

He! You are now playing
Games! The secret word is:

To continue the game, turn to
page 11.

Signed,

\$2.

Doin's Down Home

We're much obliged to the many of you who have written us with encouragement, praise and criticism (see representative sampling of letters in this issue) on our first ENCOUNTERs. So long as we get that kind of feedback, putting out this journal will be a pleasure!

Around here, we're busily involved in designing the finishing touches for Cosmic Encounter Expansion Set #9. We always seem to get touched by a bit of cabin-fever-craziness during the long New England winters, and come the first inkling of spring new ideas for giving CE yet one more weird twist just seem to well up from some lower level much like our notorious fieldstones.

And speaking of spring and it's coming, my apologies to those of you who have written and not gotten personal answers. Around here we don't have a very long growing season, and much work bar to be done quickly if we're going to get in the year's garden (our address isn't "Rural Free Delivery #2" for nothing.) Thus I've adopted a policy of answering a letter only once — if it's going to appear in ENCOUNTER

then there's no personal reply. I hope you'll understand and not put a hex on our parsnips.

Our video design work is going along very well (see issue no 2) and we're getting pretty excited about some of the gaming concepts we think we can introduce into that medium. It's been so much oriented to single-player "me versus the machine" games that we really feel we're breaking new ground every day with new ideas for involving many players in true multi-player computer-assisted interactions. Aside from developing new games, we're even exploring putting up on the screen some of our existing line. Now that should really be interesting!

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LETTERS

from Matt Van Amburgh, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA:

I very much enjoyed reading "The Cosmic Chronicles" in the Special CE Issue, concerning the origins of Cosmic Encounter. It is quite evident that all of you worked very hard and deserve a great deal of praise. Thanks for going to all the trouble in making C.E. possible.

I have so many questions and things to ask about C.E., that I am seriously considering a trip to the state of Massachusetts, and just to visit with you guys. Hah! We could sit down for a few days and just talk about Cosmic. I must be dreaming. But, of course, that is somewhat unlikely, unfortunately. How about coming out here!? Well, scratch that idea. go, please bear with me and fill me in on these pressing matters.

1) What do you think about creating an octagon for the central hex, so that eight people could play? Would that somehow change the outcome of the game or just what could that imply? Not enough cards to go around maybe or simply too many people?

Do you plan on making a total compilation of all the rules to C.E.? It sure would help I think. It is somewhat of a bother continually looking back to all the different expansion set rules, especially Lucre. I am quite flustered with Lucre. I am not sure how it is even used in C.E., i.e., what powers; when to use, etc.

3.) When do certain alien powers have to use their power? By that I mean when is it mandatory?, i.e., does the Anti-Matter have to be lowest number to win or can it play a 30 and

win that way; does Macron have to be worth 4 for each token? I have noticed this on several other alien powers and not positive when they must implement their respective power and I don't mean when the owner changes the game play in the same way by virtue of his power.

I appreciate all your help on the previous questions. Who knows, maybe one day there will be a book as big as the Oxford English Dictionary full of questions and answers dealing with Cosmic Encounter. Thanks again guys!

Editor: Thanks for the kind words, Matt. You're welcome to stop by and visit, but I'll have to warn you things around here are not as leisurely as you might think. Besides doing the Eon management and design work, and the video designs, we've four little ones to keep out of trouble (oldest is I), a mammoth garden to plant, animals to feed and water, and enough construction projects to keep us out of trouble until 1985. Come if you will, but bring a spade (and I don't mean the poker variety). Now on to your questions:

1) I'm not too hot about 8-player CE. I know a lot of folks play it that way successfully, but I think past 6 it just takes too long to get your turn. Even if you are involved in every alliance, a body needs to be in the limelight himself every so often, and it's less fun if it takes too long. You got 8 regular players? Use 2 sets, sez I.

2) Yes, in fact we are right now doing the rules compilation to be included with Set #9. We felt it was long overdue and

this would be the right Expansion Set to include it with. So save your pennies until July . . .

3) Yes, there are many mandatory powers which do not have the option of not using their power. Examples are the Anti-Matter, the Macron, the Virus, etc. Generally, the power is optional only if the words "may", "can", or some other clear indicator of its optional nature is in the text. If the text declares what you do, and doesn't indicate that you have a choice about it, you don't.

from Friedrich Tichy, Vienna, Austria:

Today I received ENCOUNTER Vol 1, no 2. I very much appreciated it. Now I've some questions for the journal:

1) The Force — The only character we are quarreling about. It is not clear what explanation #2 on the character card means. "Limit or moderately expand" is kind of a rubber conception. Quarrels often start when the affected player(s) think that the Force is too rude in cutting their powers. It would be nice to read in the next journal what the Force can do and cannot do.

Editor: We meant this to be rather open to players' inventiveness, while still within the bounds of fair play. Generally the Force cannot negate a player's power ("the Virus can't multiply") but only limit it ("it can multiply its own tokens but must add allies"). Moderately expanding a power means to think of new things it can do consistent with the basic power ("The Anti-Matter can subtract its card from its pieces, instead of the other way around"). It's a tough call, sometimes, but if the Force can make a cogent argument that his aid is consistent with the wording on the card, he can render it. After all, he is the Force.

2) The Schizoid-Always seems to win, e.g. "0 bases, one (specified) empty planet in the home system". So we forbid him to specify 0 bases. But "Base and the second planet from the right in the home system empty" will do it as well, since if the Schizoid has one base, it is easy for him to clear one planet (or even 2 specified ones) and win immediately. So how should you handle him? We handle him not helping him a bit, and all players try to prevent him from gaining one base (the usual amount) because the second condition is very easy to fulfill for him (some empty planets, an exact amount of tokens on an exact located planet, etc.) This leads to nobody wanting to play the Schizoid because everyone wants to play "with" others (CE is a social game as well as a kind of war game). So what do you say about this?

