

LE Gionnaire

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WINTER, 1990: NEW PISTOLS, RMBK, THE LARDEN UPRISING

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It's early March, the first half of the **ALIENS™** production cycle is just ending, and we are setting up the release schedule for the rest of 1990; it must be **LEGionnaire** time again. The response to the first issue was very good, and the number of subscriptions is rising steadily, which makes this one of the nicest jobs we do.

This issue we have the usual updates, including a look at what is due in '90, as well as new guns for PC, excerpts from **Trident / RMBK**, and a look at an interesting footnote of **Starguild** history; the **Larden Uprising** in 2232.

2.1

All of us here at Leading Edge have been through some long, difficult production schedules in the past, and they usually ended with a frenzy of all-night sessions, churning out writing, artwork, and layout at a ridiculous pace. Every project has had a different story, and a different set of ways of coping with the impossible. When **Phoenix Command** was being finished, the gun drawings were way behind schedule; it turns out it takes quite awhile to draw 140 different weapons, if you want to do it right. So we kept a big bowl of icewater in the refrigerator, and whenever the artist felt like going to sleep, she staggered over and dunked her head into the bowl. Pretty effective.

During production of second edition **Living Steel**, we had a disastrous outbreak of chicken pox, followed by radical computer failure which necessitated the re-writing of the entire book. Once we had finished that, we had to do all the layout with computer hardware and software none of us had ever seen before. Each of us learned a different part of the software, and we worked in shifts, and we went from absolutely nothing to the completed hardbound book in less than 2 weeks.

By comparison, **ALIENS™** has been the best of times, and the worst of times. It has been very pleasant because of the lessons our earlier work has taught us; we have all been through the mill too often to get behind schedule on our own work, and we are highly experienced at coping with the inevitable delays and disruptions common to all production. On the other hand, almost everything we did on **ALIENS** was new; developing a deliberately mass-market game system, the use of dozens of full color photographs, creating a full color map with multiple overlays when we had never even done a full color map before...you get the idea. Added to the above is the fact that the **ALIENS** boardgame is the most complex project ever handled by our printing house and several of our other suppliers. The actual mechanics of overseeing production (which usually consist of preparing the artwork, dropping it off, checking in twice, and then saying thanks when the product is delivered) grew into a job which was far more demanding than designing the game in the first place. The **ALIENS** Boardgame was actually "done", on our end, back in October; the production process took a full three months. But it is all over now, and the game is finally on the shelves.

Once the **ALIENS** Boardgame was done we had to get **ALIENS Expansion** out in fairly short order, for contractual reasons. It is a 24 page supplement (to the **ALIENS** Boardgame, of course) and includes a new map of the Aliens' lairs, a small deck of cards for determining where the Aliens are hanging out, and a variety of new scenarios and

NEWS FROM THE EDGE

"They ain't payin' us
enough for this, man."

Drake
ALIENS Boardgame

optional rules. It sells for \$10.95, and should be available now. Expansion was much easier than the boardgame, since everyone involved already knew how to do everything; the whole process, including printing, took only 6 weeks.

The obvious side effect of all this has been the delay of everything else we are working on. You have our apologies, but rest easy; it is all on the way. In fact the next few months should see us releasing an unprecedented number of products. The greatest obstacle for us now is the cash flow; we are expanding very quickly, and that obviously stretches our financial resources. Regardless, the following items are in the pipe.

The long-awaited Trident / RMBK is the next scheduled release, and will be available in early May. The sad truth about Trident / RMBK is that it has been ready for some time, but we sold out of Living Steel, and it is very hard for us to put a supplement into distribution if the game itself is unavailable. So we needed to reprint Living Steel in order to release Trident / RMBK, and with all this ALIENS stuff it was a little tricky. But they have both gone to the printer now, and they will soon be on their way to you.

The next Phoenix Command release will be the Civilian Weapon Data Supplement, which is essentially a reprint of the old Civilian / Police WDS. Following that will be an updated reprint of the Small Arms Damage Tables, and then the PC Artillery System. All of them are discussed more fully below.

And lastly, our largest release of the next few months will be the ALIENS RPG, a softcover book due in late May / early June. You probably know more or less what to expect; it will use a slightly streamlined form of the Living Steel system, and will give complete background on the setting of ALIENS, including the world of Acheron, the life-cycle and development of the Aliens, and the corporate future that produced such sterling people as Lieutenant Gorman and Carter J. Burke.

We are also changing our distribution again. With our rapid expansion and the fine print of our contract with 20th Century Fox, it has become far more practical to handle the shipping and sales ourselves; additionally, Task Force Games is going through some changes at the moment. Actually, the change is mostly on paper. John Olsen, the reason we went with Task Force in the first place, will continue handling our sales as before. The new arrangement has all the advantages of our deal with Task Force, and none of the business-related nuisances of the earlier deal.

And one last item; look for us to release board and role-playing games for another major motion picture this Christmas. More information on that next time.

"Whatever you're gonna do, do it fast!"

/asquez
ALIENS Boardgame

2.2

PHOENIX COMMAND

The first item on the Phoenix Command agenda is the Civilian Weapon Data Supplement. This is very close to the earlier Civilian / Police WDS, but features some new chamberings for existing weapons as well as 12 new weapons that we have had a high demand for over the last couple of years; the Grizzly, the Glock, that sort of thing.

As a preview, we present some of the data for one of the most-requested of the new weapons; the Casull .454 revolver.

Weapon	Physical Data	Aim Time AC Mod	Ballistic Data									
			Range in 2 yard hexes									
			10	20	40	70	100	200	300	400		
454 Casull 7.5" Barrel Revolver	L 13	1 -18	JSP PEN	7.1	6.8	6.2	5.4	4.7	3.0	1.9	1.2	
	W 3.5	2 -11	DC	9	9	9	9	9	7	4	2	
		3 -10										
454 Casull USA	RT 20	4 -9	JHP PEN	7.0	6.7	6.1	5.3	4.6	3.0	1.9	1.2	
	ROF 2	5 -8	DC	9	9	9	9	9	8	5	2	
	Cap 5	6 -7										
	AW .05	7 -6	AP PEN	10	9.8	9.0	7.8	6.8	4.3	2.8	1.8	
	Rnd		DC	7	7	7	7	8	6	3	1	

Also included will be a wide variety of additional chamberings for weapons that were in the original Civ / Pol WDS.

