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SUBJECT PROFILE

Name: Jake Gaston

Rank: Commander

Base: Delta 3, South America

ROUGH NOTES ON JAKE GASTON'S STORY

I first met him at the Harbor Cafe. He was nursing a bottle of whiskey; staring into an empty shot glass. He was in his late 50s by then and looked tired, very tired, with dark shadows around his eyes. But the way he snapped his head back and twisted his strong torso revealed an athlete of the top rank. I approached the small table and he stared at me.

"Hi, my name's Kathryn Ellis - I'm from the University - aren't you Jake Gaston?"

He looked at me, then glanced to either side of where I was standing, as though he was checking if anyone else was with me.

~~"Yeah?"~~ "What do you want?"

"You were an X-COM commander back in the 2000s. I've seen some reports flicking through the old files. I'd really like to talk to you."

"Why?" he asked, neither confirming nor denying.

"I'm writing a book on X-COM - now that the information has been made public and the threat is over."

"The threat is over, is it?" he interrupted, then lifted the glass to his lips.

"Well, I know that X-COM still exists as an organization, but its primary task of countering the alien invasion has been achieved."

"Has it?" said Gaston, replying with a question for the fourth time. I realized that he was telling me nothing. I didn't even know that it was really him.

Then he looked me in the face, his steely-grey eyes unblinking,

"What do you know about X-COM?"

Again, another question. I recognized the unmistakable signs of military command training; he was going to find out more about me than he was willing to tell me about himself.

"What was revealed in 2010 about the UFOs and the battle X-COM waged against the extraterrestrials - I've read all the available X-COM files."

Gaston smiled.

"You don't know anything - a lot of good soldiers died out there," he swept his hand across the sky, "men and women of the finest caliber. Now resting in unofficial, unrecognized graves. If you're going to write anything - it's going to be about them!"

Suddenly, I realized that I had stumbled on a real story. But that old suspicious streak began to nag at my brain.

“You’re willing to talk to me about classified information?”

“Don’t you know? It’s not classified anymore: X-COM shares have been bought up by the big corporations. You, my friend, can say whatever you like in your book!”

That was the end of our first meeting.

~~That was it.~~ He left the cafe, but promised to meet me there the next day. He gave the impression that he wanted the record to be correct - about the men and women under his command.

I was aiming for a popular history book and had a good source of military picture files on my terminal back home, but Gaston came up with much more than I’d expected. There was a haste about the way he told his story, a haste and a hint of something new to come. I didn’t push him on the subject because I figured he would only tell me what he was good and ready to tell. He wasn’t a man to be tricked.

A few hours before the first interview, I tapped in his name on Biog-status™ and the screen came up with all the known details of his career. From a conventional family background and quality education, Gaston excelled at literature, maths, physics and athletics - a strange combination to match his bulky, muscular frame. He went to a leading University in 1999 to study History, and in his second term published a book of poems entitled “Lost in Wonder.” A few reviews flashed up on the screen and then some of the poems. They were on a mystic, philosophical theme but were well composed and generally well received. In 2000, at the beginning of his second year, Jake Gaston left University. There was no explanation - he certainly did not fail any courses, because he was seen as the brightest of the 1999 intake. His career details contained no information for the next three years, but in 2002 he was billed as an officer (lieutenant) in the army. No location was listed, usually a sign of Secret Service involvement. I assume that he was drafted and trained by X-COM in those intervening years. Information about the Alien war years is patchy at the best of times and my Biog-status™ stopped in 2006, telling me to consult Update patches or Official Government Records (OGR).

No updates were produced, but OGR-Historymaker Software was released by the Parallax Organization 6 months ago. I skimmed through the official documents of the X-COM story and found various pictures of Jake Gaston: at White House receptions, at the Kremlin and one, surprisingly, of his wedding. He had married Katherine Tully, also an

X-COM captain. The records contained no other references until 2011 when Jake, then a commodore, had been awarded the United Nations Medal of Honor at a ceremony in London. Finally, there were videos of his TV interviews with all the chat show hosts over the next 2 years... and then no other record.

I flipped the terminal off and sat staring at the dark screen. I thought of the Alien War. Although there was firm evidence of a conflict from the people who suffered terror attacks, there was no reference to the war until it was over. It had never entered the public consciousness as a 'real war' because people had not seen it on TV. The startling discovery that aliens existed and that we were not alone in the Universe was almost glossed over by the media. I'd seen that phenomenon before: once you've rationalized something, it's no longer of any real interest. It was the same when man first set foot on the moon - eventually it was humdrum and missions didn't even make the front pages!

I strolled down to the harbor in plenty of time for a coffee, sat at the same cafe and watched the people walking up and down. I was lost in thought and didn't notice Gaston until he pulled up a chair. He seemed to be in a better mood today, and we chatted about the town and where he lived. Eventually, he got around to the subject of money. I knew he would. I could tell that he was hard up. I had already calculated how much the story was worth to me and how much the publishers would pay. I quoted him a figure. You couldn't tell a thing from his reaction. He raised his hand and called the waitress over, and ordered a couple of beers.

"I guess you know the standard stuff that's been done in the films - how we beat them off and won the war. Well, what no one's ever explained is the reality of living through those times. When we first went in, we didn't know what we were doing. We were just kids, really. I hadn't even completed college, and there I was dropped into the desert in the dark to catch or kill an alien creature in a downed UFO. There were eight of us that day and the only one with any real experience was our Captain, Jakobs. I was lucky - half of that force never returned. Eventually command figured you had a 25 percent chance of getting killed as a new Squad Member - the odds got better the more experienced you got - you had to learn to survive.

Even though the military colleges tried, no one could teach you how to combat a Floater or a Sectoid and, if you didn't learn, you died pretty quick.

"I remember that day more than most; I especially remember two very frightened people. Li was very small and when the Skyranger stopped juddering after the landing, he continued shaking. Next to him was Patricia – she just never stopped talking, nervous-like. Talked about anything except the mission. I remember carrying her back into the craft when Jakobs aborted the mission. She was conscious, but in silent agony from her wounds. She still clung to her laser pistol. She died that night.

"We didn't even see them that day. They found us in the open and caught us in their cross fire. I couldn't even get a shot off – my rifle had jammed. And all the while you could hear the buzzing, sparking alien craft and the murmuring in your mind as they tried to get control of your brain. It took me 3 days to get rid of that sick feeling, and I couldn't eat or sleep."

From the red-eyed look he gave me, it looked like he was still having trouble sleeping.

"I still have nightmares about those days, you know." He confirmed. "We all do. Those brown bugs – they really tried to grab hold of your mind. As well as trying to move stealthily, you had to resist those probes. That was tough. But, that's enough of me spouting, what exactly do you want to know?"

I already had a list of stuff in my mind
but I felt he was the wrong person to interview.

"Why don't you just talk like you've been doing, that's good enough – and I'll record it." I pulled out my Record-o-cam and placed it in the center of the table.

"Hey, you've got a REK 12c. I worked for REK after my spell with the bug killers. I didn't last long. Couldn't seem to hold down a regular job after that. I guess that's quite common."

He looked at me for confirmation. I said nothing.

"I expect you looked me up in the Biogs – I don't know how much you've dug up?"

"I was interested that you published a book of poetry..."

"'Lost in Wonder' – you know, it still gets me a few thousand a year from royalties – people tell me I should do some more, now that I've got time on my hands."

He stopped talking and stared into the distance across the harbor. Then he pulled out a file from the depths of his enormous coat and placed it onto the table.

"You might be interested in this. I kept a record of some of the initial missions and threw all the old stuff in here - use any of it you find of interest."

~~I thought it was time~~ I thought it was time to pull the interview together, so I got out my list of questions.

"Where did you do your training?"

"Well, I was recruited at the end of my freshman year at college. My professor recommended me - intelligence and athleticism, that's what I think they were looking for.

"I was taken to the mountain training base and was amazed by the extent of the operation. I thought it would be a few soldiers sitting in front of radar screens, but it was big! People from all over the world milling about like ants; everyone with a purpose. We were raw recruits then, and our first tour was 6 weeks intensive - up in the high mountains - there were 25 of us; 10 women, 15 men. From the beginning, the training was based on being dropped into all sorts of landscapes in two groups then having to 'locate and kill.' That's where I met Kathy. We were using lightburn tech guns - mine jammed on me and she slammed a blast in my heart - literally. Kathy was something really special; not only was she better than most of us and the first to be promoted, but she was a knock-out with her long dark hair and large brown eyes. Turn 'em on bugs though, and they were deadly.

