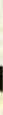


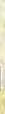
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If you would like to write a short article or letter for **FIREFIGHT** then just send a typed or clearly written transcript to the editor at the subscription address.

Longer articles may be submitted on a 3 ½ inch disk in most word processor formats. Currently Lotus Suite 96 and Corel Draw 8.0 are used.

Please do not send either MIME or Word 8.0, similarly do not embed fonts or diagrams/graphics into the document. If layout is critical send a printed copy along with the disk. The editor reserves the right to alter any material submitted.

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Mr DA Rees, 122 Hartland Avenue, Wyken, Coventry, CV2 3ES
(01203) 727105/6 Drees42@aol.com

**THE FINAL DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF
ARTICLES OR ADVERTISEMENTS FOR**

FIREFIGHT 8.1 is DEC.18th 1998

Lasertag

Calendar of Events:

Date	Event	Cost	Location	Contact
September 27th	Light Brigade - Sunday evening game	£3, £2 to members	Fox Coverts, nr Coventry	<u>Dai Rees</u> 01203 727105
September 25th-27th	Fiat Lux! - Merdon: The Final Fling	£15 (includes BBQ)	Merdon Castle, Hampshire	Fiat Lux! <u>Alex Clark</u> 01703 679758
September 26-27th	Star Trek 2	TBA	TBA	<u>Mike Brown</u>
October 16th-18th	Starlore Adventures - Dr Who /Quatermass, "The Eyes of the Kalon"	£35 (£30 to October 1st) NPCs £16 (cost price)	Walesby Scout Camp, Nottingham	<u>Starlore Adventures</u> , 111 Berridge Rd, Forest Fields, Nottingham, NG7 6HS
Oct 16-18th	Virtual Eclipse event	see <u>VE</u> <u>website for</u> <u>full details</u>	(see website)	<u>Graham Field</u> 01252 614119
Nov 27-29th	Virtual Eclipse event	see <u>VE</u> <u>website for</u> <u>full details</u>	(see website)	<u>Graham Field</u> 01252 614119
Late February/ Early March 1999	TAGCON 99 Presentations/ discussions.	£5 pre booked £8 on the day Includes buffet Lunch	Nuneaton Arts Centre	<u>Dai Rees</u> 01203 727105
May 28th-31st 1999	DROPZONE '99 Annual National Showcase Event	£25 -£35	TBA	See Organising Committee Details later in this edition

Any further details please contact Sarah & Alex Clark, or for updates access the following internet address <http://www.binternet.com/%7ESarah.Clark/lasertag/tagcal00.htm>

Why is it every time I begin this editorial I feel I have to apologise. Being the highly guilt motivated person I am, I won't hold back. **Sorry!**

Sorry, to the Light Brigade chaps at DZ98 for being miserable 'cos I was scared witless about failing in my first defence of humanity from ravaging dark forces etc.

Sorry, to all those, in between times who have been running tags with out **FIREFIGHT** coverage. I hope you had fun.

Sorry, to all those stalwart citizens of the tagging community who have slogged away on their red hot word processors and given us all, this report filled edition. I wish to encourage you rather than, as it seems, leave your prose to idly rot under 101 other bits of paper that fill my back room.

Lastly sorry to all those who actually look forward to reading **FIREFIGHT**. I hope your medication is holding out.

This edition is being sent as part of a mutual subscription deal to "The Adventurer" and "The Northwind". This means that other maniacs can see what us maniacs get up to. Notably the Adventurer's Guild are discussing many issues parallel to our own e.g.. Lack of available sites, public opinion, insurance issues (See page 40) and sharing of game props (See page 46)

Both publications are broader in base than **FIREFIGHT** but the broadest by far is "Northwind" looking at aspects of roleplay historic recreation and research. They do include a number of outfitters addresses which may be useful to taggers similarly with "The Adventurer".

The addresses are:-

"The Adventurer" c/o Elizabeth Cable, Flat 1, Rectory Place, 93 Portsmouth Road, Guildford, Surrey. GU2 5DG (01483) 562318

Dimensions, 44 Staverton Crescent. Lincoln, LN6 0YW (01522) 689271 Email: Dimensions@solarwind.demon.co.uk

At some stage I may get round to summarising some of the issues they discuss.

Enough waffling; on with the show. There are a plethora of reports and reviews in a variety of formats and styles. I hope you find one you like.

On a personal note as I'm about to start a new job in October I will be able to give more time to Tag and **FIREFIGHT**. Hopefully the reliability of the notorious rag will improve. I will see some of you at either the Light Brigade evening bash, now on the 27th Sept., or else at "Eyes of the Kalon" freezing our collective butts off in October.

See you soon thro' a 'scope

Dai Rees aka Bush

Oh yes and don't forget TAGCON 99 next Feb/March and DROPZONE 99 in May

The Dropzone 99 website is at <http://www.runabout.demon.co.uk/dropzone.htm>

The Adventurers Guild website is at <http://www.phoenix.co.uk/ag>

THE DROPZONE DEBRIEF

courtesy of the Wild Cards

In the beginning there was chaos...

This was where the Great Old Ones ruled and then the Elder Gods appeared. Wishing to create order, they fought with the Great Old Ones and imprisoned them on the newly formed planets with Hastur being imprisoned on the world of Aldebaran. The Elder Gods couldn't destroy the Great Old Ones but could force them to sleep the aeons away. Unfortunately the rise of man gave the Great Old Ones a race they could manipulate through dreams and visions. The end result of this manipulation would be the freeing of the Great Old Ones to rule the universe once more and return it to the chaos from which it came.

In order to formalise the struggle for supremacy the Elder Gods created three Avatar's amongst the human race. One was working to free the Great Old Ones (played by Simon Clark), another was working to maintain the balance (played by Gary Swanston) and the final one was working to destroy the Great Old Ones should they emerge from their slumber and at their most vulnerable (played by Dai Rees).

There were many battles throughout the ages when the stars were right and the barriers between dimensions were at their weakest. The last time this occurred was in 33AD when the Avatar's had taken the names of Judas Iscariot, Joseph of Arimathea and Simon Peter respectively. In that summoning a 'King of the Jews' was the required blood sacrifice who gave his life for the future of mankind, but as Simon denied him and Judas attempted suicide the confusion led to balance and the gate remained closed.

The next opportunity to open the gate would be on December 31st 1999. In the intervening time the Avatar's rested and then started to collect the items necessary to bring forth Hastur and then either free, contain or destroy him. To do this they subverted or allied themselves to various groups of humans throughout history to aid them in their cause.

June 1940: Northern France, near the coast.

A group of American archaeologists led by a Dr. Henry Jones (The current persona of the good avatar played by Dai Rees) were excavating the ruined abbey of Sans Luisfer(?????) in an effort to retrieve the Necronomicon (an ancient text that contains the spell of summoning with which to open a dimensional portal).

A group of British Commandos (with the neutral Avatar, played by Gary Swanston, amongst them) had been sent into the area to escort the American's home after they had retrieved their own equipment (which included a box in which to place any occult artefacts, a box known as the Ark of the Covenant that had been found a few years earlier).

Himmler's SonderKommando Hexen (the occult branch of the S.S.) had been sent into the area to retrieve both the Necronomicon and the Ark before they could be spirited out of the country. The SS advisor was the Avatar of evil (Simon Clark).

Meanwhile the French Resistance were also in the area to harass the Germans, assist the British and disapprove of any disturbance of the haunted site of Sans Luisfer.

The American's successfully found and moved the Necronomicon, but in doing so they attracted the book's undead guardians in the shape of three Wraiths (spirits of long dead monks). Being pursued by these spirits the Archaeologists retreated to join the British who had since retrieved the Ark and moved it back to their evacuation point. The effect of having two such powerful artefacts (the Necronomicon and the Ark) called forth a race called the Deep Ones (dwellers of the deep sea) who are lesser servants of the Great Old Ones. They emerged from the water around the jetty where the British were clustered and tried to retrieve both artefacts. The Deep Ones had also been guarding an artefact that had become known as the Spear of Destiny, they brought this with them to the Jetty in an attempt to unite the artefacts. During the battle with the British the German's suddenly appeared and also attacked the Deep Ones and were able to retrieve the Spear for themselves.

The British and the American's were able to get out with the American's holding onto the Necronomicon and the British holding onto the Ark. The Germans were left holding onto the Spear of Destiny. All three Avatar's now had influence over one of the artefacts required to open a dimensional portal. During the intervening years the Ark of the Covenant was lost and subsequently acquired by the Avatar of Evil.

March 1970: Dac Lao District in the Republic of South Vietnam

An unlikely combination of peoples have gathered in one small area of Vietnam. A team of American troops are performing one last recon. twelve hours before they are due to be rotated back to the world. A team from the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) along with their Russian Spetznaz advisors. Both teams were skirting around the Vietnamese village of Bin Lao, inhabited by South Vietnamese peasants and a small contingent of Viet Cong. The final group of people were members of a remote tribe of Vietnamese called the Tcho-Tcho (pronounced Cho-Cho).

The Russian's quickly disappeared from their NVA team and made their way to a rendezvous point as they intended to meet up with members of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and defect to the US. The US Army came across a US soldier tagged and in a body bag, when they opened it seemingly came back to life and tried to attack them. The patrol ran away in horror right into the Vietnamese village. The patrol decided it was time to leave, called in their chopper and were evacuated out. The zombie followed the US Troops and then proceeded to cause havoc in the village by attacking the villagers and causing them to also become zombies. The Tcho-Tcho (amongst other things) are worshippers of the Avatar of Hastur and maintain their worship at his supposed tomb.

The NVA came across this tomb and curiosity getting the better of them they deciphered some ancient scrolls that we about the place and then proceeded to enter. What they found was an altar with various decimated pieces of humans littering the place. After offering an appropriate sacrifice the inner chamber was breached and the Avatar of Hastur (apparently dead) wearing a death mask and holding a sword. When the mask was removed the Avatar came to life and pursued the thief. The Avatar was only stopped when the Avatar of Evil arrived and used the Spear of Destiny to destroy the Avatar of Hastur. At the same time all surrounding zombies collapsed to the ground. The Avatar of Evil then claimed the mask and then proceeded to leave the area.

Two of the biggest drug cartels in the world had agreed to meet to discuss their mutual problems now that various law enforcement agencies around the world had started to close them down. It was obvious that they needed to redress the balance. The Jamaican Voodoo Posse and the Columbian Scorpions, once the bitterest of enemies, reluctantly agreed to meet in an old ruined temple in one of the Columbian rain forests. The Scorpions had acquired the Ark during one of their various gang wars but they remained blissfully unaware of its power or importance in the scheme of things. King Louis (leader of the Voodoo Posse) had also acquired an ancient artefact, the Yellow Cloak of Hastur. He had conducted several small rituals to try and discover what power it possessed but had only discovered the limited ability to raise zombies and to then command them. He was aware that the Scorpions had the Ark and knowing a little of its true nature had them bring it with them to the meeting place. The meeting was a fake, King Louis had always planned to use the cloak to raise zombies and to then direct them against the Scorpions and wipe out the opposition. To protect his own men he had imbued pendants with power that meant the zombies would not attack anybody wearing them

When the power of the Cloak was used to raise so many zombies it brought forth Byakee (the things with wings) on a mission to retrieve the cloak. They were only able to exist in this plane for a short time before having to return. In the time they had they were able to catch King Louis a little way from the ruined temple and then retrieve the cloak and place it in prominence within the temple before vanishing. King Louis had been left bleeding profusely by the Byakee was found, not by his own people, but by an ultra-secret Army unit, codenamed Delta Green. They had come to terminate King Louis with extreme prejudice. They had a local botanist as guide with them (the good avatar) who was trying to acquire the cloak. They found the body of King Louis and terminated him. They were unable to acquire the cloak as the remainder of the Voodoo Posse had already grabbed it back and was then making for the border with Venezuela. What was left of the Voodoo Posse then engaged the Scorpions in a vain attempt to get some payback.

Also in the forest was a force of Karotechia masquerading as Colombian troops. The Karotechia is a continuation of the SonderKommando Hexen, a team of elite troops dedicated to the formation of the Fourth Reich. They were led by the Evil Avatar who was also after the cloak. They first encountered their old adversaries in the form of Delta Green and a bitter gunfight ensued. Into this came members of the Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) who had orders to arrest King Louis, they were in turn backed up by a crack team of Drug Enforcement Agency members. They also had the Neutral Avatar in their midst in his latest persona.

Good was unable to retrieve the Cloak and was evacuated with Delta Green. Evil shot down the FDA chopper but the FDA/DEA weren't aboard (they missed it by literally one minute). Neutral was able to retrieve the Ark and ran for the border on foot. The Cloak had already vanished across the border with the remnants of the Voodoo Posse. Evil also went back after being unable to retrieve the cloak.

This was the biggest party of the year! Everybody came to celebrate the coming of the new Millennium. Some US military (containing at least two long term Delta Green members) had been hired by Weyland Yutani executive Simon Clark (the Evil Avatar) to test some new search and retrieve tactics. The Police and the FBI are also keeping their eyes open for any major drug cartels with the Good Avatar as the Police Commissioner. There was also a group of UFOlogists here to have a party and to watch the skies with the Neutral Avatar in their midst.

As the party moved into full swing a telegram arrived, it appeared to be some form of office joke as it was sent 70 years ago with specific instructions to be delivered at this time to this place to these people. The telegram was from H.P. Lovecraft, in it he said that he will die before he can get there but the missing pieces of the puzzle will be placed within his grave and he hopes that they will all have great time!

The member of the Voodoo Posse who had grabbed the cloak 10 years ago in Colombia turned up to the party wearing it and then sees Simon Clark pointing at him and the US military cocking their weapons. He ran in fear with the Army in hot pursuit. He was able to use some power of the cloak to stop the usage of firearms around him but the power soon waned and he then went to ground. In the meantime the Police and the FBI went to Lovecraft's grave and exhumed the body where they found a missing page from the Necronomicon and the Cup of the Carpenter otherwise known as the Holy Grail.

Meanwhile Gary Swanston (the Neutral Avatar) led his group of UFOlogists deep into the woods to the place of power which is where any ceremony would have to be performed in order to bring Hastur through.

As midnight approached, a high priest of Hastur called Hephesh began to prepare the circle for the summoning and called those servants of Hastur that were still able to affect this plane of existence (Zombies and Byakee) and set them as guardians around the circle.

The team of Delta Green operatives within the US military had realised roughly what was going on since their first encounter with the Avatar's (in 1970's Vietnam) and their subsequent encounter in 1990's Colombia. They realised that the equipment carried by Simon Clark was of Occult origin and that his mission was one of chaos. It also became clear that the turn of the Millennium at midnight would be the time that something was going to happen. As they had encountered the Avatar's they worked out that there was Good, Neutral and Evil and worked out who was who. Delta Green then wanted Good to succeed (as opposed to the alternatives!) They fragged Simon Clark and left him for dead whilst stealing his occult artefacts. They arrived at the circle and handed the items over to the Good Avatar.

Good was already at the circle as he had realised that this is where both Neutral and Evil would have to go in order to fulfil their destinies. Neutral arrived and entered the circle. The ceremony still needed a blood sacrifice and just as the circle was closed Neutral persuaded a mortal to enter the circle and to become the blood sacrifice much to Good's anger at the move. Just before the ceremony was going to start the Evil

Avatar turned up (after having regenerated from his wounds) and then offered himself as the sacrifice in order to bring Hastur through. The ceremony was completed and Evil fell down forever dead as Hastur himself was summoned from exile. Neutral then started to place items in the Ark to be sealed forever, just before the Sword went in. Good realised what he should do and flung the sword into the heart of Hastur. Hastur then died in flames and was gone. The Avatar's now became mortal and started their path through life as human's and the memory of all the observers was blanked.

