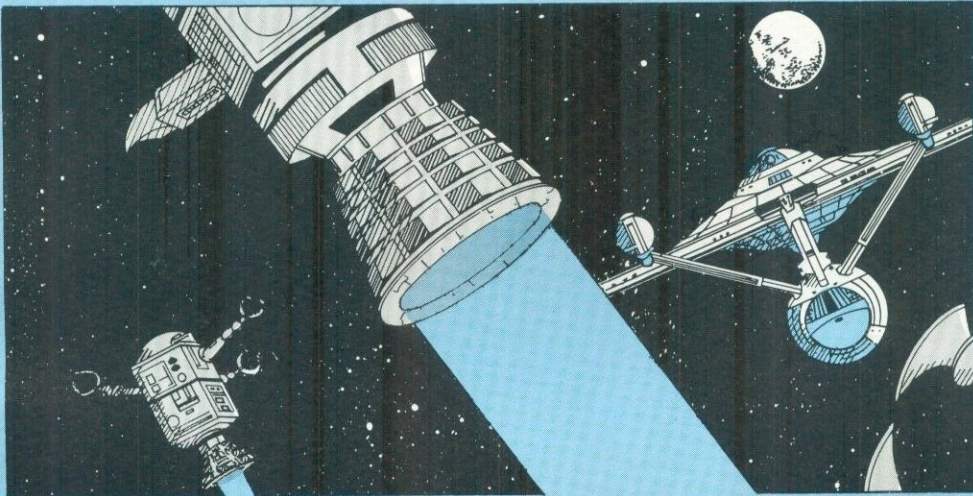


# CONTINUING THE LINE

A ST:RPG2/COMBOT Adventure by Dale L. Kemper





## PLOT SYNOPSIS

The adventure takes place in orbit around and on the planet Aeon VI, in the outer fringe of the Federation Exploration Zone. The *Enterprise* (or other Starfleet or merchant vessel) comes into orbit, where it is attacked by a number of warrior robots coming from the planetary surface. After successfully warding off this attack, sensors discover an alien complex on the surface of this barren world. Built of some unknown material, it seems to be reactivating itself as the ship beams down a landing party to investigate. Upon a general examination, they discover that this is a Comboto fabrication structure that is just now coming on-line to replace those Comboto units lost in orbit against their ship. To safely study and explore this alien artifact, they must get to the central core of the complex, where their tricorders show where the energy emanations controlling the factory are coming from. New Combotos will soon be coming out of various assembly staging areas as the party searches for the entrance to the central core. Time is of the essence. If their mission is not carried out quickly, there will soon be too many Comboto units to handle.

In **Coming Into Orbit**, the player characters are given the information leading up to their assignment to the Aeon VI landing party. A description of the orbital battle and the planetary data summary are also provided.

**Beaming Down** covers the landing party mission and a brief overview of the Comboto factory complex. Possible landing party equipment is also described.

The **Gamemaster's Notes** cover the actual running of the adventure, along with suggestions for using FASA's **Comboto** game with **ST:RPG2**. The **Comboto** game is not necessary for play, however, and brief rules are provided to aid those gamers not familiar with the **Comboto** system to interface it with **Star Trek: The Role Playing Game**. Comboto fabrication is also covered along with suggestions for starting a campaign using this adventure.

The **Factory Map** provides the key to the accompanying map of the alien complex where the majority of the adventure will take place.

## COMING INTO ORBIT

### Sensor Contact

The *Enterprise* (or other Federation vessel) begins to enter standard orbit about the planet Aeon VI for a routine sensor survey when deflector shields pop on. The defensive computer sensors have detected approximately 30 approaching objects coming up through the planet's atmosphere, each with some form of thruster. At full magnification on the viewer, they can be seen to be variously-sized cylindrical objects mostly around three meters high but some over eight, each with a number of appendages on their casings. No lifeform readings are detected, so they are assumed to be robots of some kind.

