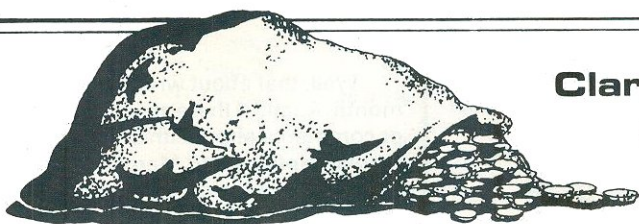


MAKING YOUR FIRST MILLION



Clarifications and Additions for Trader Captains and Merchant Princes

by Greg Poehlein

Welcome back to the continuing saga of **Merchant Captains in Space**. This month we're going to answer that age-old question: Just what the heck do I do with my Trader Captain once I've got him?

The rule supplement **Trader Captains and Merchant Princes** is filled with little tidbits and mechanics for the independent trader to go out and make money. Quite obviously, he may go out and beg, borrow, or steal a starship, buy goods on one planet and take them elsewhere to sell at a profit. But this, by itself, is really rather boring! Milk runs always are.

But, the wise gamemaster can (and should!) drag the players, kicking and screaming, into *Adventure*! The adventure in this issue is a good example. The players need not play those by-the-book Star Fleet good guys in order to have fun. After all, the Rantura Board of Directors could just as easily hire a private vessel and her crew to do their trouble-shooting. The players would then be operating like a group of private detectives, trying to solve the case before the cops can. (After all, if the cops do it first, why pay the private detectives?)

The gamemaster could use this as an example for other Independent Merchant scenarios. The players might be hired to brave a stronghold of thugs (Klingons?) in order to steal a valuable item. Maybe they have to sneak some sort of secret information past certain planet officials in order to insure the downfall of some despotic government. Perhaps they are required to use their ship as a decoy in a pirate-ridden sector of space. (Or maybe they are the pirates trying to avoid capture!)

Another possibility that I have been personally kicking around for a Trader campaign derives from the currently popular NBC Television show, the A-Team. Imagine a group of ex-Star Fleet mercenaries acting as intergalactic trouble-shooters. The concept posi-

tively boggles the mind! (Of course they would *have* to have a surplus shuttlecraft painted black with red racing stripes!)

Even hauling merchandise from one place to another need not be without adventure. Someone may be shipping a valuable but highly dangerous animal to a customer elsewhere, when the creature manages to escape. Was the escape accidental? Was it sabotage? Is there someone on board that the shipper wants dead? Is it a player? The possibilities are endless.

In creating adventures, the gamemaster can always look at some of the episodes of *Star Trek* and try to imagine if an Independent Trader crew were in the place of the *Enterprise*. (Of course, if you do this, you should file off enough of the serial numbers so that the players don't catch on to quick what you are doing.) Or you can follow the lead of the writer of **Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan** (or even our **Witness for the Defense**) in devising a sequel to one of the existing episodes.

Remember too, that Independent Traders can act as Independent Scouts and chart new planets if they so wish. (The gamemaster in such a situation had best draw up several new sectors if he wishes to stay ahead of an industrious group of scouts!) It is never stated anywhere what official policy is on this, but the individual gamemaster may wish to grant a bounty on new planets mapped, and reported to the Federation. The amount paid would be proportionate to the value of the planet and its resources. (But watch out for that Prime Directive! Its a killer!)

So, as you can see, playing Traders is not simply a matter of buying gew-gaws on Planet A, zipping over to Planet B and raking in a profit. (How much profit is again up to the gamemaster. After all, these B'ers may really like gew-gaws!)

Try the life of an Independent Trader. You might find that you like it.

NEW STUFF!

To round things out for this month, I thought I'd follow up on some of the suggestions I made earlier, and include some ideas on becoming an interplanetary scout. Of course, *anyone* can just take his starship out into the "wild black yonder" and start mapping planets, but the Federation rather frowns on these "Wildcatters". In fact, the Federation even licenses people for scouting. The requirements for this license are simple.

First, the character must serve a two year training period with a licensed scout. This is rather like an apprenticeship. During this time, the character will gain a certain number of skills that are necessary for all scouts to know. These skills (and skill levels) are as follows:

Skill	Rating
Environmental Suit Operation	10
Planetary Survival	any two at 10 each
Space Sciences	
Astrogation	20

In addition to these, the character will gain a certain level in both Small Ship Engineering and Small Ship Piloting. The skill level gained in Small Ship Engineering will either be 10 points, or one half the character's skill level in Space Sciences, Astronautics, whichever is higher. Likewise, the character will either receive 10 points in Small Ship Piloting, or one half of the character's skill level in Starship Helm Operation (again, whichever is higher).

If the character had served in Star Fleet's Exploration Branch for at least two years, and has all the above minimum skill levels, he or she may skill the two year "apprenticeship" and apply for the Scouting License.

In game terms, the scouting license is very simple to get. Application is made (tell the gamemaster that your character is applying for the license) and take the license test. The test is nothing more than

The number of terms served before the current campaign begins is determined in the same fashion as in STRPG and in Trader Captains. Roll 1D10, divide by two and apply the modifiers from the following table:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Independent Scout (one man ship) | |
| Buying ship | + 1 |
| Own Ship | + 4 |
| Already had ship before | no |
| modifier | |
| Group Scout (2 to 10 crew members) | |
| Ship Captain | |
| Buying Ship | + 2 |
| Own Ship | + 5 |
| Already had ship before | + 1 |
| Ship Pilot, Engineer, etc | + 1 |
| Star Fleet Rank of | |
| Captain or above | - 2 |
| Lieutenant to Commander | - 1 |
| Commanded at least one ship | - 1 |

Try the Interplanetary Scout in a campaign soon. It could definitely liven things up!

Only one item here this month: another gremlin that slipped into production. In the Stock Market section, we presented the Stock Market Record Sheet. The gremlin managed to jumble some of the information, and just generally made things hard to read. So, for those of you who have included the Federation Stock Market in your own

Well, that about wraps it up for this month. Again, If there are any questions or comments about either the article or Trader Captains and Merchant Princes, they should be addressed to UFP Commerce Review, Box 5541, Evansville, Indiana, 47715. Please do not send any subscription requests or orders, as we do not process any of that sort of thing, and they will only be delayed and possibly lost. If possible, I will try to personally reply to SHORT questions and comments. Until next month, Live Long and Be Prosperous!

An adventure for use with
STAR TREK®
THE ROLE-PLAYING GAME

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THE ROLE PLAYING GAME

Company Name _____ SPC _____

Percent Change _____ Dividend: _____

Trend _____ % Change _____

Availability _____ Amount _____

[illegible]

excerpts from:

UFP COMMERCE REVIEW

The Business Weekly published by and for the United Federation of Planets Independent Traders' Association

FEDERATION STOCK MARKET QUOTATIONS

CLOSE DATE: 8402.3 TREND: DOWN 3

		Sales Div 1000s	Net Close Chng
AlkrLs		23	29.99+ .59
AnUgrc		164	81.40+ 1.60
BkAnd	8.30e	65	80.18- 1.63
BxtrPh	5.80e	108	69.85+ 1.37
BtfIEI		820	77.85+ 4.41
BioGen	2.75	239	70.98+ 4.02
ChksSt		297	51.36- 2.14
ChdlWk		672	49.19- 4.86
DstDC		239	26.52+ 1.02
Drspt		572	63.44+ 3.59
GEntCn	2.15	5729	38.78- 5.79
GgrHC		803	56.60+ 2.70
Mrsfd		z75	65.72
MltiPI		340	19.32- 1.68
MYnYd		3109	100.94+ 5.71
NAmGrv		79	39.85- .81
RntrSh		381	42.71- 3.21
ShvnIj	2.50	148	30.17- 1.93
SLkVn		391	99.96- 2.04
Strwid	4.70e	4789	108.76+ 6.16
SrvrCp		692	26.07+ 1.71
TcynMc	2.90e	z92	17.33- .18
VlcMon	7.70	683	90.17- 3.76
WlsEgy	4.80	8355	88.43- 10.93
XaxxiM	3.90	49	46.24+ .46

