

STARSHIPS & SPACEMEN EXPANSION KIT

by Leonard H. Kanterman, M.D.

SECTION ONE: ERRATA

This section consists of corrections to the main body of rules as published, and are mostly in the nature of typographical errors and resolving contradictions between various sections.

a) Character Abilities—There is some discrepancy between the modifications of abilities for race and sex listed in the sections on abilities and those listed on the sections for each race.

1) Taurans—Taurans add only 1 to intelligence, as listed under intelligence (not 2 as listed under the race). They subtract 2 from charisma, and add 1 to technical skill (as listed in both). They add 2 to strength (as listed under strength). Tauran loyalty base is 7.

2) Andromedans—Andromedan loyalty base is 8 (as listed under loyalty) not 6 (as listed under race). They add 1 to intelligence (as listed under race) instead of 2 (as listed under intelligence). They add 2 to contact and charisma, subtract 2 from marksmanship and technical, and subtract 1 from strength (as listed in both).

3) Fire Control Officer—The Fire Control Officer adds 2, not 3, to the minimum hit number required in ship-to-ship combat.

b) Ship Statistics—In the main body of the rules, a freighter is given the same statistics as a dreadnought (listed just

above). The statistics given on the yellow "Spaceship" sheet is correct.

SECTION TWO: ADDENDA

This section makes several substantial procedural changes to the rules.

a) Movement—The basic movement rate (on foot) on planet's surface depends on gravity and is as follows:

Low gravity: 10 kms/hr (2 kms/10 minute period)

Medium gravity: 5 kms/hr (1 km/10 minute period)

High gravity: 2.5 kms/hr (500 m/10 minute period)

b) Concealment—Players defending in a concealed position are given a bonus when being attacked with ranged fire. Characters which are moving into close combat range, and all characters involved in close combat, do not receive this bonus.

Natural concealment (on hill, in tree, behind boulders): subtract 2 from attacker's marksmanship

Mandmade concealment (in building, trench, behind a wall): subtract 4 from attacker's marksmanship

This subtraction is made before the die is rolled for ranged-fire attacks, applies to all ranged-fire weapons, and is cumulative with other modifications (i.e., range).

c) Psionic Exhaustion—Each time a player uses a psionic power (whether successful or not), he must determine if psionic exhaustion occurs. The player

determines his Psionic Power Reserve as follows: he adds his Psionic Potential to his strength at that moment (including all damage already taken), and from that subtracts the cost of the power he is using as given on the Psionic Cost Table. The player must roll less than his Psionic Power Reserve on a D20 to avoid exhaustion. If he rolls greater than or equal to his reserve score, exhaustion does occur. The effects of exhaustion are as follows: first, the character must immediately take D6 hits in damage; second, the character may not use any psionic powers for the remainder of that day; third, if the character undergoes a psionic attack, he defends as if he had a Psionic Potential of zero. Note that the roll for exhaustion occurs *after* the power is employed and, even if exhaustion does occur, the power employed still has its full effect.

Example—A Tauran with a strength of 15 and a Psionic Potential of 10 uses telekinesis at a cost of 8. His reserve score is 17 (10 plus 15 minus 8). If he rolls a 16 or less, he avoids exhaustion; on 17 or higher, he is exhausted psionically.

SECTION THREE: EQUIPMENT

a) Laser Sword—This item costs 1 unit, and is restricted to characters with a Psionic Potential of at least 3, a marksmanship of at least 12. The weapon has a limited range of 1 meter, and is thus employed only in close combat situations

(no ranged fire). If a character armed with a laser sword is attacked in close combat, he rolls against his marksmanship. If he rolls less than his score, his attacker's close combat is deflected and his attacker immediately suffers 2D6 pts damage. If he fails to roll less than his score, a normal close combat situation ensues, with the additional modification that the wielder of the sword is attacked his usual die roll addition to strength.

