

STAR*DRIVE SESSION SUMMARY 04/17/2011

Attendance

Bruce asks, “I don’t remember anything about the last two weeks. Did I remember to send out a session summary?”

Chris points out, “No, no you didn’t. Now take away all of your old posterboards so I can get my house retiled. I’m going to go all-out: floors, walls, ceilings.”

Tim offers, “Hey! Two great new developments in the Popular Culture! There’s a trailer for a *Watchmen* afternoon cartoon! Check out Adrian and Bubastis – they’re wacky! And John can give you cancer or turn into a car!”

Ernest cautiously asks, “You said two developments...”

Tim continues, “Oh yes! They’re also making sushi out of Peeps now!”

Paul comments, “That sounds pretty good, considering that I’m currently eating the vilest French fries the world has ever known.” Then he starts going on about how the plug didn’t want to go into the socket. Everyone else stops listening right around then.

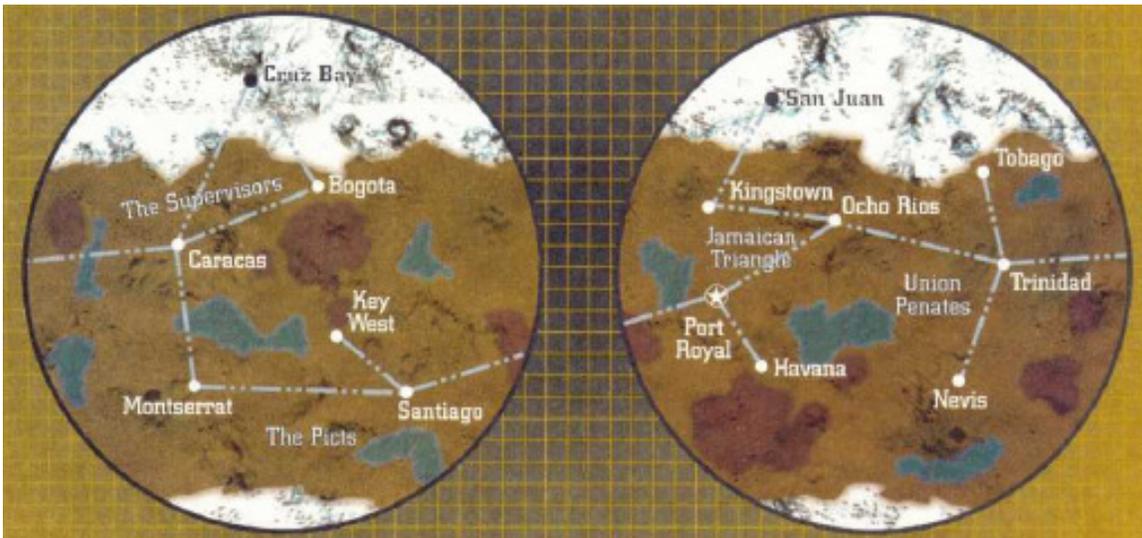
Patrick eventually shows up. He offers, “Is today Sunday?” The others ignore him, except for *Chris*, who responds, “I love Easter!”

<i>Player</i>	<i>Character</i>	<i>Deal</i>	<i>Status</i>
Bruce	Lambert Fulson	Rigunmor Guido Free Agent	Present
Bruce	Taveer	Mechalus Concord Engineer Tech Op	Present
Patrick	Martin St. John	Concord Naval Officer Tech Op	Present
Patrick	Lenny	T’sa Ambassador Free Agent	Present
Chris	Ten-zil Kem	VoidCorp Ambassador Diplomat (TO)	Present
Chris	Drest Talorgin	Pict Warchief Combat Spec	Present
Ernest	Markus Oroszlan	Warlion Bartender Combat Spec	Present
Ernest	Ken Takashi	Concord Naval Officer Diplomat (TO)	Present
Tim	Gerard Peppin	Borealin Ambassador Mind Walker	Present

<i>Player</i>	<i>Character</i>	<i>Deal</i>	<i>Status</i>
Tim	Haggernak	Weren Concord Administrator Combat Spec	Present

The Resistance on Lucullus

The majority of the I-krl occupation on Penates is centered around and based in Pict territory, including the dome cities of Montserrat, Key West and Santiago.