LEGionnaires who want the new weapon data will have the option of sending in for a compilation of changes. The Civillian and Police WDS Update will be a low-tech production, like LEGionnaire itself, so the reproduction quality of the new art will be marginal. On the other hand, it will contain all of the new weapon data, including changes and additions to existing weapons, and will be available (to LEGionnaires only) for \$3.00. The Update will be released at the same time as the new Civilian WDS; we are currently accepting mail orders for it, and will mention the Update in LEGionnaire again after it is available.

The reprint of the **Small Arms Damage Tables** is right behind the Civilian WDS on the production schedule. It will be updated to include Shock Points as well as the original Damage Points, and will have an improved, more attractive layout.

And after that is the **Phoenix Command Artillery and Indirect Fire System**. This will be an oversized supplement and will include the full range of modern and World War II artillery pieces, including mortars, light field artillery, rockets, and even naval guns. The artwork for this one is underway, and the next issue will contain a progress report.

With a little luck, (and the availability of room on the production schedule, of course) the coming fall or winter will see the release of the **Phoenix Command Role-Playing Game**. The game systems will be compatible with those in Living Steel, and the Combat System will be the same as the Basic Game in 3rd Edition PC. The setting will be the modern world, with avenues for expansion into the past and future; it fits into the Living Steel storyline, in fact. We promise that, no matter what, there will not be any cyber-elves or orcs with machineguns, as seems to be the current, rather silly trend. We will have more details on PC RPG next issue.

"Let them eat Lead."

Machine-gun Antoinette

2.3

With Trident / RMBK due in the near future, we thought we would give you a quick preview. The art is by Tom Tanaka, and this excerpt is drawn from Sections 4.1 and 4.2.

LIVING STEEL

Trident's History and Background

The history of Trident begins in the days of the Starguild - Dragoncrest War (2221 - 2251). This conflict was fought for control of the rich Seven Worlds system, and saw the powerful Starguild slowly and decisively beaten by the Dragoncrests. By 2246 the eventual outcome was clear to even the most ardent Imperial commander, and the Starguild began to look desperately for a way of saving face.

They found it in the Imperium's scientific branch, the Technical Research and Development Department (TRD). Early in the 2240's, this group of talented scientists began developing new theories about the nature of gravity and its influence on interstellar travel. By the middle of the decade these theories had developed into the very promising **Starlink Initiative**, which became a primary beneficiary of the Starguild's need to have a noticeable success. As the Imperial effort in the Seven Worlds faded, funding for Starlink grew.

In 2251, the Starlink Initiative program created the first **Gravity Induced Hyperspatial Transport Device**, usually referred to as a **Grav Gate**. This device eliminated many of the delays associated with normal Jump Drive (**Dragonstar Rising**, Section 6.3), and also extended the maximum jump distance for many ships. This led to much faster travel between established systems and consequently revolutionized interstellar trade and communications. With a successful test of the prototype, the Starguild Council had the distraction it wanted. Promising a time of spectacular expansion, it formally abandoned the Dragoncrest War and threw the resources of the Imperium into the development of Starlink.

The project was quickly taken over by the most aggressive Starguild Corporations, and the scientists of TRD were pushed out of the spotlight for a time. After more than two

decades of Starguild infighting, political mismanagement, overspending, and overt corruption, however, management of the Starlink Initiative was returned to TRD and the Grav Gate network was finally established. By 2283 Starlink was a reality, and the economic and social benefits of the Gates brought TRD tremendous wealth and respect.

When the Starguild triumphed in the **Second Seven Worlds - Starguild War**, TRD was separated from the Imperium, established as an independent Starguild Corporation and member of the Senior Guild, and awarded the planet Hryken as its primary holding. Beginning in 2294, **TRIDENT** (Technical Research and Independent Development Enterprises) was a major force in Starguild science, economics, and politics.

For forty years after its creation, Trident knew only success. Its involvement in Starlink brought it great wealth, and it was ideally located for the exploitation of the resources of the Seven Worlds and the collapsed Dragoncrest empire. Trident also had access to what remained of Seven Worlds scientific facilities, and from these ruins came research material and experimental machinery which led to Trident's development of the ORCA. A Trident exploration probe discovered the Rhand system in 2308, and the development of Rhand promised a future of prosperity for the young Corporation.

With the return of the Seven Legions to the Seven Worlds in 2337, the fortunes of Trident changed radically for the worse. Supported by large numbers of Dragoncrests, the Seven Legions had soon established themselves firmly throughout the system, and were in complete control of the planet Alpha. As the leaders of Trident attempted to rally the people of Hryken and the other worlds to repel the Seven Legions, they found themselves abandoned. Most of the people who lived in the system were defecting rapidly to the cause of the Seven Legions. The leaders of Trident turned to the Starguild for support.

For a short time, the Imperium turned its full attention on the Seven Worlds system, and made a concerted effort to drive away the Seven Legions and the Dragoncrests. Before this attempt could mature, however, news of another crisis reached the Starguild Council; the Spectrals had attacked the border planets.

As entire fleets were destroyed by Spectral spacecraft, and as whole worlds collapsed into chaos under the pressure of Spectral invasion forces, the Starguild abandoned its war with the comparatively benign Seven Legions and Dragoncrests. The war against the Spectrals quickly occupied the full attention and economic power of the Starguild. This left Trident without support, and without a home planet. Corporate headquarters fled to Earth in 2341, and there begged for assistance.

In the middle of Humanity's greatest crisis, however, Trident's plight attracted little attention, and the greatly weakened Trident soon found itself prey for more powerful Corporations. The Imperium itself appropriated several of Trident's ships. At the same time, with Trident's finances in disarray, many of its business partners called in their debts. Effectively bankrupt, the leaders of Trident were soon embroiled in legal actions as creditors claimed ownership of Trident's remaining holdings, including the planet Rhand and the RMBK division. Trident successfully fought off these claims, but was not secure until 2347. It was during these years of disputed ownership and absentee management that RMBK openly disavowed the traditions of the Starcaste.

Late in 2347 the leaders of Trident assembled what remained of its fleet and headed for Rhand. They expected the trip to be a long one; Rhand was at the far edge of the Starguild Imperium, and the fleet included a large number of slow cargo craft. The voyage began uneventfully, but once they were past the heavily settled and well-protected portion of the Starguild they were attacked by what seemed to be a rogue Martial House. This House possessed only a small fleet, but was exceptionally ferocious in battle. Trident headquarters initially assumed that the chaos of the Spectral invasion had simply encouraged some unstable or displaced elements of the Starguild to engage in piracy. They fought their way past the pirates and continued their voyage.

