MODULE PRIME ALPHA

A GURPS 3rd Edition expansion book

    GURPS Prime Directive is a role-playing game of the ***Star Fleet Universe***, using the Generic Universal Role-Playing System created by Steve Jackson Games. The first installment in this product line was the ***GPD Core Rulebook*** published in 2002. The ***GPD*** product line will include many different products and kinds of products, but the most important of these will be the ***Module Prime*** series. It should be noted that while the first of these is ***GURPS Module Prime Alpha***, we might not use Greek letters for the title of all future modules.

    Module Prime is intended to be a general expansion of the game system. Each module will include a broad range of material useful to ***GPD*** and other ***GURPS*** players. Each module will not be limited to a single subject but will cover whatever expansion material that you, the players of ***GPD***, tell us you want, and things we think you need to know. Some elements of a given issue might be related to each other, while others will be fully independent.

    Module Prime is organized in a flexible format with several departments, each with a category of information.

    HISTORY contains fiction stories portraying ***GPD*** characters doing what they do, adventure, missions, etc.

    COMMUNICATIONS provides updates on other products, announcements of future products, surveys of ***GURPS*** products from Steve Jackson Games and of ***Star Fleet Universe*** products that would be of interest to ***GPD*** players, reports on campaigns and tournaments, input guides, gamemaster advice, questions and answers, etc.

    DATA FILES includes new rules, advantages, disadvantages, skills, quirks, non-player characters, sample adventure teams (including elite prime teams), creatures and monsters, adventure settings and hooks, and other information of use to ***GPD*** players. Much of the rules material will come from other ***GURPS*** books, but not all of it.

    TECH FILES provides new weapons, equipment, and technology for use in ***GPD*** and other ***GURPS*** campaigns. One major element of each issue will be detailed deck plans for one of the many starships in the ***Star Fleet Universe***. We will provide starship data for use with the ***GURPS Space 3rd Edition*** combat system.

    ADVENTURE FILES will include short adventures and adventure hooks to inspire your GM.

    PRIME FILES will be published on a one-time basis as needed. In this issue, we have two of these, although future issues may have one or none. The two in this issue are of particular interest. One is a comprehensive advanced combat system. While everything in it comes from existing ***GURPS*** products, this is the only completely compiled and inter-edited version known to be in print. The second major section is the Hydran Racial Profile, which we have created as a sort of a "trial run" for future racial profile books, such as ***GURPS Klingons***.

    Just when the next edition of ***GURPS Module Prime*** will appear is not known, but its contents will be based primarily on what you tell us you want to see. So speak up or get stuck with what somebody else wanted!

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WELCOME TO MODULE PRIME ALPHA!

Welcome to our first issue of the **Module Prime** series, and to the first expansion for **GURPS Prime Directive**. If the previous publicity about this product, or the product itself, makes you think we weren't quite sure what would be in it until we finished it, then you're right! The whole idea of **Module Prime** is to provide whatever the players of **GPD** want or need or would like to know about the **GURPS** gaming system and the **Star Fleet Universe**.

Questions that deserve answers

Chapter 2 mentions that a player might not tell the GM his secret goals and missions. How is that possible?

He simply doesn't tell him! Such "secret goals" provide the player with personal satisfaction that they have been accomplished, but have no game function. For example, a group of players who are controlling characters of a free-lance team might decide (without the GM knowing) that they secretly want to become a rock band. The team (or player) then keeps detailed records of each adventure and what secret goals were accomplished (such as collecting alien instruments or music). After some period of time, the group (or player) tells the GM what has really been going on and the GM (who had been wondering why they did those odd things for no apparent reason) can reward their cleverness in some suitable fashion.

What the heck is this Sun Snake that caused the Paravian star to go nova and incinerate the entire race?

This is a space monster from **Star Fleet Battles.** It flies through vacuum, avoids getting killed by starships, has weapons to shoot back if cornered, and periodically dives into a star and causes that star to go nova outside of the normal stellar sequence. Such creatures are rare and incidents of them causing a sun to go nova are even more rare; only a few of them were recorded in Star Fleet History, plus a few incidents in the Omega Sector.

Since GPD has "Marines" instead of the television show's "Security" guys, what color uniform do they wear?

Red for normal duty and full dress. Their tactical uniforms for use in combat (or when combat is expected) are green with camouflage features. They have white camouflage uniforms for arctic conditions, tan for desert, grey-black for urban or low-light worlds, etc.