Editor: We haven't had that problem in our games, but I guess it happens because the Schizoid has the third best winning record of all the powers tested by Ted Schmeckepeper over 5 years (see "A Player's CE Annals" in this issue.) If it's a problem for you, I'd suggest some sort of house rule ("can't be less than 3 foreign bases") which gives the others a fighting chance to guess the win conditions by yes/no questions before it's too late.

3) The Negator — The last sentence states "... must make a different decision affecting the same element of play . . ." If the Negator negates the defender's decision to buy some cards, the only different decision is not to buy anything, is that right? (The attacker could buy tokens from the warp instead.)

Editor: Right, certain decisions are essentially yes/no ones. But if the defender had said "I'm going to buy 3 cards" then, if

negated, he could buy a different number. It depends on how the player defines the decision — if he is specific, other options remain, but if he is general, the negation negates everything included in the decision.

4) Assume the following situation — Player A plays Attack 10, Player B plays Compromise, loses 4 tokens to the warp. Player A is the Mesmer, and has only 5 cards left (4 are Edicts). Because he doesn't want to lose them and because he does want to crush B he intends to play them all as Plagues against the poor B. But B wants to get his consolation cards, and insists on getting them first, because he played Compromise against Attack 10 first. Player A shows him the sentence on the Edict which says "Play at any time". Which one is right?

Editor: Unfortunate & blood-thirsty A is right and can let loose his pack of Plagues before B can get consolation. With 16 tokens in the warp B gets A's final card, however, as consolation. Let's hope it's the 40.

from Ed Day, Williston Park, NY:

I have just read ENCOUNTER #1 and would like to make comments as needed as I skim through it again.

Page 2: On that power suggested does the '0 or 1 of your own' mean they are included in the 4 or included in addition to? Also, what on earth is a vote used for? Determining the outcome of the challenge?

Page 3: I have an interesting question or two. Why are the Oracle and the Laser allowed in the same game (especially a two player one)? The Oracle can see what the Laser is playing but cannot decide what he will play since he must play blind, effectively leaving him with no power at all! What is the purpose of setting up the Warpish around the Warp (understanding he is immune to the Wild Schizoid and certain Moons)? Idea: put the Warpish in an 8 player game to have a 9 player game if you have enough players. Can the Negator make a negation in between challenges in forfeit of making a negation in the next challenge? People who have an older copy of the rules than mine say that the destiny pile only determines the system you will attack and not the color of the tokens you must attack so I suggest you tell them of the change that says the destiny pile determines both the system and color of tokens that must be attacked. What good is the Will otherwise? I think the Doppelganger should be allowed to keep Kickers and Flares he manages to get without use of his Super Flare and the present Super Flare should be changed to 'For every Lucre you spend you may take two cards off the top of the deck instead of the regular one when buying cards (limit of 4 cards still holds).' It might be a good idea to tell people that the Changeling is not returned to the player who used it at the end of the challenge — that would make it like an Insect that negates the opponent's Power. Does the Warpish get Moons? If you get the Dragon after play has begun do you get 4 extra Lucre?

A note on your Schizoid question and answer: there are those who don't care about winning and will prolong a CE game as long as possible; beware!

Why are the Vacuum and Zombie allowed together in the same game? The Vacuum would never be able to put Zombie tokens into the warp and thus have no useful purpose.

When the Super Mutant discards his hand is the Mutant Flare also discarded?

I suggest YOU tell people that attacking yourself (playing two cards against yourself to get back a home base if none of your tokens are on it or someone else's) when the Destiny pile is turned by you and is your color is illegal; I've met people who say it's allowed. Is it? If so, what happens when you have only one challenge card?

I like the new Power suggestions and will add them to my game.

Keep up the great work!

P.S. Why can't the Miser be used in a 6 player game?

Editor: Minn's power says the 0 or 1 token of your own are included in the 4 tokens you take from the warp, not in addition to them. It also says the vote is on whether or not the tokens stay, or return to the warp. What would the Universe be like if an Oracle couldn't foresee certain disaster once in awhile, beb? We put the Warpish around the Warp because that's his home. Also it allows 7-player games. Anyone who wants to p&y 9 players deserves a Warpish in every game. The Negator cannot make a negation between challenges, but can make it as early in a challenge as he wishes, which is the same thing.

There has been some confusion about the destiny pile and attacking yourself. The star disc which comes up determines the color of the home system in which you make the challenge. If it is not yours, you must challenge the owner of that system on one planet, and he is the defensive player whether or not he has any tokens on that planet. If your own color comes up, you may flip again or challenge the base of one other player on one of your home planets, whether or not you already have tokens there. You may never challenge yourself on a home base or anywhere else, nor may you challenge tokens of another player on a planet which is neither his nor your home planet (unless you are the Will). Thanks for the chance to make this clear. It has always been this way, tho, right from the start with the original rules.

I like your changes for the Doppelganger (at least keeping Kickers) and you ought to make a house rule to play it that way.

You're right, the Changeling is not returned to the original player at the end of the challenge. As in all things, we thought the power card wording was clear, but people's assumptions about how things ought to be often get in the way of their learning how they really are. Sure, the Warpish gets moons. Why not? No extra 4 Lure if you change to the Dragon en passant. We let the Vacuum and Zombie coexist for the same reason as the Oracle and Laser - fairness in the Cosmos is not fine-structured. Yes, the Super Mutant discards his birth certificate at the moment of nativity — appropriate, no?

We kept the miser out of six-player games because the deck was too small for the extra band. But players with Expansion Sets 3 & 8 should have enough cards to deal him in.

from Joe Masset, Centereach, NY:

I've been playing your games for a few years now, and I thought I'd write to tell you what I thought of those I've played:

COSMIC ENCOUNTER — Beautifully produced. Strategic, exciting, and hilarious (a strange but winning combination if there ever was one). In my opinion, the best commercially produced game ever made. You guys should be knighted for this one.

