

ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST

Steve Crompton is a Canadian born artist and designer who has worked in the role-playing genre since 1981. In Gaming circles he is best known as the artist (and sometimes author/designer) for the Grimtooth Traps books, Nuclear War card Games, along with the Deluxe Tunnels & Trolls rpg. He was the art director for Flying Buffalo from 1999 to 2021

ART FOR GAMES

Besides Grimtooth's Traps and Nuclear War, other notable games his work has appeared in would include Traveller, Immortal, GURPS, Space Opera, Space 1889, Berserker, Deluxe Tunnels & Trolls, Lost Worlds, and many others.

Steve has done work for Flying Buffalo, GDW, Fantasy Games Unlimited, Steve Jackson Games, Reality Simulations Inc. MetaArcade, Task Force Games and many other publishers both in and out of the game industry.

Several of the games he has worked on have won HG Wells Origins Awards, including Citybook, Stormhaven, Nuclear Escalation & Nuclear Proliferation card Games. Nuclear War won the Hall of Fame award as one of the best card games of all time.

Currently he spends most of his time developing the art for Ken St Andre's Monsters! Monsters! RPG and City of the Gods Universe of books and games. He still does freelance work for other gaming and comic companies.

THIS MONTH'S COVER

Is by Steven Crompton. Originally hand painted and airbrushed in the early 1990s and used as the cover for a PBM magazine, Steve scanned in the painting and has digitally enhanced it in photoshop, adding a more detailed star background and enhancing the colors and details on the orbital station. The title of this piece is called "Dorothy returns to the Emerald City"



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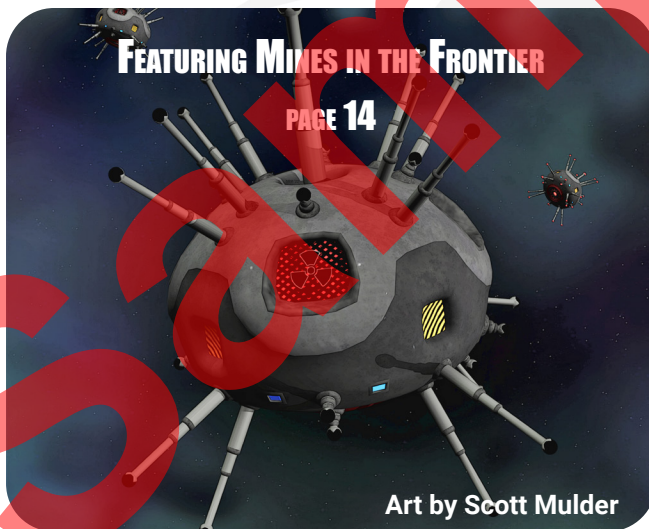
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Support the Magazine

The Star Frontiersman Vol 2 is free and always will be but you can support the magazine and help defray some of the operating cost by dropping a tip on the pay what you like feature of Drivethru RPG.

You can also support the magazine by sending comments, suggestions, and submissions to: starfrontiersman@gmail.com We are looking for Star Frontiers content under 14,000 words and in docx, pdf, odt, rtf, and txt formats. Art in jpeg, png, and tiff formats.

Also consider buying merchandise to support the magazine; check out the [40 Light Year shirt](#).



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Letter from the Editor

We are celebrating 40 years of Star Frontiers! It was at Gen Con in 1982 that Star Frontiers debuted and within months had rivaled in sales what the Traveller RPG sold on average in a year. Our new 40th Anniversary logo is a nod to the 40 years by referencing 40 light years and depicts two explorers with our new mascot. He is almost starship trained and doesn't cause too much trouble so he's been adopted.

There have been two fan magazines that have been the heralds of the Star Frontiers revival online, the **Star Frontiersman** (2007-2014) and the **Frontier Explorer** (2012-2022). These magazines represent almost two decades of fan content delivering a total of 61 issues. Today we celebrate the great history of a beloved game and beloved fan magazines by reinstating the Star Frontiersman as Volume 2 and resume publishing it with issue 26! Break out your D10 polyhedrals and get ready to roll some dice because the Star Frontiersman is back and bringing you adventure and tools to play the game!

Our mission is to promote community, game play, and revival in the Star Frontiers fan community. We will also continue the Frontier Explorer tradition of hosting other sci-fi rpg content with a regular feature called Beyond the Frontier to host that content. We're committing to a quarterly magazine published in January, April, July, and October and welcome fan content, suggestions, and feedback, just send to starfrontiersman@gmail.com.

