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Retro Rockets Pack

by Philip Reed



Welcome to the **Retro Rockets Pack**, a selection of two new rocket ships for use with your d20 campaigns. Science fiction pulps were heavy on the “fiction” and light on the “science.” Man’s first ventures into orbit and beyond were still decades away, and many of the things that we now know about space travel were merely theories at the time. The writers of the pulps concentrated on bringing readers fast-paced adventure tales, liberally seasoned with things that sounded vaguely scientific, to give the stories a futuristic sheen.

To today’s audience, phrases like “atomic ray pistol” “electro suits” and “radio rangers” sound absurd, but to the pulp reader of the time, they were full of wonder and possibility.

One of the first jobs that a Game Master running a pulp SF campaign will have to do is to communicate these sorts of expectations to the players. 21st century players will have to willingly suspend their disbelief, and go with the feel of things. Sure, we now know that there is no use for aerodynamics in outer space.... but you know what? It doesn’t matter. Wings and fins on a starship look cool.... and maneuvers like banking, power dives and barrel rolls are exciting.

These rocket ships are written up as vehicles, using the standard Modern D20 vehicle format. Game masters wishing to use the Future SRD can adapt the vessel with that system’s starship rules – although, as presented in the pulps, these ships are universally treated more like traditional aircraft than starships.

Join the Action!

The two rocket ships described in the pages of this PDF are merely a first step into a larger world of excitement. For even more rocket action visit www.rpgnow.com for the complete line of **Retro Rockets** PDFs - all designed for use with Adamant Entertainment’s **Thrilling Tales** series.

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About the Author

Philip Reed has been working professionally in the roleplaying game industry since 1995. In that time he has worked for such companies as Atlas Games, Paradigm Concepts, West End Games, and Dork Storm Press. Today Philip spends his days at home running Ronin Arts, writing and designing new games, and trying to force himself to take a break so that his wrist will heal. To learn more about Philip Reed – and Ronin Arts – please visit www.roninarts.com and www.philipjreed.com.

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■ The Devil Star

Built in the secret laboratories of the American Soviet, the space age *Devil Star* is one of the fastest, most powerful rockets yet constructed on Earth. It was a prototype *Devil Star* that shot down Major Electrode, killing one of America's most loyal, most patriotic rocket jocks.

For almost three years the American Soviet – that communist agency that plagues America to this day – constructed and flew *Devil Stars*, operating out of secret laboratories in Nevada, Idaho, and New Mexico.

It was only through the actions of Savage Jones, American adventurer and archeologist, that the American Soviet bases were discovered and

destroyed. While on an archeological expedition in New Mexico Savage Jones, and his ever-trusty sidekick, stumbled across one of the American Soviet bases.

Today, just a few years after the U.S. government took possession of the *Devil Stars*, the rocket is being produced in larger numbers for use by the Americans and her allies.

Unfortunately, the Soviets also hold the blueprints to this spectacular rocket and it is only a matter of time before American *Devil Stars* are forced to contend with Soviet rockets that possess the same strength and speed as the American rocket.

Crew: 1

Passengers: 1

Cargo: 250 lb.

Init: -3

Maneuver: -3

Top Speed: 950 (95)