When standard orbit is achieved, the objects position themselves in an attack formation and head for the ship. The Captain orders deflector shields up to maximum power as missiles are launched against the ship at extreme range. These soon explode harmlessly on the shields. Red Alert is ordered throughout the ship.

### Comboto Assault

The attack continues by the combat robots (what the science officer is now calling them). As they get closer, they

can be seen to be composed of three distinct classes, each with various amounts of lasers, missile launchers, armor and shielding, claw arms, and maneuvering thrusters. Lasers and missiles hit the ship's shields continuously with no effect and no response. Soon the Combotos seem to realize that they are having no effect and change their tactics. Some of the larger units accelerate rapidly toward the Federation vessel and ram into the shields, smashing themselves in a fireball of self-destruction. The science officer turns to the Captain.

"We just took damage on our forward port deflector shield. Another two or three detonations like that and it could buckle."

"So they have teeth that can bite us, after all," said the Captain. "Give me a full pattern of photon torpedoes set for area burst. That should change their minds for them about this attack."

"Torpedoes ready."

"Fire."

The photon bays shot forth their sparkling bullets which soon detonated amid the charging Comboto units. When the glare subsided, there was nothing left but shattered debris.

### Planetary Scan

As the Federation vessel continues to orbit the planet sensors are tuned downward and the planetary scan is begun.

#### WORLD LOG

System Name: AEON

Number of Class M planets present: one

World Name: AEON VI

Position in System: 6

Number of Satellites: None

Planetary Gravity: 0.9 Earth normal

Planetary Size:

Diameter: 11,700 km

Equatorial Circumference: 36,000 km

Total Surface Area: 459,000,000 sq. km

Percent Land Mass: 94%

Total Land Area: 432,460,000 sq. km

Planetary Conditions:

Length of Day: 28 hours

Atmospheric Density: Thin

General Climate: Desert

Mineral Content:

Normal Metals: 44%

Radioactives: 12%

Gemstones: 2%

Industrial Crystals: 5%

Special Minerals: 14%

Aeon VI is a hot, dry planetoid barely capable of sustaining human life. What little water there is occurs in underground springs which are very difficult to find without tricorders. No indigenous lifeforms can be found by initial sensor scans. There is, however, a consistently high reading on mineral content which bears further looking into.

Sensors have detected one energy source on the planet. This is a domelike complex located on a flat, burning wasteland near the equator. This structure would seem to be the origination of the Combotos which attacked the ship. The power levels within and beneath this area continue to grow, as if the complex is winding up from a shutdown. There are no other Combotos in evidence.

The Captain has ordered a landing party to beam down to the alien structure. This will be composed of a security team, chief engineer, and doctor led by the science officer. The Captain has wisely chosen to remain with the ship in case of further attacks by the Combotos (Gamemaster's discretion is allowed here, as well as with the landing party makeup. It does make more sense for the Captain to remain in the ship in this situation, however).



The alien structure seems to be made of some unknown substance that is unusually dense and will not permit beam-down to take place into the complex. There is a landing stage, however, at one end of the dome near an open entrance. It would make an ideal beam-down point.

## BEAMING DOWN

### The Landing Party

The survey team that will make up the landing party can contain any player characters the Gamemaster decides on. A pre-generated team is listed further on in this adventure if none are available for this mission from your campaign. Any Federation equipment that can be found in the **Cadet's Orientation Sourcebook** (pp. 20 to 25) of ST:RPG2 can be used at the Gamemaster's discretion. It is suggested that for play balance additional (four to six) security guard NPCs be included in a less experienced party (or give a merchant party heavier weaponry). The attrition rate of these red-shirted wonders should give the players a fair barometer of how they are doing. In any case, one thing the landing party can be certain of is that, once they enter the alien complex, they are stuck there until they can leave the structure, since the transporter will not be able to save them.