"In the evenings, we would have a series of lectures. We were shown films of UFOs being shot down by Interceptors - in the early days those fly boys had it tough, they were lucky to loose one shot before the Alien blasted them or disappeared out of sight. The trainers introduced us to our first Alien - nothing like the creatures you've seen in those films - brown, smelly, small and blotchy. They had it locked up in the containment center. It was obviously dying; I'll never forget those large eyes staring at us. I remember thinking that it didn't look very dangerous. I was wrong.

"There wasn't much known about them then. The UFOpaedia hadn't been compiled yet in those days; stuff was being added to files on a daily basis. If you sat at a radar terminal, like we did as part of basic training, you began to get an impression of the amount of alien activity that was happening across the globe. That was when we trainees began to talk among ourselves about what was really going on. It felt like the aliens had a plan and we were just the irritating flies in the ointment.

“At that time, the training base director was Gomez Rodrigues. Yep, THE Gomez Rodrigues – the one that all the films are about. He understood that we needed to be kept informed of all that was happening in the organization. We were flown to the nearest working X-COM base and that certainly opened my eyes. Everyone felt the tense atmosphere. Soldiers were dying on a regular basis, so post-mission, you just had to relieve the tension. You think you’ve been to wild parties? Well, you should have experienced those troopers’ parties in that base.

“We watched the transports – Skyrangers in the early days - take off packed with grim-faced troops. The soldiers returned the next day dirty, battered, tired but ecstatic; their faces saying ‘mission completed and no casualties’. We watched the alien corpses being parcelled up and the delight of the chief science officer at the recovery of a particularly valuable alien artifact.

“And maybe you think you’ve seen cool dudes? In those days those Interceptor pilots were ice – the real elite on the base. There was no time to test new engines or craft. The scientists and engineers would slap on a new unit and whoosh! they were off on another mission. ‘Bug swatting,’ they called it! As though it was nothing. They all wore those corny flyer’s shades and strolled around with a kind of deliberate swagger that showed they were untouchable. The whole training group were besotted with that image – after that day everyone wanted to be a flyer – you could move around the organization if you were considered good enough. I went to the intake sessions but I just couldn’t take that training. Have you ever tried a G-force accelerator? It tears you inside out and leaves you a sopping mess inside your guts.

“Back in the training base, everything assumed an urgent reality. Some of us were fast-tracked through the second training module; Kathy, Li, Ranjit and me were ‘welded,’ as they called it, into a unit. The base we were due to be sent to liked to handle groups of four in a fighting unit. It was the basic number that worked in hunting out aliens after a crash. I’ll never forget that survival course. We were dropped somewhere in North Africa – high mountains, desert and scrub lands. We were hunting two of our instructors – they had even mocked up a crashed UFO.

“Nobody was designated team leader, but Kathy seemed to assume she was it. I guess I didn’t know how much I liked her until we had a fight

on top of a mountain we had just spent 4 hours climbing. We were tired and hungry, there was no sign of ‘the Aliens’ and base camp was at the bottom of the mountain. I said something and the four of us just started shouting and blaming each other for the mess we had got in. Finally, Kathy punched me square on the jaw. I couldn’t believe it. We were all getting hysterical – then we started laughing and it was a great feeling, we all sat down and Kathy was sitting next to me in the sunset and the light was fantastic on her hair. I suppose I loved her from that point.”

He stopped talking and looked at me as though for the first time. I didn’t ask what had happened to Kathy. I think his recollections had opened a flood gate of emotions. I figured my name being nearly the same as hers might be too much for him at the moment. So I backed off, giving him time to get himself together. I ordered some more drinks and we stared at the TV someone had turned on in the bar.

“You know what, I think it’s starting up again”, he said.

I looked blank. He explained.

“I think there’s some sort of activity – some of the X-COM commanders have been contacted, but no one is saying anything. Something’s happening.”

This was big news. An X-COM veteran like Gaston knew what he was talking about.

Jake didn’t want to go on, so we ended our meeting there but agreed to meet again in 3 days time at his apartment.

Gaston lived near the center of town, in a largish building that needed a new coat of paint. The garden had been left to grow wild and the security cameras were all cobwebbed; their dusty lenses glowed gold in the early autumn sunshine. The speaker phone squawked what I assumed to be ‘Come in’ and I walked through a lobby area that looked like it hadn’t seen any changes for the last 10 years. He called to me from the top of the stairs and I climbed up to a study that had two walls lined with books from top to bottom. In the corner stood a Vidi-screen. It was obvious that someone had been rifling through some personal archives.

“I’ve got some stuff for you. ~~Like some coffee?~~”

Do you want some coffee?”

I nodded. He handed me 3 boxes, each marked with the familiar X-COM logo, asked me how I took my coffee, and then left the room. I toyed with

the tapes, then caught sight of an old pistol lying on the desk. It must have been X-COM issue; high powered, semi-automatic, with a 12 round magazine.

“Woefully inaccurate,” he said as he came back into the room with two coffee mugs, “the only advantage was their speed of fire. Nothing like today’s weapons, of course.”

We sat down. He was not a man who could exchange pleasantries. He picked up one of the tapes.

“This is probably one of the few remaining original ^{records} ~~copies~~ of an X-COM mission from back in 2002. They sometimes shoulder-mounted cameras on one of the squad members to aid debriefing. I found these tapes yesterday and haven’t had a chance to view them yet. So if you’re interested...” He inserted the tape into the player.

“Okay, it’s on. Testing 1,2,3. Camera ready. Squad ready for checks.”

I could make out a 20-year-old Gaston. He wore a captain’s insignia and was calling out to a troop of 12 soldiers: four women and eight men. Everyone was checking their weapons and there was a great sense of purpose about the preparation. The camera swiveled right to reveal a Skyranger transport. It looked enormous – I’d seen pictures and, of course, the movies they made about the Alien War but, in the real light of a combat camera, it was truly daunting. The Skyranger was sitting in a giant hangar, engines firing occasionally, making the squad cough and splutter as they hauled equipment into the hold. It was difficult to make out what was being said in the echoing building but, at one point, the camera focused on a computer terminal that showed details of the mission, including a map that looked like Brazil. I guessed that Gaston was based in or close to South America.

After a brief cut, the action switched to inside the transport. Twelve soldiers sitting in rows. At the front, two were at the controls where an unbearably loud noise came from the engines. I noticed that several of the soldiers were inserting ear plugs or had put on ear defenders. Talk was impossible but they were still having animated conversation using hand signals.

“We all learned how to talk using our hands; you had to in those tin cans.” Gaston chipped in.

~~There wasn’t much more on that tape. Jake fast forwarded it until the Skyranger was landing. Lights were flashing and the squad had assumed crash positions.~~

"This was often the worst bit of the flight. Sometimes these things were hit by the 'bugs' and they flipped over and then all hell let loose!"

As we watched, the final moments of the landing, the tape ran out. Gaston got up and inserted another tape. The screen leapt into life.

"There! There! No, to your left. Fire, FIRE, FIRE!"

We were looking at blurred figures running through a dense jungle. This was obviously the next tape in the sequence. The camera was being thrown this way and that. Then, to the sound of a massive explosion, the camera man dropped to the ground. Ahead, he focused on a large pair of hobnailed boots. It was Gaston. As he turned around, I noticed his face was made up in patchwork camouflage.

"Three rounds auto fire, mark 80 degrees. Shoot, shoot, shoot. Li, come here with that cannon of yours...behind that tree. Clear it out for us."

The camera swiveled around to show the tree just before it disappeared in a dusty blast, followed by a hideous, wailing sound. I looked at Gaston for an explanation.

"Some of those bugs did that when they were hit - that screaming was unbearable and if you saw them writhing in agony, spreading green slime all over the place..."

The tape fluttered as though it was about to snap. Then I could just about see the alien craft, embedded in the soft earth with a line of broken tree branches showing the path it had taken. The whole area was drenched in an eerie green light with the occasional spark and flash from the UFO.

More screaming,

"There! Shoot... Kristoff, to you!"