QUIRKS — Fun to play, but pretty skimpy components for the price. I love to play it, even though it's murder trying to keep track of such a large hand of light, flimsy cards.

HOAX — **Boooooo!** Entertaining but not nearly as well conceived as your other titles. I felt really gypped by this one. Couldn't this have been a capsule game?

DARKOVER — A great production job, second only to CE. A bit complex for casual play, particularly for new players. The Ghost Wind is a riot! That little chit makes **DARKOVER** the best game to play with women since Twister. Don't look at me that way.

Well, that's it. Thanks for reading, and keep up the good work.

Editor: Thanks for the candid remarks, Joe. We have designed, for Quirks, little stands for players to use to hold their band of traits, and little trays to use to lay their Quirk on the board. These items greatly facilitate handling the traits and double the appeal of the game, they make it that much easier to play. These will be put into the new production run of the game (and made available to players who bought the earlier edition for free — wait for our announcement when they are reproduced and write us asking for one). On Hoax, yes it is a far lighter, less serious game (as is Runes) but our experience is that it's a bell of a lot of fun, especially for large groups — which are too big to p&y our other items. Well, 3 out of 4 isn't bad, tho, eh?

from David Wilson, Allston, MA:

I really enjoyed your newsletter (sic) and was surprised to see my letter printed. Unfortunately, I've been too busy to get back to you (I'm sure you can relate to that.)

The experimental powers mentioned by **Mssrs.** Beach and **Rasfeld** are interesting but need refinement. I like the one from Dr. Frederick L. Minn, but feel I should add that a Terrorist's bomb on the planet chosen cancels the voting and sends everyone immediately to the Warp. And, of course, a filthy planet is ineligible for selection. Do you like the name ombudsman?

Regarding my published question - is one minute an adequate time limit to determine if unanimity is present?

The main focus of this letter is in response to the one from **Quentin Long**. The question about the Laser/Miser is interesting. We used to play that the Miser could choose which hand to play from, but that the Laser would only operate on the regular hand, if the Miser decided to play from it. Your ruling that the Laser operates on whichever hand is chosen makes eminent sense. Incidentally, is there any reason the **Laser** cannot use the Wild Magnet to place, say, his **20's** apart (along with his Edicts and Flares) from the group of eligible selectees? Also, if the Super Laser and Visionary both wish to act, the clockwise offensive/defensive rule should prevail.

I am not as impressed with your answer to the Schizoid question. To quote you: "Even the Schizoid could meet the second term, and it is not necessary that it also do SO while it has its power, according to the power text itself." But the last line of the power text states: "If you lose your power, normal win conditions prevail" thus the Schizoid has no **authroity** and cannot declare anyone (including himself) to be the winner under terms which have no power to be enforced. There is an argument for these terms being valid, but for a different **rea-**son: the requirement 'possible for all players to meet' can be

fulfilled by possession of the Power Trip Moon or Wild Witch Flare. In a game without these Expansion sets, terms involving fewer than 3 home bases should not be considered valid.

The Schizoid raises some other interesting questions (bugs, really) which I'd like to discuss with you sometime (and was the basis for our decision to declare a winner at the end of a challenge). Remembering past events", for instance, we interpret as anything before the current challenge. This example comes as close to the borderline as possible: "3 planets and playing a Mobius Tubes" is valid, but "3 planets and playing a Rebirth" is not. This stems from the fact that Rebirth is played just before a challenge begins, while Mobius Tubes is at the start of your challenge. This implies that a player with most of his tokens in the Warp (and only one token on his bases) cannot use a Rebirth without sacrificing a base. Is this your intention, or can a player in this poor condition use both Rebirth and Mobius Tubes? Even if the offensive player has to get a new hand, can he bend the rules to use both Rebirth and Mobius Tubes?

Editor: Thanks for writing again so quickly, David. I'd say that no hard and fast time limit should apply to deciding about the Sniveler's benefits. It depends on the game and if active discussion is still taking place, or someone is holding out and no one is really still trying to forge a consensus. Certainly, the Laser could save trouble by asking the Lasee (if I may coin a term) to separate out any cards he specifies because of the Wild Magnet. On the Schizoid, a careful reading of the Schizoid power makes it clear to me that the "game condition" added to the number of bases must be possible for any player to meet. It does not say that the player must be able to win while meeting the condition, simply that it is something available to all as a state during play. So I'll stick by my Schizoid answer.

Bugs! In CE? Never. Except maybe the Insect. And the Assassin. And... No, a player may not first play Mobius Tubes, or otherwise get a token from the Warp at the start of his challenge, and then play Rebirth to use it. Rebirth only precedes a challenge. I still don't understand the reasons you say wins must come at the end of a challenge, David. Seems to me if someone won by playing Rebirth, he would win immediately, and that's it.

from Rick Heilberg, Cambridge, MA:

We have come up with some new Moons that you might be interested in. They are:

"In Your Face" Moon(s) — Upon winning your fifth planet (you must have 5), reveal this Moon and state "In your face" to all players trying to alter the outcome of the game by use of Flairs, Edicts, Moons, or Powers, thereby securing victory for yourself.

"Moon Zap II" Moon(s) — Like #73 except you discard this Moon and the zapped Moon. Draw replacements.

"Wild Moon" — Choose which type of Moon you want from the list and play as described. If a secret Moon, secretly write down the Moon number. Other players may take the Moon and make their own choices.

"Flair This" Moon(s) — When someone uses a Flair card against you, you may reveal this and state "Flair This" and appropriate the Flair.

