

NEED TRIBES



THE NOMADS OF NORTH AMERICA

CYBERPUNK

CREDITS

WRITERS

Ross Winn
Eric Oppen

CHICAGO BACKGROUND

Dan Longoria

COMMENTARY

Angelina Acevedo
Tristan Heydt
Gilbert Milner
Marian Rosensriehl
Janice Sellars
Mark Schumann
Chris Williams
Benjamin Wright

ABOVE & BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

Laura G. Winn

SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

Michael Pondsmitth

ART DIRECTION & LAYOUT

Mark Schumann

COVER ILLUSTRATION

Hector Gomez

BACK COVER ILLUSTRATION

Cary Polkovitz

BACK COVER COLOR

Mark Schumann

INTERIOR ILLUSTRATIONS

Cary Polkovitz
Eric Hotz
Malcolm Hee
David Ackerman
Mark Schumann

INTERIOR ILLUSTRATION SHADING

Mark Schumann

EDITORS

Derek Quintanar, Senior Editor
Edward Bolme

Special Thanks To My Family: Roger, Sandra, Scott, Amy, Whitney, Deidre, Ellie, Karen, Brian, Ann, Bill, Hazel, Blanche, Rik, Karen, Wendy, Billy, Gil, Steve, Benjamin, Steve & (#1) Laura.

This Work Dedicated To The Memory Of John J. Gallagher (1935-1994)

WELCOME TO THE NEOTRIBES.

SOMEWHERE DEEP IN OUR HEARTS WE ARE ALL NOMADS. SOME OF US ARE LESS MOBILE THAN OTHERS, BUT NONE CAN SAY WE HAVEN'T AT SOME TIME WANTED TO MOVE. WE WERE MOVING LONG BEFORE MAN BEGAN TO FORM CULTURES AND FARM THE FERTILE SOIL. NEOTRIBES IS A PRODUCT OF MY OWN MOVEMENTS ACROSS AMERICA WITH MY FAMILY AND, LATER, WITH MY WIFE ALONE.

I HAVE MOVED THROUGH MOST OF OUR COUNTRY. I HAVE SEEN THE RANGE OF SUNSETS WE SEE. I'VE WATCHED THE SUN FORMING THE SKYLINE OF MANHATTAN INTO CONCRETE CANYONS OF DARKNESS. I HAVE SEEN THE AUTUMN SUN DISSOLVE INTO THE KANSAS HORIZON, TURNING THE WHEAT FIELDS INTO GOLDEN-ORANGE FIRE. AT THE PACIFIC, I HAVE SEEN THE SUNSET OFF THE COAST OF CALIFORNIA DISAPPEARING INTO THE COLD ROLLING OCEAN.

NOMADS ARE AS DIVERSE AS AMERICA; EVERY BIT AS TERRIBLE, AND EVERY BIT AS GREAT. IN THIS BOOK I HAVE LABORED TO ILLUMINATE THE GOOD IN THEM, AS I BELIEVE WE SHOULD TRY TO SEE THE GOOD IN ALL OF US.

TO THOSE WHO WISH TO ADVENTURE IN THE NOMAD CULTURE I CAN ONLY GIVE ONE SMALL PIECE OF ADVICE: NEVER, EVER, TURN AWAY FROM YOUR FAMILY.

MAY THE ROAD RISE UP TO GREET YOU...

ROSS WINN

CALIFORNIA, JANUARY 1995.

ERRATA

In the *Pacific Rim* sourcebook, we mistakenly credited Mike Ebert with the cover painting. Actually, the cover was painted by Hector Gomez, who also painted the fantastic cover to this book. This mistake will be corrected in the next printing of *Pacific Rim*. We apologize for this error and promise it will never ever happen again. Really.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