The largest of the kroath production plants is in Santiago, but a subsidiary site in Port Royal retains significant capacity. The Verge Alliance has achieved orbital superiority over the planet, so almost all free-terrain kroath and I-krl positions have been destroyed by orbital strikes. Port Royal and Santiago represent a harder problem: both locations have defensive arrays able to engage orbiting strike craft, and besides that represent two of the largest population centers on the planet.

The kroath garrisons include a variety of semi-organic ground vehicles, the most pernicious of which is the *Broadsword*, a hemispherical armored grav carrier seen both inside and outside the domes. It is armed with a pair of heavy dark fusion guns. It is more a mobile fortification than a vehicle per se. Two of these monsters are known to be active around Santiago. The Titan-like exterior environment is no obstacle to the kroath: they seem to prefer it to the terrestrial conditions maintained inside the domes.

Other kroath vehicles include the *Stiletto*, a light vehicle that can carry thirteen kroath troops. The *Gladius* is a light armored vehicle, typically equipped with a

blacklaser cannon. The *Saber* is a main battle tank equipped with either heavy blacklaser cannons or accelerator cannons, and a secondary weapon system like a missile or rocket cluster in addition to antipersonnel weapons. The *Cutlass* is a heavy vehicle, slow and cumbersome but equipped with a heavy dark plasma gun and three secondary turrets.

The Verge Alliance ground forces tend to not have significant vehicular elements in their TOE. Most human units use individual soldiers in body tanks instead of actual armored vehicles, with light troop carriers to provide mobility. There are about 300 body tank equipped Marines in the fleet and 700 additional Marines.

The medurr can participate in the fight thanks to the RiftShip docked to the Lighthouse: they can contribute about 1000 soldiers. They are unwilling to contribute any more soldiers than the humans are sending.

There are also a couple of hundred Pict warriors already with the Verge Alliance fleet. *Admiral Ken Takashi* issues a plea to the population of Penates at large appealing for volunteers. He is able to swell their number to the equivalent of 500 soldiers.

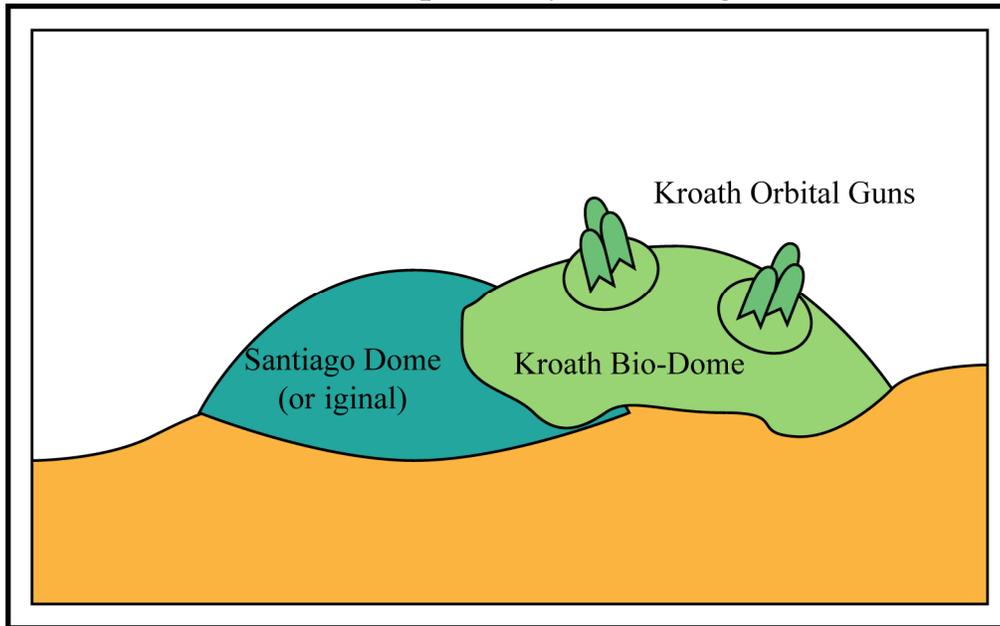
What Is Our Plan, Admiral?