What is the difference between a "contest of skills" and a "quick contest of skills"?

In a "contest" each person keeps rolling until one fails and the other succeeds. In a "quick contest" there is only one roll for each player, and whoever "succeeded by more" is the winner, unless both failed, in which case the winner is the one who failed by the least. Ties can be broken by another die roll or coin toss.

What is the status of religion in the Star Fleet Universe? Is Star Fleet atheist? Christian? Moslem? What?

The Federation is a free society, and freedom of religion would obviously be one of the cornerstones of such a society. Basically, characters are welcome to any religion (presumably excluding one that required some act that breaks a law, like the ritual murder of sentient beings). Any players who want to include religion as a major, or minor, element of their characters and campaigns are welcome to do so, and those who want to ignore the question may also feel free to do so.

How long do you plan to keep GPD in production? Will it disappear when the license expires like happened with other RPGs of this genre?

Our contract with Paramount never expires, so we can keep doing GPD products as long as there is a market.

Do female crewmen in the Star Fleet Universe wear mini-skirts? All the time? Optional? Captain's orders?

All military organizations have a variety of dress, duty, work, and combat uniforms. On most ships and stations, women are given their choice of wearing pants or skirts. One might presume that there are ships or stations where the captain or the senior female officer has "let it be known" that mini-skirts are not really appropriate, but it would be hard to believe that any captain could or would "order" the women under his command to wear mini-skirts.

Why did the Klingons and Lyrans conquer Hydran space since the Hydrans lived on gas giants that the Klingons and Lyrans had no use for?

Conquest is a matter of control. The Klingons and Lyrans wanted to control the resources, the merchant traffic, the tax base, and the cable TV system. If they had conquered the oxy-nitrogen worlds and left the Hydran colonies, bases, and fleets in control of the methane worlds, the Hydran fleet would have objected to Klingon-Lyran control over the merchant routes, exploitation of resources, and Klingon-Lyran tax collectors.

Why Things Work
Transporting High Explosives

by Loren Knight

Hundreds of fans of the television series have asked: *Why don't they just beam over a big bomb and blow the enemy ship to pieces?*

That is a good question, but there is also a good answer. Explosives are by their nature unstable and any disruption in the rematerialization process can cause them to explode. The explosion, however, causes much more damage to the point of origin (through feedback energy) than to the point of arrival. Depending on the size of the bomb, this might well be enough to destroy the transporter (or the starship) which transported the bomb in the first place. In addition, this sudden surge of energy in the power system can blow out several other systems on the ship.

Such disruptions are easily caused and hard to prevent. A ship's structural integrity field will cause it (they are *designed* to do so) and any crewman (or automated system) who spots a materialization in process and fires (or throws something) into the field will cause an explosive to detonate. (Firing or throwing something into a field where people are arriving would not cause any significant disruption unless the enemy Marines had actually arrived, and even then it would disrupt the Marines, not the field.)

Transporting a mine or other explosive device between two friendly ships who *don't* want it to go off requires special safety systems on both the transporting and receiving end, which are reflected in **Star Fleet Battles** by rules that reduce transporter efficiency by 75%.

The explosive charges used by Hit & Run boarding party actions are carried by these stalwart Marines in an inactive condition, and are set to explode only when they arrive. Such weapons are relatively small, able to damage one compartment of an enemy ship but not the whole starboard side of it. For Marines to carry anything bigger (say, a nuclear bomb or a 1,000 kilo high explosive bomb) would require the enemy ship to literally assist in the safe arrival of this bomb. Obviously, this isn't a practical plan.

There are two explosive devices that are employed by transporters: the transporter bomb (small nuclear space mine) and transporter artillery (conventional artillery shells scattered over a ground target by a transporter instead of a cannon). Transporter bombs are beamed into space and therefore avoid all the problems of beaming into a ship. No ship can lock-on to an arriving transporter bomb thousands of kilometers away in time to do anything to it, and once it arrives the mine's stealth coating makes it a difficult target to see or hit. Trying to send a transporter bomb into an enemy ship is impossible as the structural integrity field would cause it to explode inside *your* ship. Transporter artillery shells are beamed high enough over the target (hundreds of meters or more, letting gravity take over) that no one (not even an automated system) can lock onto them in time to react. Of course, by dropping a shield facing the enemy (needed to use a transporter) you expose your ship to enemy weapons of other types.