The camera veered left - all I could see were bushes - then a red shaft of blinding light and a tall tree exploded right in front of the camera.

"Carlton's out, so's... hell -there it is"

This was Gaston's voice, still recognizable in the combat chaos. He stood up in front of the camera. A laser shaft scraped his left shoulder, but he was unmoved. He adjusted his rifle sights, then calmly squeezed the trigger. A shape about 50 meters ahead exploded, splattering the camera lens with what looked like blue mud.

"Gotcha! Trapper, come up here; we're going in. Throw some grenades across that entrance - form A2 - lock 3 GO! GO! GO!"

Three soldiers ran across in front of the camera as smoke grenades exploded in front of them. The tape then deteriorated until there was no image. Gaston fast forwarded.

“ That was a bad one. We were all hit bad as we went in. Joe was dead, but the camera on his shoulder was still running. I was wacked in the thigh and couldn’t stand.”

The tape image returned, pitched at a crazy angle. Gaston was sitting up against a smooth metal wall. He was breathing heavily but still had his eye to the sight of his rifle.

“There’s one behind that console, I can’t maneuver - I’m a dead man. At least backup squad might find this tape, if I can delay them long enough. There’s stifling black smoke coming from the control box and a hideous chattering from the bugs - here they come!”

The metal walls to either side of Gaston shredded in small blasts. The camera tilted over until it was at right angles to the action. I saw two long, willowy bodies with stubby arms heading towards Gaston and then... blank tape.

Jake stood up and turned off the tape player.

“Needless to say, I survived. I don’t know how. But I had to spend 24 hours in that disgusting craft - even today, after all those years, the thought of that rotting smell still makes me retch.”

We agreed that I would telephone the next day for another interview. But I never had the chance to meet with Jake Gaston again.

The phone was answered by someone else; in a cold official voice he told me that Gaston had gone away and would not be back for some time. I returned to the house, but found it empty.

Of course, a few weeks later the mystery was solved: I caught a glimpse of Gaston on a TV report about the new alien threat that had recently been announced. He was back in X-COM uniform, but at a much higher rank. He had been called back into the recommissioned force on to the strategic planning staff. Yesterday, he sent me more information on the new crisis which I’ve included in this file.

His story ends here... for the present.



The pictures that were released to the newspapers, confirming the existence of Alien craft in our skies. October 25, 1998.



X-COM: an unofficial history 1998 to 2010

Chapter One

THE EARLY DAYS

From the late 1990s, UFO activity began to increase over the Earth. Slowly at first, with sightings mostly over the larger continents, the Americas, Africa and Asia.

Other unexplained phenomena also increased in occurrence; for example, corn circles appeared across the globe for a time, then disappearances – adults and children would vanish for weeks on end and then reappear oblivious to where they had been, telling tales of alien abduction. This was followed by extreme individual character changes, people from every country became psychologically unbalanced, leading, very often, to insanity and occasionally homicidal tendencies.

The media splashed out stories such as “we are not alone” featuring unclear photographs of UFOs. Headlines such as “Mind melting aliens plan to take over the world,” and “My Alien Lover” or “My mother was an alien!” filled the tabloid press. Eventually, the hysteria died down and people forgot about the aliens, as governments imposed an information blackout.

In 1998, UFOs began to land regularly in various under-populated locations. Simultaneously, the number of alien abductions increased and the security committee of the United Nations stepped in.

Experts attempted to communicate with the aliens but there was no noticeable response and the attacks continued. The aliens steered clear of a confrontation with the military forces until November 11, 1998 when a military patrol was wiped out, after finding a landed UFO in the Ukraine. Later that month, the world’s political leaders met at the UN to discuss the worsening situation.

In this meeting, it was revealed that over the previous 6 months in excess of 200 confirmed and filmed sightings, 90 documented landings and over 30 hostile contacts had occurred with aliens. After much debate, the decision was made to establish and fund an independent multinational force to combat, investigate and defeat the alien threat. This elite organization would be equipped with the world’s finest pilots, soldiers, scientists and engineers, working together as one multinational force.

This Organization was named the Extraterrestrial Combat Unit or **X-COM**.

The people selected for X-COM were the top in their fields: scientists, engineers, technicians, soldiers, strategic advisors and astro-physics experts.

The organization was formed to combat a life-form which was extremely advanced and possessed technology far superior to ours, combined (it appeared) with an intense desire to annihilate the human race.

X-COM was to be funded by the most powerful nations of the world. This was a threat to the existence of the entire human race. X-COM members however, stipulated that all funding was subject to monthly review and audit- this was a cumbersome process but the individual governments had to justify expenditure to their own military.

The Daily Globe

JANUARY 13, 1999

UN LOOKS INTO USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AGAINST ALIENS

In the 1990s nuclear missile production was scaled down and many arsenals were scrapped, thus getting rid of nuclear weapons that we now could have used against the alien invasion. It has been proposed that some of the hundreds of thousands of missiles that had been dismantled could be salvaged and used to destroy UFOs as they enter our planet's atmosphere. A United Nations committee will meet later this

week to discuss the viability of reconstructing 10,000 of the Class 'B' cruise missiles partially dismantled several years ago.

Evan Wittaker, a spokesperson from the world's largest environmentalist group New Green World, stated yesterday that the use of such weapons would cause catastrophic destruction to the planet. "What good was a solution that left us without a habitable planet?"

CENSORED

Economic Digest May 12, 2003

X-COM receives largest ever budget

X-COM, Inc. finance chiefs left Brussels last night after 10 days of negotiations for the amount of funds the organization will be given to aid the combat against the aliens over the next year. The hundred strong financial committee have raised the previous year's budget by more than 20 percent. Illya Dwoskin, X-COM finance chief stated that "no sum is too high to safeguard our planet." In a joint statement, at the end of the meeting, all of the countries involved in the X-COM project agreed they would continue to give their full support to the world's primary defense organization.

CENSORED

TOP SECRET AND CONFIDENTIAL



X-COM, Inc. Report 23 July 2037

A NEW THREAT?

Sub-surface disturbances have been monitored under most of the world's oceans. The readings, which were published in a report from the United Nations Research Laboratory yesterday, represent 9 months of research. The report indicates that undersea disturbances have been increasing at an incredible rate. It has been concluded that the disturbances are not natural phenomena but appear to be deliberately triggered. This activity has been linked with unconfirmed sea-based UFO sightings. X-COM, Inc. has been asked to investigate six of the main sites to try to pinpoint the cause of these mysteries.

Sept 12, 2001, from 'Strange World'
- the journal for X-COM operatives

Victory!

Recent Victory Reports

June 7, 2005

A terror zone was cleared of aliens yesterday following a 12-hour battle between the invaders and an eight strong X-COM squad.

There were seven civilian casualties and X-COM lost two soldiers. Thirteen aliens have been destroyed. Yet another successful mission for the X-COM team.

The First Alien Base Discovered

An alien base nearly a mile in diameter was discovered yesterday, camouflaged underneath trees in the rain forests of South America. It was spotted by an *Interceptor* on a reconnaissance flight when it inadvertently flew over the base and was fired upon. The craft was hit several times but made it safely back to X-COM headquarters.

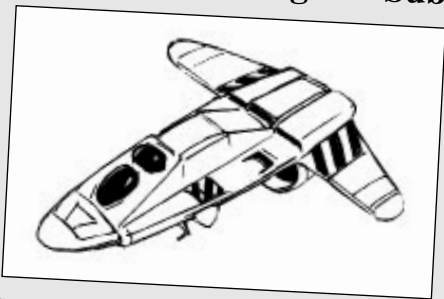
From the footage that the *Interceptor's* on board camera took on its flyby, it is estimated that the base has been complete and operational for some time and could contain up to one thousand aliens.

The Trove Museum Opens

Feb 6, 2010

London celebrated the opening of The Trove Museum today (sponsored by Zippi-Cola). It contains the world's largest collection of 'genuine' Alien Artifacts and fills nearly 2 square miles of redundant office buildings. It is expected to make over £6,000,000 profit in its first year alone. Included in the displays are two complete UFOs, intact apart from their drive systems. In addition, there are numerous weapons, photos, and wax models of aliens, plus two cinemas showing footage of UFO landings and previously restricted X-COM confrontations. There are also three huge film sets complete with animated aliens and X-COM members depicting historically accurate battle scenes.