### The Mission

The mission of the landing party is to perform the initial survey of the alien complex. This can be achieved any way they see fit, but special attention should be accorded the strengthening power source emanating from the central portion of the dome. This would seem to be the key to the structure's operation. Although sensor reports are sketchy due to the superdense material covering the dome, it would appear that the interior is composed of a series of control relay and power transforming areas, with similiar readings to some Federation fabrication synthesizers. There are a number of subterranean levels that seem to show sporadic energy readings, but these are also encased in the superdense alien material, and little else can be discovered. There is nothing else that can be learned on the ship, and the party can head for the transporter room.

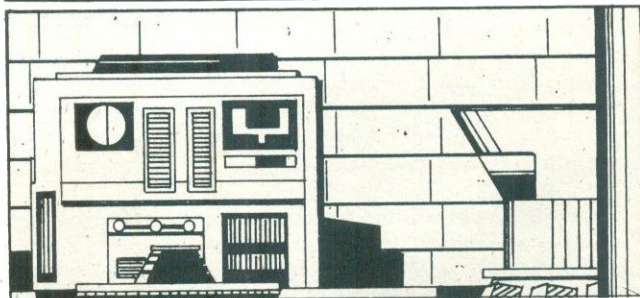
### Beginning the Adventure

The main point of this adventure is to get a party of player characters down to the alien establishment where they will be out of reach of the help of their vessel and will have to rely on their own resources to achieve their objective. Accordingly, any of the above can be altered to ensure that this occurs. If you are running a smaller ship with few weapons, simply state that the Combot units explode after reacting to the ship's shields due to some kind of energy incompatibility. (If your ship does not have shields, I would definitely worry). If the Captain just has to beam down, fine. Just because this doesn't make much sense given the situation should not deter you, as looking at any of the TV series will show. The main action will be within the alien complex, not in orbit (unless the GM would like to reward some sloppy play by sending additional Combots to attack the ship later in the game).

### The Factory

As most of the hints above give evidence to, the alien complex is an automated outpost run by a sophisticated computer and operated by self-replicating Combots. At present, there is only one operational Combot unit in the structure guarding the Central Core where the controlling computer circuits are located. All of the other Combot units were destroyed in orbit during the brief battle with the Federation

vessel. The central computer is just now gearing up to produce more Combot units, which are fabricated on the levels below the dome and then shipped up four separate ramps to holding areas until needed. See the accompanying interior layout of the dome for further explanation. This map should be kept from the players' view, as their objective will be to travel through the "maze" of computer machinery and reach the Central Core, where they may attempt to disable the main computer, causing the cessation of Combot fabrication and ensuring the safe study of the alien artifact. Of course, as the player characters are attempting to do this, additional Combot units are being completed and sent out to defend the dome. It is therefore a race against time as soon the increased output of the lower levels will become too much for the landing party's defensive capabilities.



## THE FACTORY MAP

**The Beam Down Point.** This is where the landing party will materialize and enter the alien structure. There are no doors anywhere in the complex, so this is one complication avoided.

