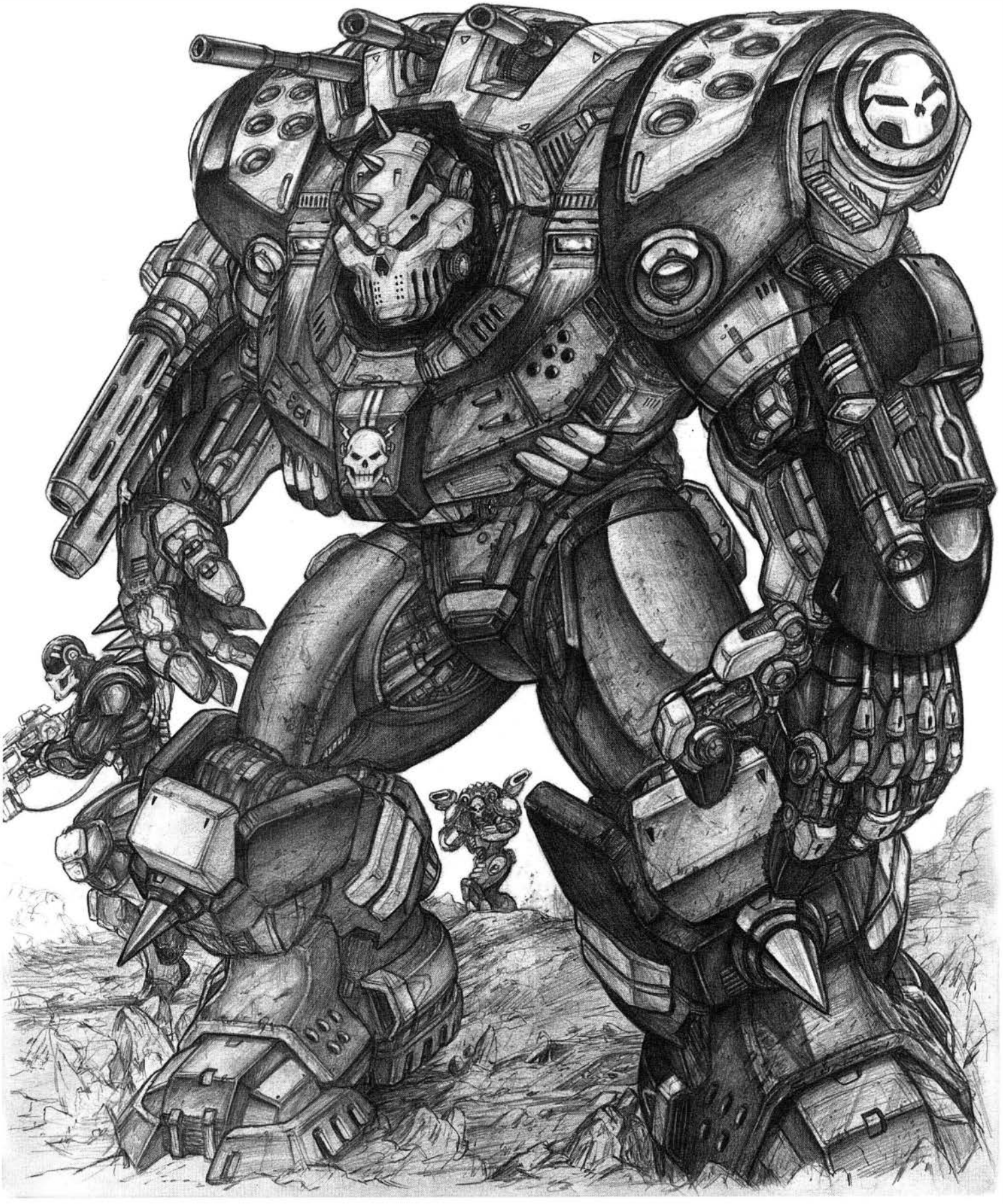
CA-66HC Hellbuster Cyborg Armor Stats

Class: CA-66HC Super-Heavy Cyborg Infantry Armor.
Size: Increases the size of the Coalition Heavy Cyborgs to approximately 10 feet (3 m) tall and 5.6 feet (1.7 m) wide at the shoulders.
Weight: 1,350 pounds (607.5 kg).
Mobility Modifiers: Poor. Reduce the cyborg's speed by half. Leaping is only possible with a running start and is limited to six feet (1.8 m) high and lengthwise. It sinks like a rock in water, but can walk along the bottom of rivers, lake and seas; maximum depth is 300 feet (91.5 m). Reduce speed by half again when trying to trudge through mud, loose gravel or very rough and uneven terrain. May also have trouble traveling through dense forests.

-30% to climb and -70% to Prowl, Swimming, perform Acrobatics and similar physical skills/performance.

Robotic P.S. of the cyborg is not negatively impacted by the armor and is still applicable.

Hellbuster M.D.C. by Location:
* Head/Helmet – 120
* Hands (2) – 70 each
* Silver-Plated Forearm Swords (2) – 20 each
Forearm Gun (1, right arm) – 50
Forearm Rocket Launcher (1, left arm) – 40
Shoulder Mini-Missile Launchers (2) – 60 each
* Spotlights (6; two chest, two each forearm) – 2 each
* Triple-Barrel Laser (1, back) – 90
Arms (2) – 160 each
Legs (2) – 200 each



** Main Body – 400

* A single asterisk indicates a small and difficult target to strike, requiring the attacker to make a "Called Shot," and even then the attacker is -4 to strike.

** Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body destroys the armor and shuts all Hellbuster systems down completely, making it useless. However, individual weapon systems can be retrieved and salvaged.

Remember, this is M.D.C. armor that is in addition to the fully armored Heavy Combat Cyborg underneath it the Hellbuster. When the Hellbuster armor is depleted, it is jettisoned and the cyborg underneath fights on.

Special Sensors and Features: Nothing extra; as per the Combat Cyborg inside the Hellbuster armor. Jettisoned armor is salvaged and intact weapon systems recovered whenever possible.
Market Price: None. Exclusive to the CS military.

Weapon Systems:

1. **C-22 Hellbuster Double-Barreled Ion Cannons:** Short-range, but heavy firepower. Point and shoot.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Missile and Anti-Aircraft.
Secondary Purpose: Anti-Personnel, Anti-Aerial Monsters and Defense.
Range: 1,200 feet (366 m).
Mega-Damage: 3D6 per single ion blast or 6D6 for a dual blast fired at the same target simultaneously. Counts as one melee attack.
Rate of Fire: Each single or double blast counts as one melee attack.
Payload: 800 single blasts or 400 dual blasts. The weapon is powered by its own battery.

2. **Triple-Barrel Laser Turret (1, back):** The large, formidable Hellbuster is going to draw major attention on the battlefield and is a tempting target for aerial assaults, swarming attacks and possibly missile bombardment. Thus, it has been equipped with the same anti-missile and anti-aircraft weapon utilized by the *PA-300 Glitter Boy Killer Power Armor*. The three barrels are synchronized to all move at once and can rotate up and down in a 180 degree arc of fire; front and back.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Missile and Anti-Aircraft.
Secondary Purpose: Anti-Personnel, Anti-Aerial Monsters and Defense.
Range: 2,000 feet (610 m).
Mega-Damage: 2D6 M.D. per single laser blast or 6D6 if all three lasers are fired at the same target simultaneously.
Rate of Fire: Each single or triple blast counts as one melee attack.
Payload: 1,200 single blasts, 400 triple laser blasts. The weapon draws on its own battery power supply.

3. **CH-28 Hellbuster Shoulder Mini-Missile Launchers (2):** Housed into the Hellbuster's massive shoulder plates are a battery of mini-missile launcher tubes; 7 tubes for each shoulder, 14 tubes total.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Armor and Anti-Aircraft.
Secondary Purpose: Defense.
Range: One mile (1.6 km).
Mega-Damage: Varies with missile type. Any mini-missile types can be used, but standard issue is 14 fragmentation (5D6 M.D. to everything in a 20 foot/6.1 m radius) and/or 14 armor piercing (1D4x10 M.D.). HEX, smoke and other mini-missiles may be also be used. Fragmentation missiles are ideal against enemy forces gathered in tight clusters and against low flying enemies such as Gargoyles and Harpies. Plasma is generally avoided as many supernatural beings, including the demons of Hades, are impervious or resistant to heat and fire.
Rate of Fire: One at a time, on in volleys or two, three, four, five or full burst of 14.
Payload: 28 total! Two per launch tube, seven launch tubes per shoulder.