The Barracuda Fighter Sub



The *Barracuda Fighter* is a derivative of the *Sword-Fish*, *Storm*, *Titan* and *Merm Class* Fighters.

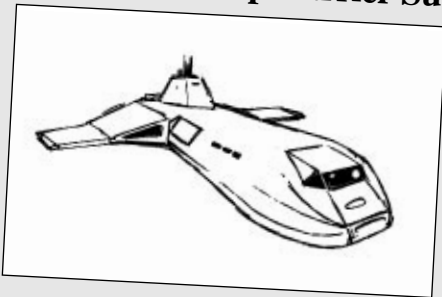
Four years in development, the *Barracuda* was designed by British Hydrospace to replace all four of these classes by taking all their advantages and eradicating the disadvantages. The *Barracuda* is faster, lighter and more maneuverable than any of its predecessors.

Originally designed for use in defending mining platforms across the globe.

Every effort has been made in designing the *Barracuda* so it can be easily upgraded, able to use any future weapons or navigation systems. The *Barracuda* at present boasts the new QW-T22 Laser Guided Navigation System enabling the craft to travel through unmapped terrain at high speed (impossible if attempted by the pilot manually). The system scans an area 300 meters in front of the craft, electronically creating an image of the landscape and plotting the safest route, all in less than a tenth of a second. The QW-T22 system is also a comprehensive defensive system, able to track other subs and homing torpedoes and can automatically avoid them with Random Evasive Maneuvers (REMs).

Measuring an impressive 75 ft with a displacement of 150 tons, the *Barracuda* is able to surface fly, or dive to 12,000 ft at 150 kts; making it by far the most superior fighter sub available.

The Triton Troop Carrier Sub



The *Triton Class Troop Carrier Sub* is the first of a new generation of carrier subs capable of limited flight.

Launched by Sub Am, the £32 million *Triton* is a multi-purpose armored carrier, derived from the *Fury Class Troop Carrier* first put in service in 2036. The *Triton* is capable of carrying a full squad, plus a Coelacanth SWS half way around the globe before needing to refuel.

Powered by a Fusion Nuclear, Dual Ducted Hyper/Aqua Drive, the *Triton* is capable of 110 kts submerged, accelerating to 200 kts to break the surface and propel the sub above the sea for short sustained flight. The farthest recorded flight of a *Triton* from a Standard Surface Exit is 500 miles. Sub Am is continuing work on the *Triton* to extend this distance to in excess of 1000 miles.

Because of the nature of the *Triton's* primary task as a Carrier, the sub is unarmed, although it has a 90 cm thick, triple-armor-plated, Lithium-coated body skin making the sub impervious to most weapons, even a direct hit from an Ajax or Fusion Head Torpedo.

interesting!!

An Exclusive Presentation

Sponsored by



trove museum

The Trove Museum, London

**ALIEN CRAFT,
ARTIFACTS,
AND WEAPONS**

Come Visit The Trove

Bring your family to see the ultimate
exhibition: authentic ALIEN artifacts,
UFOs, and live action sets

Do you know how we defeated the Aliens?
Find out at **The Trove Museum.**

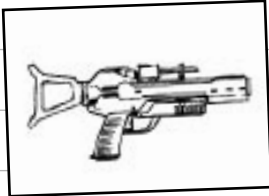
Weapons Manual Extract

WEAPON SYSTEMS



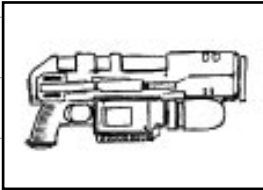
Dart Gun

The Dart gun is a small, accurate, high-powered unit with a 10 hollow dart ammo clip. The darts are fired by a gas cartridge in the ammo pod.



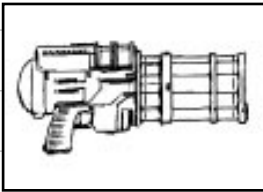
Jet Harpoon

This aqua-rifle is accurate and powerful, firing hollow steel harpoons from sealed packs of 10, each harpoon has its own gas reservoir.



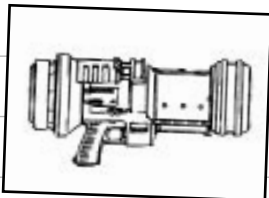
Gas Cannon

The Heavyweight of the gas technology family, this cannon fires solid bolts, some with HE or phosphor tips. A favorite weapon amongst experienced aquanauts.



Hydro-Jet Cannon

Hydro-Jet cannons are a heavy infantry weapon system. The cannon fires magnesium-fuelled mini-torpedoes. Although powerful, the Hydro-Jet Cannon is a clumsy and an unwieldy device.

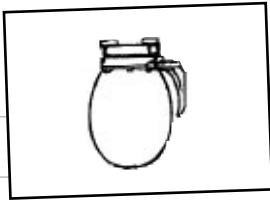


Torpedo Launcher

A real heavyweight, this launcher fires three types of torpedo, each with its own propulsion unit. A devastating weapon, with only manual loading being its drawback. Ammunition types available include large or small high-explosive and phosphor-tipped torpedoes.

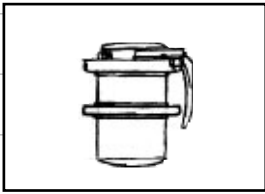
7/5 2039 These are being bought in quantities.

Why? JG



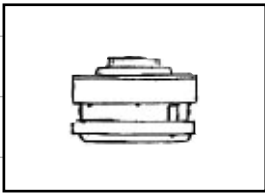
Magna-Blast Grenade

This standard issue grenade has an accurate and sophisticated timer for precision control.



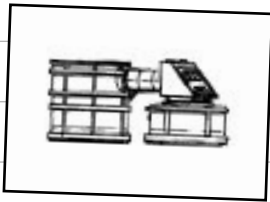
Dye Grenade

Dye grenades are dual role items, useful for providing cover in exposed situations. Functioning in both water and on land, the dye is ejected as a particle cloud, producing an octopus-like ink spray in water or dense airborne cloud on land.



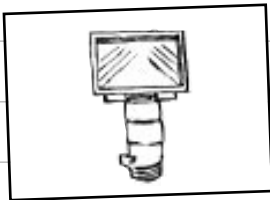
Particle Disturbance Grenade

A proximity grenade can be thrown like an ordinary grenade but is triggered by nearby movement after it lands. Skill and training are required to use these devices properly.



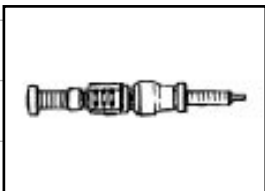
Magna-Pack Explosive

This explosive should only be used for demolition purposes. However, past experience has shown that these powerful explosive packs are ideal for rooting out Aliens. The blast radius is large so ensure a safe distance before detonation.



Particle Disturbance Sensor

This new device uses a variety of detectors and advanced computer systems to identify moving enemy units. The blips show units which have moved recently. Large units, or fast-moving units, will produce larger blips. Static units will not register on the scanner.



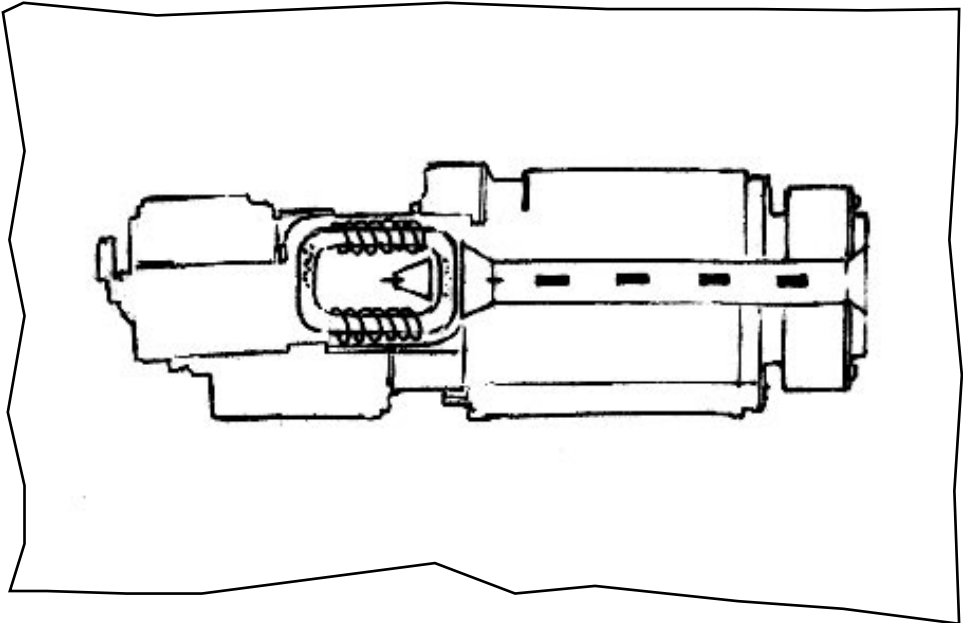
Thermal Tazer

This device can only be used in close combat, when used it will stun a living organism without killing it.