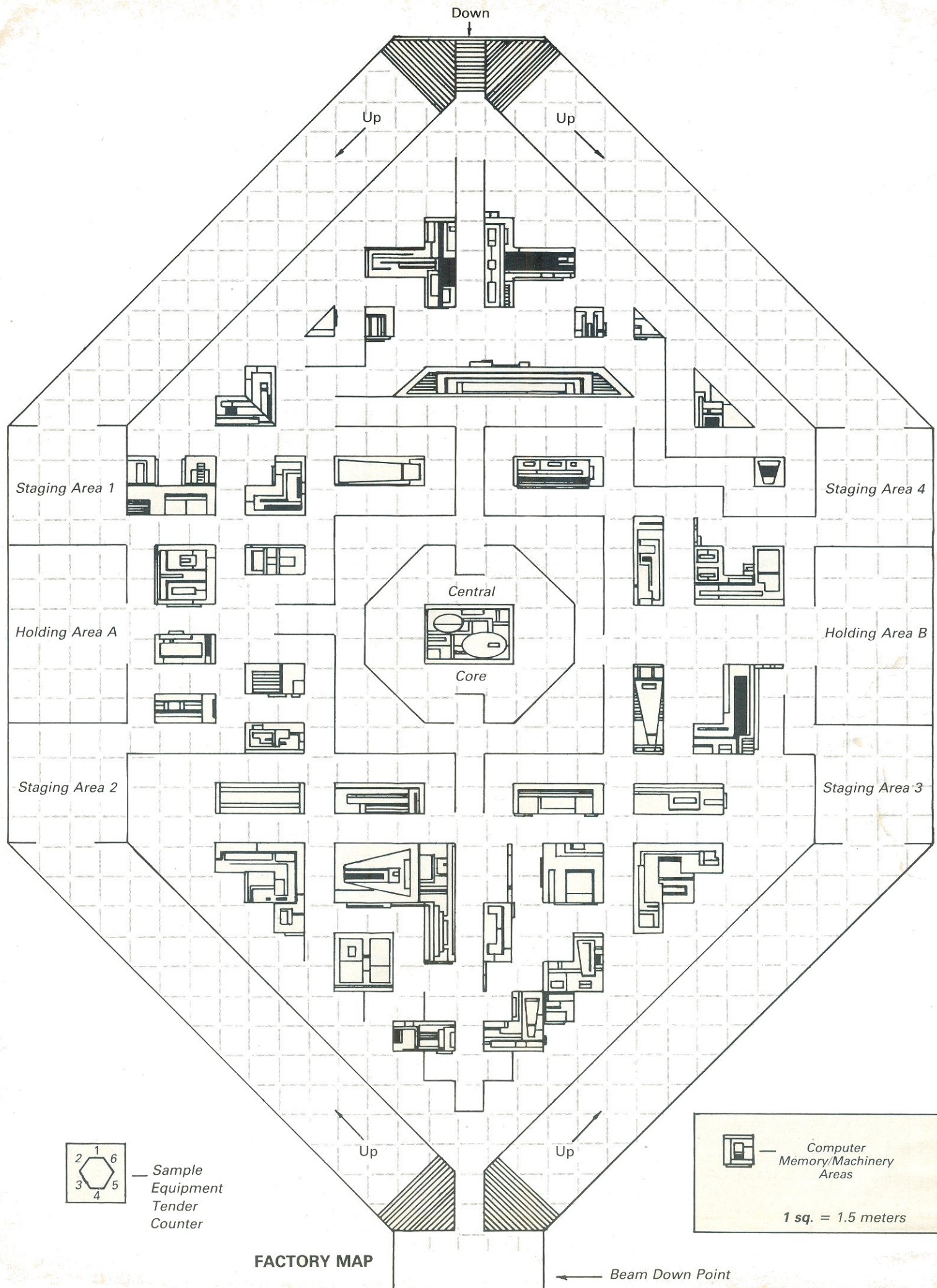
**Staging Areas 1,2,3 & 4.** These are the starting points for the defending Combot units, which will begin to appear randomly in them during the course of the game. They contain myriad amounts of testing equipment adorning the walls. A large opening leads to a down-sloping ramp that goes to the lower fabrication levels.

**Holding Areas A & B.** These compartments are used to store completed Combots which have no assigned task at the moment. Until the patrol levels for the interior of the dome are reached (see below) they will not be used. After that they can house unneeded Combots which can then be used to replace those destroyed or at the Gamemaster's discretion (a second attack on the ship, further patrolling, a banzai charge at the players, and so forth). When enough units are available a team of four will usually head for an area in which another Combot is under attack.

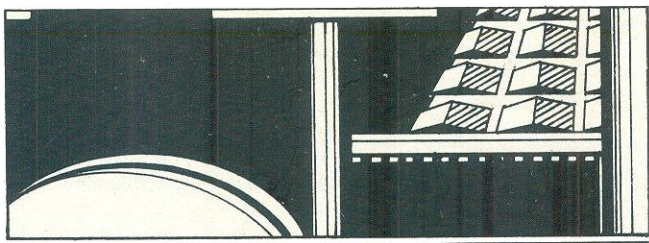
**The Machinery Maze.** This takes up the diamond-shaped interior of the dome and is where most of the adventure action will take place. Many solid areas housing the central computer's memory banks and additional machinery are located amid its corridors. They are all encased in the dense dome material and are resistant to phaser fire, but not impervious. Three hits by a phaser set on disintegrate will breach