"Bankrupt" Moon (c) — Your opponents cannot add their Lucre to their total.

Once again, great game!

from Donny Churf, Merced, CA:

I just received your first edition of ENCOUNTER today and am pleased to say that it was great. Thank you also for informing me of the CE box. I've enclosed a list of moons that I have changed to my own ideas. Some are interesting and some may be too destructive. Hope you like them.

I do have one question also: How do you keep Lucre in the game, or is there not supposed to be much Lucre used? We seem to use it so fast at the beginning that characters who rely on Lucre for their power end up just about powerless, except the Dragon. I was thinking of having some type of a round where individual powers "prosper" by gaining extra Lucre somehow.

Editor: I've heard that some players think they should discard their Lucre once it is added to a challenge. If you are playing that way, it's wrong and would rapidly use up the Lucre. If you are just spending wildly for tokens and/or cards, I guess that's the way you play and perhaps every time you turn up your own color disc or something the player could gain extra Lucre. Also, thanks for the Moon list. Below is Donny's list of replacement Moons:

6. Curtain (C) While this moon is occupied, all other moons lose their effects.

7. Armageddon (S) Upon revealing this moon, all tokens are lost and the game is over. There are no winners. Discard after use.

8. BLACK HOLE (C) While occupying this moon, you lose one token to the void each challenge. Take one token to void immediately though.

9. SUPER NOVA (I) Upon occupying this moon, this system has been blown to smithereens. All tokens currently in this system are out of the game.

10. QUIET (C) While this moon is occupied, no player may say a word. All communication must be by gestures or writing. Any utterance (except coughing and clearing throats) is penalized one token to the void.

11. NOTHING TO HIDE (C) While occupying this moon, you must reveal everything. Consolation cards must be laid face-up on the table, your power must be shown, the number of lucre's separated and the card you play in a challenge must be played face-up.

14. ANNIHILATE (C) While this moon is occupied, any tokens lost to the warp are out of the game.

15. VICE VERSA (S) When you reveal this moon, all compromise cards become Attack 4 and all attack cards become Compromise. Play as a continuing moon once revealed.

23. TOTAL NULL (C) While occupying this moon, all players lose their power(s).

37. HAYWIRE (I) Upon occupying this moon, each player randomly draws another moon to add to his system and must immediately, but one at a time, occupy the new moon drawn by the player to his left. Discard moon after use.

55. APPARITION (C) Upon occupying this moon, as an attacking or defending player your opponent 'seems' to be fighting with more tokens than he actually has. Because you feel you're going to lose anyway, you must play only Compromise cards, even if you have asked for and/or received allies. If you have no Compromise cards, then whatever Attack card you play is a Compromise card.

56. GUEST (C) While occupying this moon, you lose your turns, but at the start of each other player's turn (not their challenge) you may move one of your tokens onto one of his

bases, even if he is attacking you.

71. **SERVITUDE (I)** Upon occupying this moon, you must get each other player one item of their choosing, if feasible, (i.e., a coke, a bag of chips, etc.).

96. **SUPER MOON (I)** Upon occupying this moon, you automatically receive your flare. First, ask all players if any have your flare. If any do, you may "search" their hand for it. If none do, then look through the discard pile for it. If it still isn't found, search the deck. **Lastly**, if you still haven't got it, search through the flares.

97. **DWINDLE (C)** While occupying this moon, at the start of each challenge the attacking player must pick, at random, one card from your hand.

98. **UN-FORTUNE-8 (I)** Upon occupying this moon, write down a digit from zero to nine and keep it hidden. All other players (except the seventh and eighth, if any) must guess once what number you chose. As soon as anyone guesses correctly, you must give him, from your hand, 1 flare, 1 edict, 1 attack card, 1 compromise card and 1 kicker. You must also give him 1 base on your system by moving all your tokens off one to your other bases. If no one guesses your number, nothing happens.

99. **ROYALTY (C)** While occupying this moon, all other players, when speaking to you, must address you as "your highness" or "your royalness" or "your majesty" or lose one token, their choice, to the warp each utterance.

100. **STAY PUT (I)** Upon landing on this moon, no token(s) may be removed from any moon(s) the remainder of the game except as a result of a challenge or by the revelation of a 'vanish' moon.

from Douglas A. **Schwarz &** the White Plains NY Encounter Group:

I recently received and very much enjoyed the first issue of ENCOUNTER, especially the new set of Cosmic Encounter aliens offered. This has inspired me to write you once again concerning the work of the White Plains Encounter Group, which (as you may recall) has been hard at work developing new CE powers, etc., for some years.

At **presen*** we have a stable of over 20 home-grown powers (complete with Flares and histories), as well as three new kinds of Edict cards and seven New Moons. We would be very much interested in sending these to you, to **be** published (in whole or in part) in subsequent issues of ENCOUNTER as you saw fit, for the enjoyment and edification of CE players everywhere.

The Scheinman Eleven

Editor: Stuart Scheinman, a gamer from Ithaca, NY, has gone to lengths to devise eleven new powers for CE, including histories. I leave you to ponder and benefit from his work.

The Peeper — Ability to peek ✓

You have the power before each challenge to peek at the top 2 cards in **the deck** and to look at the unexposed discs in the destiny pile.

History: The Peepers come from a brutal environment where constant surveillance on predators was needed for survival. The paranoid peepers will not rest their eyes until all of their enemies are eradicated from the galaxy.

However. . . you may also recall that we provided you with a set of suggestions on a previous occasion (July 16, 1980, to be exact), and were subsequently rather miffed to discover that some of what appeared to be our ideas had found their way into Expansion Set 7 without our having been given credit for them. We wrote to you in protest, claiming at least partial responsibility for the Filth, the Disease, and the Pacifist -and requested that we be acknowledged for our efforts at the next reasonable opportunity.