4. **CH-8 Hellbuster Ballistic Rocket Launcher (1):** A forearm housing on the left arm fires short-range rockets. Point and shoot.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Missile and Anti-Flier.
Secondary Purpose: Anti-Personnel, Anti-Aerial Monsters and Defense.
Range: 2,000 feet (610 m).
Mega-Damage: 4D6 M.D. per single rocket or 1D4x10+3 for two fired simultaneously at the same target.
Rate of Fire: One at time or in a volley of two. Each single or dual volley counts as one melee attack.
Payload: Eight.

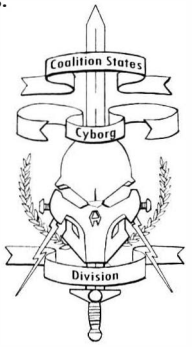
5. **Dual Retractable Sabers (2):** On each arm is a retractable and extendible, silver-plated S.D.C. sword. This is NOT a Vibro-Blade. Since the Hellbuster is, in effect, a disposable, demon-fighting armor, S.D.C. sabers are used to keep costs down. Of course, this takes into consideration that many demons and supernatural beings are vulnerable to silver, and the ordinary S.D.C. weapon does its equivalent damage to them as Mega-Damage. Thus a sword that does 2D6 S.D.C. damage inflicts 2D6 M.D. to demons, sometimes two or three times as much if the creature is extremely sensitive to silver.

Damage: 2D6 S.D.C. or M.D. (to supernatural beings vulnerable to silver) from a single blade strike. Power punch does double damage but counts as two melee attacks.

Knuckle and knee spikes are also silver-plated and inflict 1D6 M.D. from punch attacks plus the M.D. of the punch based on the cyborg's Robot P.S.

6. **Hand to Hand Combat Bonuses:** Rather than use a weapon, the Cyborg/pilot can engage in Mega-Damage hand to hand combat using the silver-plated swords or punches and body blocks. The Hellbuster's additional armor and weight add to the damage. Below is the additional bonus from common attacks. Kicks and leap kicks are not possible in the armor.

Full Strength Punch: +1D6 M.D.
Power Punch: +2D6 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks.
Knee Strike with Silver-Plated Spike: +1D6 M.D.
Body Block/Shoulder Butt: +1D6 M.D.
Running Body Block/Ram/Tackle: +3D6 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks.



Psi-Battalion

Coalition Psychics

Chi-Town and all CS fortress cities are designed the way they are because it thwarts attacks from creatures of magic and mages, and impedes demons and other supernatural beings.

Teleportation is often cited as one of the greatest weapons that mages and supernatural enemies can use to attack CS strongholds and cities. However, Teleportation has its limitations.

Unless the person teleporting knows exactly where he is going, and has been to the location himself, teleporting anywhere *blind* can be deadly. Without first-hand knowledge of the environment and without being able to see where he is going, teleporting into a wall, pillar, girder, machinery or other people results in *instant death!* Even for supernatural beings and powerful creatures of magic like dragons.

The Coalition's fortress cities, which have many levels that rise up from the ground like a man-made volcano, also have many sub-levels below the surface. All of it is deliberately designed to contain and conceal the streets, layout and population inside. Since teleporters cannot see beyond the several layers of dense, outer defensive walls, they cannot teleport inside without considerable risk of death. It is an incredibly simple, but effective solution to stopping Teleportation, and other spells too. From the outside, all one sees is the outer wall without any knowledge of its thickness or how many inner, defensive walls may lie beyond it.

It should also be noted that the *Teleport; Superior (600 P.P.E.)* and *Mystic Portal (60 P.P.E.)* spells are not common knowledge. These invocations represent great power and mystic knowledge that most mages are not going to share. There are many reasons for this (the *Lazlo World Books* will cover this in detail), not the least of which is not sharing mystic knowledge and power with potential rivals and enemies who may be able to turn such magic against you and others. The use and teaching of magic is greatly controlled and regulated at places like *Lazlo, New Lazlo,* the fallen kingdom of *Tolkeen* and even within the *Federation of Magic.* When it comes to magic, knowledge is power. Mystic power is hoarded and not easily or foolishly shared. Moreover, such spells require a fairly large amount of the P.P.E. that young mages do not possess, and which quickly deplete experienced and powerful mages. *Teleport: Superior,* for example, requires 600 P.P.E., two or three times the amount of energy that high level mortal practitioners of magic are likely to possess. An amulet, talisman, or magic ritual that draws on other sources of P.P.E. can help make the spell casting possible or less of a drain, but requires more resources and, in the case of ritual magic, time and several people. What good is it to Teleport into an enemy city or military base if the very act of teleporting leaves the intruder too powerless to successfully fight or escape after arriving at his destination?

There is also the matter of responsibility. The higher level spells are not shared without considerable thought about the people and the many likely consequences of sharing that knowledge. Knowledge that can be used against innocent people or you, or the people/nation you are affiliated with. Not everyone uses magic with care or good conscience. And evil beings use it for selfish and nefarious reasons. Even good spell casters pushed too far or traumatized may use powerful magicks to exact terrible revenge or in a manner that innocent people get hurt. For better or worse, people change. Good guys can become bad or unstable. Giving someone a spell greater than a Level One invocation is like handing a child a loaded gun. Unless that person is trained, experienced and conscientious, the results could be disastrous. Thus, responsible practitioners of magic are very careful about whom they teach spells to and how they are used. All of which gives the Coalition's fear of magic considerable credence.

Powerful creatures of magic, such as **dragons**, may have the power/P.P.E. to Teleport several times and cast many additional spells, but dragons do not, generally, work well together. Most powerful creatures of magic do not work well with others of equal or greater power. It is nearly impossible to get more than a few to organize and work in concert to mount a coordinated attack. Part of this is the nature and psychology of such creatures. Dragons, for example, see each other as rivals, and themselves as superior. The same is true of **demons** and most supernatural beings. All these creatures are forces of chaos. They don't like to be told what to do, do not work well with others, seldom follow orders (because they know better), and have a general disdain for authority and order, unless *they* are the authority. They all want to lead, and most are driven to prove themselves to be the best, the most deadly, the most cunning, etc. The best way to use such a creature is to make it a team leader, but even then it may deviate from the mission objective and usually has its own best interest at heart, not those of the cause or the people it claims to support.

What all this means is that gaining entry into a Coalition fortress city, even via teleportation, is NOT a viable option. Teleporters who do not kill themselves materializing inside a wall or machinery are often left in a weakened state (burning through P.P.E.) and are immediately besieged by CS defenders – *ISS, NT-SET, Dog Boys, psychics, power armored troops, Skelebots* — whatever is necessary to contain and eliminate the threat. And deadly force is always the response. Capture and interrogation of creatures of magic and supernatural beings is a rarity and considered unwise and dangerous. Better to quickly and completely eradicate the threat than take chances.

This is why so many CS cities are built like fortresses and, though it is not common knowledge, half the population within the Coalition States lives *underground.* Design elements that have been proven an effective defense against mages and the supernatural for generations.

The thick walls and labyrinth-like network of corridors and airtight hatches also help to restrict and limit the use of **Mystic Portal** as well, requiring multiple spells to be cast to find entry into the actual community living inside and causing the invader to burn through high amounts of P.P.E. While Mystic Portal can be more effective once inside, the invader must get close to the exterior walls of any fortified city to use the spell. Not an easy task in and of itself, as there are all manner of sensors and motion detectors on the outer walls, as well as ground patrols and SAMAS flybys that keep the empty expanse of no man's land around the city safe from intruders. Those who have visited the city-state of *Northern Gun* have an idea of what this is like, but Coalition defenses and patrols border on the paranoid, and intruders are met with immediate and unrelenting deadly force. As a rule, CS city defenders shoot first and don't worry about asking questions later. If the people gunned down were innocent and happened to have wandered into the no man's zone by accident, it is of little

consequence to the city defenders. Anyone in the defensive zone is considered a threat and liability that is neutralized with extreme prejudice. Again, it is that better safe than sorry policy. This may all sound ruthless and cold-hearted, but it has kept Coalition cities and their citizens safe for decades.