This is roughly what we believe happened during the weekend.

The guest Occult artefacts for these games were as follows:- The Ark of the Covenant

Any occult item placed into it is immediately neutralised (hence Gary as the Neutral Avatar) placing the mask, the book, etc. into it at the end of the ceremony. It does not have in itself any effect on occult fields in the vicinity but it can draw occult creatures when opened and will also affect the abilities of other occult items nearby.

The Spear of Destiny

This can be used as a one-shot weapon (every twenty years) against groups of humans, lesser servants and the Avatar's of the Elder Gods. It is also used to trace the closing circles in the summoning ritual. This was the spear stuck in the side of Jesus Christ by a Roman Centurion when Jesus Christ was on the cross.

The Necronomicon

A dark book of the occult containing spells and rituals first written at the dawn of mankind and then added to by various visionaries and magicians throughout the ages. Last seen in the abbey of Sans Luisfer as one of the personal effects of the last Abbot of that abbey, a well known black magician. It contains (amongst other things) the ritual for summoning Hastur.

The Mask of Ghengis Khan

Thought to be the death mask of Ghengis Khan and then buried with him, it is in fact many centuries older than that. It enables the wearer to see into other dimensions, other worlds and other plains.

The Sword of Hastur

This is one of the few weapons capable of destroying one of the gods, be they an Elder God or a Great Old One.

Elder Signs

The symbol of the Elder Gods capable of deterring and destroying the lesser servants of Hastur, for example, Zombies, but not higher servants like the Byakee.

The Cloak of the King in Yellow

Occult item made in the image of Hastur and capable of calling him through lesser servants.

The Cup of the Carpenter (The Holy Grail)

Carved by Joseph of Arimathea to catch the blood of the sacrifice. It travelled through Europe to the British Isles when it was then lost and then later found by H.P. Lovecraft in Boston.

An Aliens view of Dropzone 98.

by Doug Ross

Dropzone 98 in England was a lot of fun! It was the first time I had been to England. The flight from Seattle, USA to London in coach was rough. I hadn't been that miserable since I saw the Spice Girls Movie. I arrived in London, Heathrow, and the weather was a lot like it was in Seattle, kind of cloudy, humid and cool. One of the London tag players I've gotten to know through e-mail, named Dave Bodger, was there to pick me up. I stayed at his, er um, "flat" the first night. London was great! The people and the architecture were wonderful. In the USA, there's not much of anything man made that's older than 200 years, but in London, Roman chariots had once travelled down some of the roads. They say that if you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all, so I won't mention the food. The traffic in London was a nightmare, my bed is wider than most of the roads. Not only could no one get over 10 miles an hour within London (and it's a big place), but I was sitting on the wrong side of the car which scared the crap out of me every time we made a left or right hand turn.

On the second day, Dave Bodger, Dave Harvey and I packed the Range Rover. The Dropzone 98 site is about a 60 acre Paintball field with trees, forts and trails within Sherwood Forest, and we would have to camp out in a field for three days and rough it. After we packed the 1400W generator, floodlights, butane powered refrigerator, and 4 man tent in the Rover we headed out. There wasn't enough room for the microwave.

The drive up to the Dropzone site seemed short due to bouts of jet lag induced unconsciousness. The camp site at Dropzone was a large grassy area next to several sheep fields. We set up camp and I introduced myself to some of the newly arriving players. Surprisingly, they all seemed to know I was coming. Eventually, about 60 players showed up with their tents. They were all very pleasant and I was most impressed with the quality of lazertag weaponry! Most of the guns were hand crafted works of art! I also found that there is a lot of slang that I wasn't familiar with, words like "knackered" (tired), "kip" (a good sleep), "quid" (English Pound) and so on, but I was able to figure out what most of it meant.

Our first game was played that night. It was a Terminator game called "The Price of Freedom". I was one of the Human Resistance Group bent on defeating the Skynet mob of Terminators and black robots. I was given the task of carrying the "nuke" needed to blow up the Skynet HQ. The HQ was a paintball fort near the centre of the site. It was a dark moon less night. Our teams of HRG players moved in on the Terminators, their silhouettes in the distance were stiffly lumbering about within the

fort. I stayed just behind some trees watching the assault take place about 100 ft away waiting for my chance to move in and plant the bomb. The firefight was way cool! In the dark I could see the bright muzzle flashes and loud, realistic autofire weapon sounds. In my group in Seattle, we have no muzzle flash or loud guns. Soldiers were yelling commands or laying on the ground moaning or screaming for the medic. It was pure mayhem, but the Terminators were hard to kill, they seemed to go down eventually, but some got up again. Apparently they could repair themselves somewhat which was a nice plot device. We were getting slaughtered. Every time I tried to make a shot, I took a hit. Having a bright muzzle flash and loud gun sound and knowing that I could give my position away with one shot changes the entire game. During the game, a player had come in from behind me, appearing to fire shots at the Terminators. I passed him the nuke since he was in better shape than I, having a better chance at making all of the way into the fort. This was my first lesson in role-play.

Things aren't always what they seem to be. As it turns out, I gave the only nuke to a Terminator Infiltrator (played by Dai Rees). I, and a few others, were shot dead in our efforts to infiltrate the HQ to get the nuke back after finding out that the Terminators had a sign/countersign. The countersign was not "Linda Hamilton" and we were all terminated instantly. The Terminators won this one.

The game ended around midnight and we all met at the campfire and talked about the game and nursed some beers. It was really a lot of fun. Most everyone stayed up late. Some people were even going to bed about the time I got up in the morning...Dave!

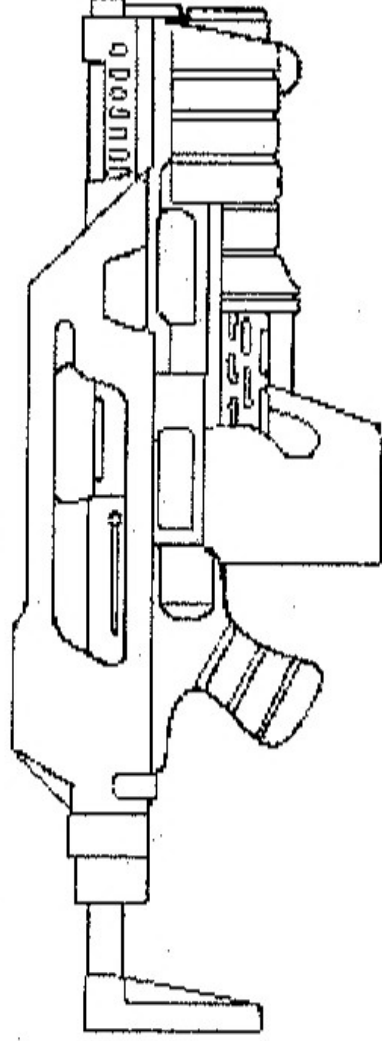
There were 3 games scheduled for that day. The first game was set in France, 1940. I was one of 12 French Resistance Fighters. This is the first time I've been in a real role-play game and I felt a little silly playing my character, carrying a concealed weapons under my coat and speaking with a French accent. Our job was to find a German ammo dump and get the Brits to blow it up. We found ourselves under German scrutiny on several occasions and we had to kill a few German soldiers. We eventually found the ammo dump and called in the Brits. Throughout the game we encountered several other groups of players, such as German Soldiers, British Soldiers, Archaeologists, Cthulhu evil spirits. Each group had their own objectives and motives unknown to our group and we had to figure out if we could trust them or not, not knowing if they were going to open fire on us. At the end of the game, we all met and the game co-ordinator recounted what each of the groups had been doing and what was really going on. Apparently the Archaeologist were there to recover religious artefacts, such as the Ark of the Covenant and the Spear of Destiny. This Cthulhu and Artefacts theme would continue for three other games. Everyone played there parts very well. We even heard of a German soldier measuring his boot size of a dead soldier and then stealing his boots.

We played several Action Man games over two days, where each player had their own mission card with an objective, such as retrieving rockets from a fort and so on, and were awarded points for how well they did. It was like a combat style lazertag game, only with a twist. When all of the games were done, the points were tallied and awards were given. I really enjoyed these a lot.

In the remaining games, I played several roles, a CIA agent in the Jungles of Southeast Asia sent to retrieve two defecting Soviet advisors, a DEA agent in the jungles of Columbia, and an American Soldier trying to stop an outbreak of Anthrax against delirious mobs of Florida swamp rednecks. The props and planning that went into all of the games was extra-ordinary! I had an absolutely wonderful time, and I highly recommend anyone try this next year. By the end of the three days of Dropzone, I was completely exhausted!

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Atkinson's Post Mortem on Drop Zone 98

This is going to be a combination write up, report, thank-you, critique and catharsis for me so if it rambles a bit - well - deal with it!

I enjoyed Drop Zone immensely and it's a tribute to every one involved that it ran the way it did, in many respects the best Drop Zone I've been to (all of them), not excluding any of the others.

I've formed this article into series of bullet points, pros and cons. I'll go pro followed by con so the article stays balanced and hopefully I'll end with a couple of pros. **[Not the for the first time no doubt. ED]**

A Pro: I think the advanced notice on costume worked brilliantly. I knew what I wanted to do months in advance and had a chance to work on my costumes.

Well, working backwards, modern American military is easy - Woodland camo and Fritz helmet -, had all that already, except an M16 so I borrowed a folding stock version a CAR-15 which works for Vietnam as well. So Vietnam kit was relatively easy, mostly because a bunch of my friends are into Vietnam re-enactment so advice and sources of supply were relatively easy to come across. Most of my kit was brought from FNG, it cost about 30 quid for webbing and bits and about 20 quid for a set of greens. WWII was a whole different ballgame. 37 pattern webbing was easy, 6 pounds 50 from the Anchor Surplus rummage bin at the Stoneleigh Military show in February (Stoneleigh is near Warwick). My helmet was a gift from a friend, but the battledress was a bastard to find, eventually I found 50 quids worth of Jacket that fitted, and compromised on a 50's dated set of Australian trousers that more or less matched for another 20. The weapon for this one was a converted BB MKII Mk II Stengun which fortunately had a hollow plastic "wooden" stock so there was enough room for the speaker.

Sorry 'bout that, I had a lot of fun putting together the various costumes, it reminded me of the past few years when a bunch of the Warlords all put together a "uniform" for various games at Drop Zone. Several times over the years the Warlords have been criticised for "going too far" with costumes and equipment based on a uniform look, well for me this is one of the things that Drop Zone does that I like. I'm just not interested in bumbling round the woods in British DPM I'm afraid (unless of course the role calls for it specifically). The other, rather more important thing is that a proper kit order encourages you to carry essential items. The classic omission being water, I forget the number of times I've had people trying to scrounge water from me in games, especially after sounding off about "going too far" with the "military look". Sorry folks, not interested, carry your own.

A Con: Sensor checks, they happened but were not carried out terribly efficiently as there was no means of marking the tested sensors, leaving it up to the conscience of the people involved, some of said consciences being more troubled than others. What we had was better than nothing, but not much. Having said that a far more important issue is that of smart-sensors. We were hoisted on our own petard this

year to some extent since the committee did not consider the issue more than a week beforehand. Unfortunately if you're going to ban something at an event like Drop Zone, you cannot in all conscience do it on the day of the event. By this time people have invested in the technology. Being pissed off with the situation is all well and good, but in such a situation you really need to bite the bullet and live with it. We can argue the toss later, but I think the outcome of any debate is obvious, we cannot ban smart-sensors as they represent the only new kit being manufactured for the hobby, end of story. We'd do better trying to make our existing kit more compatible with the smart-sensors. As a proponent of sensor checks, as well as being more aware of the way sensors work than some, I have definitely noticed that sensors are in general degrading. I have been using the same three sets of sensors on games for the last 5 or so years, and the sensitivity is obviously degrading over time, in the end smart-sensors (or the Simon Russell equivalent) will be the only way forward.

A Pro: I think the linked games worked really well, I've never really been a fan of themed Drop Zones, but this year has changed my mind. Done properly (which this was) the linked games, especially with the conspiracy overtones give you something a bit more than just shooting things, I only saw the black winged things from an extreme distance, far enough for my brain to convince itself that I wasn't seeing it at first. I especially enjoyed being able to play the same character in the last three of the linked games, an 18 year old in Nam, then a 38 year old (rather nearer the mark sadly) in Columbia, then finally dragged out of retirement at 48 for the millennium game. This meant we could take notice of characters who didn't age, and could be slightly more aware of the theme plot. It meant that when leading Simon Clarke (Bad guy) around the woods on the final game I could proactively do things concerned with the plot. For example we lead him round the woods on a wild goose chase, I may not be able to destroy the "Evil one", but boy do his feet ache (heh heh!), and of course my finest hour, the "coffee break". "OK so we need to get to the fort, you need 20 minutes to do whatever, it's 23.15 that leaves us 25 minutes, OK guys, smoke em if you've got em". In the mean time people such as Nigel Carr kept coming up saying "I've figured out what's going on" blah blah blah, reciting the story yet again, "yep ok fine", I'd say, "take a seat...". That coffee break actually lasted 30 something minutes! I had the evil one under control, I knew he was evil, I figure that him not making his deadline was probably a good idea, but eventually the pressure from the other players was such that I gave in to the group decision and we went to the fort, which as it turned out allowed the grand finale to happen.

A Con: Rubbish, people left their rubbish behind, the planned skip didn't materialise and I didn't see any evidence of the recycling that someone volunteered to do.

A Pro: The site. I didn't really like the site much last year, but that's probably because of the crap we had from the paintball site owner. This year was better and the site now has three focus points, the only real downer is that bloody walk from the staging area back, it gets longer each time.

A Con: People signing in and out of games. Don't get me wrong, again like sensor checks, this a fundamentally good idea but needed to be executed more rigorously.

When I signed some people back in from the Saturday night game, loads of people playing had not signed out in the first place seriously undermining the usefulness of the system. I do not intend this as any disparagement of Ros, nor do I wish to be patronising, to make such a system work it needs the active co-operation of the players in general and I don't think this was given. Needs more thought.

A Pro: The loos, we had enough, and after a top up they didn't even run out of paper.

A Con: The current committee structure. As I do not intend to be on the committee next year, this doesn't really affect me **[Is that 99 or 00 or 01 Tim? ED]** but I'll make the points anyway. The current structure can run the event if it's not being continually second guessed by people outside the committee. The minimum committee is chair, secretary, treasurer, site organiser and game organiser. Anything else is pure bonus, but if the above jobs don't get filled then Drop Zone doesn't happen. Communication is the key, I live in London, The Chair and Game organiser live (together) in Southampton, the Treasurer lives near Bristol and the site organiser in Coventry. We found the easiest way to communicate was e-mail, this made for very unstructured communications and so the outcome of decisions was not always obvious. The most important committee meeting (the one at TagCon) was cut short due to time pressure. Next year the committee should be much more structured with perhaps monthly or bimonthly action/achievement lists published in some appropriate forum. It has been argued that e-mail excludes involvement by non-committee members, I would argue that e-mail to interested parties is a good and easy way to keep the communication up between people in geographically diverse locations. What the committee requires is drive and commitment, it's easy to forget something that's months off.

A Pro: The weather, I think it was perfect, not too hot, not too cold, not too wet. Probably the best yet for a Drop Zone. There has been some talk of moving Drop Zone to the first May bank holiday to move it clear of exam time, however we lose four weeks worth of improving weather (it pissed down on the early bank holiday this year). I've just come back from the Biggin Hill Air Fair (6-7 June), which they moved from May into June to get better weather, it rained today!