The publication of Expansion Set 8 sure struck us as a "reasonable opportunity"! (And you had sent us a note of apology, tacitly conceding our point. I'm enclosing a copy, just in case all this has slipped your mind.) But . . . not only did X-set 8 not give us our due, but the **Flarezap** and Un-zap Edicts contained therein were at least reminiscent of our own Nullifiers, described to you back in 1980!

Now then. The advent of ENCOUNTER provides yet another appropriate forum in which you might consider mentioning our humble contributions to ever-evolving Cosmos. Need we say more?

Be advised. Not forever shall we be content with merely passive resistance! Should we be unable to come to some reasonable accommodation with you before then, you may expect us to take our protest public next Labor Day in Baltimore! Think upon that . . . and quail.

Editor: I love to think about that delicately flavored bird, especially under glass, but I'd hate to think about facing the likes of you at the next World Championship CE tourney in Baltimore, so . . . My note of apology you cited read: "I must confess our abject humiliation at not recognizing your ideas. We in all honesty thought they were our own! Imagine." There. Is the record set straight? You now have fame, Doug and Roy and Ginny and Larry and Malcolm and David and Scott. Want more? Just send in some more ideas good enough for us to claim, piping hot, and we'll see if we can't throw a little your way. See how easy it is to run a game business?

from Harry Andruschak, San Gabriel, CA:

I have received the first issue of ENCOUNTER. One new section you might add is for players looking for other players nearby. I would be glad to start things off with the following little announcement.

Announcement

Players wanted in San Gabriel Valley area. Write to Harry J. N. Andruschak, 6933 N. **Rosemead** Blvd., #31, San Gabriel, California 91775.

Battery — Bases Increase Power ✓

As a main player in a challenge, you add the number of all your bases (including home bases) and all of your allies' bases to your challenge card.

History: A species that have lived on an energy poor world, have learned to tap an extra bit of energy from every place they possess. The Batteries intend to conquer the universe in order to siphon its energy for their own needs.

Sorehead — Power of Retaliation ✓

At the start of your challenge you randomly collect 1 card from every player who has a base in your system.

History: Faced with repeated insults and injuries the Soreheads have adopted the motto "don't get mad, get even". The Soreheads intend to "get even" with all their adversaries in the universe.

Fear — Power to Terrify

As a main player in a challenge, you make your opponent (before cards are revealed) lose 2 tokens from a base of his choice.

History: This species has discovered that creating fear is both pleasurable and helpful in battle. They plan to spread their reign of terror throughout the universe.

The Jinx — Card Worth 13

Before challenge cards are revealed you have the option to call out "Jinx". Once done your challenge card is transformed into unlucky 13.

History: The Jinxes come from a world of misfortune. Using its religion and its symbol the **#13** the Jinxes have learned to harness bad luck to stymie their enemies.

The Nullifier — Can Cancel Out Power

As a main player or an ally in a challenge you have the ability to stop the use of any 1 power of any player for the remainder of the challenge.

History: Battered by an unending series of invasions by super-human beings of diverse qualities, the Nullifiers have responded by developing a science capable of wiping out all special abilities. Soon they will use their power to cancel out all of their enemies.



salmon — Brings Bases Home

As a main player in a challenge you have the power before challenge cards are revealed, to return any one player's base to his home system. The affected player then must place all those tokens on any planet in his home system. This power has no effect on a player with 5 home bases.

History: A species with a fanatical yearning for returning home during mating season has been mutated by cosmic radiation into beings that can send both friend and foe home at desired times. The Salmon hope to use their home returning abilities to shackle the universe.

The Wimp — Always Resorting to Compromises

At any time (as a main player) you can either collect all compromise cards from any or all players or you can give away your compromise cards.

History: Over the century the Wimps have learned to harness passivity as a strength. They now intend to pacify the universe.

Suiciders — Strength Through Defeat

As a main player in a challenge you receive 4 cards from the deck if you have the most tokens in the warp.

History: A race of beings who have overcome the deadly perils of their planet by strategic sacrifices of **their** members. The **suiciders** will risk the total decimation of their species in order to gain control of the galaxy.

Racist — Bans a Card Class

As a main player, before cards are played you may call out a class of cards that neither you nor your opponent can use (i.e., Edicts, Flares, attack cards, compromise cards).

History: A species so bigotted, they will not **rest till** every other race in the galaxy has been exterminated.

Thindroids — Opponents use 1 token

Whenever you are a main player or an ally your opponent cannot use more than 1 token. All of the other tokens must be moved to another base unless none is available.

History: The Thindroids have developed a simple plan for universal domination. Wear down your enemies piece by piece.

Baker's Dozen

Editor: Now comes Kevin Baker, of Sand Springs, OK, with an even dozen new CE powers *plus histories*. Get out the old battered box *and try a few of them on for size*.

Alarmist

You have the power to intercept. As the defensive player in a challenge, you may commit one to four tokens to the defensive ring of the hyper-space cone, in exactly the same manner as defensive allies. If you win the challenge, these tokens are eligible for defender's rewards (i.e., one card or token from the warp for each token committed). *You may put up to 5*

History: Fortunate enough to evolve on an extremely lush *tokens i* and fertile system, the ecologically-minded Alarmists have *the one* struggled through the years to keep it that way. Always alert to *\$ an* foreign invaders, these patriots believe that it is an honor to die in the defense of their homeland, and if necessary, they will *offensive* carry the battle to the enemy. *many* *player*

Ballast

You have the power of gravity. Each time your color appears in the destiny pile, all players (other than yourself) must immediately place two tokens on your star disc. Each player may choose which tokens to send, but if possible, they must come from their bases in your system. Tokens placed on the star disc are out of play until you are zapped or lose your power, at which time they are sent to **the warp**.