NOMADS IN AMERICA ...4

THE CULTURE OF MOBILITY5

DIVERSITY AND UNITY7

NOMAD CULTURES8

NOMAD FAMILY STRUCTURES13

NOMAD AMERICA MAP16-17

CHAPTER 2

THE SEVEN NATIONS ...18

SNAKE NATION19

THE JODES21

THE BLOOD NATION23

THE META26

THE ALDECADOS28

THE LAS NATION31

FOLK NATION33

THE EIGHTH NATION—

THE RAFFEN SHIV35

CHAPTER 3

CREATING NOMAD

CHARACTERS36

SPECIAL NOMAD CHARACTER ROLES .37

OTHER ROLES IN A NOMAD PACK ..43

NOMAD LIFEPATHS48

CHAPTER 4

NOMAD EQUIPMENT ...52

MUNDANE EQUIPMENT53

VEHICLES57

WEAPONS63

CHAPTER 5

RUNNING NOMADS68

NOMADS IN AN EDGERUNNER

CAMPAIGN69

FITTING EDGERUNNERS INTO A NOMAD

CAMPAIGN69

GENERAL NOTES ON RUNNING

NOMADS70

USING THE NOMAD NATIONS72

ODDS & ENDS73

CHAPTER 6

SAMPLE PACKS75

THE GARGOYLES76

THE BLAINE FAMILY77

THE FORCE OF NATURE78

THE TECHOMANCERS80

CHAPTER 7

CHICAGO: THE

ADVENTURE82

THE GATHERING STORM83

INTO THE STORM CITY89

CHICAGO CITY BACKGROUND92

THE CHASE94

R. TALSORIAN
GAMES, INC.

PUBLISHED BY R. TALSORIAN GAMES, INC.
P.O. BOX 7356, BERKELEY, CA 94707, USA

ISBN #: 0-937279-72-2
PRODUCE CP3371

Copyright 1995, by R. Talsorian Games, Inc. Cyberpunk® is a trademark of R. Talsorian Games, Inc., All Rights Reserved under the Universal Copyright Conventions. All situations, governments and people herein are fictional. Any similarities portrayed herein without satiric intent are strictly coincidental.



NOMADS IN AMERICA

NEO TRIBES



NOMADS IN AMERICA



DATASCREEN

4

CYBERPUNK 2.0.2.0



There are about seven million nomads roaming the North American States today, although there may have been as many as twenty million at some point during the catastrophic Collapse that shredded the fabric of 20th Century America. Yet, despite this decline in numbers and the myriad setbacks they have suffered, the nomads of 2020 have developed a vibrant and colorful culture which has weathered crippling adversity to become a force of arguable power in the Cyberpunk Age. These are the people who rebuilt the shattered cities of America from Los Angeles to Washington D.C.; these are the people who almost single-handedly constructed the TransContinental Maglev System that holds together the coasts of a divided land. The nomadic "NeoTribes" were born during a crisis—The Collapse—but they survived by their skill and determination, and they flourished through competition and the indomitable American Spirit. They are, some say, the future...

The popular media has always portrayed nomads as stereotypical murderers, thieves, raiders, and worse. But in reality, nomads are far better than that. Only a tiny minority of nomads are the menacing hordes of mechanized Mongols the media so loves to portray, and those few sociopaths are as despised by the rest of the nomads as they are by any suburbanite. The sensation-hungry popular media loves to detail the "exploits" of nomad groups with a great deal of embellishment, but this gives the average man in the street very little sense of the hardworking, family-oriented pack member who is the cornerstone of nomad life today.

THE CULTURE OF MOBILITY

When the average cyberpunk thinks of nomads, he usually thinks of huge convoys of vehicles moving down the dusty roads of post-apocalypse America. To a large extent, this is accurate; nomadic culture is defined by its rootless nature and its reliance on vehicles. What makes modern nomad culture unique in human history is the scale and scope of its operations.

While there have always been nomadic cultures, not all of these cultures have been what we define as mobile. Mobile, for our purposes, is a motorized culture; civilization in cars, as it were. Though many early nomadic cultures had the ability to move by horseback, foot, or water, they could not move much farther than ten or twenty miles a day. With the birth of the modern nomad came the ability to move a hundred miles a day in large groups, and much further than that in smaller ones. Mobile nomads can move to wherever the money, food and work are, in large numbers and on short notice. They are used to living on the road.

In an age when most Americans huddle in the fortified wreckage of their cities, it is this mobility that makes nomads suspect in the eyes of the common man and feared by the repressive governments that still hold tenaciously to power. A culture on the move is a new thing, and in 2020, the new is often dangerous.

Nomads and Statics

The 2019 Webster's Dictionary defines *static* things as objects that do not move, thus it is not surprising that nomad slang brands their non-mobile urban neighbors as statics. Statics and nomads have a great many misconceptions about each other. What the average American does not see is that nomad society is as structured as any corporation, and more peaceful than most. In many ways nomads live like their more settled counterparts, they just do it without a permanent mailing address.

And, like their static neighbors, nomads come in many different styles. There are mercenary nomad packs with military order and discipline as the rule of the day. There are also some very casual tribes, living like anarchists in the eyes of the others. Certain nomads are implicitly trustworthy and much-admired, while others—such as the Raffin Shiv, who prey on their own, and in fact anyone who crosses their dark path—are universally despised by their fellow wanderers.