APRIL 6, 2040

NEW TECHNOLOGY

The Gauss Technology System



Scientists have been researching a new technology called Gauss for several years now; developed from plasma technology, Gauss was discovered during the alien war. The research is now complete and final testing is about to commence. Gauss technology is a new weapons system that

uses an accelerated particle stream, drawing on a dense matter fuel source. Gauss weaponry can be accurately fired on land or underwater. There are plans for Gauss Pistols, Rifles and Heavy Gauss Weapons, and modifications to retrofit the new weapons system to the Coelacanth Tanks.

Basic Combat Tactics

An introductory lecture by Russ 'D-Day' Sharp
- Commander X-COM 1999 - 2003

I left the Armed Forces late 1999, having commanded the United Nations Covert Tactics division for 11 years. I was therefore well qualified to head tactical planning and training for the X-COM organization. I have had vast experience as an alien fighter and I believe these are points you must bear in mind during your X-COM days.

The Aliens we face are highly intelligent life forms; unpredictable and equipped with extremely advanced technology. They are fast to learn our combat techniques and relay information very quickly to each other. To combat them effectively, you must follow covert tactical techniques to the letter. Other courses will expand on these points.

The ratio of aliens to soldiers in a single crash site investigating squad will mean that we are often outnumbered, so use your weapons array efficiently and always keep an eye out for surprise flank and rear attacks. Always expect the unexpected. If your squad has cleared an area once, don't think you can cross it again without cover. We lost a lot of good soldiers in the first few months of the war in this way. A favorite alien trick is to follow an X-COM squad as they carry out a search, then to enter a 'searched' area and wait for an unsuspecting rookie to happen by. Don't be that rookie!

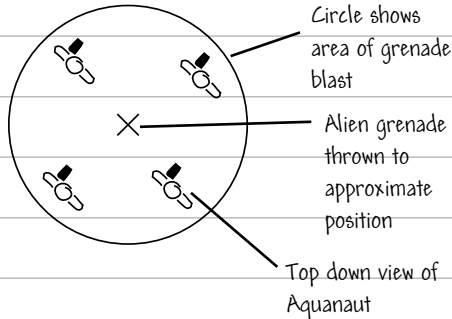
The main problem that X-COM has is that there are very few experienced alien-fighters, and the squads are for the main part made up of rookies. On average, X-COM will have one experienced officer for every five rookies.

The formation of a squad is critical when advancing on, or searching, an alien site. Entering a hostile area in a bad formation could cost you your life or jeopardize the whole mission.

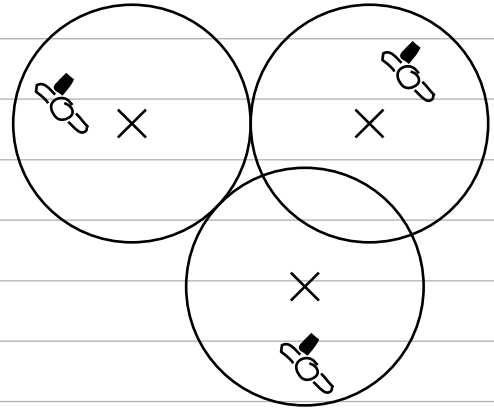
All members of the squad must remain at well-spaced intervals; never let yourselves bunch together. If an alien has a motion detector or scanner, and becomes aware of a large squad near by, it is likely to launch a rocket or throw a grenade into the middle of your group.

As always, when you come across one of these creatures, one mistake is all it takes. You'll never have the chance to make another!

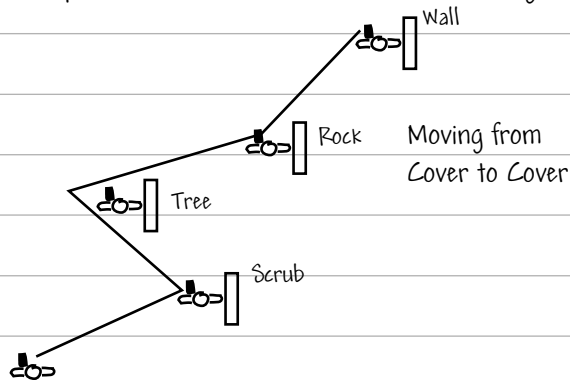
BAD FORMATION



GOOD FORMATION

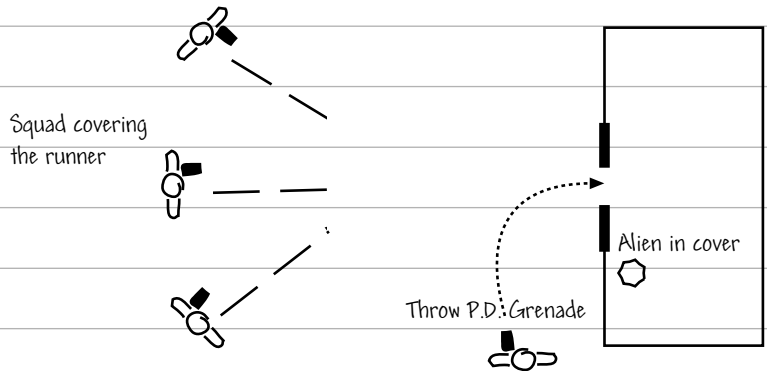
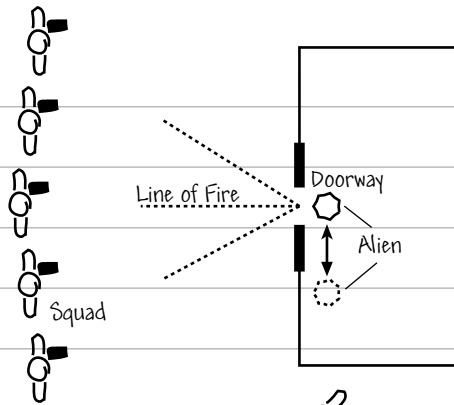


When searching an alien-controlled area, be it a craft or a landing-site, move in groups of three or more. The best shot of the three should remain at the rear of the group. The others advance a short distance in front of the marksman (spaced out), who will give them cover at all times. This formation will minimize the risk of losing any members of your squad and increase the area covered in a single combat sweep.



Never overload yourself on missions. You probably won't use more than one weapon. Carrying too many weapons can tire you and slow you down. In a hostile situation, being slow can cost you your life. Carry no more than one medium/long-range weapon, a medi-kit, and a few grenades or substitute weapons of about the same weight. Any more would prove cumbersome and affect your mobility when it really matters.

A squad should never risk having its members shot when leaving the transport. Always fire a dye grenade just outside the doors. This will prevent any alien in the surrounding landing zone having an easy shot. Once out, move in a staggered formation away from the craft as quickly as possible.



Use everything at your disposal as cover; the aliens certainly will. If possible, move from cover to cover. If an alien is taking pot shots at your squad and then returning to cover, you will need to flush him out as quickly as possible. Space out all but one of your squad and line them up facing the sniper's position. This line will cover your runner. Equip the runner with a Particle Disturbance Grenade, and provide cover as he runs in close. The Grenade is thrown close to where the alien was last seen. Clear the area of your troops. As soon as the alien appears, he and any other alien standing near him will be killed. Your squad should use all the equipment available to them, particularly the latest technology. To reduce the risk to soldiers, use a tank for searching areas that you consider risky: especially caves or darkened areas. Remember that the aliens may well be above you, so tread carefully.