Two characters with laser swords can engage in a duel in lieu of a normal close combat melee. Each character determines a Duel Score, by adding his marksmanship, his Psionic Potential, and the roll of 1 die. The characters then compare their Duel Scores: if one character's score exceeds the other's by 4 or more, the character with the lower score is hit, and suffers 2D6 pts of damage. If the differential between scores is less than 4, the duel is stalemated, for that round.

b) Stasis Generator—This costs 2 units, and, like other generators, is limited to technical officers. The tech officer must roll less than his tech score each turn he wishes to use the stasis generator. The stasis generator projects a stasis beam that extends in a cone-like fashion from the point of origin to a maximum range of 100 meters. At 10 m, the beam is 1 m wide, at 20 m, it is 2 m wide, and so on up to 10 m wide at maximum range of 100 m. While the beam spread increases arithmetically, the beam's power disperses in a geometric progression. Thus, at maximum range, a character caught in the beam is stunned for 1 minute; at half max (50 m), a character is stunned for 2 minutes, at half of that (25 m), a character is stunned for 4 minutes, and at 10 m or less, a character is stunned for 10 minutes. A character caught in a stasis beam at less than 10 m range also suffers damage: 1D6 pts if from 5-10 m; 2D6 pts if under 5 m. All characters caught by the expanding cone of the beam are affected. Characters caught by a stasis beam are immobilized, and incapable of any action except thought or psionics.

c) Landspeeder—This item costs 3 units, and can only be transported to a planet's surface by shuttle ship. The landspeeder can carry six passengers and their equipment, and travels at the rate of 100 kms/hr regardless of gravity (like a jetpack). Travel by landspeeder avoids exhaustion by characters in high gravity. The landspeeder is not a combat vehicle, and has no weapons or armament. A landspeeder can be affected by natural cataclysms (earthquake, landslide, etc.) It is considered to have 10 damage points, and loses 10 kms/hr speed for every point lost.

d) Skycycle—An individual air transport /combat vehicle, the skycycle costs 4 units, and is limited to use by military

officers or Rigel. It can be transferred to a planet's surface only by shuttle ship. The cycle has the same air speed as a jetpack (100 kms/hr), but double the ceiling (200 m on high grav, 1000 m on medium or low grav). The skycycle is considered to be concealed for ranged fire. The cycle itself is considered to have 20 damage points; for every 2 points damage taken, the vehicle loses 100 m of altitude ceiling and 10 kms/hr speed. The cycle can also operate on a planetary surface as a landspeeder would.

e) Robot Tank—Unmanned heavy combat vehicle, possessed by Zangids and the Galactic Confederacy, is available for use only in "hot war" situation and costs 5 units, can only be chosen by military Rigel. Robot tanks can only be transported to a planet's surface by shuttle, and use half shuttle's entire transport capacity. The tank is controlled by, and in communication with, the ship's computers. There are two models.

1) Mk I "light": Anti-personnel weapon, armed with 2 laser rifles.

2) Mk II "heavy": Anti-position weapon, armed with laser cannon.

Laser cannon, like laser rifle, has a 1000 m range. It scores 5D6 points damage with each hit, and is effective against buildings and vehicles.

Both models have a ground speed of 50 kms/hr, and 50 damage points. For each damage point taken, 1 km/hr speed is lost. All weapons function normally until the last 5 damage points are reached, when they fail to function at all.

The computer-controlled weapons are considered to fire with a marksmanship of 20, modified as usual for range and concealment.

f) Shuttle Ships—Shuttle ships can be used for transportation within a planet's ecosphere, either in the atmosphere, on land, or on (or under) water. The ship has a speed of 50 kms/hr, and 100 damage points, it has no weaponry. A shuttle can carry 50 individuals or 2 robot tanks. A skycycle takes up the room of 5 individuals, a landspeeder the room of 10. Starships are equipped with shuttles according to type of ship, and more may not be requested.

SECTION FOUR: STARMASTER'S AIDS

A) STARSHIP CONTACT MATRIX—This table was devised before Space Carriers were part of the game, and thus the chance of meeting an enemy carrier was not included. This revised table should be used.