A Con: Publicity, I admit this ball was fairly and squarely in my court, I figure that I produced the flyer and did a 250 name mail-shot in December, as well as the web page stuff and adds in Firefight (circulation unknown). **[50 subscribers. ED]** I also did a couple of update sheets. I would suggest that next years secretary considers this a minimum and maybe attempts to get some stuff into fanzines or whatever. However and it's a big however, Drop Zone doesn't have much of a budget, we can't afford to pay commercial advertising rates so it's creative thinking needed here.

A Pro: The role-playing, this was the best I've ever seen at Drop Zone and rarely anywhere else. People threw themselves into their roles with gusto and glee. I'm not a fan of the "Ham-acting" school of role-playing, and saw little of that, just lots of people giving convincing realistic performances. I must single out Jim Harvey in the

DROPZONE -THE BALANCING ACT

A neutral perspective from Gary Swanson

1940's France

I was attached to a British commando squad, as "psychic advisor", we were briefed to recover a book (the Necronomicon) from a ruined Abbey and to ensure it was placed in a special storage vessel. This vessel was actually the Ark of the Covenant, on loan from the Americans. We had to search the countryside for the Ark because it had been dropped in the wrong place by the RAF.

Some American archaeologists, led by the Good Avatar had already recovered the Necronomicon. The Germans, led by the Evil Avatar were trying to recover the mad Arab's book too.

We eventually found the Ark, but some Deep Ones were trying to recover it. In all the confusion, when I tried to pull the Ark clear, I opened it (the humans hadn't bothered to seal the lid and hey, we all need some excitement from time to time), summoning more Deep Ones !

The American humans ended up with the Ark. Good kept the Necronomicon, and Evil managed to obtain the Spear of Destiny. They both thought they each had one up on me. Balanced is how I saw it.

1960's Vietnam

Trying to steer some Marines who were demob happy into the depths of the Vietnam jungle proved to be impossible. From the ethereal disturbances I knew it was Evil at work again... and then finding some dismembered ex-marines confirmed it.

Running into the Good Avatar proved to be fortuitous. He confirmed it was a local blood thirsty cult being encouraged by Evil, apparently he'd lost more than a few of his followers to the Evil Avatar's cult, and was quite put out when the Marines didn't want to investigate the bloody activities of the cult. Of course, when we evacuated with him in the helicopter, it was particularly inconvenient for him as he'd stashed the mad Arab's book somewhere in the jungle. As I said to him, "You win some, you lose some".

1980's Colombia

Deputy Leader of the Drug Enforcement Agency team on a mission to arrest the drug dealer "Voodoo King Louis" who is meeting the Colombian Scorpions, another drug gang. This was even more confusing than previous events, but far more satisfying in the interactions with my co-Avatars. Louis is identified by his cloak, a garish garment of occult powers. Unfortunately, by the time the DEA team caught sight of the cloak, it was being worn by someone else. They killed the escorting minions (and I recovered a few Elder Sign Amulets from the bodies) but the cloak wearer got away. Ah well, another psychic artefact muddying the waters that Good and Evil swim in.

I bumped into Good and Evil a few times in the jungle. Evil had quite a collection now - Spear of Destiny, Mask of Genghis Khan, Sword of

Hastur. He gloated somewhat, wanted to know where Good was, where the Necronomicon was.

I met Good too, who had the Necronomicon again and seemed determined not to lose any of his followers this time. But as I pointed out to him, "You win some, you lose some, and in any case, they breed like.... humans".

An observation:

Both Evil and Good were personally carrying their occult artefacts, but for different reasons: Evil didn't trust his followers, Good didn't want his to be harmed by the artefact.

With no result on the DEA's mission, we signalled for the helicopter extraction (15 min. delay), and then found the Scorpions holed up. I sensed the Ark in their vicinity, so urged the DEA to at least take out the Scorpions so they'd have something to show from the mission. One of the DEA stayed to delay the helicopter from taking off until after we'd dealt the Scorpions. This we did, and I had the Ark (at last !). It was then a race to get the Ark to the helicopter. As I arrived with the 2 surviving DEA team members carrying the Ark for me (I don't have any qualms about using humans as beasts of burden !), the helicopter exploded. Evil's minions had arrived ! We quickly despatched the advance scout who had gunned down the helicopter, then with no other option, I was off into the jungle, heading for the border with the last of DEA team, carrying the Ark between us.

Millennium Party

The party was a mix of people, events and rumours:

Good and Evil and their respective minions were there; A telegram from HP Lovecraft arrived; Rumours of grave robbing in the locality; The Cloak turned up too.

I took the opportunity to talk with both Evil and Good... Evil did his predictable gloat, weighed down with Spear, Sword and Mask. Good, clutching the Necronomicon, seemed open to some negotiation, so I offered an alliance, saying the only way to prevent Hastur from manifesting was to do things my way i.e. neutralise it. He seemed to agree.

The Ark was being ported for me by a motley crew of followers, journalists and crack pot ufologists.

In the meantime Evil had spooked the cloak wearer, who was off into the woods, Evil trailing him.

Good then made off for the grave robbing site - as there had been a psychic "wibble", I assumed he was after the rumoured Holy Chalice. My followers were seriously outnumbered and outgunned, so I took the opportunity to stash the Ark in the woods. My followers held up okay when we were ambushed by zombies, but I think the Elder Signs helped.

The stars were aligning and Hepesh the High Priest made his appearance, calling for the 3 Avatars to be present. So we went trooping into the dark nighted woods again, to gather the Avatars at Hepesh's location.

On encountering Good, we agreed to meet back where Hepesh was, just before midnight.

I eventually met up with Evil, who was still lugging his ancient cutlery and looking for Good and the Necronomicon. I pointed out that I was his only link to obtaining it and that we could probably come to some sort of "arrangement". He agreed to meet me at Hepesh's location at midnight.

By close to midnight, I returned to Hepesh, who had set up the paraphernalia for opening the earthly portal of Hastur's gateway. Good was already present, and brushing past the varied zombies and byakee I joined him within the Circle.

The Necronomicon, the Chalice, the Cloak were all present. Good seemed a bit tetchy when my human porters brought the Ark.

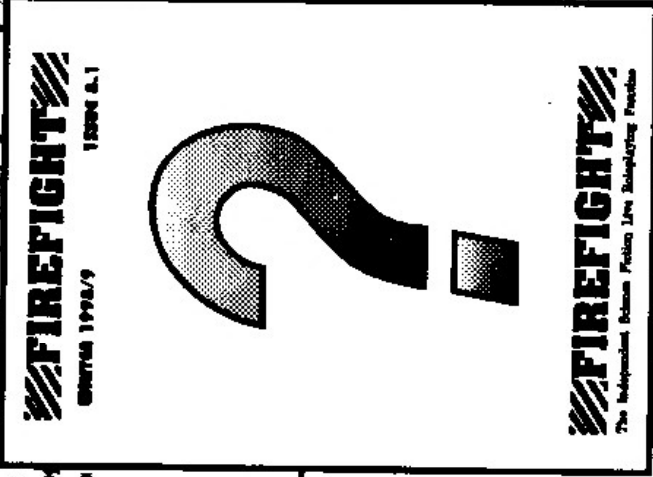
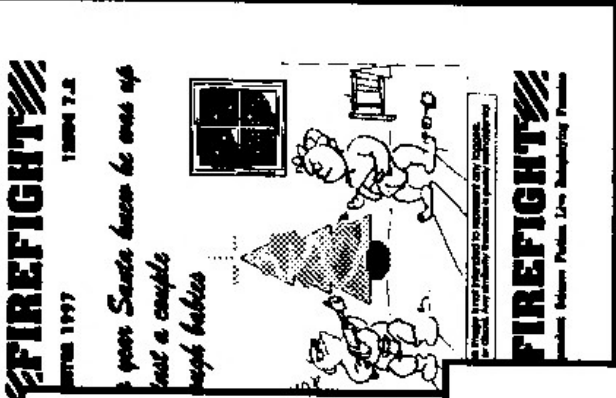
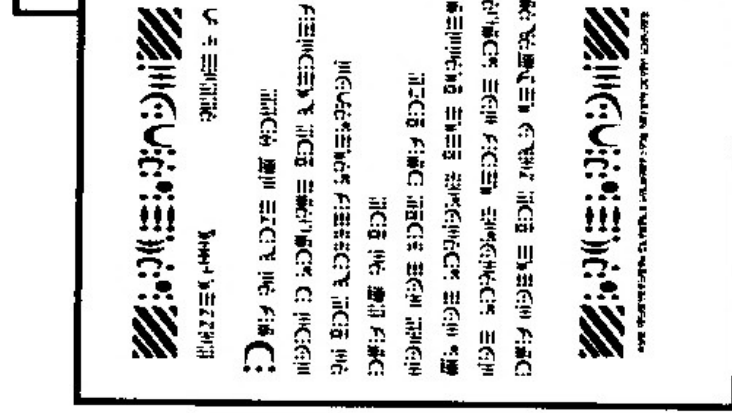
Some other humans arrived with Evil's cutlery, but Evil was late arriving. The ceremony required blood sacrifice, so just before the circle closed I prompted one of my porters to join us within. (this upset Good, he really is too sensitive). As we prepared to commence the ceremony, Evil finally arrived, so we didn't need the porter after all.

Evil took his place, clad in Mask and Cloak, and bearing Spear; I held a lamp to allow Good to read from the Necronomicon and the ceremony began. Evil fell upon the Spear as required (blood sacrifice, messy but necessary), the gateway opened and Hastur began his journey through the portal.

I opened the Ark, enjoying the moment of Good placing the various Artefacts into it, and as he hesitated with the Sword, I pointed the Spear at him.... but I was too slow and he hurled the sword into the heart of Hastur, destroying it and closing the gateway.

Well, as I've always said, You win some, You lose some, (but it'll all balance out in the long term). Only, now I'm mortal, and don't have such a long term anymore. Still, humans are fun to be around, and I need a new interest now.... where did I put that report about Roswell ?.....

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How to build your very own Starship Troopers Gun [or something like that]

Where to start? When I went to Tagcon this year I took along the Morita, the Starship Trooper gun (yes that's what its called according to the production designer). It generated some interest, with many people asking how I made it, so here we are, your very own set of plans (you can all thank Dave Bignall).

Before we start I should explain the basic construction techniques I use with aluminium.

Folding -

unless you have expensive folding equipment the easiest way to fold a piece of sheet metal (aluminium in our case) is to lightly score along the line you want to fold and then place the piece of metal on the edge of a straight bench or other surface like a kitchen worktop with the scoreline along the edge. Then exert downwards pressure on the part hanging over the edge. Voila a neatly folded edge. Easy to say, try a few folds first to get the hang of it. Its easy to do short bits but gets very tough to do long edges.

Cutting straight edges -

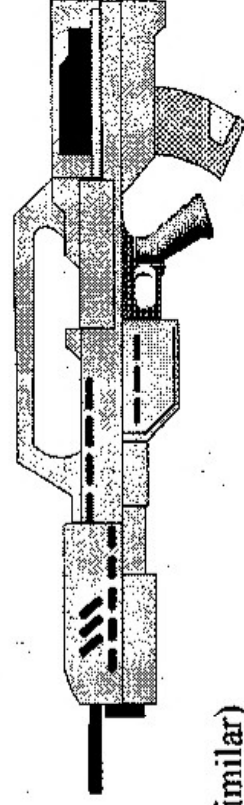
The easiest way to cut a straight edge with aluminium is very similar to above. Instead of lightly scoring a line (no jokes to do with white powder please) repeatedly score it with a craft knife then fold it as above. Then fold it back, then fold it again, repeat as many times as necessary until the metal snaps, you should have a very straight edge with a slight burr from the craft knife which you simply file away.

Folding Curves -

Simply find a piece of tube with a similar radius to the curve you require and fold the sheet around that, pushing both sides to get an even curve.

Pretty basic description right, just practice a bit first to get the hang of it.

Right lets start shall we!!!!



Required Tools

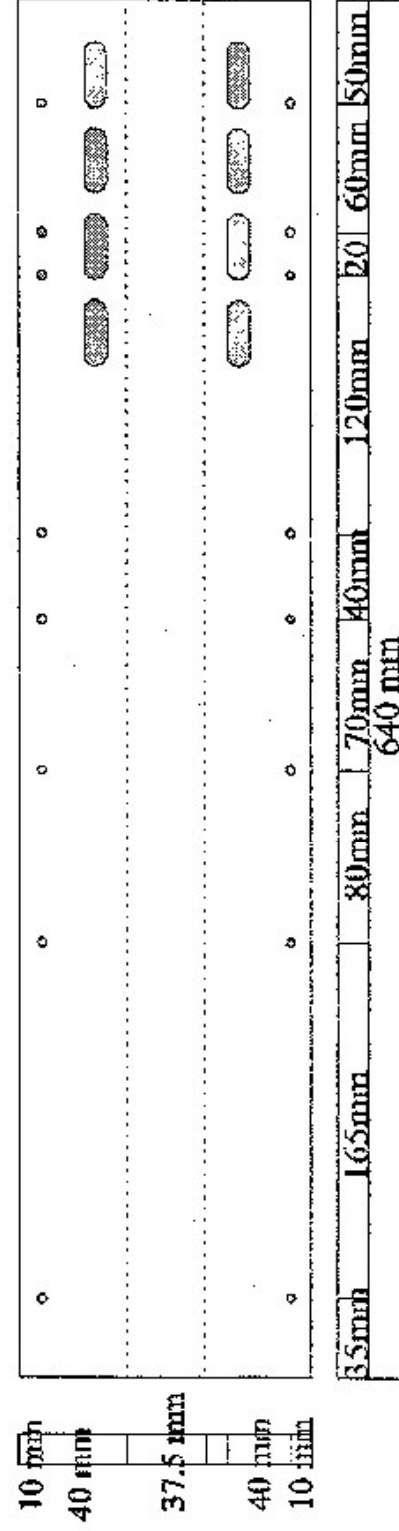
- Good craft knife (Stanley or similar)
- Drill (hand powered is what I use, you get more control)
- 3.5 mm, 4 mm, 10 mm HSS drill bit
- Flat file
- Half round file
- Aviation shears (available for about £3-5 at hardware shops or machine mart)
- Small hacksaw (if you cant get the aviation shears)
- ¼ inch Chisel (an old or cheap one preferably)
- Rivet gun (cost about £3)
- Screwdrivers, pliers, hammer
- Tap and die set (if you want to do it properly)

Required Materials

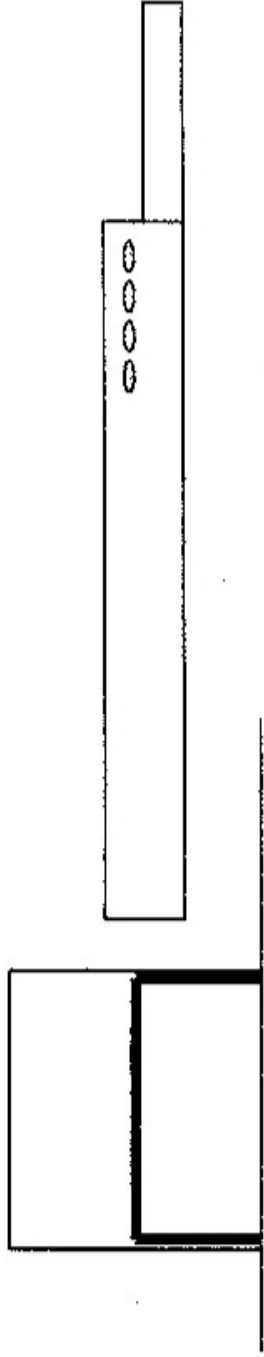
- A length of aluminium channel that is 84 cm long by 37.5mm (1 ½ inch) wide and 25mm (½ inch deep), with a wall thickness of 3 mm
- 1mm thick sheet 1m by ½ m (should be sufficient)
- M16 (the one Toys-R-Us sell is perfect or an airsoft or similar)
- 22mm plastic waste pipe (available from Wicks)
- 37.5mm plastic waste pipe (same as above)
- 40mm plastic waste pipe (for the IR barrel, if you want a different size you will have to modify the design)
- 4mm screws in 6mm, 12mm, and 20mm lengths
- 4mm Rivets

Got all that ?