What about the upper levels? The Coalition super-elite and powerful who live in apartments on the upper levels may have windows and even balconies, but they do so at considerable risk. A demon or enemy that can fly or has hawk-like vision may be able to see inside their domicile and Teleport right inside. Or fly

to it and smash their way inside – assuming they can get past the SAMAS and other patrols of fliers. You might think this is the access the Teleporter or invading monster needs to breach the fortified defenses, but it is not. The outer apartments with windows are, in effect, built or hung on a concealed inner fortress wall. The residents require a biometric system and a keypad code in order to enter and exit their own home. The biometrics is sophisticated enough to tell if the eye or body part necessary to open a door is alive or dead. In addition, a code must be entered via a touch pad. When the door opens, it opens to a corridor that runs along an inner fortified wall of varying thickness. In the hall, like all fortress corridors, are cameras and sensor systems along with randomly located automated turrets capable of visual identification of a vast range of enemies, human and inhuman. Moreover, those authorized to live on the upper levels are programmed into the memory. Anyone not recognized (friends and visitors without clearance or wearing military or police I.D. are NOT allowed in these areas), is asked to stop and not move until the authorities arrive to question them. Failure to comply results in a barrage from the automated weapons, and an emergency call to a **Fast Response Team**.

Psychics, Psi-Battalion and Psi-Net

For decades the Coalition States' secret weapon against magic and the supernatural has been psychics. From Psi-Hounds (better known as Dog Boys) and Psi-Stalkers to Mind Melters and Nega-Psychics, humankind's evolutionary response to the supernatural and magic is ESP (Extra-Sensory Perception) – psychic abilities.

Many are the rumors and outrageous stories of psionic warriors and even machines that can boost psionic power levels and psionic devices that shield and blanket CS cities. Some of these stories come from the Coalition's own Department of Propaganda, as fear and disinformation are two of its favorite weapons.

The reality is much less fantastic, but just as effective. Registered Psychics, Dog Boys and Psi-Stalkers are constantly alert for the presence of magic and the supernatural. When something manages to find its way into one of the Coalition cities or one of the levels in a fortress city, the threat is isolated, contained and destroyed with immediate and lethal force. The average response time from **Fast Response Teams** is less than two minutes. And when a number of Coalition Psychic Sensitives have similar premonitions of invasion, sabotage and other acts of terror, the city and its defenders are placed on high alert, cutting response time in half!

Dog Boys by the tens of thousands patrol every Coalition city (as well as the 'Burbs and borders) looking for magical and supernatural threats to eliminate. When they find one, they call it in and attack. Dog Boys and other CS defenders know they may be walking into something more than they can handle whenever magic, psionics or the supernatural are involved, so it has become standard protocol to report anything suspicious before investigating further. That way, backup can be immediately dispatched, and *Psi-Net operatives* can be at the ready.

Dog Boys are bolstered by **Civilized Psi-Stalkers** (mutant humans with the psionic power to sense and hunt the supernatural), **ISS "Specters"** (police detectives), **NTSET Protectors** (demon slayers and monster hunters), and **Psi-Net agents** (psychic police with a wide range of psychics and psionic abilities). All of whom fall under the umbrella of **Psi-Battalion**. When a magical or supernatural threat is identified, it is "pacified with extreme prejudice" by one or more of these agents or agencies. In most cases, this means taking no chances. The intruder is besieged with overwhelming numbers and obliterated. Inside CS cities, such interlopers are seldom questioned or taken prisoner. They are killed on the spot. It is safer that way. Period. Demons, dragons, or mages, could possess power levels off the charts. Take no chances. Destroy them. And fast.

NTSET Fast Response Teams are trained to size-up a situation in moments and respond accordingly. In the 'Burbs and city outskirts, questioning and a conversation may happen, but not on CS city streets, and especially not inside one of the fortress cities. Any intruder known or suspected to be supernatural, inhuman or possessing magic or psionics is besieged and killed on the spot. For everyone's safety. Many a NTSET team prides themselves on how quickly and efficiently they can "pacify" a threat before it can say more than a few words. Witnessing such brutal and merciless assaults can be horrifying, but CS authorities have learned that neutralizing such threats immediately is the best solution. Any intruder who thinks he can stem the tide of destruction with words had better talk fast and say the right things, or face immediate destruction. All city defenders, whether they are psychic or not, are trained not to hesitate in lethal response against magic, psychic and supernatural opponents. They know to beware of the words and possible Hypnotic Suggestions and magical Charms of paranormal intruders. As a result, defenders would rather be safe than sorry, and ignore words (sometimes even turning off their external mics) and unleash a deadly onslaught to obliterate such intruders.

These tireless defenders are the protectors lurking in the shadows. They seldom get name recognition, let alone glory. Instead, they take pride in being the secret and unknown defenders of humanity. All of them, but Dog Boys and Psi-Stalkers in particular, perish in the line of duty by the thousands every year, and are replaced as quickly as they die.

Coalition Psychics in the Minion War

Among the unknown, unnamed defenders of the Coalition States are psychics of every variety, working behind the scenes or inside a faceless suit of Dead Boy body armor. Bursters, Zappers, Mind Melters, Nega-Psychics, Psi-Ghosts, Psi-Nullifiers, Psi-Techs, Minor and Major Psychics, and all the rest, are recruited by **Psi-Battalion** and **NTSET** to thwart superhuman enemies. All psychics are required to be registered with the PRP (Psychic Registration Program). Whether a CS citizen (or aspiring citizen in waiting) has a couple of minor psychic abilities or is brimming with them, he is required to register and submit to Identification Coding (IC) with a scannable IC bar code tattooed on his neck and wrist, and in more recent years, a tracking chip implanted under his skin. Many, starting with the most gifted, are recruited for government defense work, the military, police and secret operations.

This has all been done so covertly that most people don't even think of the Coalition States as having psychics, or at least not many of them. And for good reason; until the Minion War, the vast majority of psychics worked within the low profile areas of defense, intelligence and special operations. For the first time, psychics are being deployed in the field, in large numbers. They

still remain in the background, and are often indistinguishable from the rest of the troops — until they use their powers, that is.

Many enjoy advanced training in the areas of Demon Hunting, Stealth, Stalking, Field Counter-Intelligence, and Field Intelligence. And most are skilled in facing, countering and fighting the supernatural, magic and inhuman. For some, it is nice to step out of the shadows and stand in the spotlight. For others, it is simply a matter of putting their powers to best use. As experts in the supernatural and magical, their presence on the battlefield as expert advisors, interrogators, counter-intelligence and demon slayers is both welcomed and needed. However, the battlefield experience is very different than the types of skirmishes and encounters with the demonic and supernatural that psychics experience in the city setting. Like any soldier, many psychics come to terms with the challenges and horrors of war as best they can, while others struggle with it, so some become battle-hardened and some are broken by it.

A Summary of CS Psychics

Dog Boys are so commonplace and loyal to humanity, that few even think of them as anything other than "one of the guys" – one of the "good guys," at that. Everyone trusts and works comfortably with Dog Boys, from grunts and commanding officers to the average citizen. For most humans living in the Coalition States, Dog Boys are a welcomed comrade in arms and a reassuring sight to behold. Perhaps because of their physicality and fighting prowess, many people do not think of Dog Boys as psychics. Which may be why the CS military and police have quietly let the official designated title of *Psi-Hound* take a backseat to the much more common nom de plume of *Dog Boy*.

The same cannot be said of all other psychics. Most CS citizens, including soldiers, tend to regard psychics with a bit of wariness and distrust. Part of this may arise from the very fact that they possess mind powers and awareness that transcend the five senses of "normal" or "ordinary" humans. Those two words alone have a negative connotation when it comes to psychics. The first suggests psychics are not normal. That they are different. And if "not normal," does that make them *abnormal*? And does that make them dangerous? Likewise, if psychics are not "ordinary," doesn't that suggest they are *extraordinary*, with extraordinary abilities? For many, this leads one to wonder if psychics are a step beyond normal humans and a sort of superhuman. Or are they a step closer to the very monsters we fear and fight? These questions create resentment or jealousy in some people, and fear among others. The Coalition States' history of spreading the human supremacist ideal does not help matters as psychics may be more (or less) than human. One wonders if the role psychics have played to keep the "ordinary" citizens of the CS safe and protected these many years had been made public, like the heroics of the Dog Boys, if these attitudes might be very different and much more positive. It has not, so these unsung heroes are viewed somewhat as boogeymen. A necessary evil, but people to be wary of, perhaps even feared.

It is ironic, but most Coalition psychics are strident and loyal to humanity and the nation they serve. Part of that is indoctrination since birth, as is the case with all citizens of the Coalition States, but much of it is sincere and genuine. This is due, in part, to the fact that psychics are so much more sensitive and aware of the supernatural. They know demons, Entities, and monsters are real, and understand better than most, the danger such beings represent. This alone makes them committed to protecting people from these malevolent creatures. Likewise, a psychic's empathetic nature makes them feel close to their fellow humans. It also makes them much more forgiving and sympathetic toward people, and tolerant of their fear and human frailties. As a result, many psychics do not take misgivings about them personally, and understand why people might be wary of them.