1—Friendly Freighter

2—Friendly Starship: 1,2 - DD; 3, 4 - CS; 5 - BC; 6 - DN

3—Enemy Freighter (Zangid only)

4—Enemy Starship (Zangid): 1,2,3 - DD; 4 - CS; 5 - BC; 6 - SC

5—Enemy Starship (Zangid): 1,2 - DD; 3,4 - CS; 5 - BC; 6 - SC

B) PSIONICS—Two new psionic powers are described below. Like tele-energesis and molecular control, these powers have psionic cost of 20 and cannot be used by players, only by non-player psionics.

1) Brain Drain—Resolved as any other psionic attack, if the Brain Drain succeeds the affected character rolls 1D6 and subtracts this from his intelligence. When a character's intelligence reaches 3, he is essentially functioning at the level of a trained pet; 0, a living vegetable incapable of action. When intelligence is reduced to -5 or below, the character forgets how to breathe and dies. If the attacking psionic is killed or incapacitated before the affected character dies, intelligence returns to normal if the character was not reduced below 0. If reduced below zero, but not killed, the amount of reduction is applied permanently to the character's intelligence. (For example, a character with intelligence of 12 that was reduced to -3 would, upon restoration, be restored only to intelligence of 9). A psionic employing Brain Drain may attack from 1-6 characters each round of combat.

2) Tentacles of the Mind—Resolved as any other psionic attack, Mind Tentacles reach out and grab a character (immobilizing him and prevent any action except thought or psionics), and inflict 1D6 points of physical damage (to strength) each round; a player can be physically killed from such an attack, as by any other physical attack. The tentacles can immobilize 1-6 characters per round, without inflicting any damage, or can be concentrated against 1 character to inflict damage.

C) STRONGHOLDS—Players often find themselves in the stronghold of their enemies; the following tricks are suggested to prevent them from scampering around with impunity.

1) Audio-visual Sensors—Remote-control TV cameras that sweep areas. Usually tied into a central alarm system, they may also release traps (pits, teleporters) or guards (especially robots). May be armed with lasers that can also sweep.

2) Psi Sensors—Respond to use of psionic powers in the above manner.

3) Stasis Beams—Work in the same manner as the weapon, to immobilize characters.

4) Bolaster Walls—Reflect and ricochet all laser fire.



STARSHIPS & SPACEMEN

a review

by

Richard Bartucci

In recent years, a number of science fiction role-playing games have become available; TSR's **METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA**, FanTac's **SPACE MARINES** and GDW's superlative **TRAVELLER** are only a few. The latest entrant in the field is Fantasy Games Unlimited's **STARSHIPS & SPACEMEN**, written by Capt. Leonard H. Kanterman, M.D., U.S. Army Medical Corps.

While the physical quality of the game booklet is up to FGU's usual high standards, the game itself leaves much to be desired. The game "universe" is inspired by the popular TV series **STAR TREK**, though perhaps "inspired" is too weak a word; indeed, it *is* the **STAR TREK** universe with the serial numbers rubbed off and certain names changed to protect the publisher. While freely acknowledging **STAR TREK** as his starting point, Dr. Kanterman also admits to borrowings from the best of SF (Gordy Dickson, Robert Heinlein) and the worst of Sci-Fi (**THE BIONIC MAN**, **STAR WARS**), lifting only the most superficial features from the former and only the most banal from the latter. At one point, he makes bold to suggest a pseudo-**PLANET OF THE APES** game encounter to prospective players (the gorge rises).

The game mechanics are basically similar to those of **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS**, including encounter tables requiring 20-sided dice, variations in character attributes (read "Inborn Abilities") according to race, and a dungeon master--pardon, a "Starmaster"--to referee.

The role of the Starmaster (SM) is similar to that of the FRP game's dungeon master in that he must be responsible for the actual layout of the arena in which the adventures--pardon again, the "missions"--take place. He must construct the starship in which the player characters serve, map out a sector of the galaxy through which they travel, and provide the players with a detailed description of the objectives of their missions via formalized "briefings" in the form of messages from the Commander of the local Starbase.

In addition to the above, the SM is expected to interpret the rules, control non-player characters both friendly and hostile, run the ship's computer and generally unscrew the inscrutable when necessary.