History: Survivors of a doomed planet system on the rim of a **monstrous** black hole, the unyielding Ballasts struggled

for ages to cling to anything that would save them from utter extinction. Eventually able to counteract this effect by physically rooting themselves to the planet surface, they were able to escape the gravity inversion. Now, with the advent of hyper-space travel, they dream of escaping the world that caused them such heavy burdens.

Do not use in a two-player game.

cube

You have the power to square. Any time you play an attack card in a challenge, before the cards are revealed, you may call out "square!" The value of your attack card is ignored. Instead, you square (multiply times itself) the sum of the tokens on your side (including your allies). This is your total for the challenge.

History: **These** perfect geometrical shapes evolved from eons of precise calculation and order. Accepting nothing less than exact, the Cubes were able to box in their home system, and are now looking for new enemies to corner through use of their organized, relentless tactics.

Devastator

You have the power to annihilate. If you are the offensive player, and you win the challenge in another player's system, you totally destroy that planet. All tokens on the planet are sent to the warp. All tokens in the offensive end of the cone return to bases they already own. The destroyed planet counts as a base for you and your allies, and no player may occupy the planet for the remainder of the game. Mark the destroyed planet with an unused star disc or coin. You may still gain bases in the usual manner (if you are an ally or lose your power), but destroyed planets remain destroyed.

History: Violent thought patterns made tangible by the sheer will of a race of barbaric intellectuals, the uncontrollable Devastators slaughtered the very creatures that brought them into being. Through their ability to manipulate geological changes in any sphere, it seems likely that soon the whole **universe** will fall prey to their scheme of destruction.

Martyr

You have to power to sacrifice. As the offensive player in a challenge, before cards are played, you may choose to sacrifice (remove to the warp) any or all of your tokens in the cone. For each token sacrificed, you may play an additional attack card to be added to your total. You may not play any compromise cards if you choose to sacrifice.

History: Cursed by eons of overpopulation, the selfless Martyrs discovered long ago that **their** very existence was threatened by the lack of living space. Their overflowing **hive**-cities and dwindling resources soon forced them to utilize every square inch of their system, and now, even **that** is not enough. **To** insure the survival of the species, they must colonize other worlds — or die trying.

Medusa

You have the power to petrify. Whenever you win a challenge as a main player, your opponent **must** lose his **next** turn. Until his turn has been skipped, he cannot be forced to lose another turn due to a subsequent Medusa victory. Thus, a player is not required to skip more than one turn at a time. Time-gash is not effected by this power.



History: The hideous Medusas were able to survive and flourish due to their ability to strike fear in the more comely creatures of their home system. Jealous beyond all comprehension, they destroyed everything of beauty, leaving only gruesome parodies of their planets to mark their presence. They are now determined to make each planet as ugly as their own.

Ohm

You have the power of resistance. Whenever you are a player or an ally in a challenge, your opponent's card must be rounded down to the nearest multiple of five. If it is already a multiple of five (i.e., 10, 15, 20, or **30**), subtract five from the face value. Attack 4 is reduced to zero.

History: Undaunted by adversity, the stubborn Ohms have dedicated their existence to resisting the cosmic flow. The exercise of striving against unbelievable odds has energized their inter-molecular triple-plasma bonds, and now they feel ready to leave their Super-Nova home, and conquer the Universe.

Paranoid

You have the power of caution. If you ally with a side during a challenge, you wait until after cards are revealed before you decide how many tokens to commit. At that time you may send one to four tokens, or none at all. **If you choose** to send none, you are immune to the Crystal's power.

History: Forever afraid of their own shadows, the suspicious Paranoids have for eons known the value of "looking before they leap." Believing that all alien races are planning their eventual demise, the Paranoids have now rallied their courage **to** a point where they can attempt to remove the object of their fears, and rid the universe of all of the species that are "out to get them."

Do not use in a two-player game.

Prism

You have the power of refraction. Whenever you are a main player in a challenge, examine the discards from the destiny pile. If you can reveal one of your opponent's (and/or his allies') **star** disc(s), that player's tokens are not counted in the

attack total. (Example: Red, green and gold are attacking you and you reveal a red and a gold star disc. Their attack total would then be equal to green's tokens plus the attack card.) Your **opponent's** tokens still count for all other purposes and must conclude the challenge even if all of their tokens are "refracted." (Their total then being the challenge card played.)

History: Expelled from a polychromatic dimension for their dangerous egomania and ambition, the colorful Prisms plan to use their knowledge of bending all forms of light — from ultra-violet to infra-red — to decorate this bland universe **to** resemble their former home. Successful in diverting force through illusion and deceit, it would seem to be a very likely occurrence.

Do not use in a two-player game.

Radical

You have the power to purge. As a main player, before cards are played, you may declare that a certain type of challenge card has been purged. You **must also state** the value of the card if it is an attack card. **If your** opponent and/or his allies hold any cards of this type (and value), they must discard them. Note that this could cause an attacker to end his turn, or a defender to draw a new hand.

History: Since the dawn of their civilization, the Radicals have experienced an infinite number of revolutions and counter-revolutions. Unstable provisional governments lasted days due to the whims of each successive dictator. The Radicals grew adept at disposing of unwanted elements, and now finally unified, are willing to use that talent to establish their new

regime — in the stars.

Satellite

You have the power to orbit. **At** the start of any challenge in which you are one of the **two players**, you may declare that all players must pass their **highest** attack card clockwise or counter-clockwise (your discretion). Each player may **use** this card as part of his hand. If a player has only compromises, he must pass a compromise. If a player has no cards, he is not involved in the "orbit" and neither passes nor receives any cards (his new card being given to the next player).