Less than a month later they were again attacked, by the same opponent. It was clear that this was not random piracy, but a conscious attempt to destroy Trident during a time of vulnerability. The second battle was more intense than the first, but the Trident fleet was again victorious. They even recovered the wreckage of a destroyed enemy ship; it bore the insignia of the long-outlawed Neemis Enterprises (Dragonstar Rising, Section 7.13.)

**"This unholy alliance
of Human traitors with
the most belligerent
of alien races will
be met, matched,
and defeated by the
united powers of the
Starguild Imperium."**

Imperial response to Trident's
request for assistance against
the Seven Legions / Dragoncrest
invasion.

"Save who you can."

Confidential message from the
Imperial House to Trident's Board
of Directors, shortly after
the Spectral Invasion.

This pattern of harassment, conflict, and delay continued through 2348 and into 2349. Several Corporate officers were sent ahead early in 2349 to take control of the increasingly difficult RMBK division, but their ship met with an accident; several pieces of the craft were found in the Scotia system, but apparently there were no survivors. At last report the battered Trident fleet was in the Muersken system, undergoing repairs and trying desperately to reach Rhand in time to prevent open warfare between the Imperium and RMBK.

They did not really have to worry; the Apocalypse came first.

1.4

DRAGONSTAR RISING

The time of Dragonstar Rising is a busy one in our storyline. In addition to the struggles of the Seven Worlds, the Dragoncrests, and the Starguild, there are a wide variety of other conflicts in progress. In this issue, we will take a look at the first major war the Starguild fought after the fall of the Seven Worlds; the Larden Uprising (2232 - 2260).

The Larden Uprising

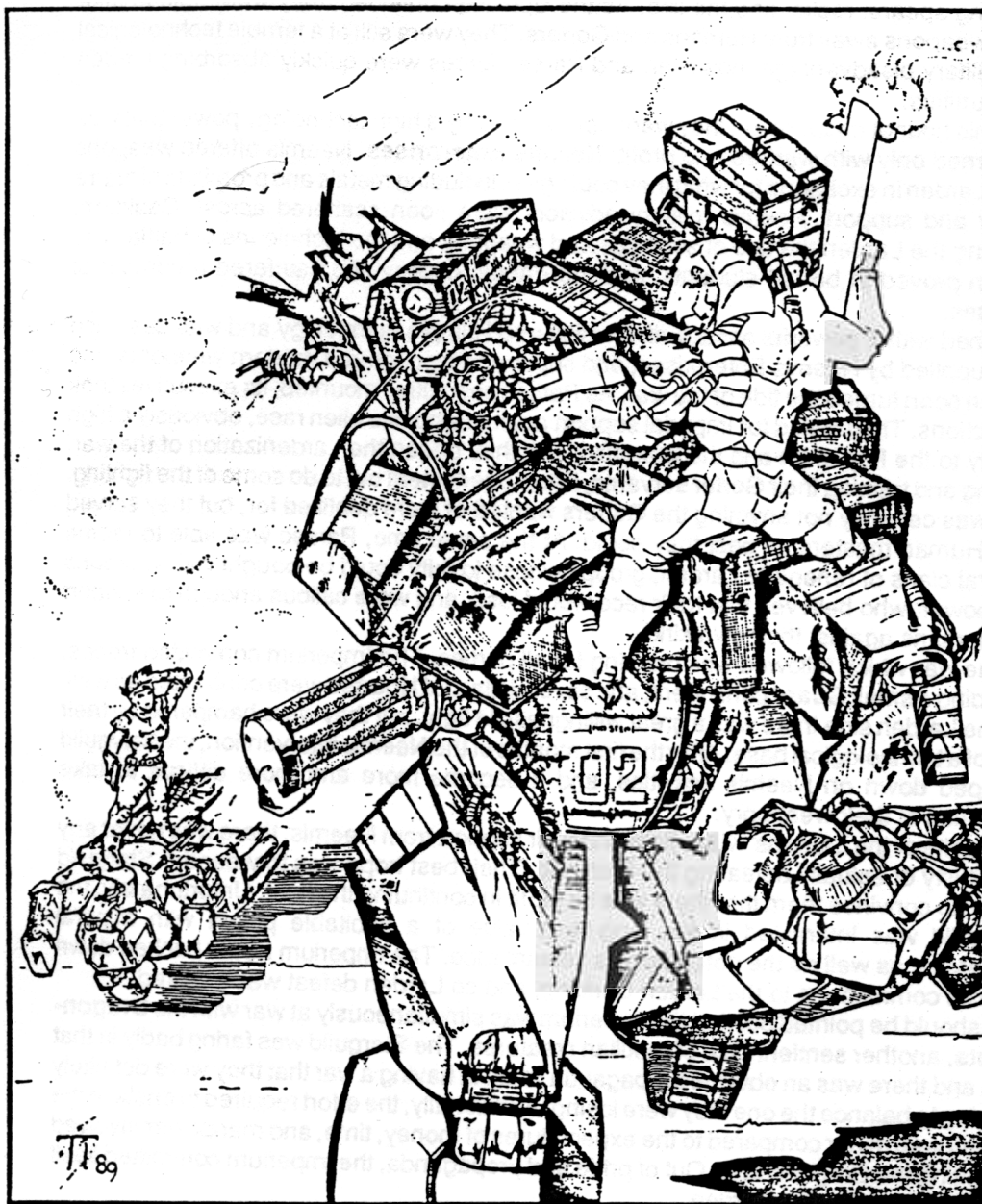
The Starguild first encountered the Larden in 2216, when an exploration craft from Parsec, a coalition of several Starguild corporations, discovered the world the humans named **Cauldron**. Harsh, volcanically overactive, and possessing high gravity, Cauldron was still important to Parsec and the Starguild for three reasons. It was habitable for humans (even if uncomfortable), there were large deposits of valuable metals near the surface, and there was a race of non-militant, low-technology sentients - the **Larden** - available for exploitation.