Gamer familiar with the **STAR TREK** mythos will find dozens of old friends in **STARSHIPS & SPACEMEN**; the Space Amoeba dispedeses its way through the ether once again even as the "Stone Creature" slithers up to vitrify "NO KILL I" in the rock at your feet. Characters can come down with "Aging Disease" as well as "Space Malaria," or they can have parts of their bodies replaced by "bionic" prosthetics (though the fabled Fusion-Powered Phallus is conspicuous by its absence). Starships are armed with "laser banks" and "ion torpedoes," and their suggested layouts are suspiciously like simplifications of the Federation vessels in Franz Joseph's **STAR TREK TECHNICAL MANUAL**. Somehow the author forgot to include Tribbles.

Mild flashes of originality are evident, principally in the Andromedans, a telepathic race of humanoids divided into three sexes and notable for their tendency to molt three times a year, becoming invisible for the 3-day duration of their molting period.

Non-sentient alien life forms described in the game appear to be drawn either from the **STAR TREK** plenum (the "Stone Creature"), popular SF ("Sand Dragons," nee Sandworms), or Wishful Thinking (Giant Spiders, Flying Dogs, Psionic Porcupines). In this last category, Dr. Kanterman displays, for a physician, a disturbing lack of familiarity with such basic principles of biology as the inverse-square law. Also, he exhibits an earth-centered chauvinism; just about everything not borrowed outright from **STAR TREK** or SF is derived from extinct or existing terran species.

In his descriptions of sentient life the author provides only humanoids, betraying the superficiality of his acquaintance with science fiction as a whole. Where are the Diomedans of Poul Anderson's

WAR OF THE WING MEN? What about Larry Niven's *Bandersnatchi*, Heinlein's *Venusian Dragons*, Laumer's *Lumbagans*?

As in **D&D**, success depends on the accumulation of experience points earned for achievements in a character's branch of Star Fleet Service. An officer in the Command Subclass of the Military Branch, for example, would receive EP's for overcoming adversaries and completing missions. A Medical Officer would be credit for characterization and control of diseases that break out in the course of a mission, while a Technical Branch officer receives EP's for the swift and efficient completion of the missions in which he participates. Promotion in Star Fleet is based entirely on a rigid schedule of experience point levels reminiscent of **D&D**; anyone for a 9th Level Science Officer?

With all of the SF genre to draw upon, Dr. Kanterman has restricted himself almost entirely to a universe that has been so thoroughly explored and documented that further exposition is wearisome. Where Redmond Simonson of SPI has devised a rich and original plenum for his **StarForce** trilogy, where Meta-gaming has dipped into the manifold worlds of Keith Laumer, Poul Anderson and Joe Haldeman for inspiration, and where Marc Miller of GDW has devised the elegant and versatile game system of **TRAVELLER**, it is galling to see such a mishmash of warmed-over Sci-Fi and **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS** foisted on the gaming public.

STARSHIPS & SPACEMEN (81pp) is available from Fantasy Games Unlimited, Inc., P.O. Box 182, Roslyn, NY 11576 for \$7.00 postpaid.

STARSHIPS and SPACEMEN

:designer's notes

by

LEONARD H. KANTERMAN, M.D.

Author's preface: I had intended to write an article for TSG outlining the design philosophy that guided the development of STARSHIPS AND SPACEMEN in any case. However, after reading the vicious, biased review of the game in TSG no.18, I felt compelled to offer an alternative viewpoint. While I am naturally prejudiced in favor of my own work, I hope readers will be able to form a more objective opinion of the game after this rebuttal.

When I set out to design STARSHIPS AND SPACEMEN, I had two major goals in mind. The first was to produce what would be, to my knowledge, the first science-fiction role playing game, as an option to the medieval milieu of DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS. S&S was developed concurrently, but independently of TRAVELLER and METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA. I had no foreknowledge of what these games would cover, and, even since their publication, I have spent little time in perusing them. The vagaries of finding a suitable publisher, and then getting the game from the sheafs of notes in my apartment into an organized form, and finally the technical difficulties of printing the game and arranging the artwork, all resulted in about a year's delay from the time the game was first conceived and playtested.

