

Table of Contents

HERO HIGHWAY

WHEN LAST WE LEFT OUR HEROES...

Keep up with the news from Hero Games. This issue – *Vibora Bay* and *The Ultimate Mystic*. 2

HEROGLYPHS

See how Steve Long himself answers rules questions. This issue – Let's get Physical Limitations. 4

YOU GOTTA HAVE CHARACTER

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec was the quintessential bohemian artist, as well as a fixture of the Parisian underworld. 6

ADVENTURE AVENUE

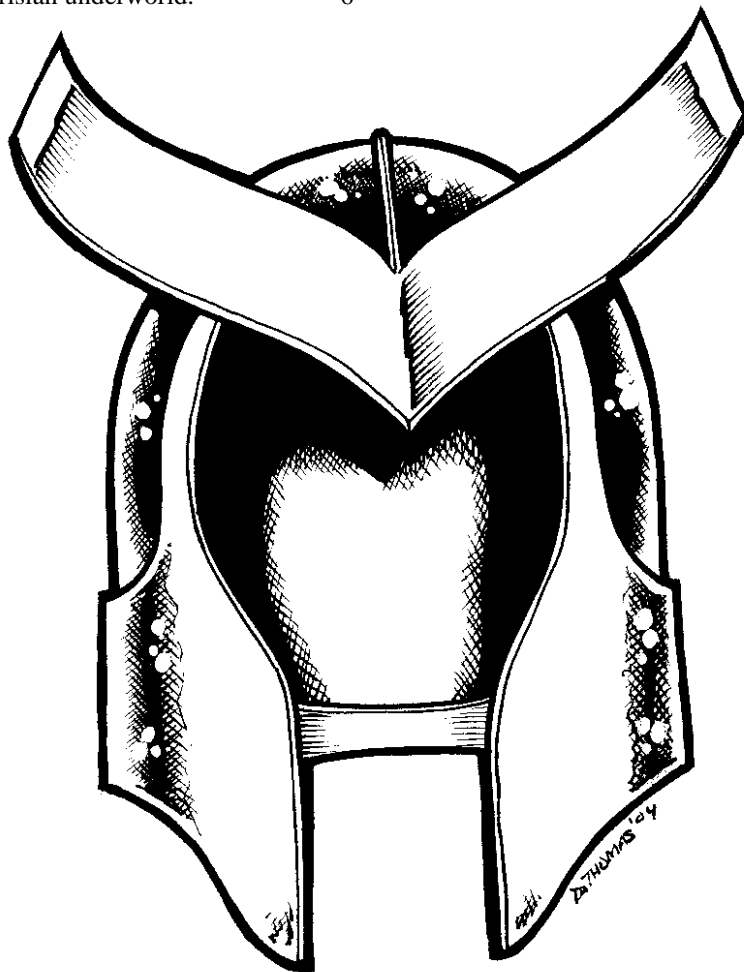
THE HELMET OF DR. DESTROYER

Far in the future, an ancient artifact has been discovered which can prove that superhumans once walked the Earth. 13

RESOURCE ROAD

LOOK! UP IN THE SKY!

Flying contraptions from history and folklore permeate the heavens, from balloons to fighters to rockets. 37



DIGITAL HERO

Publisher

Hero Games

Editor

Dave Mattingly

Authors

Bob Greenwade

Steven S. Long

Michael Surbrook

Jason Walters

Artists

Brad Parnell

Shawn Richter

Derrick Thomas

Cover Artist

Kerry Connell

Online

herogames.com

To Subscribe

herogames.com/digitalhero

HERO System™ is DOJ, Inc.'s trademark for its roleplaying system.
 HERO System Copyright © 1984, 1989, 2002 by DOJ, Inc. d/b/a Hero Games. All rights reserved.
 Champions Copyright © 1984, 1989, 2002 by DOJ, Inc. d/b/a Hero Games. All rights reserved.
 Justice Inc., Danger International, Dark Champions, Fantasy Hero, and Star Hero Copyright © 2002 by DOJ, Inc. d/b/a Hero Games. All rights reserved.

No part of this electronic magazine may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or computerization, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the Publisher: DOJ, Inc., 1 Haight Street, Suite A, San Francisco, California 94102.

Issue #25 (November 2004)



The Helmet of Dr. Destroyer

by Bob Greenwade

Of all of the supervillains of the Champions Universe, few are more feared than Dr. Destroyer. In his perennial quest for a terror-filled world conquest, he has utilized technology so powerful that, on one occasion, the entire city of Detroit was demolished.

By the time of the Terran Empire, however, Dr. Destroyer is considered as much a mythical figure as all other superheroes of the 20th and early 21st Centuries.

As described in *Terran Empire* (page 6) and *Alien Wars* (page 5), most people of the 24th through 30th Centuries regard superheroes as purely fictional myths, mostly created by popular media such as television and comic books. Even if they did exist back then, the vast majority of people don't care – it doesn't affect their lives today one way or the other, so why should they?

Still, it takes all kinds to make a universe. Just as some people in our own society pursue their own theories of various assassinations and mysterious deaths of the 1960s, so there are people in the 27th Century whose interest lies in proving the truth about the existence of superhumans in the 20th. And, just as assassination theorists are considered lunatic fringe today, so “superhuman theorists” are considered so in the Terran Empire.

This adventure is meant for a group of PCs in the Terran Empire setting. The exact number of PCs, their point totals, and their experience level are not extremely important, since most of the scenario is resolved through roleplaying and (hopefully) clever tactics.