Before the arrival of Humanity, the Larden had been the unchallenged rulers of Cauldron. No species on the planet considered them prey; smaller creatures were no match for the Lardens' intelligence, strength, and ability to cooperate, while the only creatures on Cauldron larger than the Larden were a few species of herbivores. As a side effect of their natural superiority, the Larden did not develop the complex, technology-oriented society taken for granted by humans. Instead, they lived quiet lives supported by fairly primitive technology, settled their disputes through non-military methods, and enjoyed a slow, steady expansion of their population. The Larden were a stately and confident race by nature, and were quite willing to let the Humans land, explore, and eventually settle in uninhabited areas.

The lack of weaponry and technology among the Larden led to the rapid development of a feeling of superiority on the part of the Starguild. It seemed only appropriate to treat the Larden as a subject race, and this attitude was lent further credence by the behavior of the few Larden who came to live and work with the Humans. These Larden were the underclass of their species; the Larden word for this class is **Gorfer**.

The "Gorfer" concept has no easy equivalent in Human language. The Gorfers were considered inferior to other Larden, and for good reasons; they were less intelligent and less creative than normal Larden, as well as being smaller and weaker. In Larden society they were not mistreated, but were relegated to roles as servants, living at the edge of Larden society. The Gorfers, apparently genetic throwbacks to a more primitive Larden form, were in fact the only members of Larden society not treated as full equals. This naturally meant that Gorfers would be quick to investigate the Humans' offers of food and shelter. Gorfers, however, would also be the only Larden to accept these offers, because normal Larden were far too proud and independent to accept the servitude that was a part of Parsec's generosity. The Gorfers confirmed the Starguild's view of the Larden, and it was inevitable that concrete steps would be taken to secure control of the planet's valuable resources; the rare earths and heavy metals which were readily available near the surface, and the use of the Larden as a labor force.

In 2232, after the **Adite Incident**, in which a Parsec official was accidentally killed in a Larden village, Parsec began the formal annexation of all Larden territory. Using Gorfers



**"70 Tons of Junk.
70 Tons of Molten
Slag. 70 Tons of
Useless Scrap."**

Niki's opinions of giant robots.

DRGN-equipped Sword accepting the surrender of the pilot of a WM-1 Morituri
Among the forces at Agent Briceton's disposal is a powerful, experimental unit brought to Rhand by the ISS. This unit, the Imperial Robotics Section, uses illegal technologies and was sent to Rhand for a field test against Trident / RMBK. There are two types of war machines in the IRS; the WM-1 Morituri, shown above, which is essentially a 30 foot tall giant robot with a human pilot, and the WM-2 Mantis, which is a small, fast, and very deadly piece of machinery. The Mantis is the robot which uses controlled technology; the Morituri, nicknamed "Mortuary" by its pilots, is just a very bad design.

as emissaries, Parsec attempted to impose its will in a bloodless way; they saw no possibility of Larden resistance, owing to the Starguild's complete military and technological superiority.

Unfortunately, millions of years of evolution made it impossible for the Larden to consider serving either the Humans or the Gorfers, and resistance was immediate. The Larden had few weapons, for they had never fought what Humans would call a war.

Consequently they began their fight with what makeshift weapons they had available, including spears, rocks, and the like. As the Uprising continued, they were able to take some weapons away from Humans and Gorfers. They were still at a terrible technological and military disadvantage, however, and Parsec forces were quickly absorbing Larden communities.

In this hour of desperation they were approached by a high technology power that was concerned only with warfare and profit; **Neemis Enterprises**. Neemis offered weapons to the Larden in exchange for what they could give, including metals and promises of future loyalty and support. Neemis military advisors were soon scattered across Cauldron, teaching the Larden the use of sophisticated weapons and the techniques of battle. The Larden proved to be apt students, and the Parsec military soon suffered a number of reverses.

Armed with a powerful assault rifle, which used simple technology and was designed and supplied by Neemis Enterprises, and supported by captured modern weaponry, the Larden soon turned the tide of the war. As Parsec casualties mounted, its executives took two actions. They called for Imperial support against a hostile alien race, obviously a high priority to the Imperium and the Starguild, and they began the Lardenization of the war. Arming and training their Gorfer servants, Parsec sent them out to do some of the fighting. This was certainly not anything the Gorfers wanted or were qualified for, but they served their Human masters as best they could. At the same time, Parsec was able to recruit several clans of renegade Larden; groups whose loyalty could be bought with weapons and power, who believed that their race would lose, and were callous enough to support the Humans against their own kind.

The war which followed was draining for all parties. The Imperium committed troops, including a small **Guard** contingent, and several **Martial Houses** were contracted as well. On the Larden side there was a great willingness to fight, but they were hampered by their lack of a technological base. After the first months of the Neemis intervention, the Starguild clamped down on Neemis activities, and it became more and more difficult to take deliveries of their weaponry.

In spite of the Lardens' will to fight and their support from Neemis, there was never any possibility of actually defeating the Starguild. Their best hope was to wear the Starguild down, to convince them that there was no profit in continuing the fight. Unfortunately, the Starguild was interested in the long-term value of a habitable planet with mineral resources, as well as the potential of a servant race. The Imperium never backed down from its commitment to the Larden Uprising, and so Larden defeat was assured.

It should be pointed out that the Imperium was simultaneously at war with the **Dragoncrests**, another sentient race of reptilian creatures. The Starguild was faring badly in that war, and there was an obvious propaganda value in having a war that they were definitely winning to balance the one they were losing. Additionally, the effort required to enslave the Larden was minor compared to the expenditures of money, time, and manpower involved in fighting the Dragoncrests. Out of pride and propaganda, the Imperium committed itself to the conquest of the Larden.