My second goal was to present a set of rules that were simple, concise, clearly organized, and easy to learn and play, yet which covered a wide variety of situations, and also corrected some of the deficiencies I had found in the original D&D. Although this was quite a tall order, I felt my previous experience in game design would enable me to deliver. (I was co-designer of SDC's CROMWELL and

designed a game called TICONDEROGA on the French and Indian War that was due to be published by Morningside Games before they went bankrupt.)

The setting that I specifically chose for the game was the world of TV's Star Trek. This basic premise seems to have been what upset the reviewer of the game in TSG so much. I did not intend to hide my intentions at all. In the Designer's Notes in the game it clearly states what my assumptions were. Indeed, my publisher and I debated obtaining the rights from Paramount and calling the game Star Trek but this was not economically feasible. We even attempted to alert potential buyers of the Star Trek tie-in with the tag line "the final frontier" on the cover. It seems unjust to me that, having taken offense with the basic premise of the game, the reviewer felt qualified to make substantive comments about the game itself. It is akin to condemning MIDDLE EARTH as a game because one does not like LORD OF THE RINGS.

I chose to use Star Trek as a base for the design of S&S for two purposes. Most importantly, I felt that Star Trek was a well-known phenomenon with wide popular appeal. Therefore, the "rationale" and general course of play would be easily comprehended by players of the game. Prolonged explanations and rationalizations, as are employed in many other science fiction games, would not be necessary, and the gamemaster would not be faced with huge gaps in the designer's intentions that he must divine before creating his corner of the galaxy. As an extra bonus, S&S has proven to be particularly well-suited to introducing novices and nongamers into the world of gaming; all the gamemaster has to say is,

"this is a role-playing game based on Star Trek" and everybody knows what he's talking about and can get into playing the game. My own experiences and those of my publisher, Scott Bizar of Fantasy Games Unlimited, at his wargame store have borne this out.

Secondly, I am not a science fiction writer. If I were, I certainly would not be wasting my time and effort in something that pays as poorly as game design. However, I realized my limitations and utilized a basic concept that would be familiar to many people. Unfortunately, some of my colleagues in the world of game design do not realize their own limitations, resulting in games like: STARFORCE, for which Simonsen developed a beautiful story, an exquisite map and a three-dimensional movement system, but which plays like Space Checkers; WHITE BEAR AND RED MOON, which has more unstated assumptions and missing pieces than a jigsaw puzzle; or SWORDS AND SORCERY, the childish fantasy of Greg Costikyan and Eric Goldberg where Killer Penguins and SS Divisions run amuck amid the dwarves and orcs.

