

Issue 3/88 February '16

THE END IS NIGHT

THE REDEEMERS

by Jason "PK" Levine

POST-APOCALYPTIC GUNS

by S.A. Fisher and Hans-Christian Vortisch

BETTER IMPROVISED WEAPONS by Peter V. Dell'Orto

NUCLEAR LEGACY
by Roger Burton West

WARLORDS OF THE APOCALYPSE by David L. Pulver

RAPID RAJ by Matt Riggsby

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

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ARTICLE COLORS

Each article is color-coded to help you find your favorite sections.

Pale Blue: In This Issue Brown: In Every Issue Green: Columnist

Dark Blue: **GURPS** Features Purple: Systemless Features

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In This Issue

The future is what you make of it, especially if the world's been rebooted! We're unearthing a stockpile of information about the apocalypse and beyond. These post-apocalyptic goodies are ready to be dropped into any of your games, from *GURPS Action* to *GURPS Zombies* . . . or the upcoming *GURPS After the End* series (see p. 3).

Amid the wasteland, nearly all will fall short when judged by *The Redeemers*. Assistant *GURPS* Line Editor Jason "PK" Levine describes a powerful gang whose outlook on purity makes them wary allies or deadly enemies. This feature provides *GURPS* stats for the gang members, plus full details on their compound and surrounding area, complete with beautiful maps (courtesy of consummate cartographer Matt Riggsby).

If you're looking to defend yourself amid the wasteland, your life and death may be at the hands of *Post-Apocalyptic Guns*. Firearms experts Hans-Christian Vortisch and S.A. Fisher (co-authors of *GURPS High-Tech*) look at all matters of interest to the weapons of wasteland warriors, providing *GURPS* info on heirloom guns, kludging together ammo, and even building *new* weapons – including stats for the super-simple slam fire gun!

Not everything is one-on-one in a hell-torn world; sometimes you have to face the *Warlords of the Apocalypse*. This month's Eidetic Memory offering from *GURPS Mass Combat* author David L. Pulver show you how to use the *Mass Combat* rules in a post-apocalyptic setting, with new rules and options, plus two sample forces to face on the field of battle.

If your back's against the wall, don't go down without a fight – even the odds with *Better Improvised Weapons*. *GURPS Martial Arts* co-author Peter V. Dell'Orto gives you *GURPS* insight into using anything at hand to attack or defend, including revised perks and the Improvised Rule of Cool.

When the world ends, its uranium-powered devices may continue to run . . . but someday someone will need to deal with this *Nuclear Legacy*. *GURPS Reign of Steel: Will to Live* author Roger Burton West takes you on a systemless tour of what happens when the heroes encounter abandoned nuclear reactors, ancient bombs, radioactive disposal sites, and more.

This issue also contains another peek at the forthcoming *Car Wars* universe with a moment amid melee (as reported by ever-prolific Matt Riggsby), plus a Random Thought Table that looks at how to start tomorrow with a clean slate, an Odds and Ends that offers more encounters for your wasteland warriors, and – for the tacticians – a poster-sized map of the Redeemers' bunker with 1" hexes, suitable for oversized printing. The end may be nigh for the world, but – just like every month in *Pyramid* – the fun is just beginning!

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FROM THE EDITOR

END TIMES MEAN GOOD TIMES!

You'll need more than this issue of *Pyramid* if you're going to venture into the post-apocalyptic wasteland . . . but it's a great start! Whether you encounter gangs (pp. 4-12 and 20-25), a forgotten trove of guns and ammunition (pp. 14-18), or the hidden dangers of an abandoned power plant (pp. 28-30), this issue of *Pyramid* is sure to be worth its weight in bottle caps.

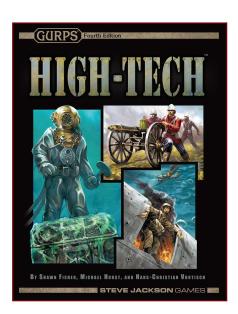
In a lot of ways, I think the post-apocalyptic ethos seeps its way into the pages of *Pyramid*. In the same way that wasteland warriors never know what they'll find when they unearth a bunker or loot a long-forgotten store, that same sense of discovery and promise comes with each issue of *Pyramid*. "This is so cool; what am I going to do with *this?*" are words that apply equally well to a pristine pre-fall workshop as they do to the articles herein. May *Pyramid* continue to surprise and delight for years to come. (And that workshop will be *great* for improvised weapons; see pp. 26-27.)