You can expect all the old types of fanzine content and some new things as well. One of our new departments is Frontier Cartography where we spotlight a map, whether it be new or old like Dominic Pelletier's "Port Loren Shuttle Port" that has been available on the web for years but we had him do a write up on it and made sure that it would be published and preserved for years to come.

Jump Routes of the Frontier will spotlight a destination of the web where you can find Star Frontiers content like Gavin Koh's "Palalyn Cluster" where he is resurrecting his Star Frontiers fan page from the early days of the internet.

Palalyn Cluster is a wealth of information and a whole setting to explore.

This issue has a theme: Mines in the Frontier. Contributor Steve Parenteau, has created a beautiful and dare I say even "sexy" deck plan and write up for a minelayer. The Kangaroo class minelayer is a great addition to the Frontier.

A real-world company gave us permission to write them into the Frontier setting and use their real world products as Frontier weapon's systems. So if you like the gadgets then you will want to check out the Pulsefire handheld flamethrower and its rifle attachment version.

As a service to frontiersmen everywhere we are starting a new series called "The Frontiers Most Wanted". Each issue will spotlight a Frontier's Most Wanted criminal with the Star Law file on the back cover. So be on the lookout for these criminals turning up in your game!

Enjoy this first issue of the reinvigorated Star Frontiersman Vol. 2. We hope it will promote play, community and new content for years to come.

Tom "Jedion357" Verreault



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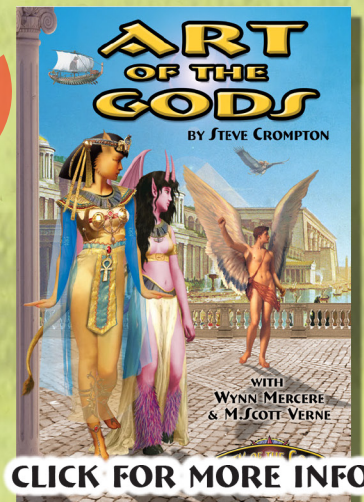
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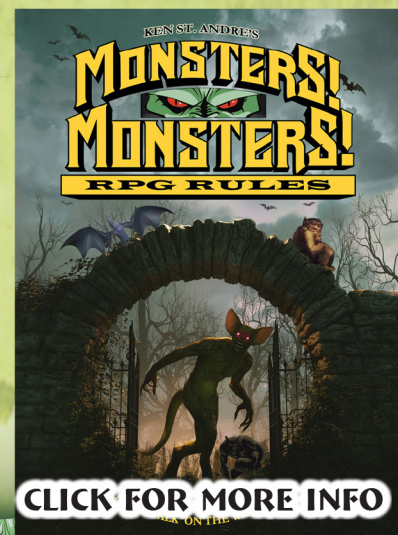
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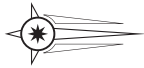
Below are some other books by Steven Crompton and his creative co-horts!



Discover more about our Universe at our recent Monstularity Kickstarter or www.cityofthegods.com Printed copies also available e-mail: sscrompton@cox.net

STAR FRONTIERS FACTS & LORE #1

By Thomas Verreault



Welcome to a new magazine feature where we explore “lost” Frontier facts and lore, digging into the past to find gems of interest for the fans of today. We’ll be exploring reviews and letters to the editor in various magazines and publications that often get overlooked in archive compilations of Star Frontiers content.

To kick things off we’ll start with the debut mention of Star Frontiers in Polyhedron magazine, in a review by Steve Winter. The issue is Polyhedron#9 and it comes with a gorgeous Star Frontiers cover drawn by Jeff Easley. It was the illustration for the Zeb Cook encounters article and made a great cover. The cover for the Volturnus Planet of Mystery module might display a mounted Ul-mor in color but the Polyhedron 9 cover is easily my favorite depiction of a mounted Ul-mor. The mounted Ul-mor is in a very dynamic pose threatening the PGC scientist to be played by a player in the Zeb Cook encounter.



While we’re on the topic of the Zeb Cook encounter, it should be noted that this encounter, aside from the article “From Anarchy to Empire” in Dragon #94, and “Coming of the S’sessu” in Dragon #96 are the only Star Frontiers content written by this author of the Star Frontiers game after his involvement in the rules. It is a small window on the direction he might have

taken the game if he had remained on its team. It has a flavor with great appeal: mysterious alien ruins to explore, a touch-telepathic primitive alien ripped from his world by pirates, a scientist in trouble in a desolate wasteland, a friendship forged in adversity that could become a defining partnership like that of Han Solo and Chewbacca.