Note: The CS psychic is distinguished from other Dead Boys by their spiked helmets and hooded capes. Different types of psychics wear different colored capes. They are always worn during formal occasions and ceremonies, and usually on base or on patrol around Coalition cities, but not always out in the field, and never when undercover. Dog Boys and Psi-Stalkers do not wear capes or cloaks.

The Burster is among the handful of psychics known to the people of the CS. These masters of Pryokinesis are generally well liked and tolerated, as they are known to be defenders of the people and monster hunters. Many are attached to Special Forces and demon hunting forces, as well as city defenders, but they can be found in any branch of the CS military. Wears a tan or red, hooded cape.

Mind Bleeders are believed to be mutant humans that evolved, like Psi-Stalkers, overseas someplace; some say Africa or the Middle East, others say Europe or the Orient. They are not native to the Americas, though some have found their way to the continent via travel through the Rifts. No Mind Bleeder is part of the CS military. These mutants are considered hostile and dangerous enemies of the CS.

The Mind Melter is arguably the most powerful of psychics, and as such, is one of the most feared. Over the decades there have been incredibly heroic Mind Melters and terribly evil ones. How many exist within the CS is Top Secret, but it is more than most people imagine. Many Mind Melters play key roles in military intelligence, counter-intelligence, espionage and domestic defense. In the Minion War, they are most likely to be found in those roles, but may also be attached to Special Forces and demon hunting forces, and in any branch of the CS military. Most Mind Melters quickly earn positions as officers; commissioned and non-commissioned. Wears a black, hooded cape with a red or silver lining.

Major Psychics are humans who develop several psionic abilities and possess a good amount of I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points). Major Psychics may have abilities from two or more categories of psionics, while others seem to have related powers that are entirely or mostly from one psionic power category. The psionic categories are Healing, Physical, Sensitive and Super (the latter often reserved for so-called Master Psychics, those who, like the Burster and Mind Melter, possess a uniquely specific and/or high level of psionic abilities). These psychics are placed in positions where their abilities can be put to the best use.

Psychic Healer: Body Docs, Medics and other areas of medicine are obvious, but Major Psychics with certain abilities such as Detect Psionics, Exorcism, Stop Bleeding and other powers may find themselves among Demon Slayers, or intelligence and counter-intelligence operations. Wears a teal, hooded cape.

Physical Psychic: These individuals often find themselves among combat forces, demon hunters and reconnaissance, but can be found in any branch of the military. Wears a brown, hooded cape.

Psychic Sensitive: These individuals possess powers of intuition, Empathy, Telepathy, and other extra-sensory abilities. This makes them ideal for areas involving tracking and identifying (and protecting against) demons, monsters and magic, including demon hunters, intelligence, counter-intelligence, and reconnaissance, as well as espionage, but can be found in any branch of the military. Wears a royal blue, hooded cape.

Minor Psychics are people who possess only a few psychic abilities and a comparatively low level of I.S.P. Many live ordinary lives and hold ordinary jobs. They can be found in any branch of the military and civilian life, though their psionic powers may give them an aptitude in certain areas. Even Minor Psychics must register with the PRP in the CS. Does not wear a cape.

Nega-Psychics are highly valued in the Coalition military and Psi-Battalion because they can actually disrupt magic and are closed to the supernatural, making them difficult to possess, charm or mind control. They also heal quickly and refuse to believe that so-called "demons" can control, dominate or conquer the people of the world. This makes the Nega-Psychic a defiant opponent of the supernatural and magic. Most Nega-Psychics find themselves among demon and monster hunters and special forces. The Nega-Psychic is unknown to the average CS citizen. Wears a dark blue, hooded cape.

Psi-Druids within the CS military most often find themselves leading Dog Packs, working with Demon Slayers and other Special Forces and in all manner of reconnaissance roles. They love the wilderness and are excellent for long-range reconnaissance missions and rescue operations. Outside the Coalition military, other Psi-Druids are involved in agriculture/botany, zoology, and conservation. Wears a green or green camouflage, hooded cape. **Note:** CS Rangers also wear a camouflage cape, but the pattern and shades of color are different than the Psi-Druid.

Psi-Ghosts are among the rarest of psychics and one of those that the CS military brass feels the least comfortable with. As their name suggests, the Psi-Ghost can make his body intangible, suggesting this psychic may be an uncommon, human mutant. This special psionic ability, and others, makes the Psi-Ghost ideal for work in intelligence, counter-intelligence, espionage, undercover ops, and Special Forces. The Psi-Ghost is unknown to the average CS citizen. Wears a light grey, hooded cape.

Psi-Nullifiers are one of the Coalition military's favorite psychics and considered to be something of a secret. Their unique psionic ability enables them to disrupt and nullify the psionic abilities and magic of others. Moreover, other psychic and supernatural beings cannot sense his presence, read his aura or remotely view him. Psi-Nullifiers have been, and remain, an important part of CS homeland security and defense. Only a handful have been deployed to the battlefront, many of them members of demon hunting teams, intelligence, counter-intelligence and Special Forces. The Psi-Nullifier is unknown to the average CS citizen. Wears a purple, hooded cape.

Psi-Slayers are a rare type of physical psychic suspected to be a mutant similar to the Psi-Stalker. In the CS, the Psi-Slayer's natural predilection and psionic abilities for stalking, hunting and killing means they are recruited for demon and monster slaying, Special Forces, espionage and all manner of Black Ops. However, their powers make the CS military brass feel uncomfortable, and Psi-Slayers are watched like a hawk. The Psi-Slayer is unknown to the average CS citizen. Wears a dark red or maroon, hooded cape.

Psi-Stalkers are a common sight within the Coalition military and cities alike. Though they are known and respected for their fighting prowess and dedication to hunting down and slaying demons and monsters, there is something about them that gives many CS citizens and soldiers the creeps around them. Perhaps it is the word "mutant" that makes some people uneasy around Psi-Stalkers. Just the fact that they are *not* quite human makes some people uncomfortable. The pale skin and lack of hair further distinguishes them from the "average" human and gives them that element of strangeness. For some reason, Psi-Stalkers are often viewed as inferior beings, and generally treated as second-class citizens and even as outsiders. This is probably because there are so-called "civilized" Psi-Stalkers, like those who serve the CS, and tribes who live like primitives in the wilderness where they hunt monsters. Coalition Psi-Stalkers do not wear capes.

Psi-Techs are psychics with an affinity for machines and technology, connecting to them on an almost empathetic level. This gives them the ability to jack into computers and machines and control them with their minds. Within the CS military, Psi-Techs can be found within any branch, including all manner of work with machines, engineering, salvage, maintenance and repair, communications and research, as well as espionage, intelligence, counter-intelligence, and Special Forces. The Psi-Tech is unknown to the average CS citizen. Wears a medium gray, hooded cape with a silver or white lining.

Psi-Warriors are not known to exist in the Coalition military. They are a creation of Psyscape.

Psycho-Stalkers are Psi-Stalkers who volunteer for Juicer augmentation. With the advent of the Minion War, Psycho-Stalkers have been quietly added to the ranks of the Coalition Military and commonly deployed among units of Juicers, Demon Slayers, Psi-Stalkers, Dog Boys and Special Forces, but can be a member of any unit including regular army. There is little physical distinction made between these amped-up monster hunters and conventional Juicers or Psi-Stalkers, and they may wear the armor of either depending on where they are assigned. Though not publicized officially, the existence of the so-called Psycho-Stalker is not widely recognized even among Coalition soldiers. Their existence is presently unknown to the public. See the complete description of this character on page 135.

Zappers are cousins to Bursters, except rather than unleash psychic fire, they command electricity. Compared to Bursters, Zappers are a rarer commodity; one for every ten Bursters. Like the Burster, most Zappers in the CS become defenders of the people and monster hunters within the cities. With the Minion War, some are attached to Special Forces and demon hunting forces, but can be found in any branch of the CS military. While there are rumors of such people, the average CS citizen has never seen a Zapper in action. Wears a light blue, hooded cape.

Note: For complete stats, powers, and details on most of these psychic characters, see **Rifts® World Book 12: Psyscape™**. The rest are described in **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** along with descriptions of notable psionic powers.

Many psychics working within the Coalition military may work in teams with other psychics as well as mixed groups of military O.C.C.s or police/domestic security and city defenses. They frequently associate and work with, or even lead, Dog Packs and Psi-Stalkers. Many have assumed covert roles for decades and remain quietly involved in the secret methods and practices

of keeping the homeland safe from the supernatural and magic wielding enemies and monsters.