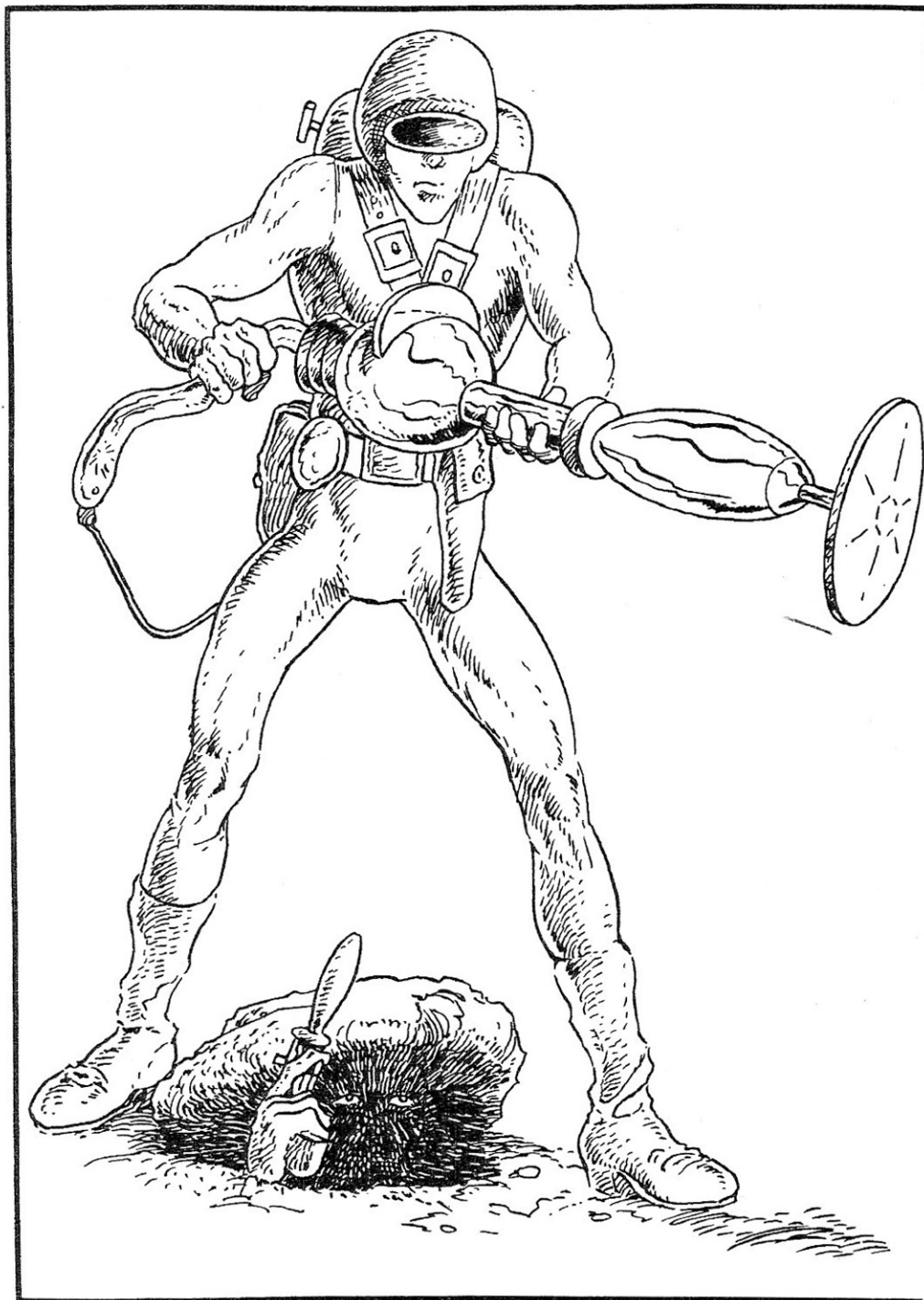
Like many things, science fiction is a matter of taste. My favorite author may be your bane. I think that a brief inspection of the profit-and-loss statements of Star Wars or Planet of the Apes show that many more people disagree with the reviewer's conceptions of successful science fiction than agree with him. In the design of S&S I attempted to suggest that the gamemaster's world should not be bound by the conventions of Star Trek, but could easily be expanded to incorporate other elements. I included the details for some of my own pet ideas, but I never intended these to exclude

other concepts. The reviewer was dismayed because I neglected to include some of his particular favorites. My answer to him, and to anyone else who reads the rules, is to include them yourself! With a modicum of intelligence and imagination, a would-be gamemaster should be able to follow the guidelines I laid out for various species of fauna and flora in translating elements from a particular science fiction medium into game terms. In fact, almost every title I've read since publication of S&S contains aspects that would lend themselves into incorporation. If a potential buyer of S&S feels cheated that I have not included every conceivable creature, I need only refer him to the original D&D, which went through a variety of supplements and an entire design overhaul, but still engenders new species in the various fan magazines.