Admiral Ken Takashi assembles his staff (except for *Taveer*, who is off on the *Red Queen*) to develop a plan of attack. Both Santiago and Port Royal remain I-krl strongholds, besieged by the local militias at a distance. The militias can't directly assault the cities because they do not have weapons able to engage the kroath vehicles and heavy weapons, but the kroath cannot move far from the fortified domes due to the threat of orbital strikes.

The I-krl defenders in both sites appear to be a typical mix of species: many kroath, some kadarens, and rumors of gardhyi. In the past, kadarens have not demonstrated great skill as military commanders and gardhyi have only appeared as leaders of small units. This suggests that there might be some I-krl hidden within the cities acting as leaders. The best reports on the subject are very sketchy and suggest that the I-krl command is buried deep underground.

The significant orbital guns are limited in number, one or two guns per city. They do have additional shorter-ranged air defense weapons in much larger quantity, but those weapons are not able to engage capital ships in orbit.

The Occupied City of Santiago



Drest looks at the surveillance photos of Santiago and the kroath bio-dome structure adjacent to it and exclaims, “It looks like a duck burrowing into the ass of a lemon!”

From what the intelligence reports suggest, there are no remaining humans in the original Santiago dome. The survivors (if any) are all held within the kroath bio-dome compound.

The plan is to insert a limited number of Marines in *Dragoon* recon armor and the characters with the goal of locating the I-krl command post and orbital fire control center. The approach of the strike team will be covered by a feinting attack mounted by everyone the Verge Alliance can assemble (1000 Marines, 1000 medurr troopers, and a mass of local militia equivalent to 500 trained soldiers). The assault group will be split into three teams:

1. Squad #1: attack gun #1
2. Squad #2: attack gun #1
3. A-team characters: kroath command center

The attack on the command center will require accurate directions through the original Santiago dome complex. On *Drest*’s advice, Admiral Takashi orders *Lambert Fulson* to form an advance team and find some local guides familiar with the service passages underneath Santiago. He and *Drest* touch down in Havana with the mission of hiring a

half-dozen guides – they accomplish this with little trouble, and buy some very nice cigars on the side, cigars rolled upon the thighs of virgins.

The Recon Squads

The Marine recon squads are equipped with ABS11 *Dragoon* recon armor and a mix of heavy weapons, between KZ 160 13mm charge machine guns and Bantam 5 rocket launchers.



KZ 160 13mm Charge Machine Gun



Bantam 5 Rocket Launcher

ABS-11 Dragoon Recon Armor

Manufacturer	General Arms Manufacturing	
Availability	Restricted	
Cost	35,000	
Mass	50 kg	
Composition	Neutronite alloy	
Environmental Tolerance	Gravity	G0-G4
	Radiation	R0-R4

	Atmosphere	A0-A4
	Pressure	P0-P4
	Heat	H0-H4
Action Penalty	+3	
Toughness	good	
LI/HI/En	2d4+2/2d4+2/2d4+1	
Hide	1	
Effective Strength	15	
Skill	Armor Operation – <i>powered armor</i>	

The characters armor themselves up with medurr Deflection Harnesses (2/2/3, doesn't stack with normal armor, but will replace it if the standard armor roll is worse). Lambert Fulson gears himself up with a *Milano GX CF body suit* and his trusty 15mm sabot pistol.