All psychics in the military and NTSET/ISS have been trained, cleared and sanctioned by **Psi-Battalion**.

The Xiticix Threat

By Matthew Clements

The Coalition's Plan to Contain the Xiticix Hivelands

As the conflict in Tolkeen gradually cools off, and before the advent of the Minion War, more and more Coalition troops were being repositioned to monitor and fight the Xiticix. The Hivelands in Minnesota and Canada are a sprawling threat, filled with millions of hostile alien creatures grouped in a series of enormous hive complexes the size of city-states.

General Jericho Holmes' experience with the monstrous insects during the Siege on Tolkeen has proven that the Xiticix's behavior and predictable response patterns may be the key to developing effective strategies to resist them. The insects also breed at an incredible rate, and some method of disrupting their reproductive cycle could be the only way to cut their numbers down to a point where a conventional military response will be effective. Xiticix hives are built with long tunnels and systems of chambers that lead deep underground, so bombardment with heavy weapons from afar might kill some of the bugs, but only inflicts superficial damage to the hive cluster, while alerting the entire hive and pushing it into a frenzied defensive swarm. A swarm that lashes out at every humanoid for miles around. Surgical strikes that eliminate Queens and eggs seem to be the only measured way to neutralize hives without resorting to a slow war of attrition that will no doubt cost millions of human lives and billions of credits worth of equipment.

Breaking out of its usual diplomatic isolation regarding magic users, the Coalition has shared basic information on the Xiticix with Free Quebec, but also Lazlo, New Lazlo, the Kingdom of Montreal and even Tolkeen prior to the Siege. The intelligence they offer is real, if incomplete, with descriptions of Xiticix breeds, behavior and hive construction. (See **Rifts® World Book 23: Xiticix Invasion™**, for such details.) The Coalition hopes that either Free Quebec will deploy a field army and strike the first blow, or that one of the magic-using states will find some way to fight the Xiticix, preferably a method that will blow up in their face and eliminate two threats. Any military action between practitioners of magic and Xiticix is a positive, especially if it leaves one or both parties vulnerable to Coalition aggression.

For now, the Coalition's standing policy is to monitor and study the Xiticix, containing their expansion until some weakness can be found. The hundreds of thousands of soldiers still stationed throughout the Tolkeen occupation zone and surrounding area are gradually beginning to redeploy into a loose net enveloping the southern perimeter of the Xiticix Hivelands. At least that was before the demon and Deevil hordes arrived.

The Markeen Hive

During cleanup efforts following the Siege on Tolkeen, a low-flying SAMAS patrol spotted a small Xiticix hive unexpectedly close to Markeen, a northern Barony and neighbor of Tolkeen itself. Sensing an opportunity, the area was isolated and the hive quickly surrounded by elite troops and researchers.

After several days of observation, the Coalition's Xiticix Specialists were confident that the newly-established hive had splintered off from one of the larger, more powerful hive-clusters to the north. An independent social structure cut off from reinforcements or support, the hive was vulnerable – a rare opportunity.

Special Forces, Juicers, mechanized units and Wild Psi-Stalkers hired for their Xiticix-fighting experience were assembled at every entrance to the hive. Outnumbering the bugs three-to-one, they deprived the Xiticix of their chief advantage, superior numbers. In short order, the hive was pacified, though unfortunately the Queen was killed in the fight for the egg-laying chamber, a major blow to the scientists eagerly awaiting a live specimen.

Once the hive was safely in Coalition hands, it had to be relocated. Leaving it in Tolkeen territory with a simmering guerilla war all around would be irresponsible, and if the Xiticix had chosen this site for a hive once they might do it again. Painstakingly, the hive was cut into sections, disassembled, and rebuilt piece by piece inside a giant hangar on a base in CS Iowa. Engineers came in and dug tunnels beneath it, simulating the layout of actual hives and creating a life-size mock-up for troops to train in before missions in the Hivelands.

Now the center of the Coalition's secretive Xiticix research efforts, the Markeen Hive has a full-time staff that educates troops serving on the front bordering the Hivelands. The interior of a Xiticix hive is a maze of tunnels and chambers, very disorienting to ground-dwelling humans and Dog Boys, and a few practice runs are extremely helpful for anyone who hopes to get their bearings during a hivebusting mission.

The existence of the relocated Markeen Hive is a carefully guarded secret, only divulged on a need-to-know basis. Units heading into the Hivelands stop on their way north to get a look at the hive and run a few training exercises, but are rarely let inside. Troops who volunteer for actual attacks on hives receive an extensive course on Xiticix architecture before they have to fight their way through it; considering how few survivors return from the average hive assault, the secret remains safe for now.

Volunteer Battalions

Olen blinked repeatedly, opened both sets of eyelids as wide as he could. Nothing. He was in total darkness.

He could taste blood and metal. His left eye hurt – there was something...different about it. Though he could see nothing and was unable to move his arms or legs, he felt the continuous vibration of distant machinery, heard a deep thrumming sound through the chamber's walls. He thought he could sense others in the darkness, too, bound and struggling, but Olen was unable to speak. The most recent thing he could remember was the Coalition detention center that he had called home for the last few weeks. The guards had gathered together all the D-Bees like him, the mages, as well as most of the humans that had been put away for serious crimes. They were lined up, supposedly for inocula-

tions, but there must have been some kind of tranquilizer in the shot they had given him.

Suddenly, he could see as a dozen screens activated in a row, all proudly displaying the Death's Head symbol of the Coalition States. Their light revealed a line of D-Bees of varying shapes and sizes, bound to seats bolted into the wall. Each one sported a bionic eye ringed in raw, unhealed skin that meant the surgery had been freshly performed.

On the screens, the image of a stern-faced human in a black uniform replaced the Coalition's Death's Head.

"I am Emperor Karl Prosek, leader of the Coalition States of America. If you are listening to this message, then you are an invader to our lands, an alien, a guest that we have never wanted and never welcomed. Maybe you are one of our human brothers or sisters, lost, overwhelmed, tempted by the vile forces of magic. No matter where you come from, no matter what choices you have made, you have all been given this grand opportunity.

"The Xiticix are a threat to all life, a devastating cancer upon the surface of the Earth! Destroy them, cleanse their hives, and your past will be forgiven! Within each hive is a Xiticix Queen. Kill her and the others will retreat to protect the eggs! Kill her and you can walk out, your mission complete! Your debt repaid!

"Aliens, Dimensional Beings, you must do your part and fight to protect this world that is not your own! Humans, Earthlings, stand with us, reject the forces of magic and temptations of other worlds, and redeem yourself now and forever! Today your sins shall be atoned! Today you shall be the heroes of humanity!"

The more intelligent or less-drugged captives began to visibly panic. The floor retracted beneath their feet – nothing but open air on the other side of a thin grating. They must have been half a mile (0.8 km) up. Down below, thousands of Xiticix filled the skies or lined the ground between hive towers, looking upwards as if someone had just rung the dinner bell.

The screens retracted – and a sickening feeling filled Olen's stomach as the chamber holding him dropped through the air. A few Xiticix who lingered beneath it were obliterated by the giant falling brick, but most seemed to know enough to dodge out of the way.

Just as he was sure they were about to hit the ground, the sound of rockets firing rumbled in the air. The platform slowed, then crashed roughly into the bare, resinous earth of the Hivelands with a thud.

They had stopped.

Tires squealed and Olen felt the inertia of rolling forward. He snuck a look out through a hole that could only be a gunport, and saw dozens of pointy-nosed armored vehicles bursting out of long, square drop pods like his. Up in the air, Death's Head Transports were releasing the last of the drop pods, as the first of the huge aircraft were already jetting away. A handful of the big bugs chased after them for a moment but broke off their pursuit when they realized it was futile.

All around was the sound of chaos as the vehicles were attacked by Xiticix defenders. One overturned nearby; Olen could see Xiticix Warriors descend upon it and rip through the grated underbelly, pulling the helpless passengers out one by one.

He strained to look forward but could only make out the shadow of a hive tower looming over them. The armored car accelerated and crashed right into the side of it, punching through the outermost layer and emerging in one of the interior tunnels. The locks holding Olen's arms and legs in place disengaged and he realized he was clad in some kind of makeshift armor. There was a rifle already in his hands. The others took stock too, confused and frightened. Without warning, the front of the APC opened, four sheets of armored metal parting at the center like the petals of a blooming flower. There was no cover, no driver's controls, and the vehicle itself was blocking the only way out of the hive. The giant bugs were closing in.