The quickest way to clear an area is to split your squad into two groups of four. Send a tank out first from the transporter. After the tank has cleared any aliens from the surrounding area, the squad will be able to leave safely. On leaving the transporter, send out the two, four-man, out with the tank in between them to provide cover. Sweep the area methodically, eliminating any aliens you may uncover.



**It's the taste that
astounds AND refreshes!**

Orbit Editions®

presents

THE UFOPAEDIA

*'Everything you've
always wanted to know
about Aliens but were
terrified to ask'*



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF VETERAN X-COM COMMANDER TIMOTHY 'SLUGGER' CHARLES.

"The first time you set off on an intercept mission is the most frightening experience of your life. I know mine was. It was 3 months ago. I remember leaving the briefing room, confident from the months of training and itching for a piece of the action. It never occurred to me that it would be so different, fighting another life-form I mean. We left our base at 5:15 am on Wednesday, June 20, 2040. A Barracuda Interceptor had just knocked down an Alien craft in the Middle America Trench. It took us nearly an hour to get to the crash site.

As we closed in, we made contact with the Barracuda. They reported that there had been no movement from the craft and all crew were presumed dead. The Alien craft was smashed to pieces; we thought nothing could have survived that impact. We were wrong!

The pilot circled the wreckage twice before bringing our Triton to rest approximately 150 meters from the UFO's stern. Final checks completed and the port door of the sub opened. Our captain fired a dye grenade and as it exploded, we all leapt from the sub. We split into two squads of four men. The other squad moved away from the sub towards the alien craft. My group was left under the Triton's wing, scanning the area for movement and covering the other four.

Everything was going smoothly until the other squad got within 10 meters of the craft. Suddenly, three shapes appeared on the ridge overlooking the craft.

We all yelled to the other group and fired on the three aliens, but there was nothing we could do. A grenade landed in the midst of the group, taking out two of the men instantly; a third, Kelson, fell to the ground screaming. A second later, the aliens opened fire on the group. The Squad leader was blasted twice, square in the back; a couple more blasts struck the injured Kelson. Then our headsets fell silent. When the murky water had cleared, four squad members lay motionless in front of the Alien craft and the figures had disappeared from the ridge.

Besides the captain, the remaining three of us were rookies, and this was our first mission. Our captain had no choice, he had to abort. Loading a Torpedo Launcher, he ordered us back into the sub.

No one said anything on the way back to base. No one wanted to talk. We had lost four men. We had been outclassed, outmaneuvered and outgunned.

I've completed 30 missions now and lead my own squad. The ratio of successful missions to failures is still about 60 to 40, but we're keeping them on the run."

Timothy Charles failed to return from an X-COM mission last week. We have published this transcript as a tribute to him.

Sorry to miss our final interview - here's some more information on the new alien crisis. JG

The Medical Journal

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Wolf J. Kirken – Chief Medic X-COM

X-COM soldiers tend to suffer from PTSD in higher numbers than any other combat unit ever recorded. The levels of stress suffered by the squads cannot be compared to any other war in history. PTSD can hit anyone, at any time and without warning. No one is impervious to the effects of intense stress. X-COM has opened a clinic for all X-COM members to attend for a minimum of 6 weeks following decommission from active squad duties. During these 6 weeks, each and every member undergoes rigorous physical and mental tests to check whether he or she is showing signs of PTSD or is at risk in the future.

By opening this specialist medical unit, X-COM hopes to safeguard the lives of long-serving members after they leave the organization.

Kathy and Bertie, W. Scotland June 2009



This photo was in with the other documents Jake sent



Alpha Squad - Vladivostock

Name: Henri Buchard
Call Sign: 'Hook'
Rank: Able Seaman
Missions: 18
Rating: 55.987%



Name: Rene Gaudin
Call Sign: 'Rascal'
Rank: Able Seaman
Missions: 15
Rating: 77.125%



Name: Boris Grosnitsch
Call Sign: 'Catcher'
Rank: Lieutenant
Missions: 21
Rating: 43.022%



Name: Maria Sanchez
Call Sign: 'Trapper'
Rank: Lieutenant
Missions: 19
Rating: 91.991%



*The best
squad I've ever
commanded!
JG*

<Promotion & Bonus>

Name: Ivan Yvtechenko
Call Sign: 'Gunner'
Rank: Commander
Missions: 28
Rating: 53.987%



Name: Christos Panayis
Call Sign: 'Cutter'
Rank: Able Seaman
Missions: 22
Rating: 26.221%



Name: Sigourney Williams
Call Sign: 'Silk'
Rank: Ensign
Missions: 1
Rating: 2.999%



Name: Claude Gaudin
Call Sign: 'Sharkie'
Rank: Ensign
Missions: 14
Rating: 33.324%



Name: Leon Drovkin
Call Sign: 'Pirate'
Rank: Captain
Missions: 30
Rating: 83.332%



Name: Spencer McNeill
Call Sign: 'Stingray'
Rank: Ensign
Missions: 9
Rating: 189.774%



<Promotion & Bonus>

INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY IS 65 MILLION YEARS OLD!

The much hyped ‘information superhighway’ of the 1990s was hailed as a quantum leap forward in the evolution of communication for mankind. It promised unlimited benefits, enabling anyone, anywhere on the planet to link up with others and access sources of information from all points on the globe. Unfortunately, something got there before us.

Research carried out by the US arm of the International Scientific and Oceanic Alien Cultural Studies Group has revealed the existence of an infinitely superior communications network, which operated from at least the late Cretaceous period – the tail-end of the dinosaur age. Initial skepticism at the disclosure has given way to hushed awe after the discovery of key communication sites (at officially classified locations) believed to include the Mariana Trench, Easter Island, and the North Pole. Experts say that this Alien information exchange was probably administered from a central complex on the site of what is believed to be the famous city of Atlantis.

Divers from the Aquatic Artifacts Institute discovered curious, as yet unexplained devices – not unlike computer ‘modems’ of today – embedded beneath centuries of silt. The devices themselves appear to have suffered no harmful corrosive effects from languishing in salt water for millions of years.

The most disturbing aspect of these finds, however, is that, according to one source, the devices are still very much ‘on-line.’ An experienced diver attempting to wrest one such machine from the ocean floor apparently set off an ancient yet sophisticated aqua-alarm, and suffered the consequences of a high-pressure shock grenade. In addition, scientists have also detected intense electromagnetic activity around certain major sites.

Professor Helming, author of *Aliens – Friends You Just Haven’t Met Yet* commented,

“This is quite simply one of the greatest discoveries of the millennium! At last we have the opportunity to peel away the mask and finally see what made them tick! To understand the thoughts and feelings of an ancient, alien life-form! The information stored in these devices could even provide us with invaluable details about our own evolution!

“This vast, all-pervasive global communications network predates our own information superhighway by at least 65 million years – we hadn’t even crawled out of the water! My colleagues and I at the Cultural Studies Group believe it was used to enable the transfer of information, as well as to coordinate massive logistical operations like population movements or transport of building materials.”

Professor Helming continued: “How else, for instance, can we explain evidence of the mysterious migration patterns of prehistoric animals during that period? It wasn’t just a search for food in the light of unexplained climactic changes. Changes which, I may add, occurred at the same time as the crash landing of an enormous ten kilometer wide ‘meteorite’ in the Gulf of Mexico. My theory is that the meteorite was nothing less than an interstellar spaceship. A crash-landing on this scale would scatter material for thousands of miles, so a vast communication system would be essential in order to reclaim that material and protect it against predators.

“Our research suggests that this massive information superhighway was used to coordinate the herding of the dinosaurs to their watery graves. The reason? Initially to provide food, and then later, to concentrate a prolific supply of organic material for genetic experimentation. This begs the question, of course – if they could achieve all of this 65 million years ago, what could they do now?”

Professor Helming is 83.

ONE MINUTE INSIDE THE MIND OF AN X-COM SOLDIER

The soldier's state of mind immediately prior to combat is crucial to the success of a mission. Through the micro-miracle of nano-technology scientists have created a machine, atom by atom, made from versatile carbon "buckytube" structures, which is implanted into the brain of the soldier. From the safety of their X-COM laboratory, scientists can then monitor the sensory self-induced stimulation of that soldier. The purpose: to learn more about the stress patterns of troops immediately prior to combat, in order to improve their efficiency in the face of alien onslaught.

The unedited transcript of Rookie X:

"I'm ready. It's them or me.