History: Bionic cells containing organic intelligence, the satellites devised a culture based on the control, rather than the occupation of planets in their empire. Their desire to rule has prompted them to take the precautions of monitoring every move of every life form on their homeworlds, and now are seeking new worlds to encircle and control.

Do not use in a two-player game.

Sponge

You have the power to absorb. As a player or an ally in a challenge, you may draw one card from the deck. You may keep this card or discard it immediately.

History: A seemingly insignificant life form, the Sponges were able to take nourishment from the mineral rich liquids of their watery world. As time passed, evolution produced Sponges that were able to absorb chemical compounds from the soil, and soon, from the air itself. Now experienced at absorbing all sources of energy, the once-passive Sponges are seeking feeding grounds in the midst of cosmic turbulences.

A Player's CE Annals



Editor: **Long-time COSMIC ENCOUNTER fan Ted Schmeckpeper has recorded all of the hundreds of games he has played since 1978. In 'COSMIC ENCOUNTER — Annals of Conflict: the great intergalactic wars of the Darktime' he has provided us with detailed records and breakdowns of the games, the players, the winning powers, etc. The following table (and find notes) are all the result of Ted's labor of love. The table lists the powers (first basic and sets 1-3, then sets 6 & 7), the number of times it has been played, the number of games it won (single or joint), the points it acquired (total of, for each game it won, the number of players in the game divided by the number of winners in the game), and the ratio of points to number of games it played (thus a power winning exactly an average number of games would be 1.0). This is only the most interesting of a number of computations Ted has done to analyze CE systematically. I thought it would be of interest to our readers. Note: the ratio is not computed for powers with fewer than 7 playings, to keep from letting the results be distorted by fluke playings.**

Mandatory powers	playings	wins	points	ratio
Anti-Matter	8	3	10	1.25
Assassin	8	1	4	.50
Assessor	12	1	9	.75
Aura	4	3	3	—
Changeling	3		12	—
Deuce	9	6	20	2.22
Doppelganger	16	3	10	.63
Empath	9	2	6	.67
Grudge	5	0	0	--

Insect	9	4	10.5	1.17
Laser	9	4	16	1.78
Macron	7	4	12	1.71
Oracle	10	5	12.5	1.25
Reincarnator	12	4	13	1.08
Schizoid	7	5	14.5	2.07
Vacuum	8	1	5	.63
Virus	13	1	4	.31
Void	8	1	4	.50
Vulch	9	5	14	1.56
Warrior	14	4	14	1.00
Will	6	2	5	—
Zombie	7	0	0	0.00

Voluntary powers

Amoeba	4	1	4	—
Calculator	4	1	3	—
Chronos	7	1	3	.43
Clone	7	0	0	0.00
Crystal	7	1	4	.57
Demon	11	4	12	1.09
Dictator	12	3	10	.83
Diplomat	6	1	4	—
Filch	9	2	7	.73
Gambler	6	2	6	—
Healer	4	3	12	—
Judge	11	7	25	2.27
Machine	10	3	9	.90
Magnet	8	1	4	.50
Mesmer	3	2	9	—
Mind	8	2	5	.63
Miser	5	2	7	—
Mutant	11	1	3	.27
Parasite	9	1	2	.22
Philanthropist	9	2	7	.78
Plant	9	3	10	1.11
Seeker	2	0	0	—
Silencer	6	1	4	—
Skeptic	9	3	7	1.00
Sorcerer	8	3	8	1.00
Trader	13	7	20.5	1.58
Worm	7	2	7	1.00
Wrack	9	1	3	.33

Mandatory bets 6 & 7)

Boomerang	1	1	5	—
Butler	1	0	0	—
Dragon	3	1	3	—
Ethic	0	—	—	—
Filth	1	1	3	—
Fungus	1	0	0	—
Pacifist	1	0	0	—
Warpish	4	0	0	—

Voluntary (set 6 & 7)

Bully	1	0	0	—
Delegator	0	—	—	—
Disease	0	—	—	—
Extortionist	0	—	—	—
Force	1	—	0	—
Hurtz	0	—	—	—
Lloyd	1	0	0	—
Loser	1	0	0	—
Negator	4	3	11	—

Pirate	1	0	0	—
Prophet	1	1	4	—
Siren	1	0	0	—
Sniveler	1	1	4	—
Terrorist	1	0	0	—
Visionary	3	3	13	—
Witch	2	0	0	—

Also, did you know . . .

With the first 3 Expansion Sets (50 Aliens) and a 4-player game, there are about 230,000 combinations of aliens that can be chosen (that's not permutations!); in a 6-player game the number grows to about 16 million!

With 74 Aliens, the number of combinations of aliens is over 1 million for 4 players, and about 185 million for 6 players.

In a six-player game, using all Expansion Sets, the number of different initial conditions (powers, flares, and moons) is about 20,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000. (Guess what the number of initial conditions for chess is!) If we played a billion games a second, it would take about 640 trillion years to play this many games (this is thousands of times the age of the universe.) Then we would start playing Quirks. Let's see, the number of combinations of plant traits in a 4-player game with Expansion Sets is . . .

Playing Games

Editor: A few months back GAMES Magazine decided to do a feature on our company (supposedly it will be in the May issue, on the newstands now — run, run) and commissioned us to do a 1-page game for them about us and how we design games. Our submission was rejected ('hot what they were thinking of' we were told. Don't worry, we're used to being rejected.) Undaunted, and shameless, we now present it to you as a bonus for your loyalty and patience. Have fun!

When the editors of Games Magazine asked us to design a ONE PAGE GAME relating to our DESIGN PROCESS, we resolutely struck out to see how we could get around these two restrictions. Thus the following ideas.:

1. Generally, a one page game would be a short game, but PLAYING GAMES can take a week or more to play.
2. Although PLAYING GAMES has **one** page rules, the playing equipment is many pages long.
3. PLAYING GAMES isn't exactly a simulation of how Eon Products designs games, but it goes a long way towards capturing the frame of mind that exists during game design sessions. This state of mind is reflected in the use of a variety of expressions both common and curious that represent our moods, the status of a project or perhaps the value (or lack thereof) of an idea.