CORPORATE PROFILE:

Rantura Shipping Lines
SPC: 4C28

Rantura Shipping Lines was founded Reference Stardate 1/2127 by Esaha Rantura, on the planet Deneva. The operation began small, designed merely to shuttle supplies between the fledgling Deneva colony and Colony 5. As Deneva grew, however, so did Rantura Shipping. They soon expanded their operation by adding more ships and more stopping points. Within 30 solar years, they had grown into a multi-billion credit corporation with more than a hundred ships.

Then, on Stardate 1/5602, the corporation suffered their first major setback. Esaha Rantura, at the age of 75, died of heart failure. Leaving the corporation to two heirs, the presidency then went to his eldest son, Jacos, while his younger son, Onto was named chairman of the board. The two of them worked very well together, causing the company to expand even further.

A major agreement with the Andorian firm of Chiokis Starship Construction gave Rantura first shipping rights for components deliveries between Chiokis facilities. This association cul-

BRIEFLY:

RANTURA SHIPPING LINES OWNER TAKEN HOSTAGE

Owner/President Onto Rantura was taken hostage aboard the company yacht, *Immaculata*, earlier this week. Although details were unclear, it appears that Rantura's personal crew, captained by Rolf Rendell were involved in the kidnapping. Kidnapping/highjacking is a major Federation offense, punishable by internment at a Federation penal colony.

Company officials declined comment, but the amount demanded is rumored to exceed Cr 500,000. Officials also refused to speculate on how this will affect the future of the shipping company. For more information on Rantura shipping itself, see the corporate profile elsewhere on this page.

GENERAL ENTERTAINMENT CONCEPTS DISCOVERS ANCIENT VIDEO ARCHIVES

Management officials disclosed this week the finding of an old-style video library, thought lost in the last century. The archaic video tapes are of 21st century broadcast video productions owned by Pipeline Productions Inc. These programs were originally broadcast, and then stored on old-style video tape.

Titles found in the archive include such memorable classics such as *Luna City Blues*, *Dolphin Detective*, *Robodoc*, *Catastrophe*, *Cooking with Soy*, *Klancy Koala*, and *Antarctic 2077*. Collections of these and others in the archive will be released on VidCart beginning next month.

minated in the design of the Deneva Class Towship. These ships, mostly owned and operated by Rantura, are capable of towing nearly completed starships for extended distances. It is rumored that although the design and construction of the Deneva Class ship is credited to Chiokis, many parts of the design were the work of Onto Rantura.

The second major setback in the history of Rantura Shipping occurred Reference Stardate 2/0803, when the planet of Deneva was 'attacked' by the infamous 'Flying Parasites'. Virtually every person on the planet was attacked and either controlled or killed by these creatures. One of the many deaths attributed to these creatures was that of Jacos Rantura. Fortunately for the Federation, all ships of the Rantura Fleet were out on assignment. Thanks to the timely intervention of the U.S.S. Enterprise, the Flying Parasites were totally destroyed.

With the passing of his brother, Onto Rantura assumed the presidency of Rantura Shipping. The increasingly eccentric Rantura has maintained control of the corporation since that time.

SHUVINAALJIS WARP TECHNOLOGY ANNOUNCES NEW LINE OF ENGINES

Officials of this company announced the release of a new line of 'micro-warp' engines, designed to be used on very small vessels. The new engine, code designation T-1000, is the latest of a very successful line of warp engines used in everything from small scout vessels to the impressive *Constitution Class* Starship.

The T-1000 engine is designed to be used on the newly developed "Warp Shuttle" currently being developed for the Vulcan government. This vessel is designed to fill the gap between the large starships and the smaller shuttles now being used. Current design calls for a two-piece, "warp sled" construction, with two of the T-1000 engines supplying warp power, and a conventional impulse engine for planetary landings and docking maneuvers.