Find them first, before they find me.

Remember: 'Check Six' – If I don't check the 6 o'clock zone behind me I'm as good as dead. Check Six.

Grenades, phosphor – check.

Grenades, dye – check.

Harpoon – check.

Gauss pistol – check.

Medi-kit – check.

Squaddie Collins looks confident – he's bluffing! He's as scared as I am. Mind you, his brother was injured in an alien counterattack last week – perhaps he wants revenge. He hasn't said much about it, but I can tell. It's more than just killing an alien – he has that glint in his eye.

I hope I've left enough food for Caesar.

What does an Alien actually look like from 6 feet away? They've shown me the

photos, explained its state of mind, the percentage chance of x response to y input.

But what will it do in the face of an ultrasonic wave grenade? Probably blow up.

30 seconds.

How will I react?

Will I be able to see its eyes? Does it have any feelings?

Collins is looking at me like he knows my thoughts. Was that a smile?

Body's seizing up – just like they said it would.

Adrenaline increase, flight response. Damn it! There's nowhere to go.

My nose itches.

20 seconds.

I can't do it, I can't do it!

Get a grip.

What have I just spent 6 months training for?

If I panic now, I've lost before I've begun.

We're going in together. Together. Safety in numbers.

I could do with a drink.

10 seconds.

Deep breaths.

One aim.

One aim.

One aim.

One aim.

Damn!

...Caesar.

Sympathetic attachment to dog 'Caesar' and lack of single-minded attention to the objectives of the mission no doubt led to this subject's demise. Prior to battle we need to eliminate all thoughts of an emotional nature and focus entirely on the mission. More frequent meditation classes and training should have left no doubts about encounters with Alien life forms, and no concern about their feelings. Kill the Alien first, don't ask it how it is!

For countless centuries man has battled to tame the world's mighty oceans. But the sea is a mercurial and unpredictable adversary, just like the alien menace. Together, their unnatural and formidable alliance has led to some of the most infamous maritime 'incidents' of this century. *Strange World* spoke to Alien Cultural Historian and author of *The History of Alien Maritime Disasters*, Professor Anthony Havers, about one of them.

Strange World: So, if I can begin Professor by asking what you consider to be the most infamous alien-maritime incident?

Havers: Well yes, of course, the most infamous example remains to this day the sinking of the so-called "Unsinkable."

Strange World: The *Titanic*?

Havers: Yes, young man. Of course her secrets have, until very recently, been known only to the inky-black deep and the fishes swimming around her – and, as I shall explain, some other dark witnesses.

Strange World: So when did the *Titanic* -

Havers: Right, now let me just set the

AUTHOR INTERVIEW

The History of Alien Maritime Disasters

by Prof A. Havers

Published by Sharp & Lucas®

£99.99

scene for you. The "Unsinkable" was quite simply a plaything for the very rich – designed not so much for swift passage across the Atlantic as for pure luxury. No expense was spared to pander to the excesses of its rich clientele. There were palm verandas, a Turkish bath, gymnasium, barber shop, and the first ever swimming pool aboard a ship. The haute cuisine was quite exquisite – did you know, young man, that this ship boasted 1000 oyster forks, 2000 wine glasses –

Strange World: But the first sign of alien -

Havers: 36,000 oranges, 7,000 lettuces – I could go on. So you see, on board the

Continued....

Titanic we have everything money could buy. Except safety. The *Titanic* left Southampton at noon on 10 April 1912 – her first and last voyage. On the evening of the eleventh, the “Unsinkable” had 1316 passengers and a crew of 891. Now – here is the interesting part –

Strange World: The recorder is still running, Professor –

Havers: Several ships in the area reported icebergs. Some reports must have reached the *Titanic*, but the crew took no special precautions. In fact, they steamed ahead at full speed! Why in heaven’s name did they do that, you ask? Speculation persists to this day. Until now. It was 10 P.M.; the sea was calm. There were plenty of stars but no moon. Frederick Fleet was on watch and he did his duty as best he could. He rang three bells and was asked what he saw. “Iceberg dead ahead!” is the famous, oft-quoted reply. Unfortunately, he has been misquoted for very many years. It is my firm belief that he said “Strange craft dead ahead!” but the crew were so surprised that they chose unconsciously and, not surprisingly, to mishear him.

It was too late to take evasive action and the ship was holed below the water by what was later described as a massive iceberg. Nothing of the sort, of course. Captain Smith requested a damage report. He was told that the ship would sink in 2 hours. The very last call for assistance was “The engine is full up to the boilers...” Again, a slight misquote. The last call was, in fact, “The engine is full up to the boilers – with hideous creatures!” Preposterous, I hear you say. But hear me out, young man.

On board the ship was a certain J. Bruce Ismay, who exerted a strong influence on

the crew of the ship. For some reason, Captain Smith seemed to relinquish his role in the face of subtle persuasion from Mr. Ismay – the precautionary measures that could have been taken to avoid collision with the iceberg were not taken. And so, on that fateful night the “Unsinkable” sank. Holed not by an iceberg, but by something else altogether more powerful, beyond human imagination.

Strange World: And what was that?

Havers: Well it is quite obvious, really. Aliens. I suppose you could say that this particular group were playing cosmic pirates. The *Titanic* contained innumerable artifacts and treasures that could be utilized by the creatures of the deep, and they were prepared to do anything to get them. Mr. Ismay was an accomplice in the whole affair, and to be quite frank, young man, not of this earth.

Strange World: A doppelganger? I’ve heard rumors that –

Havers: Yes, yes – it was through his influence that the *Titanic* sped to her demise. Captain Smith was powerless. The iceberg itself was an elaborate illusion camouflaging the deadly firepower of alien technology. The *Titanic* was plundered of her riches and her sinking used to humiliate the human race. To the aliens, you see, nothing made by humankind is ever “unsinkable.”

Strange World: You make this all sound so convincing, Professor, but –

Havers: And, as you know, there were many other famous marine incidents – all just part of a process of wearing down the resolve of the human species. The Bermuda Triangle was another nice little case in point. The Hallucinoids are particularly proud of that one.

SHOOTING DOWN

Transcribed dialogue from an interceptor mission

August 2003.

*** ** - represents garbled interference

“Interceptor Two to Base One Alpha come in,
Interceptor two to Base One Alpha come in please, over.

“We are flying low, 500 feet above the Dead Sea.
Intercepted a medi*** ** ized UFO. It was heavily
armed. We have lost port engine and starboard is ***
*** maged. We are going down and need assistance.”

“Read you Interceptor Two, Interceptors One and Four
are en route to your coordinates; when you land, arm
the distress beacon and move to safe distance, Over.”

“Understood Base Alp*** ** (two explosions) *** **
Jeez, they’re still on our tail*** ** we’re in trouble, do
you read, navigation systems gone, all power gone,
we’re going down.*** (single explosion) ***

END OF TRANSMISSION

The remains of Interceptor Two were found floating on
the surface of the Dead Sea 40 minutes later.

All crew unaccounted for.

Deep Breathing

Deep breathing 'Oxygene™' was first developed by the US Navy in the early 1990s for their deep sea divers. It allowed them to dive to depths greater than 6,000 feet without carrying heavy pressure apparatus. The Oxygene™ is inhaled deep into the lungs and then breathed as if it were air; normal breathing continues to circulate the liquid in and out of the lungs. Not only does having this liquid in the lungs remove the need for breathing apparatus, but it also prevents the need for huge plated diving suits. The intense pressure of great depths can only harm a diver when a fragile yet vital system, i.e., air-filled lungs, cannot withstand the

strain. When a diver's lungs and airways are filled with liquid, they cannot give way. However, the liquid currently used causes convulsions in two out of ten divers and there are traces of cancer cell growth in lab tests. Testing on volunteers has been halted until more research can be completed.

Berserk – What's it mean in combat? by psychologists at Kuril Trench Alpha

The Berserk Psychosis was first witnessed in the Vietnam War of the 1970s. It can affect any marine in any situation of extreme pressure or intense anxiety. In past cases, it has affected aquanauts when under heavy enemy fire, especially when one or more of the squad has already fallen. The aquanaut's

emotions, for whatever reason, reach such a level that he or she mentally loses control of the situation. Often the affected person sees anything or anyone as a threat. When this happens to an X-COM aquanaut, one of the world's best-trained, the result can be catastrophic, often leading to the deaths of other squad members.