There were several design "points" that I wanted to make in S&S that I felt were lacking in the original D&D. While the new Basic and Advanced D&D rules do address many of the deficiencies in the rules, they do so only at a considerable expense to the player. S&S can stand alone, although additional material will be forthcoming via FGU's Wargaming magazine. Among the "points" I made in S&S are the following:

(1) I devised three systems for character generation that allow both the player and the referee some input into the shaping of the character. How many times has Lady Luck failed you by giving your 18-strength fighter a constitution or dexterity of 3? I for one always seem to roll up mediocre characters who seem more at home sweeping the barn than exploring a castle, and have doubts about the honesty of a player whose character has more than 1 score of 16, 17, or 18. My favorite method for assigning attributes is where the player picks what value he assigns each die roll to as he rolls it. This way, when a player obtains a good score (of say 14), he must decide whether to apply it to his character's prime requisite or hold out for something better. When the ability modifications for race and sex are added, there is a wide range of characters available for play.

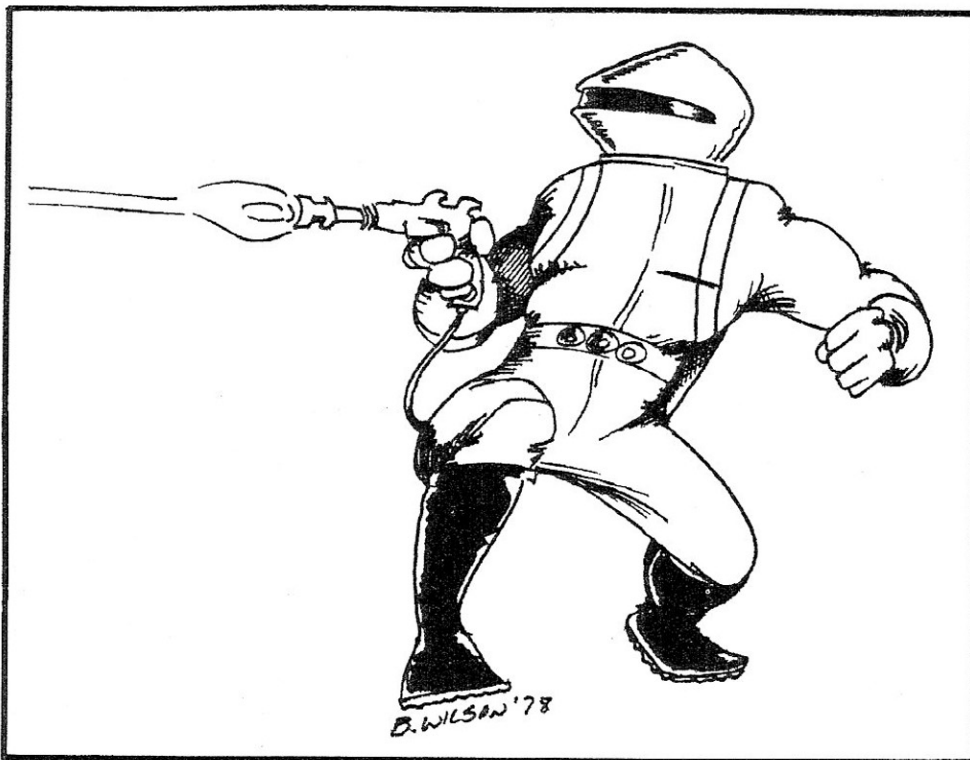
(2) One point I always found disturbing with the original D&D was that a character could not improve with experience. It seems hard to believe that a 10th level magic-user has the same intelligence he had as an apprentice. BUNNIES AND BURROWS (another Fantasy Games role-playing system, based on WATERSHIP DOWN) addressed this by offering a



"potential" which could not change, as well as a "level" which improved with experience for each ability. This was too complicated for my liking, so in S&S characters can improve their ratings with each promotion via the experience system. I divided the abilities into "inborn" attributes, which couldn't be improved (like physical strength or charisma), and "acquired" ones, which could improve (like marksmanship and intelligence). Since a character can choose which ability he will garner his bonus in, he can further shape his character's development.