The Steve Winter review of Star Frontiers describes what is in the box set, the playable species, the setting and that the first adventure is a “Golden Age of Science Fiction” scenario. As I’ve gotten older I’ve tended to focus on the things I didn’t like in this inaugural Star Frontiers adventure but knowing how it was conceived as a “Golden Age” adventure makes me want to take a fresh look at it.

Steve Winter also relayed some sales numbers on the sales of Star Frontiers between GenCon XV (August 19-22, 1982) and November (we can presume November as this was the December issue) compared to the lifetime sales of Space Opera and Traveller. Between 1980 and December 1982 Space Opera had averaged 10,000 copies a year. Between 1977 and December 1982 Traveller had averaged 50,000 copies a year. However, in the 4 months since Gen Con, Star Frontiers sold 49,500 copies.

Naturally they were excited about this at TSR but truth be told Star Frontiers had a couple of advantages: a market-dominant RPG (D&D) on which it could ride the coattails and being released at GenCon the premier gamer convention of the day. In view of these advantages, it is little wonder that the new to the market sci-fi RPG was giving the first “hard science” sci-fi RPG a run for its money. However, the numbers alone do not tell the full story. Traveller and Star Frontiers had different target audiences. Traveller was marketed to “the sophisticated science fiction gamer”* or the college age market while Star Frontiers was marketed to the young teen market. There is little doubt that many Star Frontiers fans eventually played Traveller in one of its many iterations but while Star Frontiers was in print it was the hot new thing on the sci-fi RPG market.

A final comment in the Steve Winter review caught my eye, “a separate book on frontier worlds, star system and planet creation, and adventures is also being planned.” Wait, what?

This book never materialized but some of its material is available. While Zebulon’s Guide was presented

* *The Space Gamer* May–June 1980 (Issue No. 28), Forrest Johnson’s Review of Traveller

as a second edition of the game, we know that it actually recycled a lot of existing material like raffleurs, megacorps and cadres, the Mechanons, and the progress of a corporate war. I would not be surprised if the new star systems and planets included in it were the new star systems and planets referred to here.

This also clears up a Star Frontiers mystery, for me at least, concerning the plague planets in Zeb's Guide. Kim Eastland gave us 6 new quarantined plague worlds but all we get is a Greek letter designation. Elsewhere in the book we have 15 new worlds added to the setting and we know their names, primary colonizers, population levels, type of economy, the gravity, the length of day, number of moons, the moon's names and uses as well as major space stations but they couldn't be bothered to tell us anything about the plague systems? This has been a source of frustration for decades. However, I now realize that the worlds added to the Frontier Astrographic Catalog existed way back in the first year of the game's existence. Kim Eastland had stated in an interview at Sci Con 2 that he wanted to take Star Frontiers in a Gamma World direction, the plague worlds were in all likelihood his creation and something invented only after he became project director for Zebulon's Guide. Suddenly, it's understandable why the plague worlds lacked a simple listing in the Astrographic Catalog and being part of a canceled 2nd edition I'm comfortable with ignoring them in my game.

Next up we have possibly the only mention of Star Frontiers in the Steve Jackson Games magazine, Space Gamer, outside of the few times that Star Frontiers products were reviewed in the regular feature: Capsule Reviews. The reviews I have read have been generally disdainful and it felt like the reviewer was having his teeth pulled just to say something nice about Star Frontiers. Space Opera, Traveller and the Star Trek RPG all had some actual content in Space Gamer but Star Frontiers was snubbed.

I do not know the source of the apparent animosity against Star Frontiers. Even AD&D received some love in the SJG magazines. It is perhaps not surprising that the one Space Gamer mention of Star Frontiers that is not a review comes from the annals of Murphy's Rules. The Murphy's Rules feature presented stupid, idiotic or nonsensical rules from RPGs and table top games in cartoon format.

This cartoon presents as Murphy's Rule, the fact that robotic attacks in Star Frontiers are 30 + 10% per level of robot. In the case of a floor polishing robot its attack would be 40% which is actually more than some starting



character's Ranged or Melee attack scores. The truth is more nuanced. For any robot to be able to make an attack they must have the self defense or the attack/defense robotic program installed. One has to ask themselves, "does it make sense for a level 1 maintenance robot whose mission is to polish floors to have either program installed?" No, not unless they were a sathar floor polishing robot and then is it really such a snafu that a sathar robot attacks at 40%?

I present the cartoon here because I love the fact that a Vulcan is getting smacked in the face with a dirty rag. The Star Trek RPG got far more love in the pages of Space Gamer than Star Frontiers ever did so take that Mr. Spock!