Cut a piece of the sheet to match the diagram below. You will have to scale up all the diagrams but that's life.

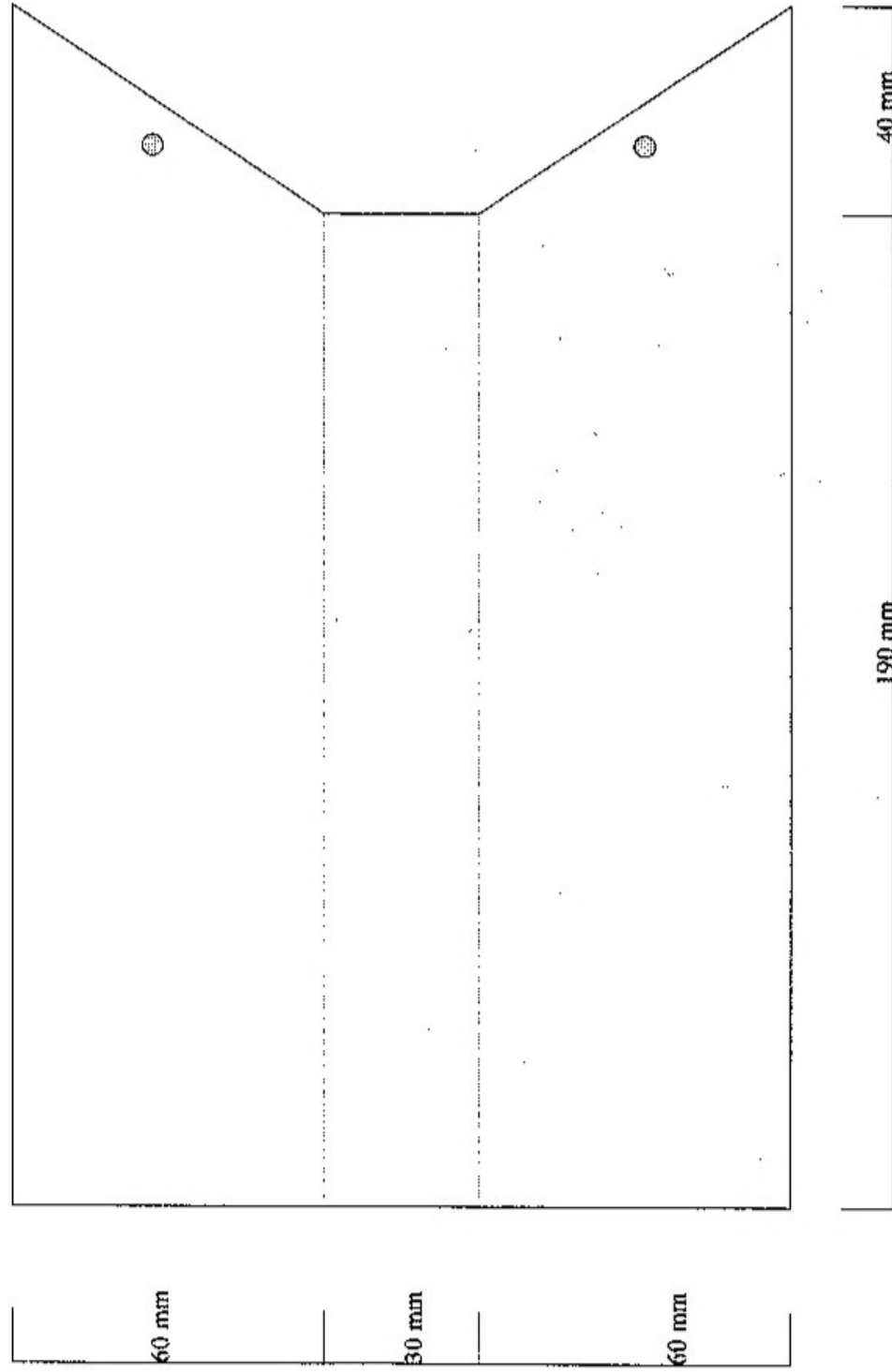


Drill the 4mm holes in the specified places and fold along the dotted line as they say. It will be a pig to fold believe me, because its very long. Work your way along bending it a bit at time as you go along, then a bit more etc until its at 90° to the rest. Now do the other dotted line. Once its folded have a cup of coffee. You should now have a U shaped piece of sheet. Now's the time to cut the slots, if you want to that is, these are 35mm long and 10mm wide, mark to points 25mm apart for the two 10mm holes you are about to drill, now drill them, draw two lines connecting the edges of the holes, now making sure the sheet is resting on the bench place the chisel along the line you have marked and hit the back with a hammer a few times. If the chisel doesn't go through the metal completely don't worry just work along all the lines you drew then gently lever out with a pair of pliers. Alternately you could just paint them in after, its much easier (but I'm a glutton for punishment). Now get the channel and lay it on a flat worktop U shape down and place the sheet you've just folded over the top like so-

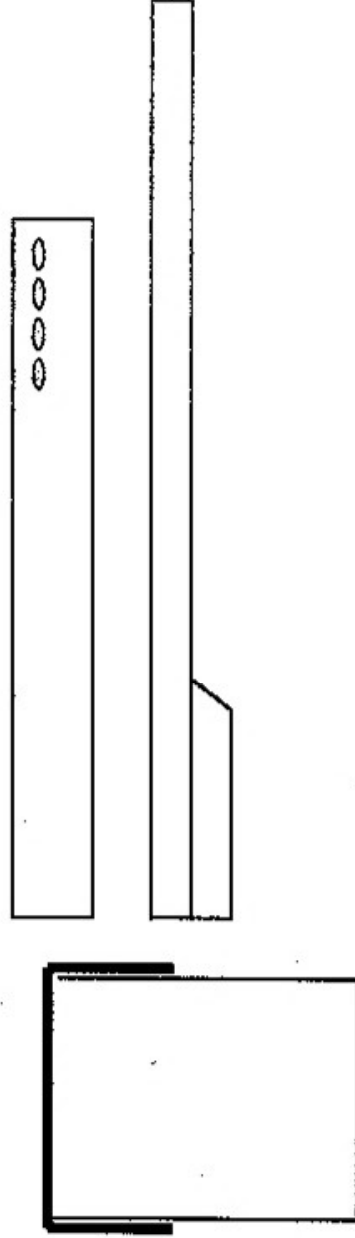


Now mark the thick channel through all the holes on the sheet. Then drill all the holes with a 3.5mm drill bit. Now use the tap and die set to make 4mm threads in the channel. Now make sure its fits, if you marked all the holes correctly it should. Remove the sheet so you are left with just the channel.

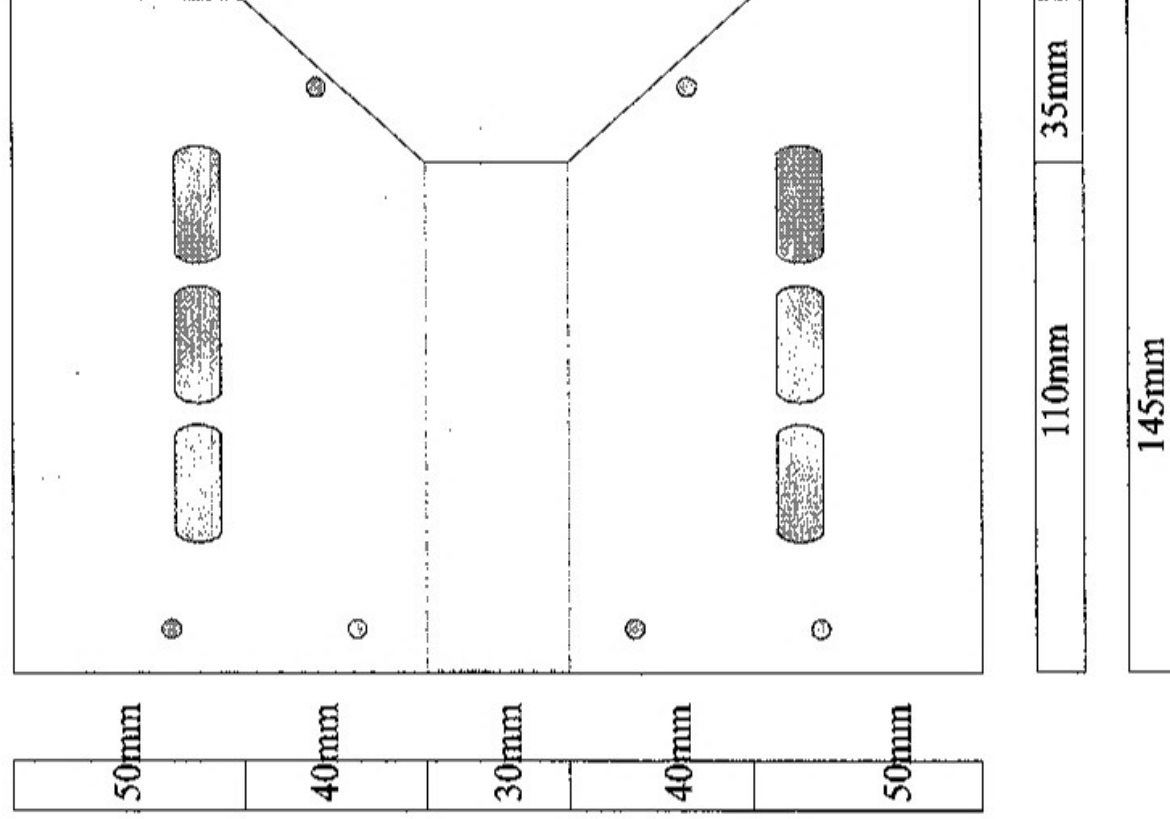
Do the same as above, but make the stock



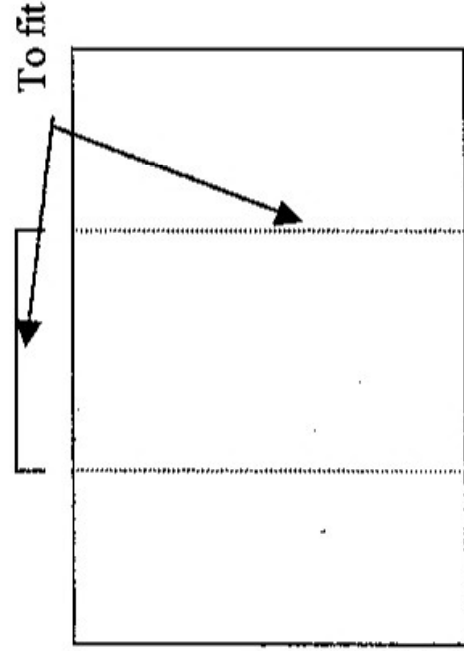
When you have cut and folded this piece place it into the channel and using the holes in the channel mark where the screws go and then drill them



Next we fit the speaker housing -



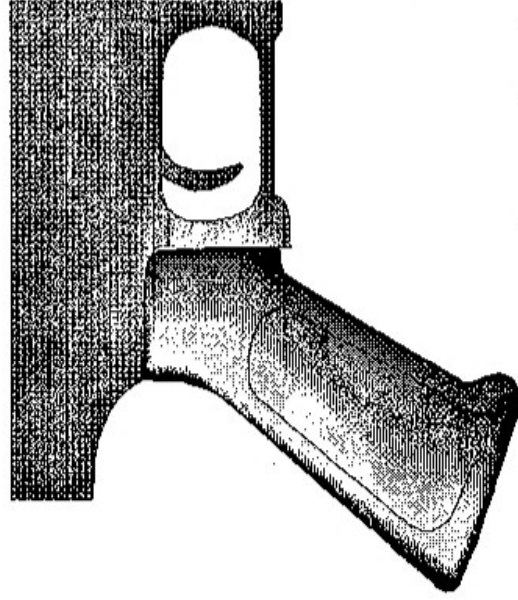
Use the same method as with the stock to fit it. The back edge of the piece needs to be 37.5 cm from the back of the gun. Notice the holes located at the front and back of the speaker housing. They are for the plates to "fill in the holes" in the ends of the piece. I have not provided measurements for the ends of any of the pieces in this guide as it is largely a matter of custom fitting. So all the edges meet. Make the ends out of thick card first, then when you have the size right use it as a template to make an aluminium piece. The piece for the speaker housing is straight forward. Its shaped like this -



This bit fits inside the back end like a cap. Mark through the holes and drill them. When finished just rivet it in place.

Do the front of the speaker housing in the same way. In fact the same method is used on the stock, carry handle and all the other bits of the gun that need the open ends filled in.

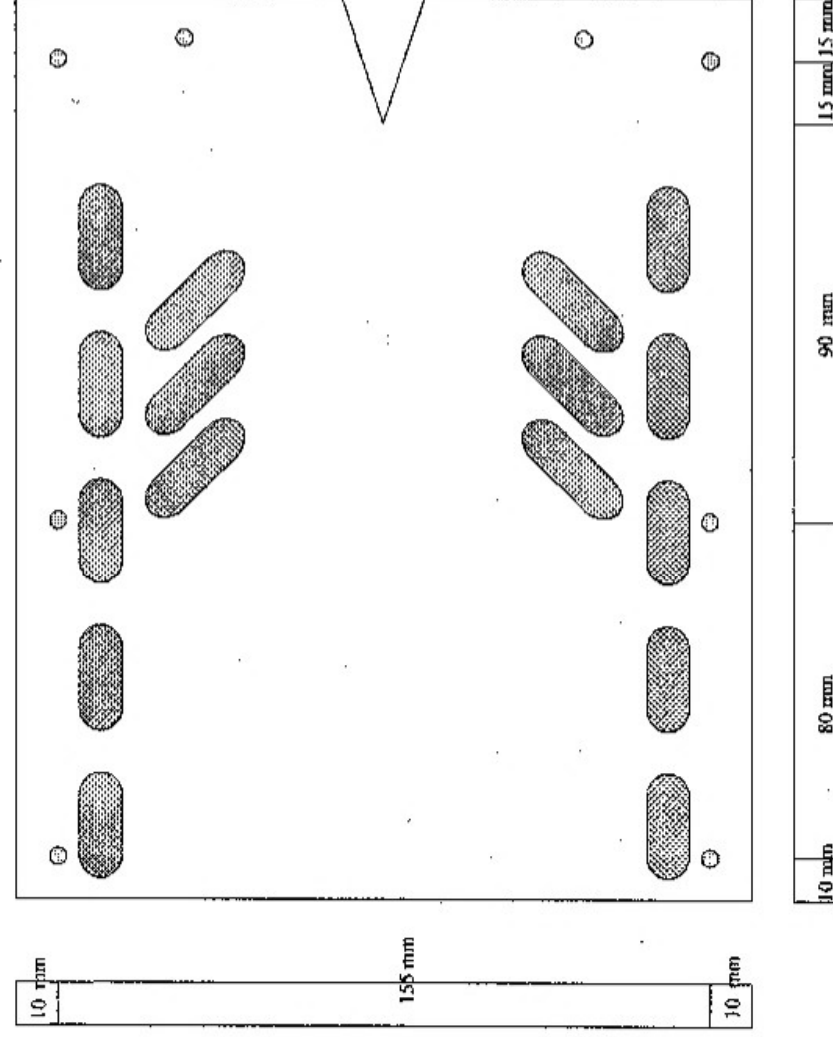
Next we fit the guns grip. Take your toy M16 and cut it with the hacksaw until it looks like this-



Place the grip so that the front butts up to the speaker housing. If you look the channel should already have the holes drilled in it for the grip, simply mark up the plastic where the holes are and drill them. When fitted use the 20 mm length screws. Its up to you how you fit a switch to the trigger, I'd use a microswitch glued into place.