"What are you waiting for? Let's go! Get to the Queen!" One of his 'comrades' shouted, firing laser pulses into the insects blocking the tunnel ahead. The others around Olen were unsure; one of them was plucked away by a pair of Zit Warriors before the rest could even open fire. Up ahead, another APC crashed through the tunnel wall, disgorging its troops inside. They might actually have a chance...

Miles away, a ***Mark IX Exploratory Personnel Carrier*** *was carefully camouflaged with nets and branches, poking a long antenna out through the cover of the tree line. Inside, several Coalition scientists were glued to monitors showing the feed from the volunteers' bionic eye implants, watching the carnage unfold.*

"Response time was ninety seconds faster than in yesterday's attack."

"Still well within our standard deviation."

"What's the ratio of Warriors to specialist sub-breeds?"

"We'll have to check the recording after. There's just too much movement."

On the monitor, Olen was the only one left from his vehicle. He ran through resin-plastered tunnels as the giant insects closed in. The D-Bee tried to find cover, some escape, even a passage leading further down into the hive, but the Xiticix had swarmed the area and there was nowhere to hide. A scowling Super-Warrior grabbed him with all four arms and pulled, instantly quartering Olen, tossing the arms, legs and torso aside.

"That's the last of our volunteers. Call it."

"Three-minutes and forty-one seconds."

"Good enough, for now. We'll try for four minutes tomorrow."

The Coalition States is the largest population center in North America, a haven of safety and strength amongst a world gone mad. Unfortunately, practitioners of magic and D-Bees are not on the guest list, and the long reach of the Coalition means such *undesirables* don't even have to stray within CS territory to be swept up and placed under arrest.

Some end up in prisons or work camps, but the military detention system and the Internal Security Service (ISS) have both been overburdened since the Siege on Tolkeen brought thousands of prisoners of war into Coalition custody. Mass executions were deemed wasteful, work camps become vectors for disease when overpopulated, and deportation simply returns potential enemies to the field where they can come back to fight again another day.

The solution to the overcrowding problem was proposed by none other than Head of Propaganda and heir apparent, *Joseph Prosek II.* Sorcerers and Dimensional Beings could be processed at special *Volunteer Centers*, creating free space in Coalition prisons for honest human criminals who might be willing to do a tour in the CS Army in return for a reduced sentence. Nonhumans and mages who require complicated and expensive detainment methods and are unfit for standard military duty could still do their part – just not willingly. After being processed, these "volunteers" would be arranged into units and air-dropped into the

Xiticix Hivelands where they might trade their lives for a few of the bug-men before being cut to ribbons. Escape or retreat would be impossible and the fallen would not be missed. At least not by the CS.

The Emperor and Military High Command were sold on the plan immediately. Precious resources were being used to feed and house enemies of the state, an unsustainable practice with Rift activity increasing and reports of organized groups of demons and monsters on several fronts. The **Volunteer Program** would eliminate excess prisoners and keep the Hivelands at bay while other threats are managed and the Tolkeen occupation zone is brought fully under control.

The Volunteering Process

Once they have been rounded up and selected for use in the Volunteer Program, the volunteers are taken to the nearest **Volunteer Center**. Highly-secure, militarized prisons, Volunteer Centers are usually located adjacent to CS military bases where they can make use of transport aircraft and the army's logistics system. ISS personnel deliver D-Bees, magic users, rogue psychics and the worst normal human offenders into the hands of the Coalition Army. Early interrogation and examinations remove magically-empowered volunteers with teleportation abilities, as they are disruptive to the system and could help other volunteers escape. Such individuals are quietly eliminated. Those who remain are organized into units and prepped for basic surgery.

Every volunteer has their left eye replaced with a cheap bionic substitute, including a visual recording system and transmitter that relays the video feed back to Coalition scientists and intel specialists. Footage from attacks on hives is analyzed in detail to learn more about the Xiticix and how they live, interact, build their hive structures and, most importantly, defend themselves and patrol their territory. Practitioners of magic are gagged and bound to prevent unexpected interruptions in the form of spell casting until their vehicle crashes into the hive. At that point all restraints unlock and the "volunteers" are free to fight their way to the Queen.

Part of the reasoning behind the continual, small-scale attacks on the Xiticix is that it conditions the insects to seeing and hearing aircraft and mechanized forces around them. The bugs are notoriously defensive of their territory, and acclimatizing them to accept human activity without a full-scale, militant reaction should help preserve the element of surprise for when the time comes to really go into the Hivelands with a full scale assault to clear it out. Coalition scientists and military commanders are currently studying the Kingdom of Monsters in Calgary as another potential opportunity for applying the "volunteer program."

Current volunteer programs have a survival rate of less than one tenth of one percent. Those few supremely talented or lucky warriors and mages that survive a hive assault and escape are sure to hate the Coalition more than ever before, burning with revenge and witness to firsthand proof of the depths of the Coalition's genocidal policies.

Deploying Volunteers

As defensive as the Xiticix are, it is difficult to deploy troops into their territory, even suicide squads, without suffering unacceptable losses of vehicles, aircraft and personnel. Getting soldiers close enough to actual hive centers to have an effect is a challenge all in itself. Early experiments using traditional paratroopers and parachutes proved unsuccessful: even with risky high-altitude-low-opening jumps, parachutes are simply too slow and vulnerable. All it takes to incapacitate an entire squad is a single Xiticix Warrior that flies by slashing or biting at parachute cords.

Simple drop pods that carry **Volunteer Deployment Vehicles (VDV)** (automated, disposable troop-carriers) have been designed that can be delivered via Death's Head Transport. The Volunteer Deployment Vehicles themselves are very simple, intended to deliver volunteers from the drop zone to the hive itself before being abandoned in the field. Volunteers are placed in makeshift armor (25 M.D.C.), then secured and locked in position with their weapons already in hand. Weapons are usually all or some of the items the "volunteer" had on his person when apprehended by the CS for interrogation or imprisonment. Likewise, in some cases, the volunteer is left with his original body armor. However, the "good stuff" is often kept by the CS to support its other war efforts. This is especially true when the Minion War occurs. Such tactics helps the CS preserve its resources.

Once the **drop pods** have been released over the target hive, they fire retro-rockets to slow their rate of descent. The deployment vehicles carried inside roll out the moment the pod hits the ground, piloted by computer software to ram and penetrate the hive's outer walls and deliver their soldiers inside. At this point, the locks preventing the volunteers from running or sabotaging the vehicle disengage, freeing them to fight as the pointed nose of the VDV opens up and releases them into the hive. The drop pod/VDV system dramatically increases the odds of a volunteer battalion actually making contact with a hive's Queen.

To convince volunteers to focus more on eliminating the Queen than protecting themselves, the volunteers' pre-mission "briefing" makes it clear that killing a Queen will cause her brood to go dormant or retreat back to egg chambers to protect the next generation. In reality, the Xiticix Research Division has catalogued a variety of different hive responses when a Queen is killed, from almost passive, lethargic behavior to a full-on defensive swarm response where the bugs slaughter every living thing in their territory that isn't Xiticix.

High-Risk Mission Specialists

"I've lived my life. I know the end is coming. I do this one last mission – the Coalition makes my family citizens – and I don't have to die sitting behind a desk."

- Robert Norman, Coalition Juicer

When large forces of volunteers are deployed, they are often accompanied by actual volunteers, *high-risk mission specialists* – heavily armed, heavily equipped, well-trained and aware of how slim their chances are. They keep other less motivated volunteers (i.e. the majority of unwilling captives), moving and fighting. They provide an example to follow, and often become the de facto squad leaders of the suicide run. Others may use the normal volunteers as a distraction while they slip in and try to assassinate the Queens.

Despite their suicidal bravery, these people are not madmen or lunatics. Many are Juicers going into Last Call, aging cyborgs, overconfident mercenaries or those that have been freshly diag-

nosed with an incurable illness. In return for their service, their families are moved up on the list of potential CS citizens, fast-tracking their way into the safety and security of the Coalition States. For most High Risk Mission Specialists, death is only a matter of time, and volunteering for duty in the Hivelands is one end that will help benefit their loved ones.

High-Risk Mission Specialists receive specific training to help them complete their mission once they are inside Xiticix territory. Most spend time at the relocated Markeen Hive, practicing and acclimatizing themselves to Xiticix architecture and tunnel networks. When the time comes to actually assault a hive, they are mixed in with the volunteers, one or two HR Mission Specialists inserted in each group. They are not identified or singled out, but they do carry better equipment if anyone has the time to notice. Equipment that is not CS, so no one should be the wiser. They engage the enemy at the first opportunity, making it clear to the volunteers around them that the only way out is to fight through the Xiticix and stick together.