**The Central Core.** This is the objective of the landing party. It is normally patrolled by two Combot units, but, at the beginning of the adventure, contains only one. The other must be fabricated and begin at a staging area, then travel through the machinery maze to the Central Core. As with the computer memory/machinery units, three hits by phasers set on disintegrate will disable the central computer, all Combots and Combot fabrication will cease, and the players have achieved their objective. They may now study the facility safely.









## Running the Combots

There are two ways that the Gamemaster can run the Combots in the alien complex; through the use of the **Combots** game rules or through the ST:RPG interface described below. Either is acceptable and really depends on whether you have access to the **Combots** game or not.

### Combot Construction

For those not familiar with the **Combots** game, these battle robots come in three types: the Scout, with one equipment tender (six module bays), the Warrior, with two equipment tenders (twelve module bays), and the Marauder, with three (18 module bays). Within these bays, any of eight weapon or equipment modules are placed. For our purposes, the usual unit encountered is the Warrior, although the type of Combot used is up to the Gamemaster.

At the beginning of play, only the Combot unit located in the Central Core is functional. This Warrior unit is equipped with 4 retros, 1 shield, 2 missile launchers, 1 aimer, 1 ECM, 1 laser, and 2 Hydraulic Claw modules. The alien complex is capable of producing one Combot unit every two turns until the Dome Patrol Level is reached (two Combots in the Central Core and one in each quadrant of the Machinery Maze). After that, one every four turns is created. These extra units move to the Holding Areas until a patrolling Combot is destroyed (in which case, one to four units will go to investigate) or it receives new orders from the Central Computer. Newly-constructed Combots start in any one of the four Staging Areas at random (1-25 for #1, 26-50 for #2, and so on). Weapons and equipment modules for the new Combots can be decided by the Gamemaster or produced by using the table below with percentile dice:

	Before Turn Eight	After Turn Eight
Laser/Armor Modules	1-15	1-25
ECM Modules	16-25	26-30
Laser Modules	26-45	—
31-50 Missile launchers	46-60	51-70
Hydraulic Claw Modules	61-70	71-80
Aiming Mechanisms	71-80	81-90
Maneuver Engine Modules	81-00	91-00

A minimum number of Maneuver Engine Modules (retros) are required for the Combot to be able to move about the Dome complex. These minimums are shown below:

Scouts — Two retros  
Warriors — Four retros  
Marauders — Six retros

More can be added if desired but these additional modules will serve no purpose in the game. This is also true of ECM modules (used to foil enemy missile attacks). For purposes of this scenario, Armor Plate Modules and Laser Shield Modules are treated the same.

It is assumed that, after some contact with the Federation Landing Party, the Central Computer will learn what modules

work best against them. Accordingly, after Turn Eight, Combots will be produced with less ECM and Aiming Modules, fewer Retros, and more Shield, Laser, and Missile Modules.

### The Combots/ST:RPG Interface

The following rules are to be used to convert the **Combots** game system to ST:RPG terms. Players may obtain a copy of the **Combots** game and use that system if they desire. **Action Points** — All Combot units have nine action points for use in one ten-second game turn. They can use them for the following actions:

Turn in place	1 AP
Move 1 square sideways or up/down	1
Move one square diagonally	1.5
Aim Laser	2
Use Claw	2
Fire Weapon	1
Receive New Orders	1

Most of the above are self-explanatory. Receive New Orders comes into play when the Central Computer (i.e. the Gamemaster) decides new instructions are necessary for the active Combot units. For example, if the player characters split up, the Central Computer might order one unit to "cover the next passageway towards the Central Core".

**Tactical Advantage** — Tactical advantage is decided by the highest roll on percentile dice.

**Opportunity Actions** — Combots are programmed to save at least three APs for opportunity actions unless specifically ordered not to (as when the Central Computer says, "Get to the Core as fast as possible!")