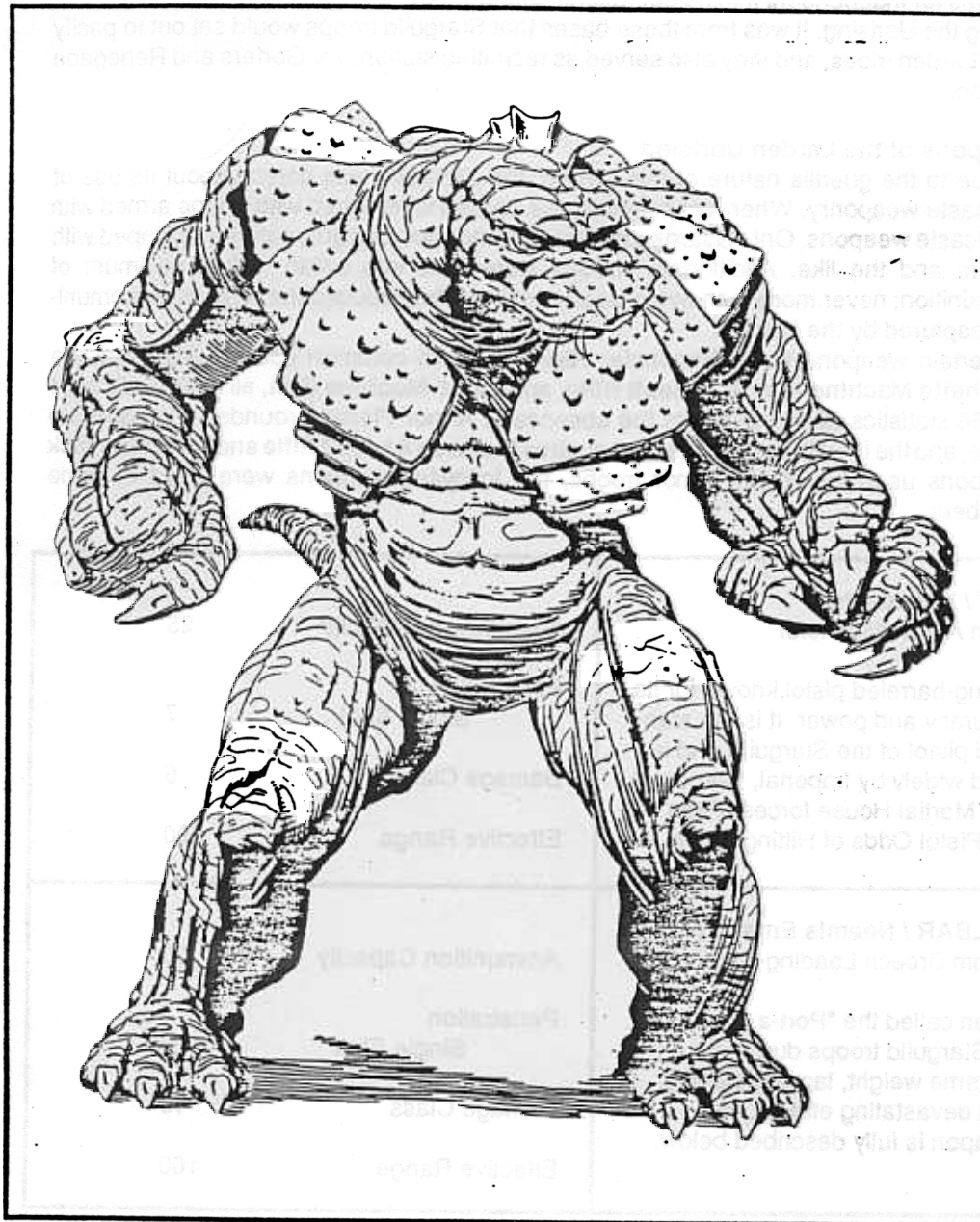
The process was a slow and difficult one, however. Years passed as Starguild forces battled the Larden, "liberating" one village at a time, forcing the surrender of a few dozen Larden here, perhaps a hundred somewhere else. The last major campaign against the Larden ended in 2258, and although fighting continued in a low-key way right up to the Spectral Invasion, by 2260 the Larden Uprising was effectively over.

Human Presence

The four corporations which were partners in Parsec were **Helsson Aeronautics**, **BRANAC**, **Cheng Financial**, and **DelmarCo**. They were equal partners in all ways, and cooperated well during the period of the Uprising. The Parsec coalition governed Human activity on Cauldron through the **Cauldron Committee**, which controlled all civil and economic matters, and **Parsec Battalion Command**, which handled the military. When **Martial Houses** were hired to assist in the battle against the Larden, it was by the Cauldron Committee, and they received their orders from Parsec Battalion Command. The involve-

Low-Tech. High performance. Neemis Enterprises presents the NELBAR, the definitive Larden home Defense weapon. Coming soon to an arms cache near you."

ighly successful ad campaign created by Neemis Enterprises



"What is all this talk about the rights of the natives? They have no rights. They are animals."

Nigel Carruthers
President of the Cauldron
Commission from 2220 to 2236

Larden

ment of the Imperium developed in a similar way; the Cauldron Committee petitioned Parsec for support, which in turn applied to the Imperium for troops. When the Imperial forces arrived, they were theoretically an independent force, but in practice they received their assignments from Parsec Battalion Command.

When the Larden Uprising began, the Human presence on Cauldron was still fairly small, numbering only a few thousand. Each decade saw a significant increase in the population, however, until it reached into the millions by 2260. Humans were gathered in dense, well-defended communities in areas which had special strategic, resource, or mineral value. Unlike the Larden, the Human communities stayed as far away as possible from the volcanic areas, and this minimized the friction between Human civilian communities and the natives.

There were numerous outlying installations, however, which were erected deep in the volcanic areas used by the Larden for breeding. These were usually mining camps, or base

stations for independent mining operations, and were the sources of much of the conflict during the Uprising. It was from these bases that Starguild troops would set out to pacify local Larden tribes, and they also served as recruiting stations for Gorfers and Renegade Larden.

Weapons of the Larden Uprising

Due to the guerilla nature of the conflict, the Starguild was careful about its use of Starcaste weaponry. Wherever possible, the Larden were faced with troops armed with Landcaste weapons. Only Guards and Power Armor troops were routinely equipped with Lasers and the like. Additionally, troops were sent into battle with a minimum of ammunition; never more than two clips per soldier. This reduced the amount of ammunition captured by the Larden.

Certain weapons from Dragonstar Rising were in common use on Cauldron; the **Flechette Machine Pistol**, **Assault Rifle**, and **Light Machine Gun**, all using their 2181 - 2186 statistics (this represents the absence of Armor Piercing rounds). In addition to these, and the few Starcaste weapons such as the **Lase Assault Rifle** and the **Battlepack** weapons used by Power Armor troops, the following weapons were used in some numbers.