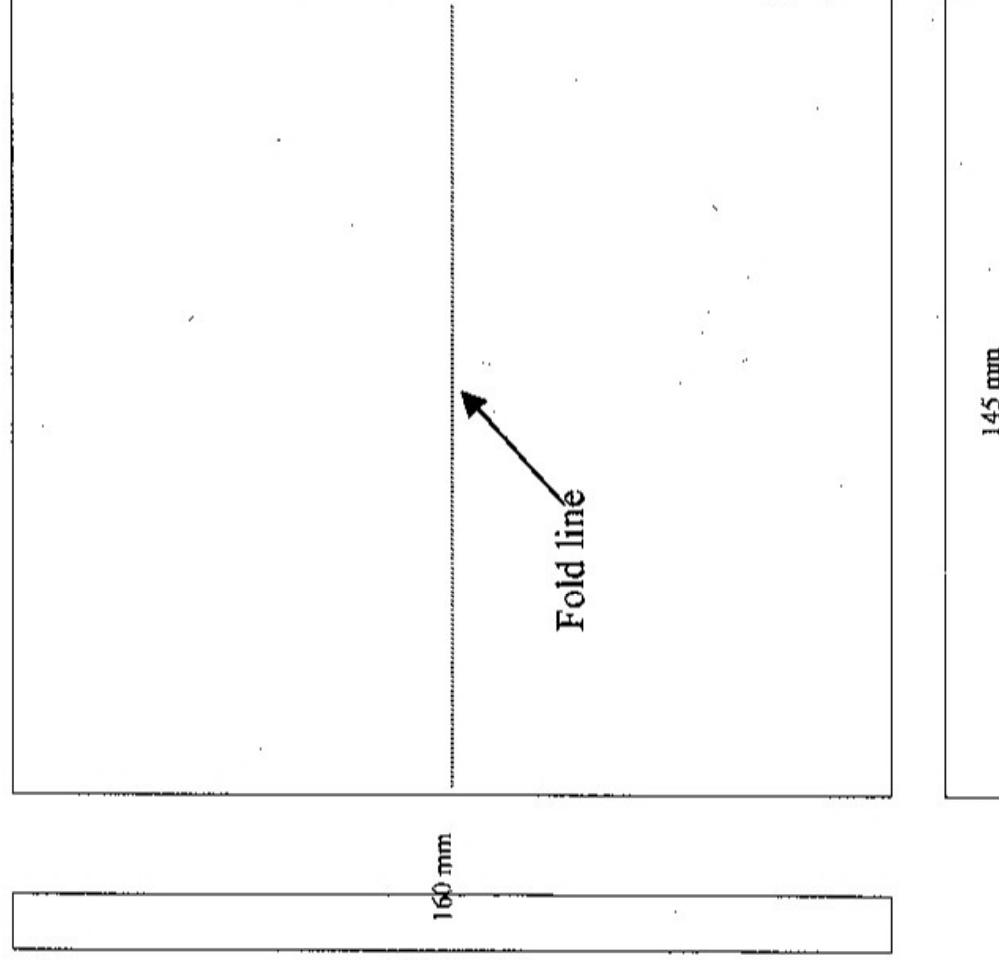
Next is a very simple piece, its just a rectangle 80 mm by 130 mm, with folds 50 mm in from both ends, giving a U shaped piece 50 mm by 30 mm by 50 mm and 80 mm long. This goes in front of the speaker housing.

Now we come to one of the most time consuming pieces, the barrel shroud.



The layout looks like this. Cut out the shape and drill the small holes but don't cut out the slots yet (if you are going to at all). Now bend it around a piece of 37 mm tube to get the curve in the middle. Bend it a little at a time and keep test fitting it against the channel until the bottom edges are the same distance apart as the channel. When they are, cut out the slots. If you cut the slots out before bending it the metal will bend at the slots rather than where you are trying to bend it. Now fit it to the channel making sure the front edge of the shroud and channel align. It should overlap the main body piece by about 1-2 cm, don't worry its supposed to. Now the triangular notch in the front of the barrel shroud needs bending, I did this by hand working the metal until the edges meet this should give you the sloping look at front.

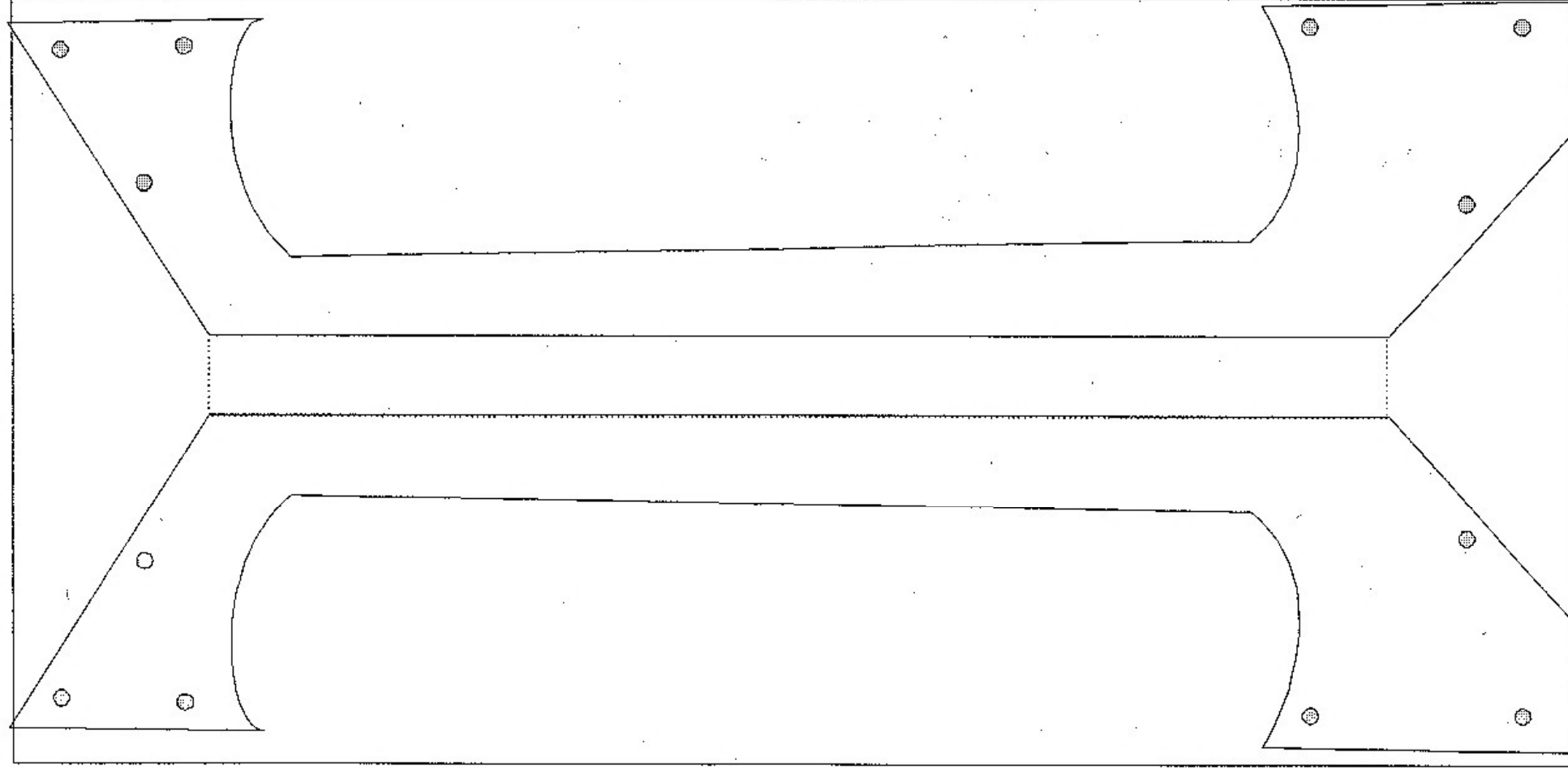
Cut a piece of aluminium 145 mm by 160 mm. Now bend it around a length of 40 mm tube, short ways, so that the finished piece is 145 mm long. Like so -



This is the fore grip of the gun. You fit this to the channel using the front 4 screws that hold the barrel shroud in place. Make sure that you fit it under the barrel shroud.

Now another tricky bit the carrying handle. When you've made this bit fill in the ends as described earlier and attach it to the gun using two more U shaped pieces. One 70 mm long by 35 mm wide with 15 mm uprights, this is bolted onto the main body 20 cm from the back of the gun in a central position, the back of the carry handle then rivets onto this. The other one is 75 mm long by 20 mm wide with 15 mm uprights and bolts onto the main body 55 cm from the back of the gun. The front of the carry handle rivets onto this.

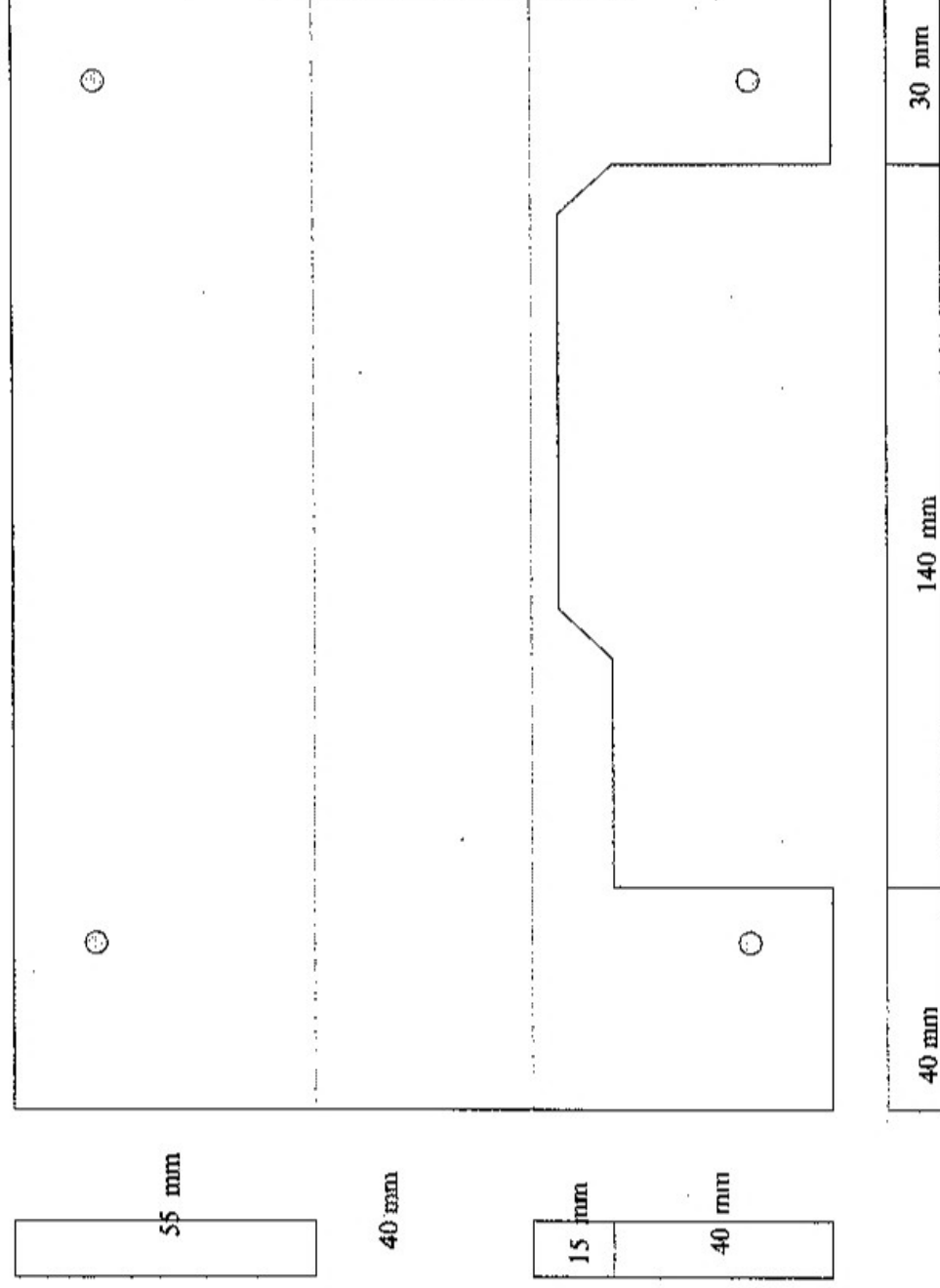
Now the carry handle itself looks like this -



390 mm

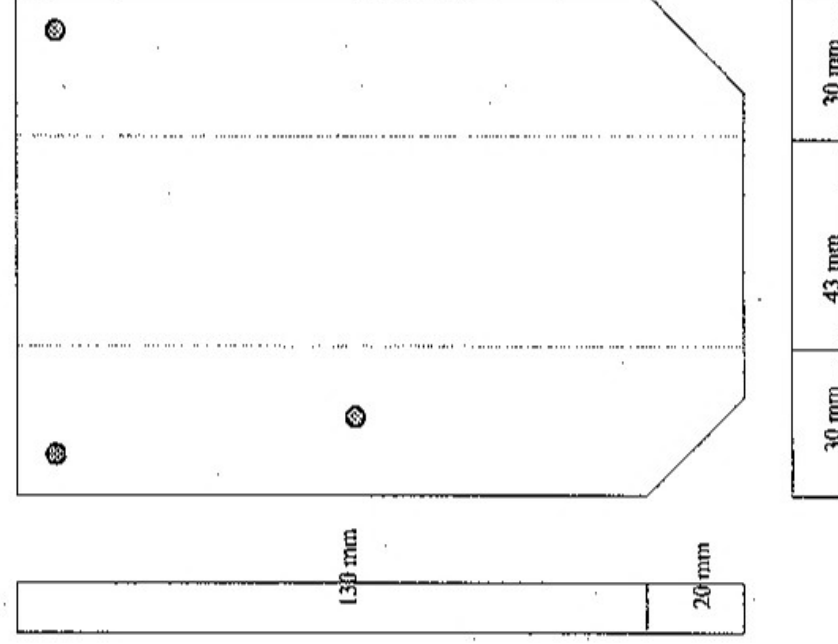
190 mm

Next step is to make and fit the receiver it looks like this --



This fits behind the carry handle rivets onto the main body.

Next comes the butt plate. Here's the plan --



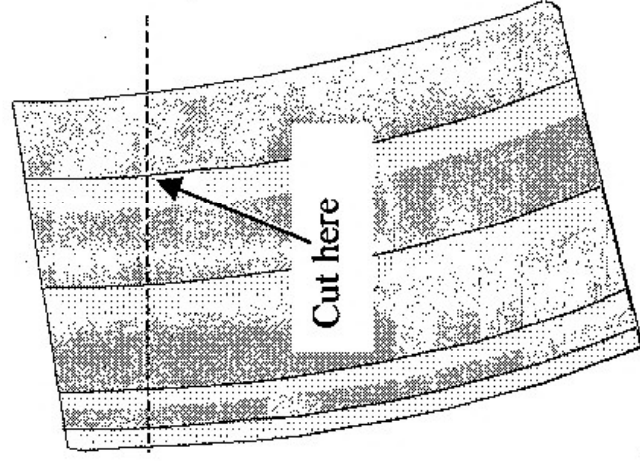
This is folded as marked and fitted to the back of the gun. Be careful not to place this right up against the back of the gun as this piece will pivot on the two rivets that go in the top two holes, so that you can put batteries into the gun. The third hole is for a 4mm screw that goes into the channel to hold the butt plate closed. Before drilling the holes in the receiver for the rivets mark them with pen and pivot the butt plate from closed to open position, if you can see the pen marks through the holes the whole time it should pivot alright.

Now get your 22 mm tube and cut 2 lengths one 11 cm long the other 25 cm. Now take the 25 cm long bit and cut out a section from the side all the way down. The idea is to fit the long tube inside the shorter tube so that the long tube just protrudes from the end of the shorter one. When you have done that mark two points on the channel at the front of the gun. 20 mm and 100 mm in from the front and exactly in the middle of the channel width. These are for two fixing bolts for your muzzle flash barrel. Now on your 22 mm tube drill two holes 145 mm and 225 mm from the front of the tube (on the side opposite the section you removed). These should match the holes in the channel, now bolt it in place (note - the same two bolts can be used to attach the IR barrel if you work it right).

I used a piece of 40 mm tube to make a barrel but if you aren't any good at making them or can't be bothered then the smaller sized barrel that Dave Bodger supplies should fit in quite nicely.

Use a length of 37.5 mm tube to fill the gap between the foregrip and speaker housing and just bolt it into place.

One final bit of construction is to fit the ammo magazine. Take the one off your M16 toy and cut it like so -



Then you guessed it another U shaped piece of aluminium that fits into the top of the magazine and bolts onto the bottom of the stock. Then holes are drilled in the mag and the U shaped piece and the mag is screwed into place. In the film the magazines are built up to look bigger. All I did was to cut out some plasticard and glued it to the

sides of the magazine then used some filler to blend it in. If you look at the complete diagram you will see the pattern they used, its just a case of sizing it to your magazine, again using card first to make a template is a good idea.

Finishing Touches

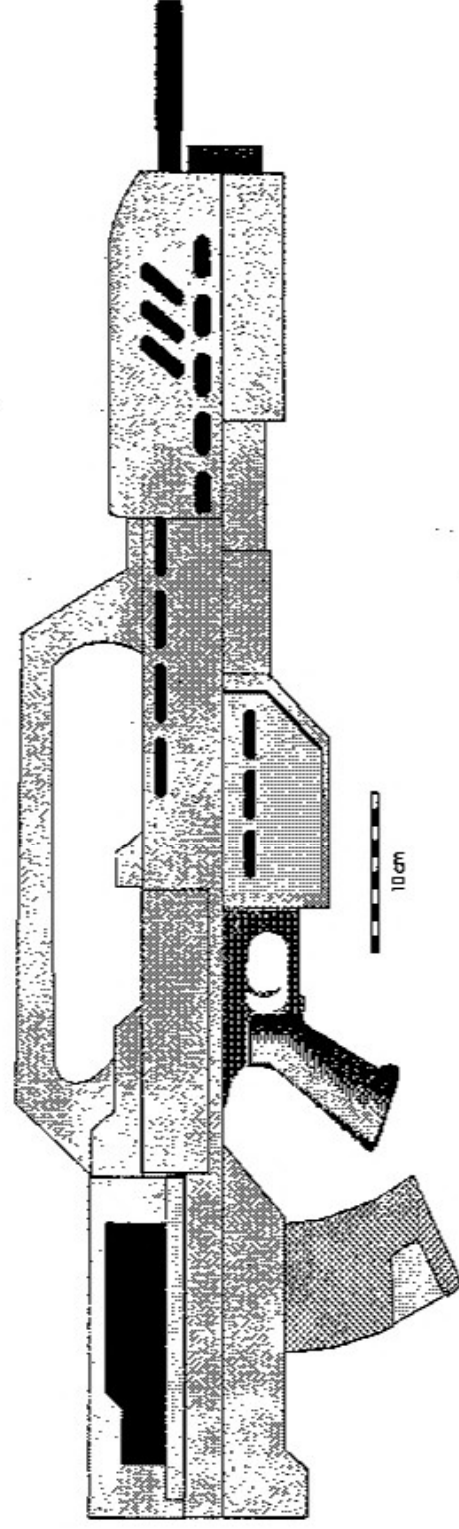
If you want to, use filler on all the edges to smooth the gun out and file off any sharp edges on the aluminium. Sand the entire gun down to give the paint something to key to and then paint the gun. I suggest a dark grey with black trimmings or if you want to be cheap about it like me I used grey car primer which is cheaper than normal car paint.

I hope there is enough info there for you to build one. I've tried not to be too long but this is the first article I've written so give me some leeway.

There is probably some thing I've left out so if you have any questions or enquires then write to me

GOOD LUCK !

Phil



From the journal of Major Nate Grey Stardate 9803.13 a Friday.

Record starts:

Where to start.....

I'm on a ship, funny name "Mighty Mouse" or sumthin' - no "Minuteman" that's it. Everyone's callin' me Major, I guess I'm some kind of soldier.

The medics say I'm over my addiction to green meanies. That's cool.

The Captain calls us in, we're chasin' a ship called the Darmah to Groombridge, we're on the rogue list so presumably someone's huntin' us, we're out of supplies, it's dark and we're wearing sunglasses. (oops sorry greenie flashback).

We're in orbit round an earth type planet, ghod only knows where we are.

We're going foraging for supplies.

It looks like I'm in charge of the ground troops, the Captain tells me he's battlefield promoting me to Major - funny I thought I already wuz one. Don't mean jack though if we're onna rogue list.

I sort the men into fire teams.

OK we HALO onto the planet, it's dark, we find some structures defended by a mixture of Chigs and AI's. We locate a large building and assault it, it seems to be some kind of genetic research base.

When we get inside there's a bomb (isn't there always), and Bodger goes to defuse it. The stupid MF triggers a radiation burst and gets out, but unfortunately medic Clark gets caught in the pulse. At about this time we also find some results of the genetic experiments, "people" who have been compromised with some extraneous genetic material. I order them shot and the bodies burned, harsh, but I have they safety of my men at stake, four lives versus twenty-five. Also I need more info about the radiation zone, Clark has already been contaminated so I send her back in. Hard decisions all, Ghod I could use a meanie.

Things quiet down so I catch a few Z's.

Saturday morning we mount an expedition out onto the planet and hit a load of AI's and chigs. We also met a load more people supposedly down from the Minuteman, no idea where they came from, we even found some

paper work in chig addressed to one of them, like we're gonna trust him, yeah.

When we headed back to the building, I wuz winged, when I woke up I had me a cravin' for green meanies (MMMMMMMM). The freakin medics had screwed me over again, I simply can't resist them, one an hour at first, but the medics are rather stupid and it's easy to scam more.

Unfortunately apart from a feel good rush, the meanies also impair your judgement and on another foray I got drawn away from the party, shot and captured by a bunch of AI's. So did Watson so that wuz cool.

The CO and 2IC being held and tortured, our men bravely came to the rescue, draggin' us back to base, ghod I could a meanie about now.

A couple of hours later they come in and try to fob me off with a sedative instead of a meanie, I spot this and get a bit stropky at which point they jump me, bastards, five of em, they hold me down and shoot me with a tranq whoa.

I wake up cuffed up in a locked room, it's a few seconds struggle to get my hands in front, but I can't break out of the handcuffs.

The CMO is by the door, unfortunately I can't control my moods by now as I sink into

withdrawal.

The following morning - I've spent a really shitty night and the rest of my mutinous crew go out to find a suitable LZ for the dropship. I spend the time contemplating how I'm going to kill the medics, the ringleaders and also the Chigs (after all it's their fault I'm in this freakin war) very slowly. Time passes and Steve Aucott slips me a meanie so I can think a bit straighter, I play dead next meanie time, and lure them into the room intending to jump them, unfortunately they just kick the crap out of me, and I'm lead in handcuffs to the dropship. I try to bust out but Aucott can run faster than me. Bastard!

I get to the ship just behind him and they tranq me again.

I wake up with 6 meanies in my mouth, I must be in heaven, then I don't remember much.....

Record ends...



LOG TIME 5:15 AM MARCH 17

IT'S BEEN A WILD COUPLE O DAYS, AND I CAN'T SLEEP, I'M NOT EVEN SURE WHY I AM BOTHERING TO RECORD THIS, I'LL PROBABLY SCRUB IT WHEN I' DONE, BUT I GUESS I JUST NEED TO TALK, THE CAPTAIN'S BEEN MOODY AND KEEPING ME OUT OF EVERYTHING BUT RUNNING THE SHIP, WHICH I AM PRACTICALLY DOING ON MY OWN, THESE NEW TIN BOYS MUST REALLY HAVE THE CAPTAIN SPOOKED, MAYBE I SHOULD START AT THE BEGINNING.

WELL THE 5 TH GLOBAL, WAS HAIRARSING OUT TO MALICENT 580 A BEAUTIFUL TWIN BINARY STAR SYSTEM THAT WOULD HAVE PLACED US RIGHT IN THE EDGE OF CHIGG CONTROLLED SPACE, WE LOOPEO OUT OF WARP TO FIND A CHIGG CARRIER COMING IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION.

CAPTAIN KEN ISHI ABOARD THE UNITED EARTH SHIP ANDROMEDA GAVE THE ORDER TO ATTACK, NOW WE ARE, SORRY BUNCH O SHITE'S, SCRUB THAT, WE WERE ALL PLANETARY BOMBARDMENT SHIPS, WITH NO CRUISER SUPPORT, NO WAY WERE WE SET UP TO TAKE ON ANY OTHER SHIP, ESPECIALLY A CHIGG CARRIER, WELL THE CARRIER BACKED UP BETWEEN THE BINARY'S USING THE SOLAR FLAIRS TO TOP EFFECT, THE CAPTAIN HELD US BACK, LUCKY FOR US HE DID CAUSE WHEN THE PARIAH GOT HIT ALL 18 OF THE TAM'S SHE WAS CARRYING WENT UP WIPEO OUT EVERYTHING AND ALMOST GOT US TOO, IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR PRIVATE GUPPY, GOD REST HIS SOUL, NONE OF US WOULD BE IN ANY POSITION TO BE HERE TODAY, WE LOST 80% OF A GOOD CREW THAT DAY.

WELL THE CAPTAIN RETURNED TO US GROOM BRIDGE FOR REPAIRS, AND BEFORE THEY WERE HALF FINISHED WE WERE SENT TO THE BACCHUS, NOT FOR R&R, BUT TO GRAB ALL THE GROUND POUNDERS WE COULD LAY OUR GRUBBY HANDS ON, OH AND TO PICK UP CAPTAIN MC-KENDRICK'S SPETSNAS RETRIEVA TEAM BUT THEY ALL TURNED OUT TO BE TYPE II SILICATES, AND TRIED TO RUN OFF WITH HIS CARCASS HIS INFORMATION AND OUR TAMS.

WE SHIPPED OUT WITH OUR BUNCH OF DIRT MUNCHERS WHO TURNED OL TO BE NOT A BAD LOT, TO GET THE BRIT CAPTAIN MC-KENDRICK, WHEN WE GO' TO WHERE WE WERE GOING, IN THE HART OF CHIGG OCCUPIED SPACE, THE STRANGEST THING HAPPENED, WE HAD A DUST UP WITH A CHIGG BOMBER SQUADRON, BUT WE SAW THEM OFF, FOLLOWED THEM TO THERE CHIGGY INSULATION AND BOMBED THE CRAP OUT OF IT, THEN BACK IN TIME TO GRAB MC-KENDRICK AND THE GROUND POUNDERS, SOON AFTERWARDS WE DISCOVERED THE MISSING PERSONNEL AND THE TAM'S.

WE FIGURE THEY MUST HAVE MOVED THE WARHEADS TO BAY 6, AND JETTISONED THEM WITH THE REST OF THE JUNK, WE DUMPED TO PUT THE BOMBERS OFF, AND THE UNITED EARTH SHIP DARMAH, CAPTURED AND RUN ENTIRELY BY TYPE II'S, MUST HAVE HOMED IN ON SOME SORT OF BEACON AND PICKED THEM UP, OH AND HALF THE TANKS WE SENT DOWN CAME BACK ADDICTED TO GREEN MEANIES, IN ALL IT WAS A BAD COUPLE OF DAYS.

WE MET UP WITH THE UNITED STATES SHIP RISHAN AND SENT CAPTAIN MC-KENDRICK TO GROOM BRIDGE THEN THE CAPTAIN SET OUT TO FIND THE DARMAH, EACH DAY NOTHING TURNED UP HE GOT MOODIER, EVENTUALLY HE STARTED DRINKING ON THE BRIDGE, I KNOW HE DID IT BEFORE BUT IT WAS AS RELAXANT NOT TO GET SO DRUNK THE DARMAH COULD SLAP US ON THE ARSE AND HE WOULD NOT KNOW, ANYWAY HE USED TO OFFER IT AROUND, ABOUT THREE WEEKS OUT WE CAME ACROSS A POD OF SURVIVORS, FROM HER MAJESTY SHIP ADAGI, WE FOUND WHAT WAS LEFT OF THE 57 TH CRUSADERS STARVING, DEHYDRATED AND IN A BAD WAY, BUT THE SHIPS SURGEON GOT EM BACK ON THERE FEET, THE DARMAH HAD ATTACKED AND DESTROYED THE ADAGI, SO WE KNEW SHE HAD PASSED THIS WAY, THE CAPTAIN PUT THE MINUTEMAN ON SILENT RUNNING, THIS LASTED FOR TWO WEEKS UNTIL WE GOT LUCKY AGAIN.

SOME OF THE TECH'S HAD BEEN WORKING ON CRACKING THE NEW ENCODING ON THE SILICATE HARD DRIVES, THE LANGUAGE THEY USED WAS A PIDGIN CHIGG, WHICH WE LATER GOT A ALPHABET FROM, WELL THE DARMAH SENT AND RECEIVED A MESSAGE FROM JAVA 163, A SMALL AND SUPPOSEDLY UNINHABITED M-CLASS PLANET 2/3 THE SIZE OF EARTH, WE HIGTAILED IT TO JAVA, ON THE WAY WE WERE HIT BY WHAT WE ASSUME WAS A METEOR BUT WE LATER DISCOVER IS A CHUNK OF HULL IN ONE OF THE CHIGG EXPERIMENTAL COMPOUNDS.

THE CAPTAIN TOOK CONTROL AGAIN, I AIN'T SEEN THE OLD MAN LIKE TH HE HAD ME BRING THE SHIP INTO A RANDOM LEVEL ORBIT AND SCAN FOR JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING, APART FROM SOME UNNATURALLY HIGH RAD LEVELS THER WASN'T EVEN SOMETHING YOU COULD CALL A DECENT PIECE OF COVER.

THEN HAD ALL THE AVAILABLE TROOPS BROUGHT TO THE BRIDGE, FOR A BRIEFING, SOMETHING WEIRD WAS GOING ON HE HAD ALMOST ALL THE 121 S IN HIS READY ROOM ON SOME SORT OF BUSINESS WHICH HE STILL HAS NOT TOLD ME ABOUT, THEN HAD THE TROOP OUT ON SOME SORT OF FOOD HUNT, HORSE SHIT MORE LIKE, WHAT THEY FOUND ON THE PLANET WAS A TYPE II SILICATE PRODUCTION FACILITY COMPLETE WITH STOLEN GESTATION TANKS ANI TANK TEST SUBJECTS.

WE DROPPED THE TROOPS BUT SOME PRETTY UNUSUAL THINGS HAPPENED DOWN ON JAVA THE RESEARCH FACILITY HAD SOME SORT OF SHIELDING ON IT MAKING IT A TOUGH NUT TO CRACK, THE FACILITY WAS A PRISON COME RESEARCH FACILITY WITH TANK POW'S, BUT THEY ESCAPED INTO THE SURROUNDING AREA, MY GUESS IS THE FIRING SQUAD MAY HAVE HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH THIS.

WE COULD HAVE PICKED THEM UP MAN, BROUGHT THEM BACK, MAN WHA EVER HAPPEN TO SEMPER FI, MARINES LOOKIN AFTER THERE OWN, BUT THE TANK MAJOR WAS WEIRD FROM DAY ONE, TO QUICK TO THROW ANY DRUG INTO HIS BODY, BUT THAT'S THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER'S PROBLEM.

IN THIS FACILITY THEY FOUND PLANS ON THE SILPHEDE CORPORATION NEW TOY, THE SUEL ATTACK CRAFT-77, WHICH ACCORDING TO INTEL IS UNDERGOING SECRET TESTING AT GANAMEDE, ONE OF OUR TAM'S, WHICH MADE THE OLD MAN REAL CHERRY, THE CAPTAIN ACTUALLY SMILED, FOR ALL C TWO MINUTES BUT HE SMILED AND LOADS OF CHIGG INTEL ON THERE EXPERIMENTS, BUT TO GET ALL THIS THE GROUND POUNDERS HAD A STICKY DUST UP, THEY FOUND A TYPE II BUT IT BROKE OUT APPARENTLY THEY ARE REAL STRONG, THREW ONE OF THE PATCH UP BOYS A CLEAR 100 YARDS THEN WENT FOR THE TOUCHDOWN, AND A SILICATE CHIGG HYBRID ARMOUR, IT LATE EXPLAINED THE HIGH RADS, THE ARMOUR AS FAR AS I CAN TELL BENT LIGHT AROUND IT SEAMING TO DISAPPEAR, THAT IS ALL WE NEED INVISIBLE CHIGG.

I GUESS THIS IS WHAT CONFUSES ME THE MOST, BUT THIS IS WHAT I HAVE GOT, FROM THE INTEL. THE SILICATES HAVE SET UP A UNDERGROUND RAILROAD, NAMED THE INVETRO FREEDOM ALLIANCE, THE IFA'S AIM IS TO SHOOT OUT DESERTING TANKS, MUCH LIKE THE OLD SLAVE TRAINS IN THE ANCIENT AMERICAS, THE TYPE II SILICATES IN COMMAND WHO RUN THE IFA USE RUMOURS OF THE 58 TH, TO CONVINCE TANKS TO LEAVE, ALL BRANCHES OF THE MILITARY, THEN DUMP THEM ON OUT OF THE WAY M CLASS PLANETS, LEAVING THEM TO SURVIVE OR DIE, IT FIGURES, OUT REALLY, IF YOU CAN GET RID OF THE OPPOSITIONS MEN, IT'S COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS IS REDUCED, BUT THERE HAS GOT TO BE A TANK ELEMENT TO ALL THIS OR THE NETWORK WOULD NEVER WORK, AND WHEN HIGH COMMAND COMES A CALLING LOOKING FOR SOMEONE TO BLAME IT'S THOSE PEOPLE THAT ARE GOING TO GET HUNG.

OUR SYSTEMS WENT HAYWIRE FOR A WHILE AND THE ARIADNEE SIDLED UP ALONG SIDE AND SOME GUY TALKED WITH THE CAPTAIN APPARENTLY THEY HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR US, OR IN PARTICULAR ONE OF OUR TROOP NICK BECKET, THERE TOP MAN TOM DALLAS TOOK CONTROL AND SHIPPED DOWN TO THE PLANET WHILE THE ARIADNEE FIXED HERSELF TO OUR HULL, THE PLAN BEING TO HIGH TAIL IT BACK TO EARTH.

IT WOULD SEAM THE SILICATES HAVE OVERSTEPSSED THE MARK DRAWN BY THERE CHIGGY ALLIES, BY DOING ALL THIS EXPERIMENTATION AND STEELINI OUR TAM'S, THERE SUPER STEALTH CHIGG ARMOUR MADE THE TEST SUBJECT! SECTION 8, AND THEY STARTED CAPPING EVERYTHING SO WHEN ONE OF THE CHIGGY HIGH UPS TURNS UP TO SEE HOW IT'S ALL GOING HE GETS PINNED DOWN BY THERE ROUGE EXPERIMENT, IN THE END IT GOT OUR BOYS TO KICK IT! ARSE AND ORDERED THE SILICATES TO HELP, I GUESS IT MUST HAVE BEEN PRETTY HIGH UP, THERE IS A RUMOUR THAT ALL THE CHIGGY HIGH UPS ARE BABES BUT I CAN'T TELL IF CHIGG ARE BUTCH OR CHICK, AND I DON'T INTEND ON GETTING CLOSE ENOUGH TO FIND OUT, BUT IT! WAS PRETTY IMPORTANT, AND GOT THE JOB DONE.

WHILE ALL THIS WAS GOING ON, THE 2ND AERO BOMBARDMENT WING ATTACKED THE CHIGG CENTRAL SHIPYARD DRAWING AWAY MANY OF THE CHIGG HEAVY CRUISERS, THE SARATOGA RAN THE BLOCKADE THEN SPLIT TO A NEARBY STAR, WHERE THEY MET UP WITH THE ARTIMIS, THE PROMETHEUS AND DEADELIS, WHICH HAD SPENT 48 HRS PLACING OVER 1600 ANTI SHIP MINES, THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE SYSTEM ANY SHIP NOT SENDING OUT THE CORRECT FOF CODE IMMEDIATELY ATTRACTED THE ATTENTION OF THESE MINES, I GUESE IT WOULD HAVE MADE A REAL MESS OF ANY PURSUING SHIPS, LUCKILY FOR US THE CHIGG WERE TO BUSY TO NOTICE US AROUND ONE OF THERE FACILITIES.

DALLAS USED THE TAM TO WIPE OUT THE JAVA FACILITY AND BOY, MAN DO THOSE BABIES HAVE A HALO COMPLETELY STRIPED THE PLANET, NOW I KNOW WHY THE OLD MAN WAS SO PISSED, ALL THE TIME, THE ONLY PROBLEM WE HAVE NOW IS THAT THE DARMAH STILL HAS TWO OF THESE ON BOARD AND HAS A HEAD START ON US BACK TO EARTH, IF THOSE SILICATE SONS O BITCHES GET THERE THIS WAR IS GOING TO BE OVER IN A NEW YORK SECOND.

I CAN HERE THOSE OVERSIZED DETROIT ENGINES ON THE ARIADNEE, HAMMERING OUT THERE MANTRA ALL OVER THE HULL OF THE MINUTEMAN 'CAN'T CATCH ME, CAN'T KILL ME, CAN'T CATCH ME, CAN'T KILL ME' AT TIME THE OLD GIRL COMPLAINS AT THE EXCESSIVE SPEEDS SHE IS BEING SUBJECTED TO, STRESSES HER HULL WAS NEVER DESIGNED TO TAKE, I CAN ONLY HOPE SHE HOLDS OUT BECAUSE IT'S THE ONLY WAY WE ARE EVER GOING TO GET BACK IN TIME TO STOP THE DARMAH.

LOG INTERRUPTED BY PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM CAPTAIN GROOVETOWN TO COMMANDER DISCO AFRO.

GREAT LIFE JUST TOOK A DIVE INTO THE PAN THE OLD MAN SAYS AS SOON AS WE GET TO GROOMBRIDGE HE IS GOING TO HAND HIMSELF OVER AND GIVE ME COMMAND OF THE SHIP AND I DON'T ITS GOING TO BE FOR A PARTY, DALLAS IS LOOKING AT PLACING HIM UNDER ARREST TO AVOID COURT MARSHA UNTIL WE CAN GET THIS MESS SORTED THAT'S ALL I GOTA SAY I'M GOING TO GET DRUNK THEN HIT THE SACK, IT MAY LOOK BETTER TOMORROW.

A Weekend in the Country

by Alex Clark

There can rarely have been a live role-play event so beset by difficulties as this one, but despite having to delay the start to avoid the local junior school's charity walk, and having a group of seasonal field hands camped on one edge of the site, Dave Harvey put on a very enjoyable event. Although given the torrential rain that came down for most of Friday night, the delayed start may have been a blessing in disguise.

Sarah and myself arrived at about 3:00pm, Sarah having spent the morning preparing stuff for the barbecue. Tim Atkinson and Ros Day were already on site, and others arrived over the next hour or so.

The opening game of the weekend was "Open the Box...!", by Ros Day and Jasper Hedger and was set in the Star Wars universe. The administration of a minor world on the edge of the Empire were trying to ingratiate themselves with the Emperor by sending him a gift. Unfortunately, various malcontents and criminals wanted to steal the Emperor's present, which was in a very securely locked box. I was part of a group of government representatives who had been given the job of delivering the box to the Imperial officials at the space-port (OK, space landing strip). The others were Dave Harvey, Craig Porch and Sue Davies

Knowing that there were bands of desperate criminals who wouldn't hesitate to shoot us and take the box, and that none of us was carrying anything bigger than a pistol, we decided that our most prudent course would be to cache the box, then go to the space port, find some nice heavily armed Imperial soldiers as escort, and go and get the box together. We also reasoned that, as we didn't know what was in the box, or how to open it, we must be pretty low on the bureaucratic totem pole and therefore not inclined to get into a gunfight.

We managed to sneak around to the space-strip without encountering anyone, although it was a near thing. Unfortunately, the Imperial officials and troopers that we'd been hoping to find there had obviously decided to be fashionably late. Moving cautiously further round the site, we heard the sound of gunfire, so we did the sensible thing and hid. One of the warring sides was the Imperial troopers we'd been looking for. Making ourselves known to them (from a safe distance) we were informed that they were retiring to fetch reinforcements, and that we should wait in cover to rendezvous with them. After an encounter with a some heavily armed rabbit hunters, **[? ED]** a party of Stormtroopers made their entrance, complete with concealed combat orchestra playing the Stormtrooper March! With them was another trooper (Mick Penver) carrying what appeared to be the box containing the Emperor's present. They'd captured it from a group of rebels, who must have found our cunning hiding place for it.

By this time it was getting towards time for the shuttle to land so we all moved towards the landing area. As there were still some 10 minutes to go the Stormtroopers deployed out in the open and the rest of us hid behind a

tree. The Stormtroopers started coming under heavy fire, and it was all getting a bit busy until it started to chuck down rain (monsoon season on Merdonia, obviously) which may in fact have saved us. Most of us took (largely ineffectual) shelter under the large yew tree that was our finishing point until final whistle went.

In the debrief, delivered by Ros, made up as a member of the Black Sun (a highly organised criminal organisation), we learned that our box had not been found after all - those naughty rebels had made up a duplicate box, which when opened by the slicer (Sarah Clark) turned out to contain a nasty little snake, and a box of Tribbles! So it would seem that the Emperor is in for a different kind of birthday surprise, as will be the administration of Merdonia. The real box, when recovered, had in it party poppers and sundry other party items, and a cake with the Imperial logo on the icing. The entire script had actually been an elaborate way to give Sarah, whose birthday it really was, a cake!

The rain had blown over by this time and, although the skies frequently looked threatening, the weather stayed dry for the rest of the event.

After a chance to rest and dry out, Sarah served the barbecue, consisting of coated chicken, and peppered steaks. We'd just bought a new portable barbecue which did the job very well, which was a good thing considering that the fire pit where we'd done the cooking in the past was well waterlogged!

While the rest of us were eating, Paul Grosvenor and Craig Porch were setting out the props and suchlike for their game, "Many Happy Returns". In this game, most of us were members of a UN team sent to locate the remains of a shuttle which had crashed on re-entry returning from Mars, carrying the results of a number of scientific experiments. Players were engineers, biologists, geologists or medical specialists, with a small contingent of UN military to take care of security aspects. In a moment of madness, someone had decided to script me as military commander and 2ic of the whole mission, so I wasted no time in exploiting the cock-up potential of the situation.

As the scientists dispersed around the site to look for debris, I assembled my little band of merry men. This apparently consisted of two new guys whose names I can't remember (sorry, lads!) plus Tim Atkinson and Mick Penver. Unfortunately, I didn't think to check everyone's ID and Mick was actually a tabloid journalist and Tim was an eco-activist. At their suggestion I sent them out in pairs to patrol and set myself up at an observation point on top of one of the earth rampsarts (i.e. well away from Dave Harvey the field HQ and comms link.)

The scientists soon came upon radioactive hot spots, which were the remains of the fuel cells, and also some coloured gunk. Tim was an early victim of both, as he was infected by the gunk, which was some kind of nerve toxin, then led through a radioactive area which did him severe damage,

none of which was treatable by our medical team. In a bad way and getting worse, Tim's behaviour was so erratic that I put him under guard. (I'd returned to the HQ by this time) I also had a complaint that neither he nor Mick could produce ID when requested, and a call via the Comms system brought the news that they were actually intruders. This was very embarrassing as I'd vouched for them to one of the scientists a short time before. I placed them both under guard, but Tim was becoming unmanageable so I decided to stun him. As I brought my gun up he rushed me, and passed on the infection of the nerve agent to both myself and the mission commander (Sarah Clark). I stunned him anyway. In the confusion Mick Penver escaped into the darkness. The effect of the nerve agent was to knock off 1 HP every 20 minutes. The only treatment we had available slowed the rate down to every half hour so we really needed to finish the job and get back to proper medical facilities. This sense of urgency was superseded by a message from HQ telling us we had 45 minutes to locate and destroy all the toxic biological material before they sterilised the area with an airstrike!

With such an aid to concentration, the areas of infection were quickly located. A means of destroying the material was to hand, in the form of the hottest of the hot spots, which was so active that it would vaporise anything coming close. The gunk was deposited into the hot spot with the aid of a pulley devised by one of my troopers (well done, that man!), and we mostly lived happily ever after. Except Tim, who expired before we were extracted. And the UN was going to have a major PR job to do as Mick had managed to file a story about secret bioweapons research and cavalier disregard for the environment while I was off in splendid isolation on the rampart.

An interesting game in which the only shot was when I stunned Tim.

With no dry firewood we couldn't have the usual session round the fire so we huddled round the barbecue instead, while Sarah cooked some sausages. We watched satellites and meteorites until it got too cold and we turned in.

Sunday morning dawned bright and very warm. The game planned for the morning was Pete Merritt's "Any Port in a Storm....?", but Pete had not been able to make the event. As an alternative, Dave gave us a "border crossing" game. We were organised into mercenary groups of 4, and invited to contract for various jobs, including guarding the border which was the inner rampart. Other contracts required smuggling something across the border, capturing a wanted criminal, or hunting down a terrorist gang. Tim and Mick were far too effective for comfort as the terrorists, and 4 guards made for a rather leaky border. As each contract was time limited to half an hour, it made for a pretty lively game.

By now it was lunchtime, and the sky was looking very black again, so proceedings were brought to a close. Thanks to everyone involved in organising the event, particularly Dave and Sarah.

Drop Zone 99

Chairman's Address - 3rd August 1998

For those of you who weren't there, the kick off for DropZone 99 was held in the usual venue, the Arts Centre in Nuneaton on Sat. 25th July. Many thanks to Paul Tudor for organising the venue.

To sum up a new committee was elected.....

Chair - Tim Atkinson - Warlords
Secretary - James Bloodworth - Wild Cards
Treasurer - Graham Parton - Light Brigade
Site Co-ordinator - Katt (Jason Landinaff) - Black Watch
Game Co-ordinator - Paul Watson - Wild Cards
Chief Marshall - Roz Day - Fiat Lux

The role-playing theme for Drop Zone 99 will be "Invasion Earth" - run by Blackwatch. This will be loosely based on The Invasion Earth, Dark Skies type series. The committee mostly in the form of Katt are looking for a new site probably further south than Thorsby Park (Although this is a standby) and we already have a few contenders, but if anyone knows of a viable site please let us know. The date will be Late May Bank holiday May 28th-31st 1999, there are 298 days left.