**Combot Combat** — The base To-Hit Number for the Combot Laser is 25, and for the Combot Missile Launcher is 35. Laser and missile fire from Combot units and hand-to-hand Claw attacks are treated as any other weapon in ST:RPG. The below table gives the ranges and effects of Combot weapons:

Type	Damage	Pt. Blank	Short	Medium	Long	Extreme	Graze
Laser	50pts.	1	2-4	5-10	11-20	21-40	20pts.
Missile	70pts	1	2-6	7-15	16-30	31-60	15pts.
Claw	3D10	—	—	—	—	—	—

Missiles may fire only once per launcher module and are then expended. Combot lasers will not drain and have no power limitations. All other modifiers are in effect.

Combots are considered man-sized targets. They can only be affected by phasers set on disintegrate. A Combot unit can take as many phaser hits as it has armor plate modules or laser shield modules. After these have been expended, the final shot disintegrates the Combot unit.

### For Those With Combot Rules

Below are listed some changes in the basic **Combots** rules booklet that should facilitate the use of Combot units in ST:RPG.

**Armor Plates and Laser Shields** — These modules protect the Combot from phasers set on disintegrate. The Combot unit can take as many hits as they have armor plate or laser shield modules. After these are expended (it is assumed that these detach before phase-out effect reaches Combot chassis), one more hit will disintegrate the Combot unit. Phasers set on stun do no damage to Combots (let the players find that out for themselves).

**Missile Movement** — These weapons are considered to reach their target within one (ten-second) turn rather than be plotted on the gameboard as in **Combots**. The warheads are also of a reduced energy yield to avoid any damage to the computer system being fought through. Missiles do not hit automatically. Target is allowed one saving roll against DEX to avoid any damage. Missiles do 70 points of damage to human targets.



**Laser Fire and Hit Determination** — Hits are determined with two 6-sided dice for each laser module on the Combob. The base number for humans is 3. To this, add the range to target in number of squares and +1 if the target is under cover. Subtract the number of Aiming Modules the Combob is equipped with. After calculating a final number, roll the dice. If the roll is equal to or greater than the total needed, the laser has hit. The target takes 50 points of damage.

**Claw Attack and Hit Determination** — The Combob must be adjacent to its target for a claw attack to be attempted. As in the **Combob** rules, a roll of six or greater on two dice is needed to hit. For any damage to be inflicted, however, the target must fail a saving throw on his DEX attribute with percentile dice. If the claw hits, the target takes 3D10 points of damage.

All other rules are followed, as in a regular **Combobs** game.

### Designer Notes

**Continuing the Line** should be a fast paced, action-packed adventure scenario probably with some casualties (watch out with your favorite characters). The tactical portion of the game can be used with miniatures, if enough *Combobs* games are available, or through the use of cardboard counters. To make Combob units, draw a hexagon on a blank counter and number each side. Then list what modules are on which side of the hexagon. One counter should be made for each equipment tender on the Combob. Only weapons that have a line of sight to the target may be fired. Armor plate and laser shields protect the Combob regardless of facing.

Play balance will be of utmost importance in this adventure. If the Landing Party destroys all Combob units they see and waltzes into the Central Core, something should be changed (larger, more numerous Combobs, less security guards with the Landing Party, and so on). On the other hand, if the Landing Party is decimated at the Beam Down Point, some changes the opposite way will have to be initiated (as well as beaming down another Landing Party). A good solution to play balance is Landing Party ammo limitations. Phaser I-A's only have enough power for five disintegration blasts and Phaser II-A has enough for eight (ten in the case of Phaser II-B). If the players were not foresightful enough to request additional power packs for their weapons, they might be in a jam. Phaser rifles and heavier weaponry would not be sent down with normal Starfleet Landing Parties, but merchant groups might consider them.