(3) In D&D, the only attribute which did improve with experience was hit

points. This seems somewhat ludicrous; the human body is able to absorb only so much damage without collapse. I never found the D&D explanation that a character was more able to dodge hits quite satisfactory. The D&D system also has the unfortunate aspect that beginning characters are overly vulnerable to the slightest danger. In S&S, I grouped the physical attributes of Strength, Constitution, and Hits into one rating, which, as an inborn ability, could not be improved. As such, all characters have the same vulnerability regardless of level of experience. I felt that this decision was justified by the technology level of the game. A hit from a laser gun seems just as



likely to kill an admiral as an ensign. In fact, a Star Trek purist could argue that, based on the show, *any* hit from an energy weapon should be fatal. To grant greater flexibility, in the game most characters can stand 2 or 3 hits from an energy weapon if these hits score average damage. With poor luck, the weaponry can be quite deadly.

(4) The high number of hit points that most higher level characters have tended make melees in D&D long, drawn-out affairs, with both parties hacking away as their hit points slowly dwindle over an interminable period unless magic is employed to radically alter the outcome. The combat system of S&S is designed to be swift and decisive, with most melees decided in a few rounds. The high damage potential from the game's weapons, combined with the fixed level of damage that can be absorbed, resolve fire combat rapidly. The only mitigating factors are personal screens, which help dissipate damage. (In one game, two characters with a screen knocked out a small enemy base with ten times their number.) Close combat resolution is made decisive by the "stun" result, which leaves a combatant somewhat hindered in his ability to respond in further rounds. In addition, there is a morale consideration, related to casualties sustained and the leader's charisma.

(5) The experience point system is tied to a series of USN related promotions. No longer will a player have to wonder what a "myrmidon" or "the-

maturgist" is; he is a lieutenant or commander or captain. The early promotions are easily attained, while the more advanced ones are successively more difficult. The game is designed for relatively low level characters, although higher level ones can employ the more useful and potent items of equipment. (Equipment in the game is in a sense "loaned out" from headquarters, with a character's equipment allowance concomitant with his experience, and thus his chance to return it intact.) Although the promotions scale does go up to 12th level (Admiral-in-Chief), the highest ranks are limited to command branch only, and most positions above 8th or 9th level would be at a desk job. The dangers of space exploration and combat are reserved for more expendable personages.

(6) Also regarding the experience system, S&S is probably one of the least competitive games on the market. Each class of character has its own means of advancement; military officers gain for combat experience while science officers gain for scientific discoveries (which can lead to interesting situations when the military wants to kill off a new creature, but the scientists want to capture it.) There is no money in the game. This lack of competition tends to make S&S an enjoyable experience for people new to gaming, especially women.

(7) S&S is a non-sexist game. Unlike D&D, where women tend to be stereotyped into beautiful-but-helpless princesses or fighting amazons, women come

into a full role. S&S recognizes that, while the sexes are different, women are not in any sense inferior. While women lose somewhat in physical strength, their gain in charisma and psionic power more than makes up for this. The loss of physical strength is of less consequence in a game with energy weapons, which can be wielded by all. In fact, women characters are probably better overall than their male counterparts and, in our playtest group, one of the co-commanders was female. For the ultimate in sexual equality, there is a *trisexual* race.

(8) There is an entire subsystem of play that enables players to try to divulge information from the gamesmaster, via the mechanism of the ship's computer. Since the computer interprets questions *literally*, and is limited to "yes", "no", or "insufficient data" as responses, the players learn about the nature of logic in learning how to phrase questions to obtain meaningful knowledge.

(9) With deference to my flights of fancy such as flying dogs (which I postulate in the context of low-gravity planets where less force is required to lift a given mass), the game does incorporate several scientific lessons. The game is squarely based on the metric system, with approximate conversion tables offered in the rules. While there is some speculative science in the game (namely, the effects of atmosphere, gravity, temperature, and radiation on life forms), other elements such as the space amoeba (with its semi-permeable membrane, mitochondria, and lysosomes) could be straight of a college-level Cell Biology course.

In summary, players of S&S will find a refreshing change of pace from gloomy caverns and castles. In a relatively simple set of rules based on a well-known and popular medium, players can experience a wide range of adventures in environments ranging from deep space to planetary surface, or even throughout time travel. These components make the game attractive to people with no prior gaming experience. Judging the game for what it intended to accomplish, I feel it is a success, and would be a welcome addition for anyone with an interest in science fiction, role-playing, or both.