Publicity: Drop Zone 99 already has its own website <http://www.runabout.demon.co.uk/dropzone.htm> if you have access to the internet, keep an eye on it for more details. I will continue to send out update emails on a monthly basis and we will be performing the usual mailshot as soon as some of the details have firmed up.

Drop Zone 99 is going to have another theme this year - audience participation. None of us on the Drop Zone committee get paid for what we do, neither do any of the game organisers, we do this for the hobby, in fact we pay our attendance fee like everyone else. Over the last couple of years we have done a large amount of work on the day, this year we hope to share some of the work and maybe even enjoy the event a little bit. This effort will be co-ordinated by Roz Day the chief Marshall. If anyone wishes to help out with anything please contact Roz or any other member of the committee. Drop Zone happens because you want it to, the committee try as it will, cannot do everything.

We have had various discussions regarding sensor technology. Specifically in regard to the sensitivity of Dave "Saint" Bodger's "Smart Sensors". The current official position of the Drop Zone committee following the meeting is that we currently plan to allow Smartsensors and introduce a corresponding reduction in minimum sensitivity to accommodate this. This will have the additional benefit of addressing the increasing general lack of sensitivity in people's kit as star sensors age, which was a source of complaint at Dropzone 98. The additional feature of Smartsensors inability to detect Terminator generated tag has been considered but cannot be addressed at the present time. Terminators use a method of generating their infrared output which is rather different to that of standard Starlyte pistols and as such the currently Smartsensor technology cannot detect this style of IR. I understand that Dave is working on a fix for this, but for the time being ANY SENSOR that can pass a minimum baseline test (probably about 2 metres with an unlicensed standard Starlyte) will be allowable at Dropzone 99. We will continue to keep you updated with any developments.

On an allied subject some doubt was expressed at the meeting regarding the Lasertag Confederation Third Party Insurance. As this concerns Drop Zone in a major fashion, Simon Clarke (organiser of the insurance for the Confederation) has clarified the subject of the insurance - we are all covered as we thought and we now have this in writing, hopefully a copy of the letter will go into the next Firefight. Drop Zone will pay the initial cost for this to ensure that no one individual carries this burden, but we cannot afford to subsidise the entire hobby. If you wish your club events to be covered, please forward a cheque to Graham Parton for £20 payable to "Dropzone". This means that you will be covered by the Lasertag Confederation Insurance for the current "insurance" year (January 1st-December 31st) the period the insurance runs for each year. We (Drop Zone) can only afford to extend this facility to clubs as long as our efforts in this direction are as minimal as possible, hence the cost is the same if your club runs one event a year or twenty. We (Drop Zone) will not chase you for this money, it is the responsibility of the individual club to volunteer payment of this sum. Without payment in the current "insurance" year, and the phrase "in association with the Lasertag Confederation of Great Britain" YOU ARE NOT COVERED. Please note: this is Third Party Insurance, not Personal Accident insurance, if you injure yourself playing a game of Lasertag you are solely responsible, the purpose of this insurance is to protect you from being sued by members of the public for damages you may inadvertently cause to them or their property whilst playing Lasertag. If you have any questions regarding this, please feel free to get in touch, but be warned, we do not haggle!

I know the above paragraph is a little "heavy" but that's the way it has to be. All in all I feel very encouraged about the start that Drop Zone has got off to this year, we have a strong committee of people who have proved themselves in the past, everything points to this being the best Drop Zone yet.

--Tim Atkinson <mailto:tim@npagroup.co.uk>

LETTER

Dear Editor,

Ok, this subject was brought to my attention by people who attended the Dropzone '99 meeting at the end of July; so if you find this boring and useless blame them and not me. (The ancient art of passing the buck).

As some of you are aware, I organise an insurance policy for a few clubs under the heading of the Lazer Tag Confederation. This covers the "Officers and Members of 'The Lazer Tag Confederation'". The problem is, how do you prove who is a member of the Confederation and who is not. Being the wonderful and dutiful human being I am; I then asked the insurance brokers what the insurance company would require to prove who is and is not a member of the Confederation. They sent a letter, which I attach to this one and hopefully this will be published in **FIREFIGHT** with this short but sweet **[?]** note **[see facing page]**

The letter mentions a chairman, and until an official and very friendly **[?]** meeting regarding the subject has taken place, I will be unfortunately standing in that position. If anyone has any further queries then please do not hesitate to ring, write or collar me at the next games you see me at.

See you at the next game,

Simon Clark

Simon can be contacted at his padded in-patient address
Cell #3
110, Ewart Road,
Forest Hill,
London.
SE23 1BE

[If this is not sorted before Tagcon niner-niner then some time may be allocated to allow some limited discussion/ 'friendly chat'. ED]

AEGIS

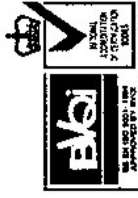


POLICIES

ICKNIELD HOUSE
EASTCHEAP
LEITCHWORTH
HERTS SG6 3DF

AEGIS MEMBERSHIP SERVICES
Turret Insurance Brokers Ltd • F.P. Clarke (Insurance) Ltd
T.F. Bott (Insurance Broker) Ltd

Lazer Tag Confederation
C/o Mr Simon Clark
110 Ewart Road
Forest Hill
London
SE23 1BE



TEL: 01462 480367
FAX: 01462 482057

CLIENT REF: LAZER
OUR REF : LJM
DATE : 27 July 1998

Re: Policy No: L/7769802

Dear Mr Clark

With reference to our telephone conversation today, I can confirm that in the event an accident all members will be covered and all that will be required is confirmation from the Chairman confirming them as a member of lazer tag confederation.

Should you require any further assistance do not hesitate to contact the office.

Yours sincerely

Laurie McNaughton
AEGIS POLICIES

BIIBA

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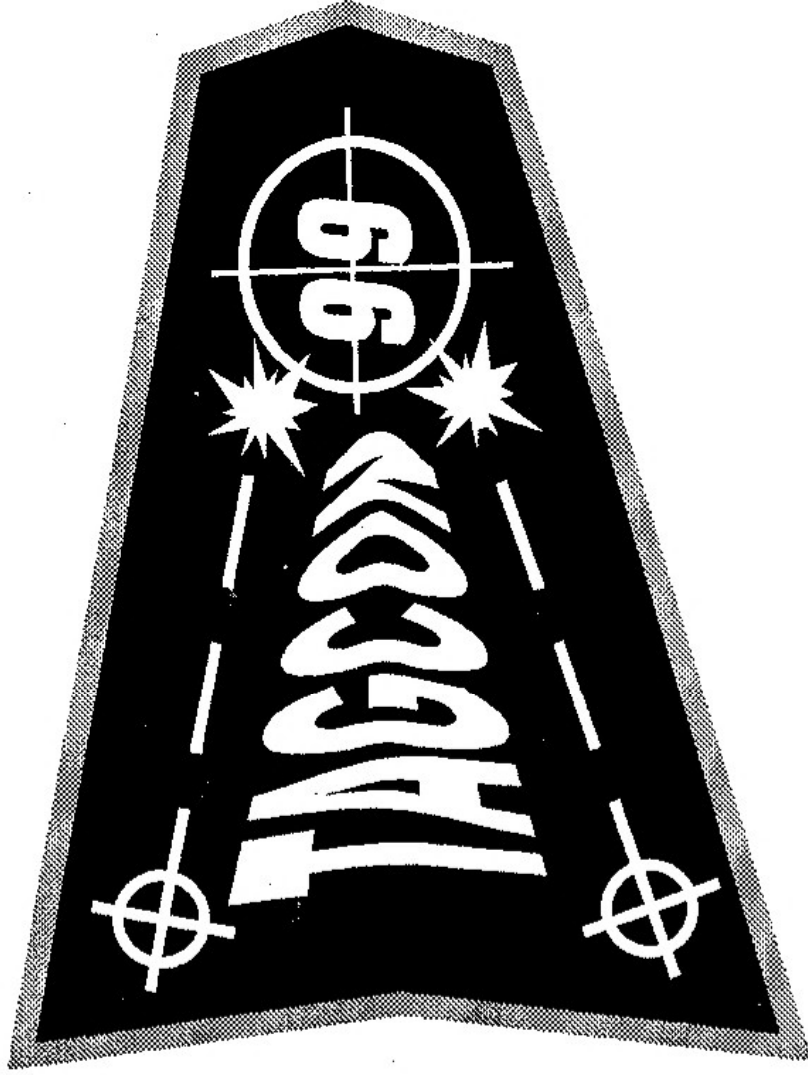
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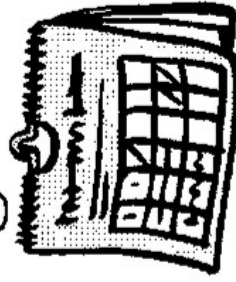
**CALL
FOR
TALKS
AT**



9th Annual Science Fiction Live Roleplaying Convention

FEBRUARY/MARCH 1999 - NUNSTON ARTS CENTRE

Tag details



for '99

Sci-Fi Quiz



PRESENTATIONS & Discussions
with a Buffet lunch thrown in!

For further details contact :-
Dai Rees, 122, Hartland Avenue, Wyken,
Coventry. CV2 3ES (01203) 727105/6
drees42@aol.com

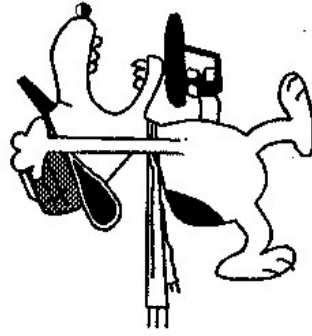
CLUB DIRECTORY

BAD COMPANY

BAD COMPANY

Contact: Ian Palmer,
2 Beech Close,
Stokenchurch,
High Wycombe
HP14 3QL
(01494) 483160

BARKING (MAD) WARDOGS



Contact: Paul Watson,
51, Vivien Road,
Sheffield.
S5 6WJ
(01114) 2440565

BLACK WATCH



Contact: Mr Katt (Jason) Landinaff,
18, Althorpe Rd.,
St. James,
Northampton.
NN5 5EF
(01604) 750329
(0802) 698802

FIAT LUX

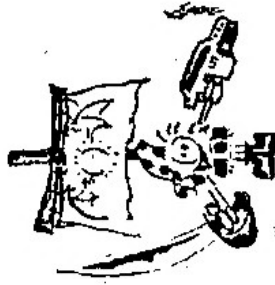


FIAT LUX !

Contact: Alex & Sarah Clark,
74, Bluebell Rd.,
Southampton,
SO16 3LQ
(01703) 679758
(0385) 790673
AJC4@SOTON.AC.UK

<http://www.soton.ac.uk/~ajc4/index.htm/>

FREEBOOTERS

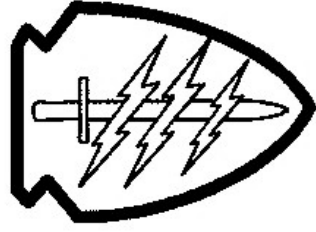


Contact: Peter Sherwood,
129 Parc-y-dre,
Ruthin,
Clwyd.
N. Wales
LL15 1PH
(01824) 704735

LAZERQUAKE

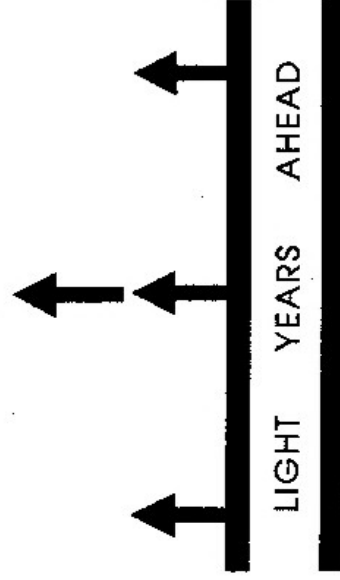
Contact: Paul Simmonds,
7, Preachers Lane,
St. Ebbes,
Oxford.
OX1 1RS
(01865) 728695

LIGHT BRIGADE



Contact: Dal Rees
122, Hartland Ave.,
Wyken,
Coventry.
CV2 3ES
(01203) 727105/6
drees42@aol.com

LIGHT YEARS AHEAD



Contact: Jon Blau,
Lane Cottage,
Whitbread Lane,
Northlam,
East Sussex.
TN31 6QU
(01797) 252537
(0860) 314857

N.O.A.G. 2500



Contact: Pete Webb,
8 Grenadler Walk,
Hardwick,
Cambridge.
CB3 7XW
(01954) 211593

SOUTH LONDON WARLORDS



Contact: Dave Harvey,
88, Crabtree Walk,
London.
SE15 5PE
(0171) 7018981

STARLORE ADVENTURES



Contact: Shaun Danby,
111, Berridge Rd. East,
Nottingham.
NG7 6HS

SURREY & HANTS OUTDOOR LAZER TAG

Contact: Jim Harvey,
2, Ibotson Court,
Poyle Road,
Slough
SL3 0HP

THIRD AGE ADVENTURES



Contact: Andy Gudelaifis
49, Goldsmith St.
Mansfield,
Nottinghamshire.
NG18 5PF
(01623) 644914

VIRTUAL ECLIPSE

Contact: Bill Chivers
5, Stokes Close,
Maldenbowe,
Crawley,
West Sussex.
RH10 7LY
(01293) 889642

Bill@Chivcons.demon.co.uk
http://www.chivcons.demon.co.uk/ve_info.htm

VIETNAANS

Contact: Dave Bignall
Flat 8, St John's Court,
101, Wentworth Rd.,
Harbourne,
Birmingham.
B17 9SF
(0121) 4262520

International Lazer Tag Federation Game Equipment Index

The GEI database facility is only available to clubs affiliated to the ILTF. The GEI shows details of equipment that a club is willing to lend to another club for use in Lazer Tag events, such as Drop Zone.

Please copy this form for as many items of game equipment as your club has, or updates. Please return the completed form(s) to J. Harvey, 2 Ibbotson Court, Poyle Road, The Flight Path of Heathrow, Slough, SL3 OHP.

If you would like a database listing for your club please contact J. Harvey, with an SAE. Any equipment loan should be negotiated between the club which owns it and the club requesting it.

Your Name
Club Name
Tel no

Your Address

Item Description

Category: mask
(tick one) costume
prop
armoury
s. effect

Genre

Approx. size

Conditions of use

Any other information

Please attach a photo if possible.

To register for affiliation please complete the ILTF Affiliation Registration form and send it to D. Rees at the 'Firefight' address.

Internet Lasertag Small Ads

As of, well, now I'm running a small-ads page on my web site. If you are after any particular item or have kit to sell, drop me a line by

post: Sarah Clark, 74 Bluebell Rd, Bassett, Southampton, SO16 3LQ

phone: 01703-679758

or e-mail: sarah.clark@btinternet.com

An advertisement may be placed on the page free of charge in any of the categories:

- Articles for sale
- Articles wanted
- Services offered
- Services wanted
- Advertisements must be text only to a maximum length of 100 words and should include a contact - sorry, no PO box service.
- You must provide us with your name and address though this doesn't have to be included in the ad itself. No anonymous correspondence, please.
- To avoid cluttering the page with out of date ads, any item will be posted for a maximum of 28 days or until we are notified that the goods are sold, whichever is sooner but can be renewed as often as you like.
- Items/services offered/wanted should be in some way related to the Lasertag hobby, but may include army surplus/camping items and more general LRP & props stuff.
- I reserve the right to refuse any advertisement I consider unsuitable on any grounds. As a general guideline, keep it:
 - Legal (*no mercenary services, toxic/explosive chemicals, shipment of arms/drugs, white slavery etc.*)
 - Decent (*no pornography of any kind*)
 - Non-lethal (*no real weapons including knives, deactivated firearms, martial-arts kit*)

Sarah Clark