Players would be well advised not to be surprised at close range by any Combobs. Those multiple claws can do quite a bit of damage, not to mention the point blank laser and missile fire. It wouldn't be a bad idea to have a "point man" scouting ahead of the group so this situation does not occur.

Gamemasters may wish to continue this situation with the study of the alien establishment on Aeon VI. There could be other Combob installations as well as other alien artifacts to discover. And what if the owners come back to see what's going on?

As in all scenarios, feel free to change any of the above to meet your own campaign needs. Any comments are welcome!

## PRE-GENERATED PLAYER CHARACTERS

**Name:** Tonya Sackson

**Rank/Title:** Lt. Commander

**Current Assignment:** Gamemaster's decision

**Position:** Science Officer

**Race:** Human

**Age:** 36

**Sex:** Female

### Attributes

STR — 71	CHA — 56
END — 61	LUC — 21
INT — 70	PSI — 67
DEX — 51	

### Combat Statistics:

To-Hit Numbers      Bare-Hand Damage: 1D10 + 4

Modern: 43      AP: 9

HTH: 35

**Distinguishing Physical Characteristics:** Plain face with dish-water blond hair that has a tendency to fall across her forehead into her eyes.

**Brief Personal History:** Born of poor parents, Tonya took it upon herself to be the best she could be — whatever the cost. Her ruthless rise to prominence in Exobiology and similar sciences has been at the cost of any personal desires she might have. Career is everything to her, and Starfleet gave her the chance to show what she could do.

**Birthplace:** Inverness, Scotland, Earth

**Personality:** Tonya is very businesslike and blunt. Her subordinates think that she is hard to work with, but this is only because she expects the same 120% effort from them that she expects from herself.

**Motivations/Desires/Goals:** To excel in her scientific specialty and get the recognition she feels she deserves.

**Manner:** Aloof and distant. Most of her peers do not know the real woman behind the mask of professionalism.

### Significant Skills

Administration	40
Carousing	10
Computer Operation	84
Computer Technology	26
Damage Control Procedures	10
Electronics Technology	23
Environmental Suit Operations	30
Instruction	10
Language (Gaelic)	35
Leadership	30
Life Sciences	
Bionics	51
Exobiology	85
Ecology	30
Marksmanship, Modern	36
General Medicine	10
Negotiation/Diplomacy	10
Personal Combat, Unarmed	20
Personal Weapons Technology	5
Physical Science, Chemistry	20
Planetary Sciences, Geology	46
Shuttlecraft Pilot	10
Small Equipment Systems Repair	10
Social Sciences: Archaeology	30
Federation Culture/History	15
Federation Law	15
Space Sciences	
Astrophysics	46
Astronomy	28
Astrography	38
Starship Sensors	61
Streetwise	10
Transporter Operational Procedures	10
Zero-G Operations	10



**Name:** Denny Takamura  
**Rank/Title:** Lieutenant  
**Current Assignment:** Gamemaster's decision  
**Position:** Engineering Department, Weapons Tech.

**Race:** Human  
**Age:** 35  
**Sex:** Male

**Attributes**

STR — 53	CHA — 51
END — 46	LUC — 55
INT — 60	PSI — 0
DEX — 59	

**Combat Statistics:**  
 To-Hit Numbers Bare-Hand Damage: 1D10 + 5  
 Modern: 63 AP: 9  
 HTH: 39

**Distinguishing Physical Characteristics:** Short and slim, considered frail by those who don't know him. Black hair with Oriental features.

**Brief Personal History:** After refusing to take over his family's pawn shop business, Denny joined Starfleet in the Engineering branch. Always a tinkerer, he soon found he was good at repairing and redesigning various weapons, both contemporary and historical. He is now one of the most knowledgeable Technicians in charge of repair and upkeep of the ship's small arms.

**Birthplace:** Hong Kong, Earth

**Personality:**

**Motivations/Desires/Goals:** Well-mannered and polite, Denny also knows how to have a good time, as his numerous sordid shore leave stories will tell you. His goal is to write a reference book on how to convert old muskets and other historical guns into modern energy weapons. He has recently built a flintlock pistol (circa 1790) which actually houses a phaser 1A interior.

**Manner:** Easy-going unless crossed. If crossed, then the guilty party has an enemy for life. Chivalrous to others, but with his own personal code of honor.

**Special Knowledge/Powers:** General knowledge of all hand weapons of all members of the Federation, both current and historical. Some knowledge of the interworking of Klingon small arms.

Significant Skills	Rating
Carousing	10
Comm. System Technology	10
Computer Operation	39
Computer Technology	19
Deflector Shield Technology	10
Electronics Technology	22
Environmental Suit Operation	10
Gaming (3-D Chess)	12
Instruction	10
Language (Klingon Battle Lang.)	15
Leadership	20
Life Sciences	
Genetics	10
Life Support Syst. Technology	10
Marksmanship, Archaic (Automatic Weapons)	22
Marksmanship, Modern	67
Mechanical Engineering	13
General Medicine	19
Negotiation/Diplomacy	10
Personal Combat	
Armed (M-26, 1995 U.S. Assault Rifle)	24
Unarmed 20 Personal Weapons Technology	45
Physical Sciences, Physics	10
Planetary Sciences, Geology	10
Planetary Survival	13
Shuttlecraft Pilot	19
Shuttlecraft Systems	
Technology	20
Small Equipment Systems Operation	10
Federation Culture History	24
Federation Law	15
Space Sciences, Astronautics	10
Starship Weaponry Technology	51
Streetwise	15
Transporter Systems Technology	10
Trivia (Archaic Automatic Weapons)	29
Warp Drive Technology	46

**Name:** Luther Tobias  
**Rank/Title:** Lt. Commander  
**Current Assignment:** Gamemaster's Choice  
**Position:** Senior Medical Officer

**Race:** Human  
**Age:** 41  
**Sex:** Male

**Attributes**

STR — 60	CHA — 62
END — 61	LUC — 40
INT — 73	PSI — 31
DEX — 57	

**Combat Statistics:**  
 To-Hit Numbers Bare-Hand Damage: 1D10 + 5  
 Modern: 43 AP: 9  
 HTH: 38

**Distinguishing Physical Characteristics:** Balding, middle-aged man, slowly losing his muscle-tone.

**Brief Personal History:** After some discipline problems during his cadet cruises, Dr. Tobias settled down into the role of professional physician, slowly climbing the promotion ladder until he was appointed Chief Medical Officer.

**Birthplace:** Staten Island, Earth

**Personality:** **Motivations/Desires/Goals:** At his time of life, Dr. Tobias wants nothing more than to carry on his Starfleet duties and retire on his pension. He is becoming sedate after a decade or so of carousing and wine-tasting around the Galaxy.

**Manner:** Mild-mannered, easy-going.

**Special Knowledge/Powers:** None

Significant Skills	Rating
Administration	51
Artistic Expression (limericks)	14
Carousing	36
Computer Operation	65
Instruction	10
Language (Latin)	35
Leadership	30
Life Sciences	
Genetics	10
Bionics	38
Botany	10
Life Support Syst. Technology	10
Marksmanship, Modern	29
Medical Sciences	
Human Psychology	40
Andorian Psychology	20
Tellerite Psychology	20
Surgery	45
Pathology	29
General Medicine	
Human	65
Andorian	40
Negotiation/Diplomacy	26
Personal Combat, Unarmed	20
Personal Weapons Technology	5
Physical Sciences, Hydrology	10
Planetary Survival	28
Small Equipment System Operation	20
Federation Culture History	15
Federation Law	20
Streetwise	16
Trivia (Wine)	23

Average Starfleet Security Guard:

STR 65	END 60	INT 60	DEX 65
CHA 50	LUC 25	PSI 0	
To-Hit, Modern 60	To-Hit, HTH 55		

Skills	Rating
Marksmanship, Modern	55
Negotiation/Diplomacy	10
Personal Combat, Unarmed	35
Personal Weapons Technology	20
Security Procedures	30
Small Unit Tactics	20