NEW ACADEMY TEMPLATE

Star Fleet Auxiliary   **20 points (+ specialty)**

While most "unrestricted line" officers come out of the Star Fleet Academy's standard course of study, certain specialty officers (doctors, lawyers, scientists, supply officers, and construction engineers) come out of specialized Star Fleet schools affiliated with the Academy. As a category, these are known as Auxiliary Officers, although the term is rarely used except in personnel records. In simple terms, these officers have fewer of the "military" skills and more of the skills of their specialty.

Purchase of this template is a requirement for any character who is, or has been, a Star Fleet Auxiliary officer. Minimum requirements are ST 9, IQ 12, DX 9, and HT 9.

Some of the skills items below are "Must pick within career field". If there is no skill related to a given career field, they can (with the GM's permission) either skip that entry or select any skill of that type that would have at least some utility to an officer of that career field. Star Fleet Auxiliary Academy graduates receive the following:

Advantages: Same as Star Fleet Academy.
Disadvantages: Same as Star Fleet Academy.
Skills:

Administration at IQ-1 [1] .... improve to IQ-0
Astronomy/TL at IQ-2 [1] .... reduce to IQ-3
Beam Weapons (Phaser) at DX [1] .... reduce to DX-1
Computer Operation/TL at IQ [1] .... no change
Computer Programming/TL at IQ-3 [1/2] .... no change
Electronics/TL (your choice) at IQ-2 [1] .... Note 1
Electronics Operation/TL (Transporter) at IQ [2] .... n/c
Engineer/TL (your choice) at IQ-3 [1/2] .... Note 1
First Aid/TL at IQ [1] .... no change
Free Fall at DX-2 [1/2] .... no change
History (Federation) at IQ-2 [1] .... no change
Judo at DX-2 [1] .... reduce to DX-3
Law (Federation) at IQ-2 [1] .... no change
Leadership at IQ-2 [1/2] .... no change
Mathematics at IQ-2 [1] .... no change
Mechanic/TL (your choice) at IQ-2 [1/2] .... Note 1
Physics/TL at IQ-3 [1/2] .... no change
Pilot/TL (shuttlecraft) at DX-1 [1] .... no change
Research at IQ-2 [1/2] .... no change
Sailor/TL at IQ-1 [1] .... reduce to IQ-2
Savoir-Faire (military) at IQ [1] .... reduce to IQ-1
Strategy at IQ-3 [1/2] .... use default (IQ-6)
Survival (choice) at IQ-1 [1] .... no change
Tactics at IQ-3 [1/2] .... use default (IQ-6)
Vacc Suit at IQ-1 [1] .... no change
Xenology at IQ-2 [1] .... no change

SPECIALTY AREAS

Logistics Branch: Improve administration to IQ+1 [4]
Medical Corps: Add Physician at IQ [4], Diagnosis at IQ [4], and Surgery at IQ [8].
Scientist: Add any three hard science skills at IQ [3x4]
Construction Engineer: Add Engineer (space construction) or Engineer (colony construction) at IQ [4]; must take the other of these two skills as his selected engineer skill above.
JAG: improve Law (Federation) to IQ [4]
Note 1: Selected skill must be within career field.

From The Quartermaster

As promised in **GURPS Prime Directive**, here is a selection of common items of technology available in the **Star Fleet Universe**, compiled by Alex Chobot.

Several of the breathing devices include a standard communicator. This is equivalent to the one on page 116 of **GURPS Prime Directive**. Equipment obtained from civilian sources will probably have lesser capabilities.

While costs are given, military people on official missions will be issued the needed equipment. Government property which is legitimately lost in combat results in a simple form being filed with the supply clerk; abandoning, selling, or breaking government property without a good and valid reason is subject to a Line of Duty Investigation, followed by having the cost deducted from your pay!

Technology Improvements

Most items remain available at all TLs after introduction, but they become less expensive in some areas. An Early Years phaser may be almost worthless to a Federation soldier in the X-Ships era but to a TL7 nonaligned planet it would command far more then it was worth when it was new! (As a collectible antique, it is priceless!)

Cost: As a general rule, for any item introduced at TL8 or later, halve cost at the TL after introduction, and halve it again at the next TL.