AP7 / Landcaste 7mm Automatic Pistol A long-barreled pistol known for its accuracy and power. It is the standard pistol of the Starguild and is used widely by Imperial, Corporate, and Martial House forces. Fires on the Pistol Odds of Hitting Table.	<table> <tr> <td>Ammunition Capacity</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr> <td>Penetration</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td> Single Shot</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr> <td>Damage Class</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr> <td>Effective Range</td><td>300</td></tr> </table>	Ammunition Capacity	25	Penetration		Single Shot	7	Damage Class	5	Effective Range	300
Ammunition Capacity	25										
Penetration											
Single Shot	7										
Damage Class	5										
Effective Range	300										
NELBAR / Neemis Enterprises 15mm Breech Loading Rifle Often called the "Port-a-Cannon" by Starguild troops due to its extreme weight, large projectile, and devastating effects, this weapon is fully described below.	<table> <tr> <td>Ammunition Capacity</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr> <td>Penetration</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td> Single Shot</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr> <td>Damage Class</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr> <td>Effective Range</td><td>100</td></tr> </table>	Ammunition Capacity	20	Penetration		Single Shot	22	Damage Class	10	Effective Range	100
Ammunition Capacity	20										
Penetration											
Single Shot	22										
Damage Class	10										
Effective Range	100										

"To the Starguild, it's the terrifying Port-a-Cannon. But to you and the other members of the Resistance, it's a Larden's Best Friend."

Another successful ad campaign created by Neemis Enterprises

NELBAR

The NELBAR was the Neemis Enterprises / Larden Bolt-Action Assault Rifle, and was also called the Port-a-Cannon. Designed specifically for the limited Iron Age technology of the Larden, the NELBAR was a simple pump action rifle which loaded loose powder (from a large hopper) and a cast bullet (from a simple magazine) into the chamber. The powder was ignited by a sparkplug-type device which was energized by a spring powered magneto, which was in turn cocked during the pump action which reloaded the weapon.

The NELBAR had two powder chambers, which were used alternately. After the weapon was fired, the pump action switched the first chamber aside to cool, and simultaneously cleaned all hot, unburned powder residue out of the weapon. The second chamber moved into firing position, and a full load of powder dropped out of the hopper while a bullet fell into the appropriate place at the front of the chamber. Both the powder and the bullet used a gravity feed; this meant the weapon had to be held upright to be fed properly.

This unusual design, which blended cap-and-ball methods with modern engineering and design, was used by Neemis because of the limited technology available to the Larden. They could easily make both the powder and the bullet, but lacked the sophisticated machinery necessary to produce consistent metal cartridges.

The Larden In Dragonstar Rising

The abilities and equipment of the Larden vary widely, as discussed below. In general they were organized in Squads of 6 to 12, with up to 5 Squads operating in a given area. This was the highest level of cooperation attained by the Larden on a regular basis, due to their lack of communications and transportation. Larden commanders were occasionally able to overcome these logistical difficulties, and when they did they were able to put together effective, well-coordinated campaigns against the Starguild.

Over 80% of the rebellious Larden involved in the Uprising carried NELBAR's and were of Green skill. In game terms, their hide should be considered Light armor, they receive 1 Combat Action per Impulse, and use the Incapacitation Chances for Expert troops on Herculon (Dragonstar Rising, Section 3.4.)

Most of the remaining rebellious Larden were considered their Elites. These were Larden who were directly trained and equipped by Neemis Enterprises, and they were the closest the Larden came to professional soldiers. They used captured AR7's, wore modified armor that was the equivalent of Starguild Assault armor, were of Regular skill, and received 1 Action per Impulse. For their Incapacitation Chances, double the values listed for Expert troops on Herculon.

A small number of the rebellious Larden received special psychological indoctrination from Neemis Enterprises, as well as a Herculon-derived Combat Drug which was modified to fit the Larden physiology. They were generally the same as Larden Elites, except that they wore Line armor and had Incapacitation Chances equal to ten times the values shown for Expert troops on Herculon.

Not all the Larden involved in the Uprising were against the Starguild, of course; both Renegades and Gorfers served on the side of the Starguild, and fought against their fellow Larden. Renegade Larden should be treated in all ways as Larden Elites, having benefitted from the same type of training and equipment as that provided by Neemis Enterprises. Gorfers, on the other hand, are in Light armor, receive 3/4 of a Combat Action per Impulse (no Action in every fourth Impulse), have the same Incapacitation Chances as Regular Starguild Non-Powered Infantry on Herculon, carry AR7's, and have a 2R Modifier to their Odds of Hitting; 1 worse than Green troops.

Starguild Military Organization

The basic unit in the Starguild's military was the Squad, which included 11 Starmarines and 1 Sergeant or Lieutenant. Three Squads, led by a Lieutenant, made a Platoon, and three Platoons headed by a Captain were a Company. Each Company also had a Squad-sized Company Reserves unit, and a Company Headquarters of 18 people, most of them with less combat training than regular Starmarines.

This meant that a Company included 9 Squads, each of which was organized as follows; a Non-Commissioned or junior Officer carrying an FMP6-7, one Machinegunner with an MG7L, a Machinegun Loader with an FMP6-7, and 9 soldiers with AR7's. In addition, everyone carried an AP7. The troops in these Squads were generally of Regular skill. The Reserves were of Crack skill and carried the normal weapons, while the Headquarters personnel were Green troops in Light armor, and were armed with FMP6-7's and AP7's.

As mentioned above, Parsec was made up of four prominent Starguild corporations; each of them contributed a Company of troops to the Parsec Battalion. During the Uprising, the cooperation of these forces was excellent, and never posed any problem to operations. For all purposes they were a single force, and their militaries were of equal quality. The Companies supplied by Heisson Aeronautics, Cheng Financial, and DelmarCo were Line infantry, while BRANAC sent a Recon Company; a unit comprised of infantry in Light armor which was used in rough country and for scouting. In the Recon Company, only the Reserves were in Line armor.

"The Humans sweep across us, like lava across the breeding sands. But no rock blocks their path, no channel turns them aside, and no sands are untouched. What will remain of us when the lava has passed, I cannot say."

Deck 'lask-tal
Larden emissary to
Neemis Enterprises

These four Companies were present on Cauldron throughout the Uprising, and did the majority of the fighting over the course of the war. During the peak periods of military activity, however, there were several Martial Houses on Cauldron which saw extensive action. Two of the most prominent are listed below.

Union of Crestus Point (UCP): The UCP has long been the most prominent of the Martial Houses (see *Dragonstar Rising*, Section 7.12), and was naturally one of the first to be brought to Cauldron. A full Company of the UCP's **2nd Advance Deployment Battalion**, consisting of Crack Light infantry, was on Cauldron from 2238 through 2251, and saw considerable service in the most inhospitable areas of the planet.