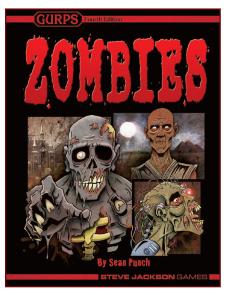
WHAT COMES NEXT?

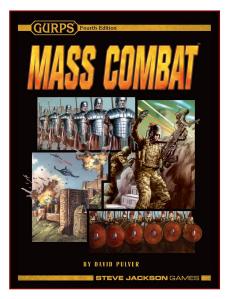
Like all *Pyramid* issues (including the first post-apocalyptic one we did way back in 2009 with *Pyramid* #3/3), this issue is designed as a standalone issue. However, it's also laying the conceptual foundation for *GURPS After the End* – another in our quick-play series of supplements that follow in the footsteps of *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy* and *GURPS Monster Hunters* by paring *GURPS* down to those elements you need to get exploring fast. May this issue serve you well . . . and if it whets your appetite for more *GURPS* gaming goodness in a post-apocalyptic vein, we hope you'll stay tuned in coming months; the end may be nigh, but *GURPS After the End* will be just the *beginning* of the fun!

WRITE HERE, WRITE NOW

We love to know what you're thinking! How are you using this material in your campaign? What do you wish we'd write about? Let us know privately at **pyramid@sjgames.com**, or join the friendly fans online at **forums.sjgames.com**.







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The only way to cleanse the Redeemer is to remove the modification, usually via force. A side effect is a dislike of amputees and others whose bodies have been "modified" by accident; while the victims are not technically impure (and are allowed to use simple prosthetic replacements), many believers consider them marked by God's displeasure.

- 6. **Mutation Reveals Impurity.** *If* mutants exist in the setting, the Redeemers hate them. As there is no way for this impurity to be cleansed, any Redeemer who develops mutations is killed on the spot, and mutated outsiders are attacked (if the odds favor the gang) or treated with contempt (if not).
- 7. **Other Religions Come From Impurity.** The Redeemers are proudly intolerant of other faiths. They're willing to interact with members of other traditions, as long as those heathens don't proselytize, but a theocratic caravan or community invites their wrath.

While all Redeemers claim slavish devotion to the Code, most members only identify strongly with a particular portion of it. For example, a given Redeemer may pay only lip service to the rules about fornication (even dallying on the sly) while passionately hating those who voluntarily modify their bodies. The GM playing up these variances will go a long way toward making the gang feel *real* and interesting, particularly if they'll be a regular campaign feature.

THE GANG

The Redeemers dress to set themselves apart from the unworthy. All of their clothing and armor is a mix of black and white, in no particular combination; e.g., a given raider might wear black leather on his upper body, white gloves, white pants, and black shoes. As a side effect of keeping their bodies "sacred," most shave their head (men and women alike); the rest maintain short, cropped hair.

The Redeemers supply themselves primarily through scavenging (in the city ruins a few days' travel away), raiding travelers, and hunting, with over half of the gang away from the Promised Land at any given time. They keep what they need and trade the rest with merchants and a few wary settlements. They're always in the market for bullets and ethanol; the latter fuels their vehicles and keeps the whole flock happy.

Redeemer Laity

There are about 80 "rank and file" Redeemers, though only 25-35 will be at the main camp at any given time. They either wear leather armor (DR 1*) or leather with thin plates from road signs and such (DR 2, but -1 to Move and Dodge from encumbrance). For weapons, most carry cheap .41 derringers (1d pi+, Acc 0, Range 80/650, RoF 1, Shots 2(3i), Bulk -1, Rcl 2, Malf. 17) and *either* a board with nails pounded through it (sw-2 imp, Reach 1, Parry -1U) *or* a length of weighted chain (sw+1 cr, Reach 1-4*, Parry -2U, can entangle at -4).

ST 11; **DX** 10; **IQ** 10; **HT** 10.

Damage 1d-1/1d+1; BL 24 lbs.; HP 11; Will 11; Per 11; FP 10.

Basic Speed 5.00; Basic Move 5; Dodge 8; Parry 9 (Brawling), 8 (Axe/Mace), or 6 (Kusari).

SM 0; 5'7" to 6'2"; 120 to 180 lbs.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Callous; Improvised Weapons (Axe/Mace *or* Kusari); Obsession (Recruit the worthy) (15); Stubbornness; Total Intolerance (Religious).

• Either Code of Honor (Redeemer Code) *or* Fanaticism (Redeemer Code).