The Nomad Contribution

Few statics also are aware that nomads are not relegated exclusively to the highways; many nomads are also a part of daily static life. When camped in an area, they provide a valuable source of skills and economic clout rarely if ever mentioned in the fevered headlines of the corporate-controlled media.



A NOMADIC TIMELINE

- 1989** —End of the Cold War.
- 1990** —Start of the First Central American Conflict.
—Jonathan Meta participates in "Operation Blind Faith", attempting to control the Panama Canal Zone.
- 1992** —The Aldecaldos "clan" forms as a protection society in East L.A.
—As cropland dies and rainfall declines, farmers and rural populations are forced into migration to the larger cities. These "Jodes" are labeled as parasites by media and some city governments.
—DEA Drug War begins with coca bio-plague, it quickly accelerates to complete havoc, and as a result the First Central American Conflict spreads into South America.
- 1993** —The first coherent nomad families appear and are identified by the corporates and the media.
—The Jodes leave Oklahoma, heading both north and west in an attempt to escape the "dust bowl".
—The Aldecaldos, because of increasing pressure from police and gangs, are forced to move out of East Los Angeles.
—Gangs war openly with police and each other in Miami. After a six month-siege, the government gives up, unable to commit resources which are needed elsewhere. The gang war lessens and several power structures begin to form.
—Terrorists nuke New York, fifteen thousand killed immediately, many more die as a result of contamination.
- 1994** —Nuclear accident in Pittsburgh. The Federal Government declares "The Pitt" a Superfund site, but no assets are allocated to deal with the problem. After a very public debate it is determined that nomad labor will be used in reclamation. The Aldecaldos Clan is hired to administer the project. The clan must travel almost two thousand miles to Pittsburgh, but accepts the contract.
—Stock market crash, beginning of the Collapse.
- 1995** —The Bloods unofficially run (or own) all of Miami, other gang structures are subsumed into the Bloods by relatively peaceful treaties or agreements.
—Beginning of the Emergency Welfare Relocation Program. The program is administered by the newly created Bureau of Emergency Relocation.
- 1996** —Martial law is declared in America.
—The so-called Nomad Riots. In actuality, few of the aggressors are actually nomads; the term is misused by a popular media figure and sticks.

Since the vast rebuilding projects at the turn of the millennium, construction jobs remain a huge part of the nomad economy and guarantee them a place in society for the near future. There is still a great deal to be done if the entirety of North America is to be reclaimed. Nomads finished arcologies in the Northeast. Nomads helped repair Mexico City. Nomads are rebuilding the nation, piece by piece, job by dirty job.

Some nomad families can't find construction work, or don't want to be on a government or corporate payroll. Whatever the reason, they still need a way to support themselves, and in a collapsed society, salvage is the easiest way to do this. Areas of many of America's metropolitan cities rot in abandonment after riots and conflagrations stripped them of economic viability. Nomad groups move into these ghost towns across the nation and pull wire, electronics, precious metals, and other valuables from the rubble to sell on the open market. Some salvage groups even work in concert with construction nomads, stripping the areas before rebuilding begins.

Nomads, being mobile and well-armed, are also in demand for the transportation of cargo. Nomad convoys are secure and knowledgeable, they are used to the troubles that life on the road can bring. And consumer goods are not all that need to be moved; messages as diverse as crop reports and intelligence briefings must sometimes be verified by hardcopy documents. In other cases, electronic transmission of data is deemed too vulnerable to hackers, so the nomads provide physical delivery instead. And of course, as a natural complement to transport and courier services, smuggling has become a profitable business; a huge market exists for regulated, heavily-taxed, and downright illegal goods. In fact, the shadow economy that extends across America could not exist without the nomad distribution network and the innovations of their technical people.

Mercenaries are also a needed resource in this time of struggle. Since nomads must keep themselves heavily armed to counter banditry, there is demand for nomad warriors, arms and expertise. Some tribes market themselves exclusively as military or security services, and do well in the marketplace.

Bread and circuses also have their place in helping to keep civilization civil. Many nomads deal with the bread part—agriculture. Crop-picking, seeding, clearing; any farming job that robots are not smart enough to do are done by the agripack nomads which travel the U.S. in slow pursuit of the seasons. Finally, circuses provide the livelihood of some nomads: carnies, vid-shows, and other entertainments are provided by these packs.

The nomads are not merely an adjunct to American society, they are a complete society existing in symbiosis with static culture.

Know The Code

All nomads, whatever their stripe and lifestyle, have a code of behavior and honor:

