

A Traveller Scenario for 3-6 Player Characters. The Referee will need Books 1-5 (or the Starter Edition plus Books 4 and 5).



by Paul Ormston

BACKGROUND

The players have, for some reason or other, found themselves on New World One (B063769-C), a man made space colony orbiting the system's only planet, a solitary gas giant called Skiddir. The colony itself is housed in a huge cylinder (48 miles long, 6 miles in diameter) which revolves along its axis to provide artificial gravity. Conditions inside are perfect for all kinds of human activity but recently this apparent paradise has undergone a revolution and then, a counter-revolution. The present governors now feel that they cannot trust most of New World's inhabitants, so they have approached an 'off-world' party whose loyalty they can buy.

PLAYER'S INFORMATION

The party is approached by Gyron Chard (UPP 56898A), a representative of New World's government, who offers the players a mission. If the party are interested in what he has to say they will be led to a private room where they will be given details of their mission:

Within the clouds of Skiddir are several airborne gas refineries or sky-rigs as the locals call them, vital to the colony. The rigs provide fuel for all the colony's power plants, as well as for refuelling visiting starships. Contact with a small experimental rig has been lost, and it is proposed that the party be sent to investigate.

The rig was working normally until five days ago, when the first outbreak of an unknown disease was reported by the rig's surgeon. Since then many of the crew have died. Then, 21 hours ago, audio contact was lost, and just 3 hours ago the rig's powerful location/navigation beacon failed. The government, fearing another uprising, dare not announce this to the general public until it is sure of what has happened to the rig.

If the party accept this mission they will have but one hour to collect any personal equipment and arrive at the starport. This speed is necessary due to the worsening weather conditions on the planet below. Gyron tells them that a 30 ton cutter is waiting for them at the starport.

Cutter Profile (High Guard)

SY-0105501-20000-00000-0	MCR19	TL9	30 tons	
Crew = 2	Passengers = 8	Cargo = 6	Fuel = 2	Agility = 5

Data on the Gas Giant Skiddir

Skiddir has a diameter of 151,270km (94,000 miles). The atmosphere is made up mainly of Hydrogen and Helium, but also contains higher than usual amounts of other rare gases. All altitude readings are taken from the exact centre point of the planet. Using this, the top of the atmosphere has an altitude of 75,635km (47,000 miles); the cloud tops start at 69,200km (43,000 miles), and the sky-rig the players are heading for floats at a height of 51,500km (32,000 miles). The average wind speed at this altitude is 560km (350mph), rising to 1050 (650mph) during storm conditions. Skiddir's gravity at this height is 3g, and its atmospheric pressure is five times greater than Earth's. Skiddir also emits a huge amount of radio noise, making normal communication links useless. To combat this, all ships that enter Skiddir's atmosphere are fitted with large arrays of communications/avionic equipment, but even these cannot pierce the extra interference caused by a storm.

REFEEFEE'S INFORMATION

The referee should give the players a copy of the rig's deck plans. Gyron Chard will have informed the characters about all the relevant security procedures, so they can gain access to any part of the rig. The players should also know the data about Skiddir, as well as the fact that a storm is heading rapidly towards the Sky-Rig.

The Journey to the Sky-Rig

The New World colony orbits Skiddir at an altitude of 2,059,960km (1,280,000 miles). It will take 8½ hours to reach the last known position of the Sky-Rig. During the flight roll twice for encounters on 2d6, 9+ an encounter has occurred. Roll 1d6.

Encounter Table

Die Roll	Encounter
1	Turbulence. Pilot must roll 8+, DMs, +1 pilot skill to remain in control of cutter; if the roll is failed then the ship is out of control, roll again each round until control is regained. For each round out of control roll 2d6, if a 12 is rolled some piece of the player's equipment has been broken.
2	Lightning Strike. The cutter is undamaged, but one character takes 1d6+1 Damage.
3	Confused Avionics. Static build up on the outer hull confuses navigation instruments. Roll 8+, DMs, +1 navigation skill to remain on course. If the roll is failed add 1d6+1 minutes to flight time.
4	Radar Contact. The players see a blip on the cutter's radar that looks like another ship following them. It is in fact a false radar image, there is nothing there.
5	Personal Equipment Failure. Unknown to the players one piece of their equipment fails, due to old age, lack of maintenance etc Revolutionary Spy. A spy has hidden onboard the cutter, if the players say they are searching for the cutter he will be found, otherwise he will remain hidden. If he is found he will not tell the players his true identity, but he will always try to prevent the players from succeeding with their mission. UPP 678A66, he carries a snub pistol. This can only happen once, if it is rolled again count the second roll as no encounter.
6	

Once the players have reached the rig's last known position, they will find that it has drifted off station, 32km (20 miles) 'downwind' and 4.5km (2.7 miles) lower than it should be.

Once aboard the players will have access to three other sources of information, the rig's main computer, the Captain's Log and the Surgeon's Log. Information can be gained from the rig's computer at any terminal throughout the rig but it only contains a great deal of very technical data which would take days to analyse. The two logs can only be found in the Captain's cabin and in the Sick Bay; the players should know of the Logs but not where they are kept. The Encounter Table and the Systems Failure Table give the events relating to the adventure. The referee should add other events to confuse and mislead the players. These can be about failing production figures, minor accidents or anything else the referee likes. The Surgeon's Log also contains a full description of the symptoms of the disease at the end.

Encounters

The Energy Sucker. Deep within Skiddir's atmosphere live a multitude of strange unknown animals, of which the Energy Sucker is one. This particular individual lived off the occasional lightning strike, but entirely by chance, found its way into the upper reaches of the atmosphere, where it found an incredibly rich source of food, the Sky-Rig. As this creature approached it was sucked into one of the rig's gas intakes, causing all kinds of malfunctions in the rig's refinery which led to it being injected into an empty fuel tank where it lodged and started to feed.

The Energy Sucker lives off electrical energy, which it absorbs through a vast number of tentacles. This creature has caused all the deaths on the rig, and the players must find and kill it to save the Sky-Rig. It consists of three main parts. A large energy storage sac, a small body containing the brain and other organs and a vast mass of thin but extremely long feeding tentacles. These tentacles allows the passage of electricity along their length, but not through their sides, so all energy is absorbed at the very end of the tentacle.

Energy Sucker	Size	Armour	Hits	Wounds & Weapons
Energy Sac	25m Diameter	Cloth & Reflec	12/-	none
Body	3m Diameter	Cloth	2/29	none
Tentacles	150m Long	Cloth & Reflec	2/2	Electrical Discharge

For game purposes the number of tentacles is unlimited. The Energy Sucker can create an electrical discharge, a small lightning bolt projected from the end of a tentacle. Each tentacle can fire one lightning bolt each round; the bolt attacking as a laser rifle but only doing 1d6+1 damage. Reflec has no effect on this attack. It can also 'attack' via a by-product of the way the creature feeds. The human body is controlled by tiny electrical impulses in the central nervous system. These impulses are vulnerable to being absorbed by this creature. This draining effect manifests itself as a form of disease. The symptoms of this disease are:

A feeling of tiredness, lasting for Endurance x 1 minutes, after which ▷

SKY RIG

►the patient falls into a deep sleep, lasting for Endurance x 1 minutes. The victim then goes into a coma which lasts for Endurance x 1d6 minutes, after which the victim dies.

Medical Slow drug will increase the survival time to three times that of normal (the players should not know this). The creature's tentacles do not have to touch their target, they absorb energy from everything within 3 metres of them.

Finding and Killing the Energy Sucker. The creature's tentacles have burnt their way through bulkheads following electric cables in between the decks. Opening any inspection panel will reveal great bundles of tentacles. There are no parts of this creature in plain sight.

There are three main ways of killing the Energy Sucker. Shooting the Energy Sac, shooting the body or giving the creature so much power so quickly that the shock kills it. Shooting the body is quite a safe method but the body is a small target compared with the Energy Sac, which sprouts directly from it. Shooting the Energy Sac is very dangerous, as once it has taken 12 points of damage, all the energy stored in it will be released in one huge explosion. This explosion will do 1000 points of damage and have a blast radius of 15 metres. Being behind hard cover will reduce the damage by half, and if the blast fails to penetrate, the damage will be halved again. Treat the blast as a PGMP-12 for 'to hit' purposes. If a character is in an area completely sealed off by bulkheads from the explosion he will take no damage. There is also a one in six chance that the outer pressure hull will split. If it does split an instant increase in pressure will occur; throw under Endurance to remain conscious. This will be accompanied by a sudden increase in wind speed; unless the character is tied down or can duck through an air tight door they will be literally blown out of the rig. The last method is to make an incision in the Energy Sac (2 points of damage will make a suitable hole) insert a steel cable and touch the other end to the side of the body or a group of tentacles. All its energy will be instantly released and the creature will be unable to cope with this massive influx of power and will die.

Spikeys. These animals come from the same region as the Energy Sucker, but are small and are not so dangerous!

Animal Type	Weight	Hits	Armour	Wounds
12 Flying Parasite	6kg	8/8	Jack	2d6 A6 F9 S2

These animals are 60-70cm across resembling huge snow flakes because of their crystalline structure. They attack by flying into their victims, the ends of their spines impaling the target. The rig's atmosphere acts as a slow poison on these animals and so they may die before the players encounter them.

Worker Robot. These machines are 2.5 metres long and very strong. They are designed to work on the outside of the rig in all but the worst weather conditions. Only one robot is still functional when the players arrive onboard. The robot has two work arms, and a central welding laser. It flies on null-gravity modules, but at the present time it can only fly as fast as a man can walk. The robot was originally controlled via a radio link, but this has been rendered useless by the Energy Sucker. Its

internal controls are malfunctioning and it will attack anything it can see moving. As weapons the workarms count as Blade +1 and the laser as Laser Rifle +1, its skin counts as Cloth -1. It has 35 hit points.

The Scientist, Daniels. The last surviving member of the rig's crew, Daniels has been affected by the disease and looks in a very bad way. When the players reach him he will weakly say "it's... it's a..." and will then fall unconscious.

System Failure

This table reflects the feeding of the Energy Sucker on the power sources within the rig. As a guide for other pieces of equipment not on the list, large energy sources will fail before smaller ones and sensitive equipment will fail before the more robust. Most equipment will not be damaged, just all the electrical power that was in it will be 'gone'.

System Failure Table

Time (mins)	Effect
5	Docking bay door power fails, the player's cutter is locked in.
7	Storm hits, all communication is lost with the outside world.
10	Air locks fail. Players cannot open the outer air lock doors, except by blowing the emergency explosive bolts.
20 END	Main lighting circuit fails, replaced by red emergency lights, cutter's power output reduced by half.
30	Characters feel heavy, due to partial failure of deck grav plates. Internal gravity now 1.5g. Battle Dress fails.
35	PGMP weapons fail.
40	Vacc suits fail.
45	Main bridge controls fail, laser rifles and short range communicators are drained.
55 END	Main computer fails, laser carbines drained.
65	Hand computers fail, the rig's cooling system stops, slowly increase the internal temperature.
70	Spikeys die, Worker Robot's power fails (see encounter section).
75	Laser pistols, and any other energy weapons are drained. All life rafts but one fail.
85	Emergency lighting fails. Internal gravity rises to 2g. Air recycling stops.
95 END	All remaining electronic equipment carried by the players fails.
105	Power to Iris valves, and lifts fail. Total power failure on the cutter.
110	Grav plates fail, internal gravity now 3g.
115	Last Life Raft fails.
120	Complete power failure, the rig's drives fail. The rig falls from the sky. Anyone left onboard at this time dies.

Time = Time after the party arrive onboard in game minutes.

END = Endurance saving throw. Throw under Endurance on 2d6, DMs; First save -2, second save -1, third save no DM. If the character fails a save they have 'caught' the disease.

The failure of the life support systems cooling and air recycling has no real game effect but it can add a great deal of 'atmosphere'.

Captain Straker's Log

3rd. Science Officer Daniels has noticed some odd-looking crystalline like creatures through the Observation Blister.

4th. Several of these creatures (Spikeys as Daniels has named them) attacked some crew members on C deck. Security managed to capture and confine them in the Caging area under my orders. Martens is studying them now. I have Garron, the Chief Engineer, looking into how they got aboard.

5th. Garron reports a major malfunction in the Gas Intakes. This must be where the Spikeys came on board – hence the damage. However, the Engineering Section were able to repair it within five hours. (Referee: this was the Energy Sucker making an entrance).

6th. Garron reports some minor power failures, nothing to worry about, he says.

7th. Surgeon Martens tells me a crew member has died today – from some unknown disease. I have given him all the necessary facilities to examine the Spikeys in depth. It seems likely they are the

cause. I have ordered the quarantine of the Sky Rig. New World must not be exposed to the disease. Also puzzling are the continued reports of minor power failures. Afternoon – Martens reports that the Spikey's are slowly dying.

8th. This morning, Garron recommended the closing down of the refinery because of increased unexplained malfunctions, endangering the safety of the crew. The Production Manager objected but I was forced to agree with Garron and ordered the shutting down of the Refinery. Afternoon – the disease is spreading. I have called a general meeting to explain to the crew the importance of not leaving the rig, after Security stopped some people attempting to steal a life raft. A team of specialists have been promised by New World One. They should be here within the week.

9th. Continued mechanical failures. I feel very tired... Garron is gone.. Must sleep.

10th. No entry.

Surgeon Marten's Log

8th: Crew well. Riggins' flu improving.

9th. Treated 2 security men for puncture wounds, caused by some alien life forms that have invaded the ship. Have set up small lab in Caging Area to study them. The men look fine – there seem to be no added complications. Keeping them under observation in case of disease/biological reaction.

10th. Spikeys have a definite crystalline structure – extraordinary. They also appear to use helium in respiration. Security patients are improving. Riggins has been discharged.

7th. Crewman Williams from Deck C admitted, suffering from extreme exhaustion. Afternoon – he has fallen into a deep sleep.

8th. Crewman Williams fell into a coma and died last night. I still cannot determine cause of death. Two new cases from C Deck admitted. There must be a virus of some kind but I am unable to isolate it.

8th. The disease is spreading like wildfire. Sick Bay cannot handle them all, had to confine many to quarters. I am very worried – it is essential to confine the disease to the Rig. Several of the crew have died.

9th. Captain Straker has fallen ill. Afternoon – Captain has died. The plague seems to be acting faster. There are only five of us left now; me, Daniels, one of the security men and two other crewmen.

10th. Rogers (security) has left the Rig in a pressure suit. We tried to stop him, but he shot two of the crew – the stupid, selfish fool; with any luck he won't be picked up. Afternoon – Discovered that the cause of death involves the cessation of neuronic impulses in the central nervous system – as if all a person's nervous energy was drained. However, I am still unable to find any organism causing this. Evening – I think it is too late now. I am feeling drowsy... Where is Daniels?... It is only a matter of hours now.

11th. (Today's date). No entry.

SKY RIG

The Sky-Rig

This Sky-Rig is used to test new equipment and processes in working conditions. The equipment being tested now is a device which can extract rare gases from the atmosphere at a fraction of the normal cost. The rig's drives are non-standard anti-grav drives; these can be kept running constantly for many months at a time. The rig had a crew of 23 and 6 non-standard life rafts. These are built around a simple hydrogen ramjet. Each life raft masses 10 tons and can carry 10 passengers. The flight controls are entirely automatic consisting of just three buttons which activate and launch the raft. The raft uses the gas giant's atmosphere as fuel so once the raft is in orbit it will not be able to manoeuvre nor restart the jet engine. The life raft will complete three orbits of Skiddir after which time the orbit decays and the raft plummets planetward. On each orbit there is a chance that the life raft will be picked up by a ship answering the raft's distress beacon. This chance is: 15% on Orbit 1, 25% on Orbit 2 and 50% on Orbit 3.

Sky Rig (High Guard)

SZ-G604622-40000-00000-0 MCr2,600 TL12 7000 tons
Crew = 19 Passengers = 6 Cargo = 24 EP = 420 Agility = 4

Life Raft (High Guard)

QN-0305110-30000-00000-0 Crew = 0 Passengers = 10

MCr5

TL12

10 tons

Special Equipment

Pressure Suit. Unlike a Vacc suit, this is designed to withstand the crushing atmosphere of Skiddir. It is a large armoured suit with anti-grav modules built in. The hands and feet of the suit have electromagnets built into the suit, so the operator can 'stick' to the hull of the rig while working outside. A skill of Vacc Suit-2, or Battle Dress-2 is needed to operate the suit. In combat the suit counts as battle dress, but any hit that penetrates the suit will cause a malfunction, all moving parts will jam and no movement will be possible. Anyone shooting a weapon while wearing the suit does so at -3 to hit due to the suit's bulkiness. In normal gravity the suit can fly at a maximum speed of 350kph.

Life Support Machine. Medical-2 is needed to attach the machine to the patient. A character with Medical-1 can attempt hook up – throw 2d6, +8 the attempt succeeded. If failed then the patient takes 1d6 damage. These machines are movable but must always be connected to a power supply.

REFEREE'S NOTES

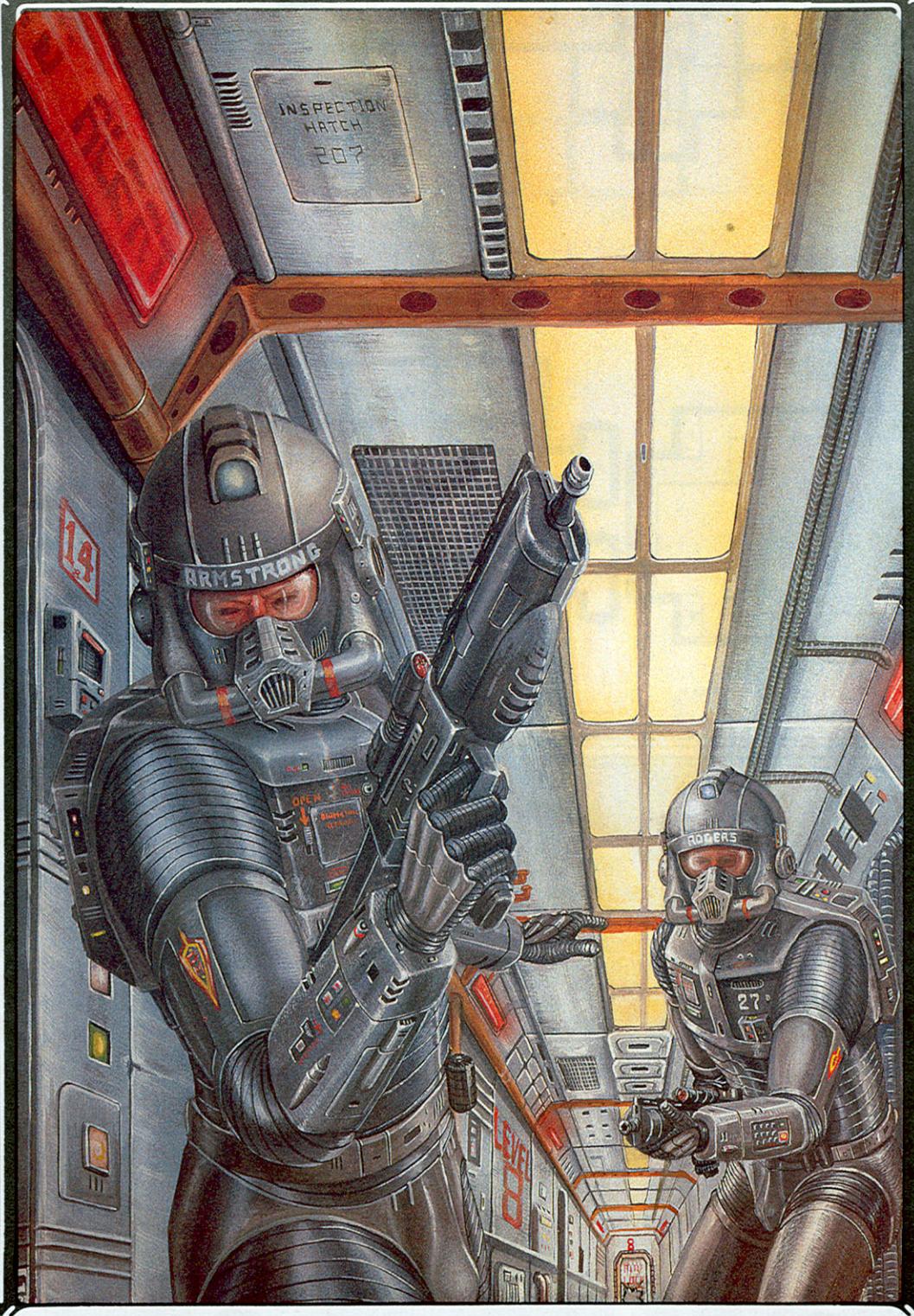
It is up to the referee to decide exactly what payment the players should receive, but it should be remembered that the cutter is only on loan from New World's government, and that the characters will be doing less than one game day's actual work.

The Journey to the Sky-Rig.

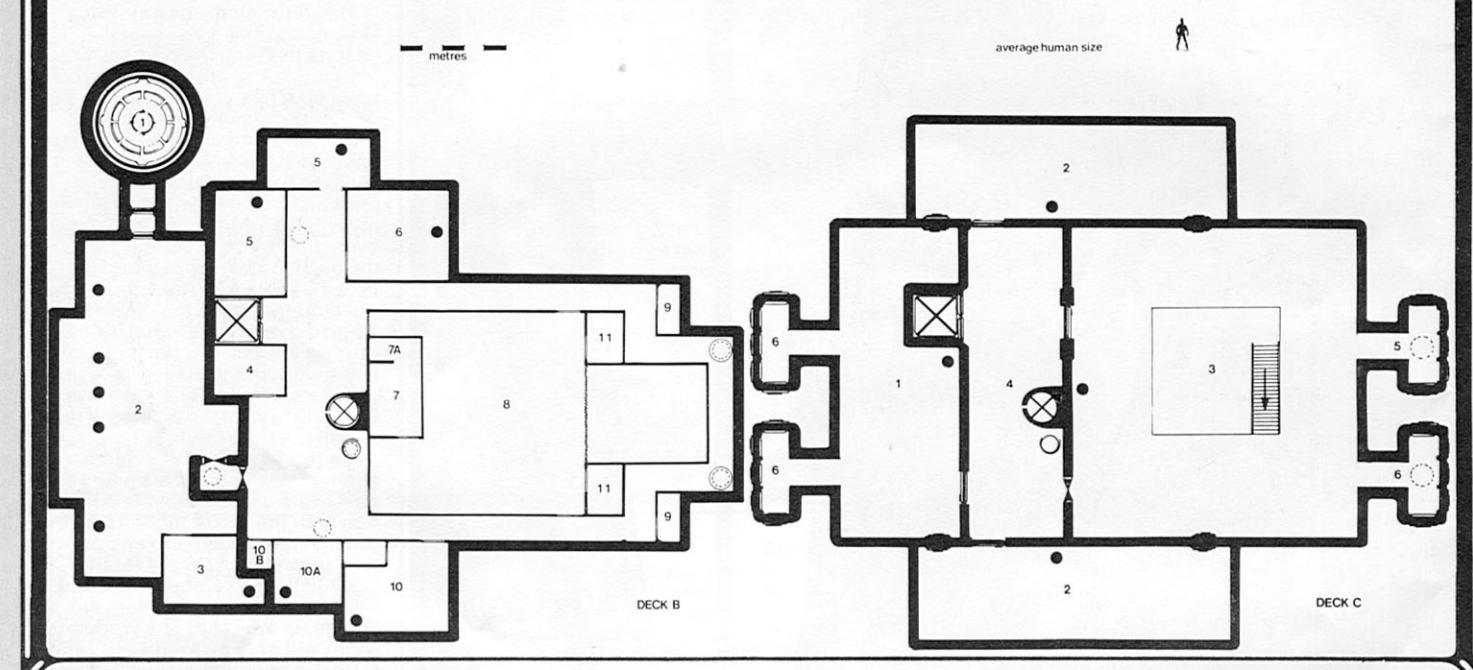
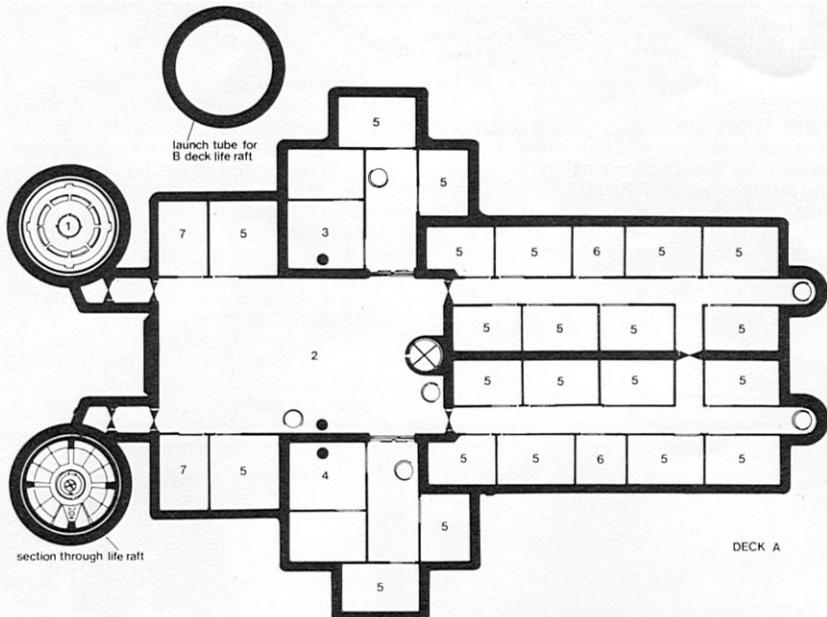
Only encounter 3 will actually change the time the party arrives on the rig. Any other delay will have no effect. If encounter 6 occurs the players will find it much harder to succeed with the mission. If the spy is found he will seem to be friendly but once onboard the rig he will start giving away false information and may even attempt to sabotage parts of the rig. If the spy is not found then he will sabotage some areas of the rig, aiming to stop the players from finding out just what is going on. The spy will always try to leave without the players by using a life raft. One life raft will always be ready to save the players at the end of the time limit.

On the Sky-Rig. The referee should use the System Failure Table to create tension. Encounters with the lesser inhabitants of the rig are not keyed to any particular location, (except for the Scientist). The referee should let the players encounter them when they least expect it. The worker robot will only be found on C and D Decks, and the Spikeys will be found somewhere on E Deck. The System Failure Table should be kept to, but if the referee wants, he can lengthen or shorten the time slightly if he thinks it will increase the tension of the game. To give an idea of how long things take to do, it takes one minute to quickly search a stateroom and four to five minutes to search it thoroughly. It will take 7 minutes to read one of the logs.

Recovery from the Effects of the Energy Sucker. All affected equipment must be checked after it has been drained, or after that piece of equipment has left the rig, to see if it has been damaged in any way. Every character that caught the disease must also check at the same time. Throw 2d6. If the result is 2 or 3 then that piece of equipment has been damaged. It will cost 10-60% of its purchase cost to repair. For every affected character do the same except if they throw a 2 or a 3 they will permanently lose 1 point of Intelligence and 2 points of Dexterity, due to slight brain damage, caused by the disease. □



SKY RIG



INTERIOR DETAILS

A Deck, Crew's Quarters

1. **Life Raft.** One of the two life rafts will contain 3 dead crew members.
2. **Lounge.** Scattered around this area are low tables and comfortable chairs. The wall between the two life raft hatches is a large viewing screen, at present showing a recorded quiz show (fortunately, 45 mins after the party arrive onboard the screen will fail).

3. **Captain Straker's Cabin.** A double sized stateroom, full of momentos of old commands and the Captain's log (see Referee's Information section for details). The dead body of the Captain is on the bed.

4. **Production Manager's Cabin.** A similar area to the Captain's cabin, but is much neater. In one corner is a larger scale model of the Rig.

5. **Stateroom.** All these staterooms contain various personal items. There will also be 7 dead crew members, all who have died of the disease. If the players want to waste time they will find Cr564 in cash, and 1,200 credits' worth of goods.

6. **Fresher.**
7. **Storage Space.**

B Deck, Control and Recreation Level.

1. **Life Raft.**
2. **Bridge.** A large room filled with control consoles. From here the refinery can be controlled as well as the flight path of the rig itself. The consoles show that the rig is in perfect working order, but will also show the parts of the rig that are not working, (no reason should be given by the referee about why things are not working).

3. **Computer Room.** A computer Mk2 is fitted in this room. An extensive back-up memory has also been installed.

4. **Locker.** This area contains the usual types of equipment found in all ship's lockers, in a locked rack on one wall are 5 Snub pistols with 15 HE and 30 Tranq rounds.

5. Offices.

6. Library.

7. Kitchen.

7a. Cold Store.

8. **Recreation Area.** This was the rig's main common room where the crew ate their meals and relaxed. Amongst a pile of broken furniture near the folding doors is the body of one of the rig's crew. The area on the other side of the folding doors was used as a gymnasium.

9. Fresher.

10. **Sick Bay.** Four life support machines line one wall, all occupied by crew members affected by the disease. If they are removed from the machines they will die. All four are unconscious. The life support machines will fail after 90 mins unless another power supply can be found.

10a. **Surgery.** A small operating theatre. On the floor is the body of the rig's surgeon, Martens. His Log will be found nearby.

10b. **Air Lock.** Used to keep infected air out of operating room.

11. Storage Space.

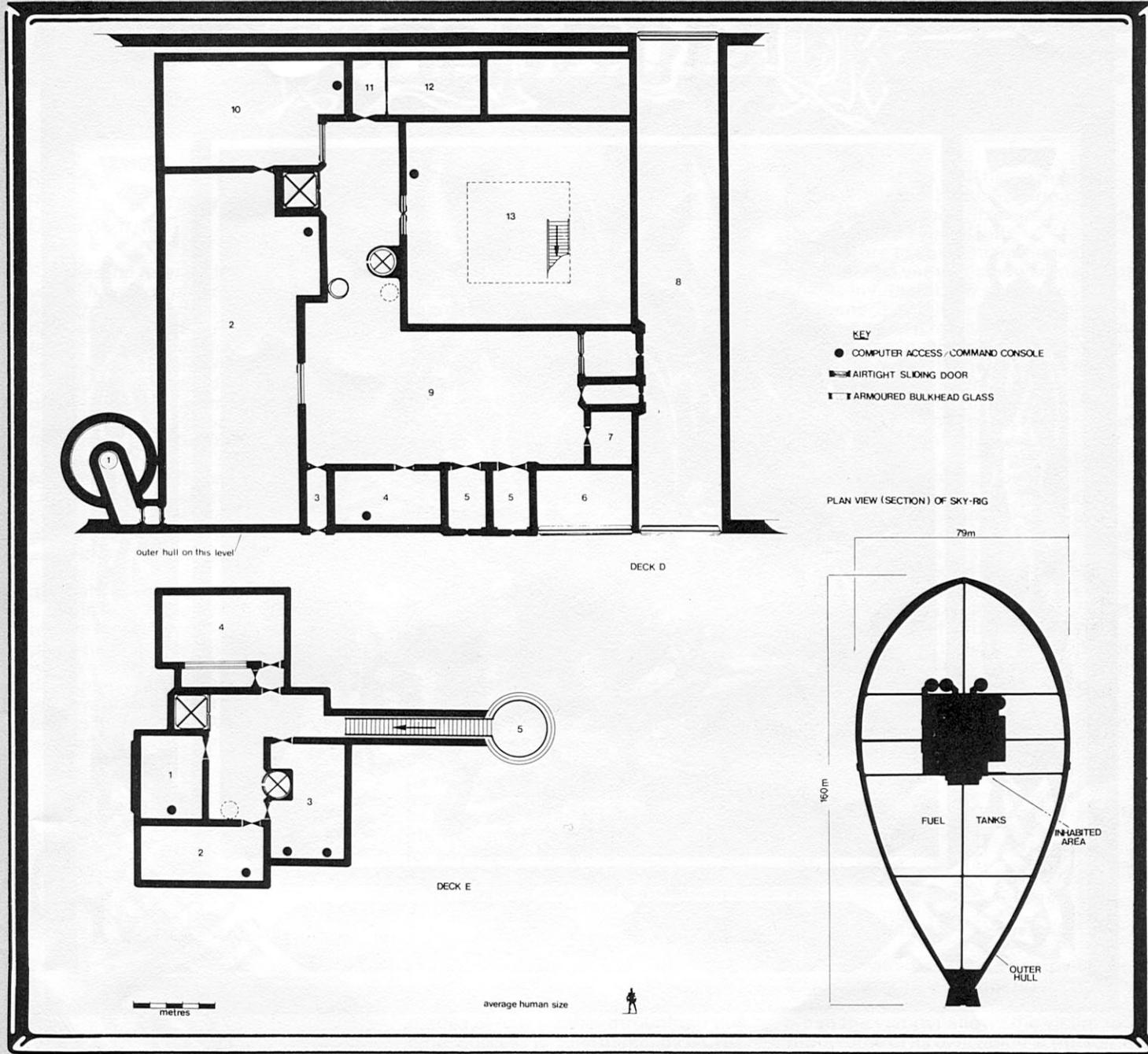
C Deck, Power Plant and Drives Level

1. **Power Plant.** In perfect working order, it will continue to run right up to the end. The Energy Sucker is absorbing the power, diverting it away from where it is needed. The Energy Sucker will not be seen even in this area.

2. **Drive Rooms.** These two areas contain the rig's drive units. They are in perfectly good condition. Two more dead crew members will be found draped over control panels.

3. **Upper Refinery Level.** A large amount of heavy machinery occupies this area. A vast mass of pipes lead to the central refinery, the top of which rises through an open area in the middle of the room.

SKY RIG



4. *Loading Area.* Two fork lift trucks stand idle; one is loaded with a large metal valve.

5. *Maintenance Access Area.* Lying here is the body of a dead mechanic. He was removing an inspection hatch leading to an empty fuel tank. If the players complete the mechanic's job they will find the central parts of the Energy Sucker within. The players will not be able to see the body of the Energy Sucker since it is hidden by the bloated bulk of the Energy Sac. The Energy Sucker will not react to the players unless they attack it, in which case it will draw in 2d6 tentacles each round and defend itself.

6. *Maintenance Access Area.* As 5, but without mechanic or the monster.

D Deck, Refinery Level

1. Life Raft.

2. *Gas Separation Planet.* This machine separates the rare but useful gases out of Skiddir's atmosphere. This is a very large machine, filling most of this room.

3. *Air Lock.* Inside will be found another dead crew man (Rogers, Security). He is in a pressure suit, and carries a body pistol with a half empty magazine (he shot the crew men in the Lower Refinery).

4. *Robotics Control Centre.* Many control panels line the walls of this room. Each console controlled one of the worker robots. At present only one console is operating. The controls are not functioning but a TV picture will be seen, this picture is being transmitted by the last working robot. This picture will show some part of the interior of the rig.

5. *Air Locks.* These large air locks are designed to launch and retrieve worker robots.

6. *Fuel Transfer Equipment.* This sealed area contains the machinery necessary to transfer refined fuel from the rig to a waiting tanker.

7. *Locker.* Storage space for four pressure suits.

8. *Cutter Bay.* This tube acts as a hangar for cutters bringing food etc to the rig. The player's cutter will have to dock here.

9. *Cargo Hold.* Stacked high with crates containing newly designed machine parts.

10. *Workshop.* Along one wall are racks for holding the rig's robots, 6 of the 10 racks are occupied with deactivated robots. In the centre of the room are heavy duty work benches; a small crane is fixed to the ceiling.

11. *Electronics Store.* Spare parts for the rig's electrical equipment.

12. *Store.* Metal sheet, pipes of all shapes and sizes, as well as coils of steel rope are stored in this area.

13. *Lower Refinery.* This is the base section of area 3 on C Deck. It has a similar mass of pipes and ducts. At the bottom of the stairs are two bodies. Both have been shot.

E Deck, Science Level

1. *Probe Launching Area.* Small unmanned probes are dropped into the clouds through a small air lock. Wall racks hold 11 unused probes.

2. *Weather Centre.* Instruments for recording weather patterns.

3. *Laboratory.*

4. *Caging Area.* The Spikeys were kept here [see encounter section]. During the confusion of the last few days they escaped, smashing the glass wall and killing one of the crew. His body remains in the middle of the floor in a pool of cold blood.

5. *Observation Blister.* At the end of the flight of stairs is an armoured glass observation post. This room has the only "windows" on the entire rig, and allows direct observation of cloud formations as well as the underside of the rig. The blister is crammed with all kinds of measuring equipment. It also contains the last surviving crew member Daniels [see encounter section, the Scientist]. □