Skills: Brawling-12; Guns (Pistol)-12; Intimidation-12.

• Either Axe/Mace-12 or Kusari-11. • Other common but not ubiquitous skills include Armoury (Melee Weapons or Small Arms)-10, Bicycling-12, Driving (Automobile)-11, Mechanic (Automobile)-10, Merchant-10, Scrounging-12, and Survival (local terrain)-12.

GANG REACTIONS

Apply the following additional modifiers to any reaction rolls made by Redeemers or to any Influence Roll made against them. For group encounters, average the leader's reaction modifier with the worst modifier in the party (round down, for the worse). The options for each bullet point are exclusive; if more than one would fit, use the worst. In all cases, Theology (Redeemer) may act as a complementary roll. A Good or better reaction will usually result in a recruitment pitch!

- +2 if *no* penalties below apply *and* the subject speaks well of or shows interest in the Redeemer faith.
- -1 for dressing provocatively, -2 if caught or admitting to having casual sex, or -4 for a known prostitute or rapist.
- +1 if all body hair is shaved off, -1 for especially long hair or beard, -1 for amputees (with or without prosthetics), -2 for a single piercing or small tattoo, -3 for multiple modifications, or -4 for cybernetics or bio-mods.
- If mutation exists, -1 to -2 for someone exhibiting "mutant-like" qualities (GM's call). For a confirmed mutant, take the reaction penalty from Freakishness or Social Stigma, add -1, and *double it* or use -4, if worse.
- -2 for displaying articles of other religions (e.g., a crucifix necklace) or -4 for ostentatious displays (like a train of covered wagons all painted with crosses) *or* for debating religion with the gang.

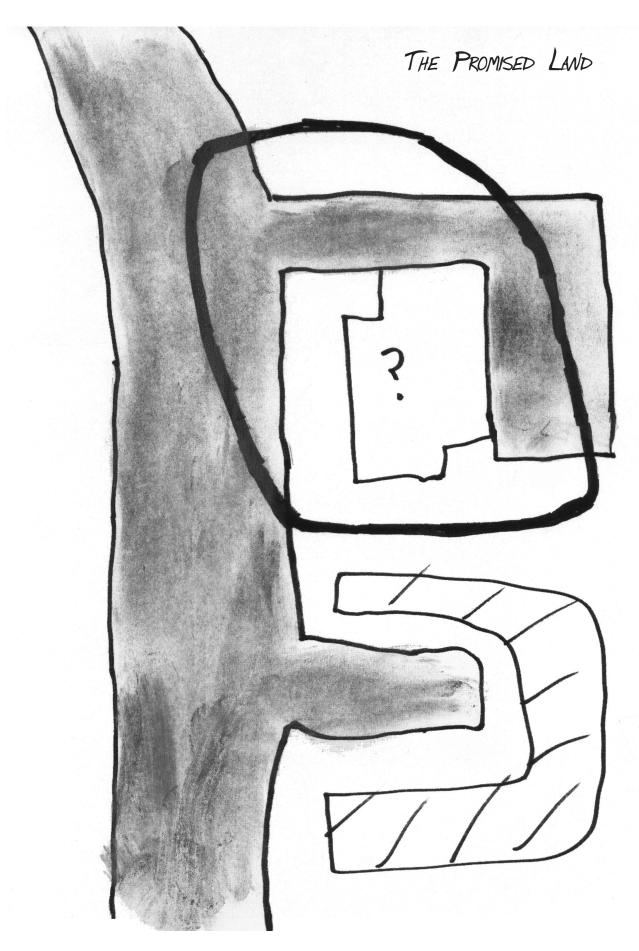
Brother or Sister

Each brother or sister oversees a group of up to a dozen members *or* has some specific duty at the Promised Land. There are currently 14: Brothers Alister, Dirk, Ewell, Orton, Ramon, Shipley, Trace, Vasili, and Wilton, and Sisters Corinne, Mirelle, Nina, Tavaras, and Tsi. Five remain at the camp while the others supervise distant activities.

Most wear armor improvised from leather and metal (DR 3, but -2 Move and -1 Dodge from encumbrance), though a few prefer thick leather (DR 2*) to stay nimble and fast. They use the same melee weapons as the laity above, but most carry cheap .36 revolvers (2d-1 pi, Acc 0, Range 120/1,300, RoF 1, Shots 6(3i), Bulk -2, Rcl 2, Malf. 17).

ST 13: DX 12: IO 12: HT 12.