From now on, the vetting technique for selecting viable X-COM members will include several high-stress/anxiety tests in an attempt to filter out candidates likely to be susceptible to the Berserk Psychosis.

STRANDED IN AN ALIEN TERROR SITE

Transcribed from a voice journal by 2nd Lieutenant Kato Koto, an X-COM trooper, last duty: Paris Terror Site June 2, 2001.

June 2 3:00 hours

I'm alone now. My ship blasted off nearly 2 hours ago. I missed the rendezvous window by 10 minutes and have already primed my distress beacon. We were outnumbered by more than 50 to 1. I believe only two of the away team made it back to the Skyranger. From where I'm sitting, I can see half the city burning. They've really hit the city hard. Bodies are lying all over the place. I haven't found anyone alive yet. But I'll keep looking until the rescue craft arrives; I hope that'll be in about two hours.

June 2 6:00 hours

There's been no sign of a rescue craft so far and I still can't raise anything but garbage on my radio. Maybe the Aliens are using some sort of jamming device.

I still haven't found anyone human alive. Came across a group of six aliens examining a burnt out bus. I threw a grenade taking five of them out and shot the last as it ran away. I'll continue to search the streets until the craft arrives and return to the rendezvous coordinates on the hour, every hour, from now on.

June 2 13:00 hours

Still no sign of the rescue craft. I am beginning to wonder if the aliens are jamming the signal from the beacon, as well as my intercom. I have, however, found a group of people. I was walking down a side street when a young girl called to me. She took me through the ruins of some buildings and there they were: About a hundred people hiding in the basement of a collapsed office building. Some are injured but most are just scared. I've tried to reassure them by telling them there will be some more combat craft here soon. But from where we hide, I can hear the explosions getting louder. The aliens are getting closer and will be here soon. I will stay here now and try to help, but I think it will soon be over."

The body of Kato Koto was never found. By the time the backup craft arrived ,the aliens had gone.

<End of transcription>

The following document is part of the X-COM commanders' training course that Jake Gaston attended in September 2000. It refers to tactical solutions in a battle situation with Alien forces. In the Alien War, there were few pitched battles and a lot of this information is obviously sourced from traditional officer training material. Jake Gaston has commented that in the early days of X-COM "no one really knew what they were doing and who the enemy was, and how they were to deal with the aliens."

TACTICAL SOLUTIONS

An X-COM Commander's Training Course Notes

The Problems of Attack you get attacked!

When coming into contact with the enemy Aliens in battle, an X-COM field commander, having had sufficient information from reconnaissance sources, must review his strategic situation and decide to either:

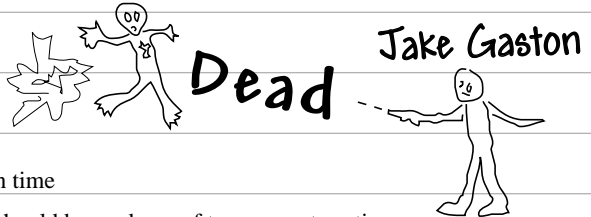
a. Attack the Aliens

or

b. Wait to be attacked

or

c. Avoid any attack in order to gain time



If option (a) is chosen, the Attack should be made up of two separate actions:

1. An attack along the whole, or portions of, his position to: pin the Alien force to the ground; wear down his power of resistance; prevent him from reinforcing a point he considers likely for a decisive attack.

2. A Decisive Attack against a selected part of his position.

Note that in attack 1, if an opportunity arises to push home an attack, the Commander should agree to a Local Assault.

Note that in attack 2, the Decisive Attack should be carried out either by:

i. A force detailed for that purpose by the Commander and in a direction specified when the Plan of Battle has been decided and orders issued.

or

ii. A large group of Reserves that stays with the Commander until the Attack has been developed. After a period of fighting, the Commander might discover a suitable objective for the Decisive Attack or might be able to exploit any defensive mistakes by the Aliens.



THE ATTACK PLAN

First Stage

Select which portion or portions of the Alien position the Fire Attack or Attacks are to be used against.

The objective of these attacks is:

1. To pin down the Aliens, prevent them reinforcing the point against which the Decisive Attack will be directed, and force them to use up any Reserves.
2. To reduce Alien powers of resistance, particularly at the point designated for the Decisive Attack.
3. If the opportunity arises, to pursue a Local Assault to weaken the Aliens' hold on the position or cause them to fall back along the whole line.

It's obvious that it's better to attack across a wider line, ideally across the whole enemy line and encompass one or both flanks. But remember that the attack must be made in sufficient strength, and that this will limit the extent of the front against which the front can be developed.

Note: If an attack is to be of any use, it must be carried out with a strong purpose. No half-hearted measures will succeed.

Second Stage

Select the point against which the Decisive Attack should be pressed.

The point against which the Decisive Attack is to be directed should:

1. Be that section of the Alien position where success will give the greatest results. Usually, this tends to be one of the enemy flanks; attacking an enemy flank threatens his line of retreat and the strength of his front might be compromised.
2. Be that section against which it is potentially possible to concentrate the power of Heavy Weapons or Artillery in the form of converging or enfilading (line-on) fire.
3. Be that section that is easily accessible to Ground Troops and where their forward movement will be concealed using natural cover.

Note: In the event that no section of the enemy position meets these requirements, the Commander will have to decide between conflicting choices. Commanders should give preference to point 2 (above) in this case.

Third Stage

Select the units from the total force that are to:

1. Press on the Attack or Fire Attack.

2. Press on the Decisive Attack.

3. Be part of General Reserve.

Note: Commanders must specify the actual limits for each attacking body of troops and decide upon the division of each unit into Firing Line, Supports and Local Reserves.

Ideally, the Commander must decide what troops are needed for the Decisive Attack and then use the rest to carry out the Fire Attack on part or parts of the enemy's front.

Fourth Stage

Select positions for any Heavy Weapons or Artillery (if available). If in an exposed position, detail an Escort for these units.

First we must identify the purposes of artillery:

Killers!

1. At the beginning of an Attack -

While the ground troops are deploying or developing the attack, a small proportion of heavy weapons units must direct fire at the most important target. The remainder must stay in readiness to come into action without delay.

2. As the Ground Troops advance -

More support is needed at this stage, so more units will be brought into action and open fire against that section that is opposing ground troop advance.

3. During the Decisive Attack -

Every available Heavy Weapon must be brought to bear on the point against which the attack is being directed. In addition, a portion of Heavy Weapons must be pushed forward to support Ground Troop advance.

4. Once the position is captured, as many Heavy Weapons as possible should be sent to the captured position in order to:

a. Break down any resistance offered by a second position

b. Support any pursuit

c. Resist counter-attacks



Fifth Stage

Select start positions for any Tank or similar Vehicle and decide on the manner in which Tanks will be used.

The opportunity to use Tanks increases as the enemy becomes exhausted at the peak of battle and the time approaches to drive him from the battlefield. Thus it is important not to exhaust Tank-based resources in the early stages of any battle.

KATHY

Use of Tanks or similar vehicles in a battle:

1. Protect exposed flanks of attacking ground troops by meeting enemy counter-attacks.
2. Threaten enemy flanks or go around flanks to attack enemy reserve and lines of communications.
3. Add weight of fire power to main attack.
4. Take advantage of mistakes made by the enemy that leave them exposed to any extent.

Sixth Stage

Select positions for any Engineers (if available) and how they should be used in the attack.

After any major assault, Engineers should be moved forward to strengthen the position against counter-attack or improve communications.

Seventh Stage

Select positions for Medics (if available).

This position may not always be possible to decide until the action has developed. Information about where the wounded have been left under cover must be relayed to the Medical commander. Stretcher squads should go forward, taking advantage of cover.

Eighth Stage

Select positions of Transport and Supply Columns during the attack.

These items should be kept in a secure position at the rear, with adequate communications with the front line.

Ninth Stage

Select a Reporting Position and the position of the Commander.

Command position depends on the size of the force that he controls.

If a small force, the commander should:

1. Exercise personal supervision;
2. Be where he can see all that is going on;
3. Be where he can receive reports; and
4. Be where he can issue orders easily and quickly.

If the force is large, he should be well enough in the rear not to be distracted by local events, and within easy reach of any sub-commanders.