Phaedros Alrmobile Company: A single Platoon of this small Martial House was stationed on Cauldron during the most intense portion of the Uprising, but was soon evacuated. The Phaedros organization was too small to replace the high losses which were sustained on the front lines, and they were forced to withdraw from their contract three months after their arrival in 2240. The key factor in their casualties was the NELBAR; although the weapon could not penetrate the Head and Body armor of Phaedros' Crack Line infantry, the terrible Arm and Leg wounds it caused were enough to guarantee that any Starguild soldier hit would be out of action for months. Phaedros was too small to withstand casualties of that sort. This was a significant turning point for Phaedros; because of its Cauldron experience, it converted to Power Armor in 2249 and soon became one of the most famous Martial Houses in the Starguild.

"The Union of Crestus Point. The leader in independent military forces for over 150 years. The First. The Best. The UCP."

UCP ad campaign

Beginning in 2247, the Imperium also sent significant troops to the support of Parsec. Two full Companies of the **16th Starmarine Regiment** were present by 2249, and were not removed until 2260. These troops were in all ways the same as Parsec Line infantry.

From 2252 through 2254, however, a Company of the **3rd Imperial Guard Assault Battalion** was stationed on Cauldron. This unit included two Platoons of Elite Line Infantry and one Platoon of Crack Power Armor. There were two Squads of Medium Combat Power Armor, and one of Heavy Combat Power Armor. The Company Reserves were also Heavy Combat Power Armor. All Power Armor troops were in Squads of 6 soldiers each, and were equipped with the BP-GMG7L Light Gauss Machine Gun Battlepack.

It should be noted that all of the personnel sent to Cauldron were fairly strong; they were chosen for their ability to function in the higher gravity of the Larden homeworld. This also accounts for the absence of Assault troops on Cauldron, since even strong soldiers were unable to carry a full load of Assault armor on Cauldron.

Scenario Ideas

Most of the battles in the Larden Uprising were hit-and-run affairs, short firefights of the kind associated with guerilla warfare. The reasons for this were clear; the Larden could not hope to stand up to the Starguild's Grav Gunships and other heavy firepower, and were forced to resort to quick raids and ambushes. Additionally, neither side had a large military, due to the disjointed nature of Larden command and the small Human population; this meant that it was rare for large numbers of troops to be concentrated in any one place, and Squad and Platoon-sized actions were by far the most common.

The single most frequent event of the Uprising was the Larden raid on a Parsec outpost. All of the available Squads of local Larden would mass near a Parsec camp that they found particularly annoying or unusually vulnerable. They would wait until there were no Gunships in the area, and launch a fast attack. Their purpose was usually to destroy property and to drive away the Humans; killing Human soldiers was a secondary goal, and shooting Human civilians was very rare. Parsec outposts were almost always surrounded by high walls, and featured a Light Machine Gun in a reinforced position.

There are any number of other settings for battles during the Larden Uprising. Parsec forces launched large, effective assaults on locations which were believed to be Neemis training camps, or where arms caches were said to be hidden. There were also attacks on gatherings of Larden leaders, and Gorfers and Renegade Larden were used to ambush rebel Larden, or to infiltrate their bases.

This month in **Froth On!** we present an oddity from the early days. Back before the publication of **Rhand: Morningstar Missions**, Barry was looking for a writer to flesh out the storyline. Toward that end he hired a man who will remain nameless, paid him a fair amount of money, and asked him to bring the Morningstar notes to life. The following is a collection of excerpts from the 4000 word chapter he turned in.

FROTH ON!

Excerpts from the Morningstar Draft

"...The Bug assault craft used special reflective coated fuselage shields in its surprise attack on Rhand. Waiting until Rhand had reached the apex of its equinoctial cycle around the Tharsean sun-star, the Bug craft simulated a meteor trail as it shot out of the orb of Great Light toward Rhand. The Star Fleet's zetetic probes dismissed the fiery projectile as burning debris from the many pyrotechnic supernova explosions in the galaxy...

"The Bug assault craft began releasing "soft-skinned" bacterial warheads along an orbital path encompassing the northern polemic latitudes, down across the equator, traversing the south pole and back up the far circumference to link up a deadly meridian. Once in place, the warheads were suspended in space by their bi-phosphor rockets that negated the gravitational and orbital forces.

"The "soft skin" of the warheads was made of a special percuron material that disintegrated soon after its exposure to Rhand's rich chemically atmosphere. One by one the warheads vaporised and the bestial podophyllak gas fell like acid rain to Rhand's surface...

"On the light side of Rhand facing the sun star, a grotesque rainbow reflected through the podophyllak fog brought millions of Rhand people out of homes and factories to view the surreal colors. The pods were immediately ingested into their bodies where they began their destructive work on the nervous tissues. Quickly brain signals became confused and distorted until the impulses from a virulent cerebrum took over. Vandals, psychopaths, robbers, and satanic goons - these were now collectively known as Visers. Those on the dark side of Rhand never surfaced from their slumbers as happy peaceful souls. but instead emerged as malevolent sleepwalkers with insanity in their sightless eyes...

"...The creatures had already built fission chambers near their landing site so that the breeding embryos could reproduce Bug warriors, workers and other alien types. To add a chill to Orca's fear of impending doom, reports began to come in from the higher latitudes describing harsh, numbingly cold weather as polar winds fanned out like starving wolves across the once-idyllic Rhand environment. The Bugs, craving ultra-violet rays to replenish their energy sources, were absorbing the Tharsean sun star's power into their grey skeletal bodies. What sunlight did penetrate to these regions cast a hypnotic mezzotint shadow that triggered a raving blindness among the hapless Rhand people...Isolated from the other planets in the Tharsean solar system, Rhand slowly floated in an unstable orbit towards open space beyond its familiar galaxy..."

Well, there's plenty more where that came from, complete with spelling errors, bizarre science, and polemic latitudes, whatever they are. We are honestly not responsible for any of the hard-core gibberish in there, by the way; Tharsean sun stars, podophyllak fogs, sleepwalkers with insanity in their sightless eyes, Bugs that absorb ultra-violet rays, all of these and more were news to us. 17 pages of this. Bought. Paid for.

Just another of the hurdles that a young man faced in his drive to follow his dream. It's enough to make you go to bed early, finish school, and get a good steady job selling shoes.

"We can't believe you really paid for this."