Damage 1d/2d-1; BL 34 lbs.; HP 13; Will 13; Per 12; FP 12.



Still, wastelanders will be able to make use of the low-powered cases and cast the lead bullets to fill them with ease.

THE NEW WEST

"I have my trusty cannon," he said, half drawing the ancient, ponderous Le Mat percussion pistol. "I assure you that I shall give a good accounting of myself, and I shall take some of the monsters with me."

- James Axler, **Deathlands: Neutron Solstice**

All this means that the most reliable and efficient firearms after the end are medium- to large-caliber TL5 guns with relatively low RoF. Many obsolete guns will see a renaissance, both originals and the millions of replicas that have been made at TL6-8. Single-action revolvers, lever-action carbines, large-bore single-shot rifles, double-barreled shotguns, and even mechanical machine guns will constitute much of the more reliable armament. See Adventure Guns for an exhaustive selection of TL5 firearms. As examples of this return to the guns of the Old West, watch films like A Boy and His Dog and The Book of Eli; the latter even features a Gatling Model 1874 (*Adventure Guns*, p. 37). A step up from direct replicas, a number of TL7-8 equivalents mimic the old technology but take advantage of more modern materials and manufacturing, including single-action revolvers and lever-action rifles that feature firing pin safeties, making them safe to carry fully loaded (*High-Tech*, p. 93).

Another option are TL6-8 bolt-action rifles, which are simpler and sturdier than lever-actions, yet offer more firepower than single-shot rifles. Most of these are chambered for bottlenecked smokeless cartridges, however, and will not be as efficient with black powder.

Note that even simple firearms can go awry. Revolvers, for example, can get out of sync due to excessive use, especially with powerful loads, meaning the cylinder no longer aligns properly with the barrel mouth, causing a malfunction with each shot. Correcting this requires an Armoury (Small Arms) or Machinist-5 roll.

An even simpler solution is to shun cartridges entirely and go back to muzzleloading. This requires fewer materials and tools, but also comes with all the drawbacks of the TL4-5 muzzleloaders, which primarily concern low RoF and, most

distressingly, low reliability. Most of the muzzleloaders listed in *GURPS Low-Tech*, *High-Tech*, and *Adventure Guns* can be maintained using fairly limited knowledge.

New Guns

This was a Thrower, a muzzle-loading, smooth bore carbine, whose inch and a half bore fired six-inch long explosive rockets. The weapon was hideously expensive, the barrel being made of beryllium copper, and its small projectiles had to be handloaded...

- Sterling Lanier, Hiero's Journey

At some point, wastelanders will start to build new firearms. These will almost certainly be muzzleloaders or simple cartridge guns such as single- or multi-barrel rifles, shotguns, and pistols. Revolvers are probably the pinnacle of what can be achieved in mechanical complexity. These guns may be improvised weapons such as the zip-gun (*High-Tech*, p. 92), or they may be newly built clones of the few remaining gun models. Many of these home-grown guns will likely use the existing barrels, springs, and so forth from defunct guns. Rechambered, rebored and rerifled, old barrels could have a very long life.

Copying a known muzzleloading design requires Armoury (Small Arms) or Machinist-5. Good patterns to copy would be the Tower blunderbuss (*High-Tech*, p. 104) or Kentucky rifle (*High-Tech*, p. 107). Manufacture of a rifled musket is a long task (p. B346) that can easily take up to 100 hours, assuming a workshop and a supply of all required materials. Developing a *new* muzzleloader but employing known principles (such as action type) is a Simple invention (p. B473) using Engineer (Small Arms) or Armoury (Small Arms)-6, with -6 (Simple) and +5 (existing variant). Using the *Time Spent* rules (p. B346) gives a bonus on the design and manufacturing rolls.

Incredibly simple guns can be made with the most minimal in tools and supplies. One such weapon is the *slam fire gun* which can be fashioned out of nothing more than a couple of pipes. These weapons were in common use by guerrillas fighting the Japanese in WWII, and today are still made in the Philippines, built from iron plumbing pipe or the front forks of cast-off motorcycles and scooters. For construction rules, see the description for the zip-gun (*High-Tech*, p. 92).

Post-Apocalyptic Guns Table

See pp. B268-271 for an explanation of the statistics.

