

Ozone-Powered SteamPunk!

A Game of Political Revolution in a Time of Ecological Devastation

By James MacGeorge, For use with S. John Ross' Risus: The Anything RPG

GUTEN TAG, CITIZEN! Welcome to the Zurich, Greatest City-State On Earth! While you wait for the Reichsbus to us to take you to the Administration Bureau for registration and housing assignment, please take a moment to read through this document. You will have to take a Citizenship Exam in order to avoid exurbanization, so read closely!

History Lesson:

The discovery of Ozone by Dutch chemist Martin van Marum in 1784 went largely unheralded outside of an exclusive circle of scientific dreamers. While the initial discovery may have been by a Dutchman, the Reich has been leading the way ever since! Sixty years later, Christian Friedrich Schönbein, having recently lost his hand in an attempt to create an alternative to gunpowder, was casting about, looking for a new avenue of scientific inquiry, when he rediscovered the mysterious, acrid-smelling gas. Shortly thereafter, he discovered the explosive properties of its liquefied state – the force generated by the detonation leveled a city block, revealing the True Power of Ozone! It didn't take long for another Proud Son of the Reich, Hans Adalwolf, to create an engine, powered by the force released by decomposing compressed liquid ozone. While it was deemed impressive, with limited amounts of ozone available, little was able to be done with it, until 1885. The discovery of what was coined the Ozone Membrane by Brecht Adler prompted a race among the powers to find a way to tap into this seemingly endless supply of energy. The invention of the Ozone Scoop by Johann Austerlitz in 1887 was touted as the pinnacle of human achievement, allowing humanity to reach up to the sky and call down the very power of the Gods themselves. Balloons were armed with the scoops, and Towers built to launch them. The Ozone Race was on!

That was 30 years ago. Since then, the process has been Modernized even further – the Towers actually process the Ozone and deliver the finished product to the cities below, fully usable! It has been the answer to all of mankind's problems – limitless energy, drawn from the very air we breathe! Nowadays, you can see canisters of Liquid Ozone being used to power everything from vehicles to streetlights to gigantic mechanized suits of armor! Truly we live in an age of wonders! All we need is within the walls of our cities, and the Barons ensure that the towers remain standing, the balloons still fly, and the scoops bring the precious ozone down to earth, where it heats our homes and powers our vehicles, and ensures that our O-Knights can defend our walls each day! We no longer need anything beyond our walls, and have chosen to leave the countryside behind! We no longer need "governments", we no longer need "nations" – we have evolved beyond such things, and soon, we will evolve beyond the need for this planet! The Ozone Rocket is in the final stages of development, at which point we will expand our reach to the Stars Themselves!

Not all share our optimism, our drive and our vision – to the East, a new threat emerges! The Barony of St. Petersburg has been overthrown, and the Anarchist Vladimir Ulyanov prattles on about the rights of workers. Renaming St. Petersburg Petrograd, he believes that a new name and a radical ideology will weaken our resolve! The fool! He carries on with his radio broadcasts, urging workers to throw off their shackles, not realizing that we gladly participate in our Grand Endeavor, for the betterment of us all! His arrogance will be his undoing!

Current Events!

- Baron von Zero, the Butcher of Berlin, is on the warpath! Loyal citizens - Enlist Now!
- The Constantinople Tower has fallen, causing massive casualties – beware of infiltration from the Ottoman refugees!
- Sparks and small explosions have been seen on the Tower of Zurich! Who will volunteer to repair our City's Ladder to the Gods?
- Anarchists are everywhere! Don't believe their lies! If they seek to draw you into their conspiracies, report them immediately!
- Keep your eyes open! Criminals are always looking for opportunities, and target those who are new to our City!

New Discoveries!

- New Advances are being made every day in Ozone powered propulsion – soon each Citizen will have their own personal Ozone Powered Jet Pack! Production is under way, and the first models should be available soon!
- Recent advances in Ozone Containment Canisters have allowed the development of Ozone Powered Personal Arms!
- Our O-Knights are More Powerful Than Ever! Shoulder-mounted cannons will ensure that we Dominate the Battlefields of Europe!

Sings of the Times!

- Beware of Scavengers! They reject the safety of the Cities and live amidst the wreckage! Pity them!
- Mutations are on the Rise! Report any Mutant Activity to your Ward Leader! Remember – They're NOT People, They're Mutants!
- Prevention is Key! Wear your gasmask and protective clothing when venturing outside, to avoid Blacklung and Skinrot!