The King's Men

We have a letter from Shane Ivey of Orangevale, CA this time. Shane writes:

While GMing Living Steel and Dragonstar Rising, I've come up with a few questions and I'd appreciate it if you could help me out. Here goes...

READERS' COMMENTS

1. This may sound dumb, but why are the *Ringers* called "Ringers"?
2. What is the relationship between rank and Sword color among the *Seven Swords*, and which takes precedence?
3. Could I get a rough description of the *Slozeks*, for role-playing purposes?
4. Will there be any rules in the future for piloting aircraft and space craft?
5. Do *Hand-to-Hand Combat* and *Gun Combat* skills cover all *Hand-to-Hand* weapons and guns?

Thank you for your time and consideration, and thanks more for *Living Steel*. No other game has gotten me interested enough to write the authors!

Sincerely, Shane Ivey

And the answers are...

1. It doesn't sound dumb at all; we have heard the question a hundred times. The word "ringer" is sometimes used to describe someone who has been fraudulently entered into a contest; one of the most visible uses of the word is in the movie "MASH". In the sense of its use in *Living Steel*, it refers to the fact that the central characters have been brought secretly to Rhaid, and that their abilities and experiences are far greater than anyone would have any reason to expect. The word was used because it had become a kind of catch phrase during development, when no one could think of any other one-word way of referring to the survivors of the Seven Worlds; in 2nd Edition, of course, we inserted the word "Sword", which is the proper term and the one we will continue to use.

2. Rank and Sword are generally separate concepts, with some exceptions. Pay scales, respect, and independence are related to Sword color, however, with each Sword being roughly equal to half of a rank's difference; that is, a Red Legion Colonel would receive the same pay as a Blue Legion Major. For soldiers of low rank, the Legion is of minor importance in most operations; a private is a private. At the higher levels, it becomes more and more important, and the opinion of a Captain of the White Legion would certainly be listened to very carefully by even the highest ranked members of the Blue or Green Legions. A *Seven Worlds Sourcebook*, which will deal with this sort of thing in more detail, is in the works, but until it sees the light of day each GM will have to make his or her own decisions about rank, Legion, and the chain of command.

3. The Slozek will be covered in the next issue of *LEGionnaire*, in fact. Included will be drawings of the Slozek, as well as their numbers, equipment, and organization.

4. The *Grav Vehicle Combat System*, which will cover the various aspects of air-to-air and air-to-ground combat, is complete and awaiting production time. It will consist of two separate 48 page supplements; the first will include the game systems and the most common Grav Vehicles, and the second will feature a wide variety of Grav Vehicle configurations and other aircraft.

5. For most purposes, these skills cover all weapons with which the character is reasonably familiar. For example, it can be assumed that a character with Gun Combat is comfortable with almost any rifle or pistol. On the other hand, someone with the Hand-to-Hand skill who had never seen a Chain and Mace before would find life more difficult. The best guideline for these situations is to use common sense, and if the character is confronted with a substantially new weapon, halve the appropriate level with the weapon for all purposes until the character has trained with the weapon to 1st level, as if it were a Qualified Skill.

Thanks, Shane; we will have more questions and comments next time.

their Ringer
it spotted
r Ringer, Sir."

words to that effect)
lar O'Reilly
SH

7

AND SO FORTH

This is where we mention the people who are important to us, and unfortunately we have to start this section with a loss. We were greatly saddened to learn of the death of Warren Hamele, who handled color stripping at Huttner Litho, the place where our printing is done. Warren was a good friend to us through many difficult times, and was both extremely talented and wonderfully funny. We miss you, Warren.

The big circle keeps going around, however, and we have also added a member to our staff. His name is Tom Tanaka, a serious young artist with a beautiful ink technique and more patience than we can believe. It is his work that appears in the RMBK section of this issue, and there is plenty more of it in the actual Trident / RMBK supplement. We are sure that you will be seeing his work in our products for some time to come.

Mail Order Specials

We have made another trip through the warehouse, and come up with another armful of discontinued products and items that we usually sell only at conventions.

The first is another classic, **Rhand: Morningstar Missions**. Published in 1985, this was the first product in which we started to talk about the Living Steel storyline, and it is set on the planet Rhand 500 years after the Spectral Invasion. It is basically a medieval fantasy RPG, with limited high-tech overtones. Like all of our early products it is a spiral-bound book, and it contains full rules for combat, skills, magic, and the like, as well as an overview of the world of Rhand. It used to sell for \$18.95; the ones we have left are \$15.00 for LEGionnaires.

Also available are several styles of T-shirts, listed below. They are printed on top-quality 50/50 cotton blend shirts, and cost \$10.00.

LIVING STEEL: The Living Steel Power Armor Schematic drawing, with the rather uncompromising words "All The Rest Are Useless Scrap... Now There's Living Steel." Available in either Black or White.

SPECTRAL: Everyone's worst nightmare, in Black or White.

DR. OSCAR SCHNEIDERBUNK: The deranged Doctor, his Mallet, and some of his best quotes on a white shirt.

KVISR ROCKS!: Vissertown's fabulous DJ, Brandy Charlatan, printed on a white shirt.

DRAGONCREST: The classiest reptile in the galaxy, on a black shirt

LEGION LOGOS: There is one of these for each of the Seven Legions. They feature the Legion's logo on a shirt of the appropriate color; the Sword of the Red Legion, the White Legion's Unicorn, the Skull of the Black... just pick your favorite Legion(s).

LEADING EDGE LOGO: Make a statement. Available in black.

And remember, LEGionnaire members do not have to pay for shipping and handling. It's the least we can do.

Next Time

In the next issue of LEGionnaire we will have a special section on the Slozek in **Living Steel**: their numbers, deployment, and equipment, as well as illustrations and a close look at what life is like under the Slozeks' rule. For **Dragonstar** fans there will be a writeup of **BrutalVislon**, the Starguild's most graphic and violent entertainment network, as well as the early and shadowy history of **Gregor**, a Black Sword Dragon. Plus the latest release information and advance data for **Phoenix Command** and all the usual features.

Closing

LEGionnaire is written and produced by Barry Nakazono, David McKenzie, and the rest of the Leading Edge staff.

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All mail should be sent to LEGionnaire, Leading Edge Games, P.O. Box 70669, Pasadena, CA, 91117. See you next time.

"Well, you can just die then."

End of Many Negotiations
Rhand: Morningstar Missions