	TL Weapon	Damage	Acc	Range	Weight	RoF	Shots	ST	Bulk	Rcl	Cost	LC	Notes
(GUNS (RIFLE) (DX-4 or most other Guns at -2)												
	5 Small Game Slam Fire Gun, .22 LR	1d+1 pi-	1	70/800	4/0.0077	1	1(10i)	7†	-5	2	\$10	3	[1]
(GUNS (SHOTGUN) (DX-4	or most o	other (Guns at -	-2)								
	5 Hunting Slam Fire Gun, 12G 2.75"	1d pi	1	30/600	6/0.12	1×9	1(10i)	10†	-6	1/5	\$20	3	[1, 2]

Notes

- [1] The weapon should use the Post-Apocalyptic Gun Malfunction Table (p. 15).
- [2] The stats list buckshot, but the ideal load for hunting large predators might be buck-and-ball (High-Tech, p. 173).

Features: Impetuous.

Cost: \$25K to raise; \$2.5K to maintain.

There are two elements of booze riders with a total TS of 5.

Rolling Death Commandos (TL4)

Medium Infantry

A vainglorious name for the most battle-crazed but least well-equipped gang members – mostly youths and new recruits, these are close assault troops armed with meat cleavers, axes, and hammers. Motorcycle helmets, garbage-can lid shields, and leather jackets covered with chains protect them. They often ride skateboards or use rollerblades when the gang operates on highways. If they prove themselves, survivors are told they may end up graduating into the

motor pool and getting a bike off of a dead booze rider.

TS: 2.25. WT: 1.

Classes: None. Mobility: Foot.

Quality: Poor equipment; Average troops.

Features: Impetuous.

Cost: \$22.5K to raise; \$4.5K to maintain.

There are two elements of Rolling Death Commandos in the gang with a total TS of 4.5.

Meet spirit for worship
Sky-born and earth given.

- John Veitch, "The Tweed"

Mercury Cougar Eliminator (TL7)

Light Truck

Mercury Cougar and her co-driver Bam Styx are mercenary road warriors who have temporarily joined up with DDT. They don't trust the gang and vice versa. They drive a tricked-out muscle car with off-road tires, and carry pistols and sawed-off shotguns.

TS: 7.5. WT: 1.

Classes: Cv, T1. Mobility: Motor.

Quality: Poor equipment; Average troops.

Features: Disloyal, Mercenary. Cost: \$0 to raise; \$18.75 to maintain.

They are a single element with a total TS of 7.5.

OWL GIRL AND THE MUTANTS

A tribe of primitive mutants were living around a blasted ruin in a desert waste, raiding neighboring settlements and preying upon those travelers and scavengers foolish enough to dare venture into their "sacred death lands" – the ruined city they considered

taboo, land of the ancient sky gods. The mutants killed and often ate anyone who defiled their sacred grounds . . . until a goddess floated down out of the sky!

Kiddy Cars (TL4)

Light Chariots

The child auxiliary, these each represent a trio of shopping carts with upgraded suspensions and larger wheels. The carts are pulled by chained mutant dogs and driven by feral child-soldiers armed with slingshots firing ball bearings or with Molotov cocktails. If one of the kids drops a cocktail, the kiddy car goes up in a huge fireball.

TS: 0.5. WT: 4.

Classes: Cv, F. Mobility: Mounted.

Quality: Poor equipment; Inferior troops.

Features: Impetuous.

Cost: \$25K to raise; \$5K to maintain.

There are two elements of kiddy cars with a total TS of 1.

Mutant Warriors (TL0)

Stone-Age Warriors

A gang of fierce warriors with various mutations. The tribe are fanatical followers of the sky goddess they call Owl Girl.

TS: 1.5. WT: 1.

Classes: Rec. Mobility: Foot.

Quality: Basic equipment; Good troops. *Features:* Fanatic; Terrain (Desert). *Cost:* \$42.5K to raise: \$6K to maintain.

Owl Girl's Mu	UTANT 7	TRIBE F	orce R	OSTER
Elements	Total TS	Classes	Mobility	Features
10 Mutant Warriors (Stone-Age Warriors)	15	Rec	Foot	Fanatic, Terrain (Desert)
Giant Mutant Cannibals (Ogres)	2	_	Foot	Impetuous
Giant Sand Worm (Giant Monster)	15	Arm	Foot	Disloyal, Impetuous, Terrain (Desert)
Owl Girl (Balloon)	(1)	Air	0	Night
Mutant Catapults (Light Artillery)	(3)	Art	Foot	
Air TS	1			
Artillery TS	3			
Recon TS	15			
Force TS	32.4			

ABOUT GURPS

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Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata pages for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are available on our website – see above.

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition*. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

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