This game designers' jargon then forms the basis for PLAYING GAMES.

EON GLOSSARY

"Put it on the back burner" — This is what **to do** with an idea when it can't make the first team,

"Let's see what's in the closet" — This is where you look for an idea when you can't think of a new one. (Somehow, the back burner is mysteriously connected to the closet — since everything that you put on the back burner eventually turns up in the closet.)

"Why don't we sleep on it and see how it plays in the morning" — What you do with an idea when it is so late at night that you think any idea sounds reasonable.

"Clearly an off the wall idea" — A polite way of assigning the responsibility for a less than spiffy idea to the wall, which can't answer back.

"A bit half baked" — An attempt to have the oven take responsibility for something even the wall rejected.

"Playing above the table" — The game play among people which takes place outside of the formal structure of the game, but which the game caused to take place.

"Let's play the rug" — A common belief among game designers that a game can be made out of anything. The rug for some reason has drawn the assignment of representing this belief.

"Retire it to the archives" — This is what to do with something that has been to the back burner, through the closet and off the wall. Most ideas that go to the archives stay there forever, although just the other day

Thus the **BACK BURNER**, the **CLOSET**, the **BEDROOM**, the **WALL**, the **RUG**, the **OVEN**, the **TABLE** and the **ARCHIVES** in cooperation with Eon Products and ENCOUNTER bring you **PLAYING GAMES**. **PLAYING GAMES** is a game of bluff and counter-bluff, seek, feint and counter feint. You can play at home, at the office, at school, or anywhere at all.



PLAYING GAMES

Any number of players; ages 8 and up; playing time indefinite.

TO START THE GAME

1. Hide ENCOUNTER in a place where it is not visible, but where it is likely to be found.

2. Before hiding it, attach a note to the cover that says: *Hi, you are now playing games! The secret word is _____ (Fill in a word that describes the hiding place; e.g., closet, couch, refrigerator, etc. To continue the game turn to page 11.) And sign your name.

3. **IF YOU FIND THE MAGAZINE**, you write a new note (see #2) and rehide the magazine.

4. **SCORING**. After you find ENCOUNTER, you must say the secret word to the person who hid it without that person catching you saying it. You are caught if the other person says "You're playing games with me."

5. If you manage to say the secret word to the person who hid the magazine without getting caught, you score two points. If you get caught saying the secret word, you score one point, and the other player scores one point.

6. **PROTECTING**. If you wish to 'protect' yourself against being caught trying to say the secret word you may do so by using the following talisman: Write the secret word (that you found on the magazine) on a piece of paper and HIDE IT

PHYSICALLY ON THE PERSON WHO HID THE MAGAZINE, e.g., in a pocket, purse, shoe, etc. Now, if you get caught trying to say the secret word, you still score two points. Unless, of course, the other player has found the word that you hid on him or her, and removed it. In that case, when you say the secret word, and he or she catches you, the other player scores two points, and you score none.

7. **KEEPING SCORE AND WINNING**. Players' names and scores are kept in a public place — bulletin board, blackboard, etc. The first player to score ten points wins **PLAYING GAMES**. Once secret words have been used, they are also written on the score sheet. Those words can't be used again during the game.

SOLITAIRE VERSION

For those of you who both live alone and are absent minded, the solitaire version of **PLAYING GAMES** will delight you, as you hide the ENCOUNTER on yourself, and then find it again. We've found that the best way to accomplish this feat is to put the magazine in a "safe place". That is usually an iron clad guarantee that you won't ever be able to locate it again on purpose.

As to sneaking the secret word by yourself, we have heard that those who talk in their sleep do very well, with mutterers and **musers** finishing a close second.

RUNZLES

Editor: With this issue we're inaugurating a new feature, which we'll continue if you like it (that is we get solutions, new Runzles by readers, etc.). The word stands for RUNE PUZZLES, and, of course, the method is based on the method of forming letters in the game RUNES. If you have played the game, I think you'll like these little mind-benders. If you haven't, well, now, shame, shame.

Runzle #1: Find the unique 6-letter word which matches these clues (piece in top box indicates that piece is in the letter, piece below the box indicates that piece doesn't belong).

A 10x10 grid of letters with a central 'RUNES' logo. Below the grid are six boxes labeled 1st through 6th, each containing a letter and a set of pieces. The pieces are either inside the letter (indicating they belong) or outside (indicating they don't). The letters in the boxes are: 1st: T, 2nd: Q, 3rd: [empty], 4th: V, 5th: W, 6th: W.

Runzle #2: Find the 6-letter word that has these pieces in the respective letters.

A 10x10 grid of letters with a central 'RUNES' logo. Below the grid are six boxes labeled 1st through 6th, each containing a letter and a set of pieces. The pieces are either inside the letter (indicating they belong) or outside (indicating they don't). The letters in the boxes are: 1st: U, 2nd: C, 3rd: C, 4th: C, 5th: N, 6th: N.

Runzle #3: Find the I-letter word with the fewest pieces in it. (We found one with only 6.)

Runzle #4: Find the 5-letter word with the most pieces in it. (We found two with 19.)

Runzle solutions should be sent to ENCOUNTER, and we will print the name of the solver of each Runzle with the earliest postmark.

Win a free subscription (or a one-year extension)! Submit a set of Runzles suitable for publication (4 or more) and get a free sub to ENCOUNTER upon their use in the journal. All submissions become the property of ENCOUNTER. (Please include solutions with your submissions so yours truly isn't up all night with Runzelitis.)

The journal of innovative gaming

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