Sometimes, when Coalition operations planners think there is a real chance of eliminating a Queen, they create entire units of High-Risk Mission Specialists. The HRMS will deploy in the midst of several units of unwitting volunteers, wait for the others to get the Xiticix's attention, then move in to carry out their own surgical strike on the Queen's chamber while most of the hive is busy fighting the louder, more noticeable threat. Equipped with superior maps and a working knowledge of how the Xiticix arrange their hives, these **Kill Teams** go direct to the source. Making it out is a different story, but Xiticix Queens are much easier to hunt down once most of their guards and entourage have run off to defend the hive, unaware that their matriarch is in danger until it is too late. Some Kill Teams don't even try to make it out; going into battle with fusion-block vests that detonate after a computer system stops receiving vital signs from the troops.

Xiticix-Killers:

A Top Secret Coalition Program

A rare and unique specimen, even to the best-informed xenologists in North America, **Xiticix-Killers** are believed by most academics to be a predatory creature that originated on the same planet as the Xiticix themselves, or followed a swarm through a Rift at some point. Only a handful of Xiticix Killer carcasses have made it to centers of study like Lazlo, and none of these sport the unique and curious cybernetics that some specimens in the wild have been observed using to hunt their prey. Scholars

agree that the animals have only been recorded during the last few years, a far shorter time than the Xiticix themselves, but on an interdimensional crossroads like Rifts Earth, it is almost impossible to tell when they first appeared.

This version of the Xiticix-Killers' origins, like most lies, is based on a grain of truth. The giant, bipedal predators were *inspired* by a parasitic insect from the Xiticix homeworld that bores holes in Xiticix armor and kills the big alien bugs with ease. Besides their basic technique, however, there is little left of the original parasite. Genetic engineers at the **Coalition State of Lone Star** took numerous artistic liberties when they were given the task of creating a genetically engineered creature to hunt Xiticix. They recombined DNA from dozens of different monsters and animals until they had a living weapon capable of fending for itself in the wilds of Rifts Earth. Deployed into the Hivelands, these Xiticix-Killers survive almost exclusively by hunting their namesake prey, and are capable of reproducing naturally in order to replenish their numbers. Unfortunately, the small number of XKs, compared to the teeming millions of Xiticix, means the creatures have not had the desired population-controlling effect, and the secret Xiticix-Killer breeding program at the Lone Star Complex has been closed down. (See **Rifts® World Book 13: Lone Star**, for more details about the Xiticix-Killer, Dog Boys, Kill Cats and other CS genetic experiments.)

As containing the Hivelands becomes part of daily life for the Coalition military, the plan regarding the remaining Xiticix-Killers is simple. If and when the Coalition decides to launch a full-scale assault on the Xiticix, CS forces clearing the Hivelands will force the XKs northward, operating under standard procedure to kill anything not native to planet Earth. The troops have no need to know the truth about the animals in order to do their job, and once the surviving Xiticix-Killers have been deprived of their intended instectoid prey and pushed into an increasingly small and seasonally harsh environment, their numbers should dwindle until they disappear completely. Of course, invasive species are historically very hard to eradicate, even if they don't have the benefit of a genetic profile tailored to make them a berserk killing machine.

Disguising Skelebots

Coalition leadership is worried that at least one Xiticix hive has already recognized Coalition equipment as hostile, one of many arguments for the adoption of a slightly different cosmetic style with the launch of the Campaign of Unity. The uniform nature of Coalition equipment plays off the simple, competitive mindset of the bug people, making them think that anything bearing the Coalition's Death's Head must belong to the same rival species. Tanks, aircraft, infantry; since they all look alike, they must represent the different breeds/variations found within the humans' "hive."

Launching waves of automated Skelebots is one way to grind down a hive's defenses before sending in human troops, but restrictions have been placed on this tactic in order to prevent Xiticix from automatically associating the Death's Head symbol with threats to their hives. Skelebot attacks are still conducted, however, particularly for research purposes, but their origins must be partially concealed.

Simple-minded as they are, it does not take a lot of work to throw off the Xiticix. A new coat of random-colored paint and a few metal bars, pipes or spikes welded in place to alter its appearance is plenty to convince the Xiticix that they are fighting various different enemies rather than an organized and unified army. Old-style Skelebots often meet their end this way rather than at the scrapyard, though there aren't many of the older model left after the Siege on Tolkeen.

Xiticix-Imposter Robot

Sold to Coalition military higher-ups as a potential Queen-Killer, the Xiticix-Imposter is a Skelebot designed to look like a Xiticix Worker. The Imposter infiltrates hives, emitting a chemical-simulation of Xiticix pheromones in order to help it blend in. Once inside, the robot-bug is programmed to seek out the queen, (or, failing that, an accessible egg-chamber) and detonate a powerful explosive charge concealed within its body. The blast is substantial enough to vaporize eggs and hopefully, mortally wound a queen before collapsing her chamber on top of her.

Imposter Xi-Bots are new and experimental, and difficult to use in the field. Their chemical disguise is most effective on lower-tier Xiticix like Workers and Warriors, but the more intelligent Hunters, Super-Warriors and Queens grow suspicious at close range, not only of the smell but of the robot's appearance and mannerisms. By this time, however, it is hopefully too late, and a Queen trying to figure out what is wrong with this particular Worker or Warrior will have her curiosity answered with a massive fusion block explosion.

Early trials indicate that Xiticix-Imposter robots are most effective when their missions are kept short and sweet. A robot air-dropped right into a hive complex or secretly moved to a forward position by a Special Forces unit is much more likely to reach a suitable objective than one that is forced to trudge through the Hivelands and interact with a larger number of bug-men. Like most anti-Xiticix technology, Imposter 'Bots are used in an extremely limited fashion in order to preserve the element of surprise when it comes time for the Hivelands to be pacified.

Model Type: Experimental modified model FASSAR-XK7.
Class: Fully Automated Self-Sufficient Robotic Saboteur.
Crew: None; artificial intelligence.
Typical M.D.C. by Location for XK Units:

* Hands (4) – 1D6+9 each
Arms (4) – 2D6+20 each
Legs (2) – 3D6+30 each
* Head – 2D6+30
** Main Body – 1D4x10+30

* Destroying the head of the robot triggers the fusion-block charge, as long as no Coalition personnel are detected within the blast radius. If the robot does detect CS personnel or equipment it self-destructs, limiting damage to the robot itself and anyone within 2 feet (0.6 m). The head and hands are small and difficult targets to strike, requiring the attacker to make a "Called Shot", but even then the attacker is -4 to strike.

** Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body will trigger the fusion-block charge, as long as no Coalition personnel are detected within the blast radius. If CS personnel or equipment are detected the robot self destructs as noted above.

Note: There is an M.D.C. range, because damaged and decommissioned Skelebots, old and new style, are often used. Since the robot is a disposable walking bomb that is going to

be destroyed on its mission into the hive, there is no point to replenish Main Body M.D.C. unless it is less than 40.

Speed:
Running: 40 mph (64 km) maximum. Note that the act of running does NOT tire the robot and maximum speed can be maintained indefinitely.
Flying: None.
Water: As a disposable walking bomb, the Xiticix-Imposter robot has limited abilities in the water. The best it can do is walk along the bottom of the sea at about 25% of its normal running speed. Maximum Ocean Depth: 200 feet (61 m).

Statistical Data:
Height: 6 feet (1.8 m).
Width: 3 feet (0.9 m).
Length: 2 feet, 9 inches (0.8 m).
Weight: 390 lbs (175 kg).
Physical Strength: Equal to Robot P.S. 1D6+24. Again, there is little reason to repair walking robot bombs with diminished P.S.
Cargo: None.
Power System: Electric battery with a 144 hour field life.
CS Cost: Unknown. Unavailable on the Black Market. Top Secret.

Weapon Systems:

1. **Fusion-Block Self-Destruct Charge:** The chest and large pincer-arms of the fake Xiticix Worker body contain dozens of fusion block charges wrapped around the robot's skeleton. Once its programming determines that it is within range of a Queen or egg chamber the Imposter detonates immediately without warning.

Primary Purpose: Priority Target Assassination.
Secondary Purpose: Egg Destruction.
Mega-Damage: 4D6x10 M.D. to a 30 foot (9.1 m) blast radius.
Payload: One.