The Hydroponics Tunnels

The Alpha Team consists of Admiral Ken Takashi, Drest Talorgin, *Martin St. John*, Lambert Fulson, *Haggernak* and a squad of fifteen Marines, plus two local guides. Martin St. John doesn't trust the local guides, so he brings a map too. They venture into the hydroponics tunnels. Their primary guide is *Simpson Macoth*, a onetime underground real estate agent who talks endlessly, especially about his abusive father. They note that the hydroponics tanks show signs of extensive neglect: the Externals have plainly had no interest in maintaining the human hydroponics systems.

As the team gets closer to the interface between the human tunnels and the kroath dome the characters can see that the kroath have extended their slimy bio-structures deep into the human areas. Admiral Takashi tells the others, "Nobody touch nothing!"

Martin St. John looks at the kroath orifices and asks, "I thought the kroath didn't excrete."

Drest tells him, "They don't, but their buildings do. Check it out, building grade waste." He and three of the Marines take the lead, with Haggernak and another team of three Marines behind him.

It isn't long before the lead elements encounter a room with four kroath guards and one bareem. Drest and his Marines march forward and engage with their charge machine guns, destroying one kroath. Haggernak and his team storm forward and

engage, but accomplish rather less with a hail of machine gun fire. The kroath return fire, injuring some Marines and annoying Haggernak.

Haggernak and his men eliminate the remaining kroath. Lambert Fulson and his Marine team show up just in time for the Marines to gun down the last wounded kroath, and for Fulson to proclaim, “The room is secure!”

The bareem flees down a side corridor. Drest and a Marine run after the thing, spraying gunfire wildly. The bareem returns fire, injuring Drest slightly. Drest machine guns him down, or tries – even after taking seven points of mortal damage, the bareem is still able to press a button to trigger an intruder alarm.

Knowing that he will not be able to interrupt the alarm, Admiral Takashi instead calls up the display on his Commo Gauntlet and traces the locations of I-kr1 communications to pinpoint their command center. A Marine brings up his cavitation sensor to sketch out a route to the location.

The Sifarv Garden, In the Shade

The characters continue to move into the core of the kroath bio-dome until they reach a massive alien garden, rank upon rank of bizarre growth. The chamber is filled with birdsong. The Marine conclusion is that this must be a bareem chamber. But then the characters find a survivor: a naked human woman, dirty and huddling among the plants. She cries out, “The skies, watch the skies!” More Marines find additional survivors, four of them.

Admiral Takashi orders the Marines, “Get the survivors! Back to the tunnels!”

Several birdlike sifarv swoop down from above, wearing light armor and carrying blade weapons. Two rush past Admiral Takashi, cutting him deeply. Subsequent sifarv fly-bys inflict quite a bit less damage.

Haggernak marvels, “You guys are galactic conquerors?” as he cuts a sifarv in half with his tri-staff. He can see the surprise in all of the (surviving) sifarv’s eyes.

One of the sifarv squawks in alarm, “They can kill us? Holy mother of I-kr1!” Apparently the sifarv don’t normally engage in personal armed combat. Given their racial sense of superiority, they are clearly amazed that one of the slave races can kill them.

One of Drest's Marines draws a bead on a fast-moving sifarv and guns it down. Drest slashes another with his chainsword, drawing blood.

The surviving sifarv fly for escape and safety. Admiral Takashi whacks one Marine on the helmet and yells, "Fire mission! Now!" The Marine launches an antipersonnel bantam rocket into the midst of the sifarv, knocking one of them out.

Admiral Takashi yells, "You! Get the prisoner! All humans! We are leaving! You with the flame-gun! Set all this on fire!" Nobody is troubled by the idea of destroying the place where the sifarv hunt humans for fun.

Lambert Fulson unpacks some survival suits from one of his Marine's cargo racks for the survivors as he does his best to gain their trust, explain that he will get them out, and find out where the other survivors are. The survivors are pretty shook-up, but one of them explains that there are hundreds of human survivors in a nearby holding area.