To properly run this scenario, the GM will need only *Terran Empire* (and, of course, the *HERO System 5th Edition*). Ownership of certain other books – *Spacer's Toolkit*, *Alien Wars*, *Star Hero*, *The Ultimate Martial Artist*, and/or *Conquerors, Killers, and Crooks* – would be helpful, but are not required.

“And So, It Begins...”

The bulk of this scenario takes place on Henamak IV, a world just inside the Mon'dabi Federation. Technically also within the Vorşan Expanse, it's a hot, arid desert world with rudimentary carbon-based life (plants and small animals).

Getting the PCs involved should be little, if any trouble. If they're independent contractors, they can be hired by the Fanboys to accompany them to Henamak IV. The trio could be expecting more trouble than they're used to (such as if Bertrand Devereaux is involved, as discussed later), or their own ship may be broken down or simply not fast enough to make the trip with the speed they'd like to make.

If the PCs work for the Imperial government (nearly any branch will do), they may be assigned to accompany the Fanboys to Henamak IV. Diplomatically speaking, this would be an *extremely* sensitive matter; the Imperial government's main claim to the helmet is that it's an Earth artifact and therefore rightfully belongs to Earth. However, the Xenovores and Mon'dabi both have different rules regarding such things and may make a claim.

Government-employed PCs with undercover identities – particularly with the Imperial Security Police – may have both of the above apply to them.

Since the rebellion would have little interest in an ancient Terran artifact, getting rebel PCs involved in this adventure will be more difficult. The lure of possible technology beyond the Empire's current level, proof of a centuries-long government cover-up, or some other potential edge against Imperial forces might make a difference, though.

However it works out, roleplay the initial involvement and the journey to Henamak IV to whatever extent works in the campaign. This could take only a few minutes, or an entire session, depending on the GM's preferred level of detail.

THE STORY TO DATE

The Fanboys, a semi-notorious trio of the conspiracy-fringe element, claim to have tracked down a significant artifact of the early 21st Century: the helmet of Dr. Destroyer. They claim that this would represent proof that superhumans really did exist in the 20th and early 21st Centuries, and lend credibility to their claim that the Imperial government – as well as the governments of the Perseid Empire, the Conjoined Civilizations Republic, and other regions of the galaxy – have been hiding the truth from the people for roughly three centuries. (The reason for this cover-up is a wildly debated question even among the Fanboys themselves, but they do agree that if it's important enough to cover up it's probably important enough to know.)

The helmet's history (as shown later) is rather convoluted, but in the end it can be tracked to a certain Xenovore captain whose ship disappeared several years ago in the Henamak system, just inside the Mon'dabi Federation. The Fanboys are ready to go there and complete their quest, but they expect some resistance.

That's where the PCs come in.

Look! Up in the Sky!

 by Michael Surbrook

Fantastic Flying Machines from Fact, Folklore, and Conjecture

“When once you have tasted flight, you will forever walk the earth with your eyes turned skyward, for there you have been, and there you will always long to return.”

— Leonardo da Vinci

Ever since man watched a bird fly overhead he has dreamed of taking to the air. His early attempts included kites, bird- (and bat-) winged gliders, rocket-propelled chairs, and balloons. Most of these failed, often with disastrously fatal results. True flight wasn't achieved until 1783, when Joseph and Jacques Montgolfier succeeded in building, testing, and flying a hot-air balloon. Powered flight had to wait until 1852, when steam-powered engines were added to an airship, while man's first controlled, heavier-than-air, powered, *and* manned flight had to wait until 1903 in the form of Wilbur and Orville Wright's *Wright Flyer*.

Since the invention of the airplane, man has gone on to create an almost bewildering variety of aircraft. As aeronautical technology improved, so did the aircraft. They became bigger, faster, stronger, and more maneuverable. In some cases, the sheer size of some aircraft can be staggering (The Boeing 747, for example, has a wingspan greater than the Wright Brothers' first flight.), while the speed of others can be beyond belief (The SR-71 "Blackbird" can reach speeds in excess of Mach 3.2, over 2,200 miles per hour.).

This article will present a number of air vehicles suited for use in different role-playing campaigns, all drawn from a variety of sources. Some are totally mythical, existing only in our imagination and folklore; others were planned but never escaped the drawing board, or if they did, never went beyond the prototype stage. Others are quite real, albeit strange and unusual. Each entry will include historical information, a write-up, description, and suggestions for how it can be used in a variety of campaigns and genres.

This article is respectfully dedicated to all those, of any nation and any era, in both war and peace, who lost their lives in aerospace-related accidents and incidents.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Clark, Jerome. *Unexplained!*

Cloutier, Chris. *The Golden Age of Champions* (Firebird Limited edition).

Greenwade, Bob and Steve Long. *The Ultimate Vehicle*.

Long, Steve. *HERO System Vehicle Sourcebook*.

Hite, Kenneth. *Suppressed Transmission: The First Broadcast*.

Miles, Jim. *Weird Georgia*.

Websites

Google. www.google.com

Luft '46. www.luft46.com

Unreal Aircraft. www.unrealaircraft.com

HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

This article is certainly proof that truth is stranger than fiction. I mean, who would have ever thought up the idea of a jet-powered water-based fighter plane? Or of a tiny jet fighter carried inside an immense bomber? Okay... outside of comic books and similar fare. Not me, that's for sure. I was amazed at the some of the technology I came across while researching this article and hope to present a sequel concentrating on German aircraft of World War II.