2. **Chemical Pheremone Supply:** Though it is impossible to convincingly or exactly simulate the specific identification scents of each Xiticix hive, this artificial chemical compound sets off some of the same scent receptors in the brains of Xiticix. It is able to fool most *Workers* and *Nannies* (01-80% success rate per encounter), but Hunters, Warriors and Super-Warriors are likely to become suspicious and investigate the Xiticix-Imposter Robot, and attack it within 1D6 melee rounds after investigating this odd "Xiticix." Queens are too intelligent to be deceived at all and realize that the robot is not part of their hive within one melee round (15 seconds). Queens realizing the robot is indeed an imposter, immediately assume the thing is hostile, prompting her to cry out for defenders as she takes defensive action.
3. **Sensor System Note:** Has the same sensor systems as the basic FASSAR-30 Skelebot.

Volunteer Deployment Vehicle

The Coalition **Xiticix Studies Division (XSD)** is still experimenting with the most effective way to deploy "volunteer" troops. Simply air-dropping them in cargo pods has a 95% success rate, at least for getting the troops onto the ground. Less than half of volunteers ever make it inside the actual hive, however, cut down the moment they try to exit the cargo pod.

The standard delivery system for volunteer deployment relies on small, automated APCs that drive directly into Xiticix hives. Delivered in cargo pods or dropped independently via parachute, these Volunteer Deployment Vehicles (VDVs) are compact and nimble. Their frames tapering down to a pointed nose that serves as a ram prow for punching through walls and recalcitrant Xiticix alike. Inside the vehicle is a passenger section for carrying the volunteers, designed to unfold like a series of metal flower-petals both to help the troops inside disembark quickly and to insure that they cannot hide within the vehicle.

VDVs are fully automated, controlled by basic driving software. From the deployment point, they use optical cameras to locate the nearest Xiticix hive and find an access point. Typically, VDVs stay at ground level, relying on their front-facing ram-prow to create an entrance by piercing through the side of a hive wall. Sometimes they are able to drive down into tunnels or up embankments or through the Xiticix's own entryways. Once the vehicle becomes stuck or reaches a position that satisfies its preprogrammed criteria, it stops and opens up to deploy the volunteers waiting inside.

Model Type: VDV-2.
Class: Disposable Armored Personnel Carrier.
Crew: Up to 20 passengers.

M.D.C. by Location:
Front-Facing Deployment Ramp/Ram Prow – 35
* Puncture Proof Wheels (4) – 8 each
** Main Body – 60

* A single asterisk indicates a small and difficult target to strike, requiring the attacker to make a "Called Shot," but even then the attacker is -4 to strike.

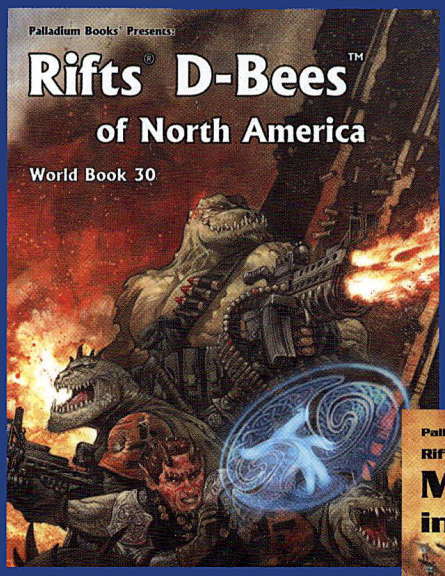
** Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body shuts the vehicle down completely, making it useless.

Speed:
Land: 60 mph (96 km) maximum.
Water: None.
Flying: None.

Statistical Data:
Height: 8 feet (2.4 m).
Width: 6.5 feet (2 m).
Length: 20 feet (6 m).
Weight: 6 tons unloaded.
Cargo: None; the interior of the vehicle features bench seating along each side with little or no additional space.
Passenger Payload: It carries 22 volunteer troops.
Power System: Electric battery with a 96 hour field life.
Cost: Less than 250,000 credits. VDVs are cheaply mass-produced and not intended for more than one mission.

Gun Ports (4): While the VDV does not have any built-in weapons, it does feature a series of gun ports that let the troops inside fire outward. The ports are all arranged to face forward, making it impossible for volunteers to stop the vehicle by shooting out its tires.

Sensor System Note: The VDV itself has no lights, radios or sensor systems beyond those used by the autopilot to deliver the vehicle to its destination.



Also from Palladium Books®.

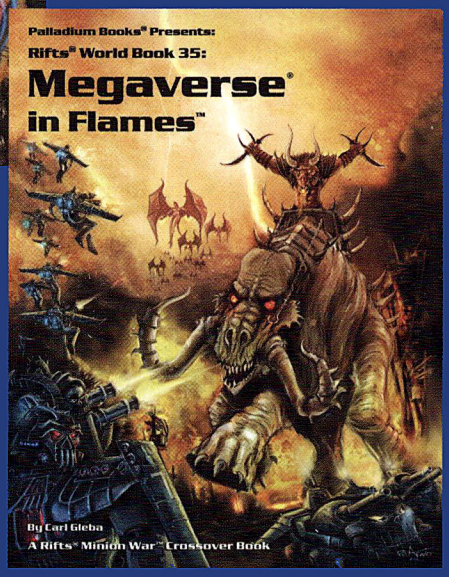
Rifts® World Book 30: D-Bees of North America™

- 86 D-Bees – alien humanoids common to North America. Each illustrated.
- Complete descriptions, history and stats. 224 pages.

Rifts® WB 35: Megaverse® in Flames™

The Minion War has spilled onto Rifts Earth. Two rival demonic forces fight to conquer the planet, starting with North America. The greatest military powers unite to stop them.

- Soulmancy magic, Demonic weapons, armor, and vehicles.
- 7 Demon Hell Lords, 7 Dyval Overlords, and their armies.
- Hell Pits, the Kingdom of Monsters, and much more. 192 pages.
- Part of the Minion War™ crossover series. By Carl Gleba.



Rifts® Dimension Book™ 10: Hades™

- 30 Demons and Sub-Demons, plus the Demon High Priest.
- Demon Bone Weapons, Soulmancy, Netherbeasts and more.
- Hades mapped and described. 224 pages by Carl Gleba.
- Part of the Minion War™ crossover series.

Rifts® Dimension Book™ 11: Dyval™

- 18 different Deevils, 7 War Steeds, and 5 Host (minions).
- Soul Gems, Chrysteel Weapons, Encounter Tables and more.
- Dyvalian Hell mapped and described. 224 pages by Gleba.
- Part of the Minion War™ crossover series.

At stores everywhere

Hell has arrived! Other Minion War™ Titles:

- **Dimensional Outbreak™**
- **Armageddon Unlimited™**
- **Heroes of the Megaverse®**
- **Heroes of Humanity™** *Arsenal* (coming)
- **Rifts® The Disavowed** (coming)
- **Rifts® Haunted Tech™** (coming)

Rifts® Secrets of the Coalition States™

Heroes of Humanity™

Heroes of Humanity™ is the next chapter in the epic war for the soul of humanity.

A call to arms! The Minion War has spilled onto Rifts Earth. At the epicenter of the invasion is *North America*. If either of the two rival demonic forces succeeds in conquering the continent, the rest of the world shall follow and Earth will become an annex of Hell. The demon hordes believe no one can stop them. The Coalition States has something to say about that.

For the first time in history, the Coalition States, Northern Gun, the Manistique Imperium, Lazlo, New Lazlo, the Cyber-Knights, Lemurians, Free Quebec, D-Bees, mages and many, many others stand together against a common enemy. Meanwhile, the *Splugorth of Atlantis*, *Archie Three*, *the Republicans* and *the Vanguard* engage in their own shadow war against the invading demon hordes and each other.

- **Never before possible mixed player groups that would otherwise be ideologically opposed, fight side-by-side for the greater good.**
- **Ways to upgrade your existing characters. Tables, gear, more.**
- **Coalition Demon Hunter school and advanced training programs.**
- **The strategies and tactics of the Minions of Hell against humanity.**
- **The strategies and tactics of the Coalition States and its allies.**
- **Coalition military O.C.C.s expanded: CS Juicer, CS Combat Cyborgs, power armor pilots, Fly Boys, Military Specialists & more.**
- **Coalition psychics and Psi-Battalion.**
- **Coalition innovations like the Death Knight.**
- **One Xiticix battle plan and who really pays the price.**
- **CS background and secrets, world information and adventure ideas.**
- **160 pages by Kevin Siembieda, Gleba, Clements and others.**
- **Part of the *Minion War™ "Crossover" series.***

One game system –
an endless Megaverse® of adventure™

$20.95
Cat. No. 889
ISBN-10: 1-57457-238-5
ISBN-13: 978-1-57457–238-4

Palladium Books Inc.
www.palladiumbooks.com

ISBN-13: 978-1-57457-238-4
ISBN-10: 1-57457-238-5
52095>
EAN
9 781574 572384