Admiral Takashi, briefly amazed by the fact that he's just witnessed Lambert Fulson doing something sensible and humanistic, details one wounded Marine to escort the survivors and the prisoner back out of the complex. Understanding that the sifarv screech has a neurological component in addition to being very loud, he has the captive's beak zip-tied shut. He orders the Marine escort to help the prisoners, then once the guns are silent to bring the Marine sapper squad in to break out the rest of the prisoners.

The Skirmish Outside

While the strike teams move on the orbital guns and the command center, *Commander Chase* and his miscellaneous force of Marines, medurr and local militia are having surprising success against the I-krl ground forces. Their orders had been to skirmish, with highest priority on avoiding casualties. However, they show unexpected brilliance, inflicting substantial damage upon the Externals armored units, including damage to one of the I-krl *Broadsword* mobile fortresses.

The Command Center

The characters' assault group bypasses several kadaren research labs, shooting down bareem guards and flinging bug-bombs at the cowering scientists as they go. They finally reach a barricaded door protected by a force of bareem and kroath soldiery, plus one sifarv to supervise.

The characters answer this challenge with a barrage of grenades and bantam antipersonnel rockets. From Lambert Fulson's point of view, it seems like the explosions go on for hours and hours even though his chronometer says it only took mere seconds. Admiral Takashi notes, "Because of all the weird resists and stuff, kroath are better to shoot at but bareem are better to frag."

Haggernak asks, "Who is better to hit with a tri-staff? Because that's what's coming up next."

Lambert Fulson offers, "Sifarv."

One of Admiral Takashi's Marines punctuates this comment by shooting the sifarv square on the breast-bone. The creature's armor takes most of the damage. It staggers but does not fall. Then it draws a bead upon Haggernak and drills him three times with its quantum rifle. Haggernak drops like a stone.

The sifarv moves over to Haggernak and aims the quantum rifle at his head. It announces, "This one dies if you continue to resist!"

Admiral Takashi orders, "Hold your fire, men!"

Komyth Raksed negotiates briefly with the Admiral. He agrees to surrender and resist no further, sacrificing his men. His orders were to defend the command until they were able to depart. He is quite confident that they are already gone, and that they are on their way to take the human flagship, the so-called *Lighthouse*. He is clearly quite confident.

Admiral Takashi whispers to Martin St. John, "Mr. St. John, if you would please get in touch with the *Lighthouse* and let them know that they might see some teleporter-based incoming. Oh, and have the Marines blow down that door and kill anyone they find behind it." Martin St. John salutes and goes off to obey. In the background, various Marines do their best to restore Haggernak to health.

Admiral Takashi continues speaking to *Komyth Raksed* (*Komyth* is his rank). While he's doing his best to create doubt in the mind of a fanatic, Martin St. John is learning that *gardhyi* teleporters and an alien assault force teleported up onto the *Lighthouse* bridge and took it. Even worse, *Mina* has been subverted by an alien force (at least, a different alien force than normal). Currently, the crew have sealed the bridge and blocked the elevators but are making little additional progress.

The gun assault groups are doing quite well. One of the teams has succeeded and the other is close – within a few minutes both guns are disabled and the sky is open.

The characters take the Komyth out to the landing site then let him go. They haul back to the *Lighthouse* to settle down the situation there.

The Ending Cliffhanger

Courtesy Lambert Fulson's illicit knowledge, the characters use a secret airlock in a massage parlor to board the *Lighthouse*. They are moving towards the bridge when a strange male voice addresses Takashi, "I am trying to help you, Admiral. I am assuming as much control over the ship as I can manage." He thinks that the voice is that of the Jamaican hacker youth *Brent Turtiyev* the characters rescued from Penates some time ago; his avatar *Peshtigo* bearing the image of a chibi cannibal with a spear tends to confirm his identity.

The End of the Session

Involved characters each gain five experience points.