Size: Unless specified otherwise, all devices except weapons, vacc suits, power cells, and body armor, weigh half as much one TL after being introduced, and 1/4 as much after two or more TLs.

Power: If using power cells, duration assumes *steady* use (e.g. a year means turning a radio on and leaving it on for a year); casual use will be about ten times as long. (In the **GURPS** rules set, power cells are better than and different from batteries, but are used in the same way. In **SFU**, the terms are used more or less interchangably. In **GPD**, we try to use only Power Cells to avoid confusion.)

Air Mask   (TL10+)

The air mask is used on worlds that have an unbreathable but otherwise harmless atmosphere (nitrogen, reducing, carbon dioxide and so on). The mask covers the entire face (human, and most humanoid, eyes get oxygen directly from the air). It always includes a standard communicator for the TL, which uses an A cell. It requires air tanks or a filter (see below). It takes three seconds to put the mask on, one second to take it off. Weight is 1/2 pound and cost is $25. For another $12.50, the mask includes a mini-tank with ten minutes' worth of air.

TL8: The original stats are two pounds and $100 dollars. The mini-tank is $50. See **Ultra-Tech** page 24.

Air Tanks   (TL7+)

A two-hour tank weighs ten pounds and costs $100 (full). A 24-hour tank weighs 73 pounds and costs $400. Don't reduce weight or cost at higher TLs. Air refills are $5 per hour if you don't have your own air compressor. Tanks take ten seconds to hook up and two seconds to jettison.

Note that an hour of oxy-helium breathing mix weighs only 1.5 pounds; the rest is the tank weight. (Ordinary compressed air would weigh 4.2 pounds.) Different people use air at different rates, so duration is approximate. For game purposes, assume that all adults breathe the same amount of air, and that children under 12 use half as much. All times given here assume an external pressure of 1 atmosphere or less. At 2 atmospheres, an air tank lasts only half as long, and so on. Prices are those charged by an honest dealer when air is plentiful; they will be considerably higher if air is scarce! See **Ultra-Tech** page 24.

Autograpnel   (TL10+)

This uses Guns (Grenade Launcher) skill to fire a grappling hook up to 50 yards. A motor winch on the gun lifts up to 400 pounds at up to five yards per turn. The reel contains 50 yards of biphase rope with a breaking strain of 2,000 pounds (4,000 at TL12+). One C cell is good for 200 ascents or descents. Cost is $100 and weight is 1.5 pounds.

TL8: Cost is $400 and weight is six pounds. Breaking strain is 1,000 pounds. See **Ultra-Tech** page 83.

Combat Armor (TL8+)

Combat armor is a multi-piece suit of articulated armor plates covering the entire body. It is fully sealed "space armor." With the helmet visor closed the suit is completely airtight, providing complete protection against contaminated atmospheres, pressure loss, or chemical and biological threats. Combat armor includes a life support pack (described under vacc suits), and tanks for two hours worth of air. The entire range of vacc suit accessories can be used with combat armor. It takes 60 seconds to don the entire outfit, and 40 seconds to remove, or half as long on a successful DX roll.

Light Combat Armor: LCA has PD 4, DR 20. The armor gains DR 5 per TL after TL8. $1,850, 36.5 pounds.

Medium Combat Armor: MCA has PD6, DR 30. The armor gains DR 8 per TL after TL8. $2,350, 36 pounds.

Heavy Combat Armor: HCA has PD 6, DR 45. The armor gains DR 10 per TL after TL8. $3,100, 66.5 pounds. See **Space** page 85.

Diagnostic Table   (TL11+)

This is a 7' x 3' x 3' padded, computerized table with a full range of biomed scanners. The patient lies on the table and the results of the scan are projected onto an overhead screen. It gives a +5 to Diagnosis (+1 per TL over 9). Not a portable unit, the table must be installed in a sickbay on a ship or vehicle, or in a hospital. Cost is $3,000, weight is 62.5 pounds and volume is three cubic yards.

TL9: Cost is $12,000, weight is 250 pounds. See **Ultra-Tech** page 94.

Emergency Medkit   (TL10+)

This is a belt pouch containing the basic requirements of TL8 first aid: five plastiskin patches (see below), plus the usual bandages, antiseptic cream, etc., which enable it to act as a TL7 kit when the plastiskin is used up. It also contains five Revive capsules, a pneumospray hypo and