Defense: 8

Hardness: 65

Hit Points: 42

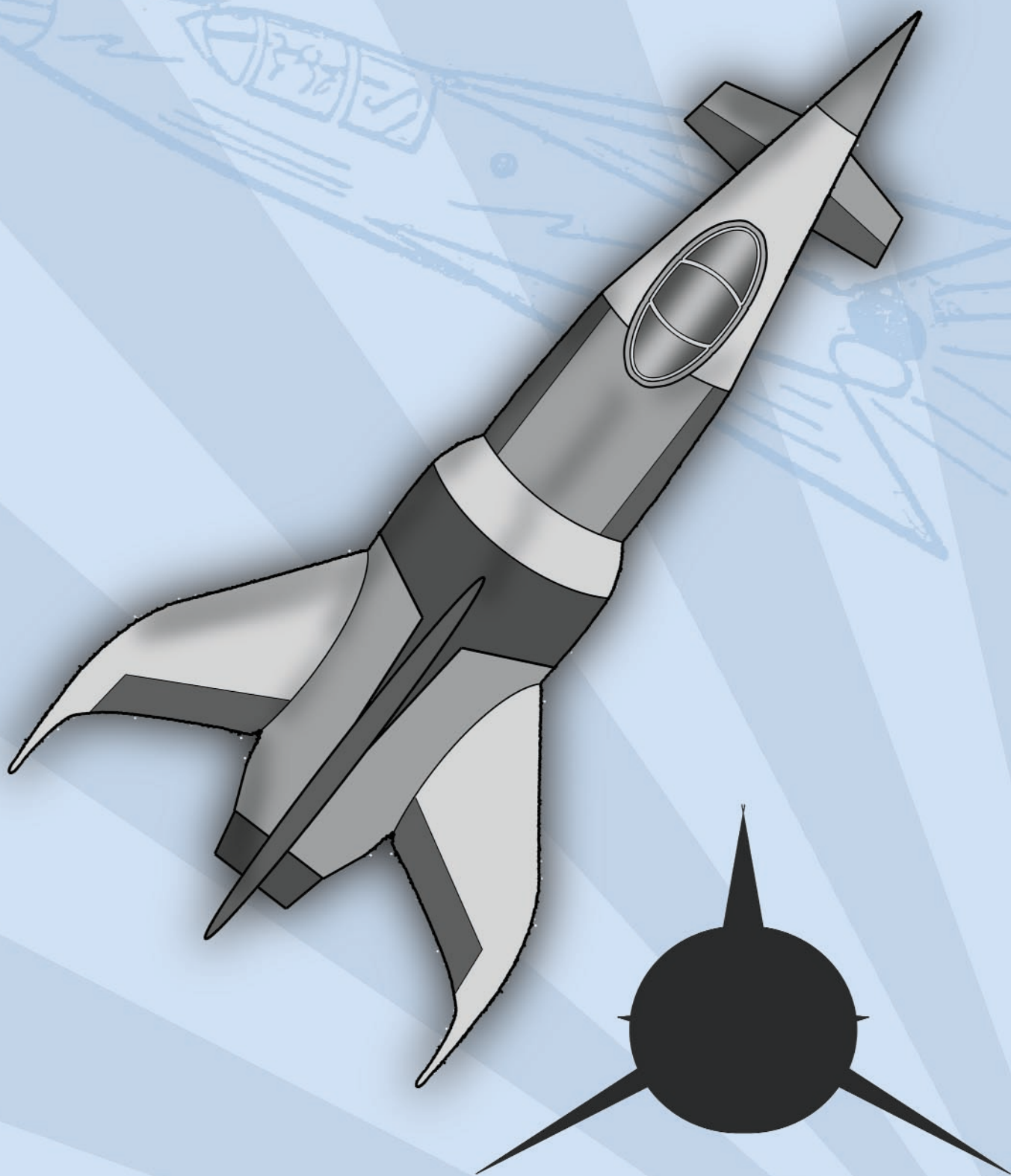
Size: G

Purchase DC: 54

Restriction: Illegal
(+4)

Adventure Hooks

- The American Soviet has constructed a new base in the United States, possibly once again in the desert southwest or maybe the Florida Everglades, and it is up to the heroes to wipe out this base before a fleet of new, advanced *Devil Stars* can be completed.
- An American spy, grasping at life, falls into the hands of the heroes and tells one final tale: the *Devil Stars* under the command of the United States are all equipped with a self-destruct mechanism and the American Soviet plans to destroy the rockets when they are in-flight. Can our heroes prevent the loss of these powerful rockets? Can they prevent some of America's finest rocket jocks from being slain by this terrible communist plot?
- Recreate the original discovery of the American Soviet bases, with the heroes replacing Savage Jones and his sidekick. Will our heroes be capable of not only destroying the secret bases but also capturing the fleet of *Devil Stars*?



■ The Devil Star

■ The Martian Flyer

A military dropship, the *Martian Flyer* is a troop transport designed to deliver soldiers on the surface of alien, hostile worlds. In rare instances the *Martian Flyer* is used to drop troops on the Earth's surface, but in such events the crew is careful to be sure that they are not spotted.

Crew: 3

Passengers: 12

Cargo: 4500 lb.

Init: -8

Maneuver: -8

Top Speed: 500 (50)

Defense: 9

Hardness: 50

Hit Points: 65

Size: G

Purchase DC: 65

Restriction: Military (+3)

Prototype Heat Ray: As a military rocket it should come as no surprise that the *Martian Flyer* is armed, though many would be surprised to discover that the rocket's weapon is an experimental "heat ray" stolen from Nazi scientists. The U.S. government has equipped with *Martian Flyer* with this heat ray so that they can test it under combat conditions.

Damage: 15d10.

Critical: 19-20

Damage Type: Electricity

Range Increment: 1,000 feet

Rate of Fire: Single

Magazine: Unlimited (runs off the reactor)

Size: Large

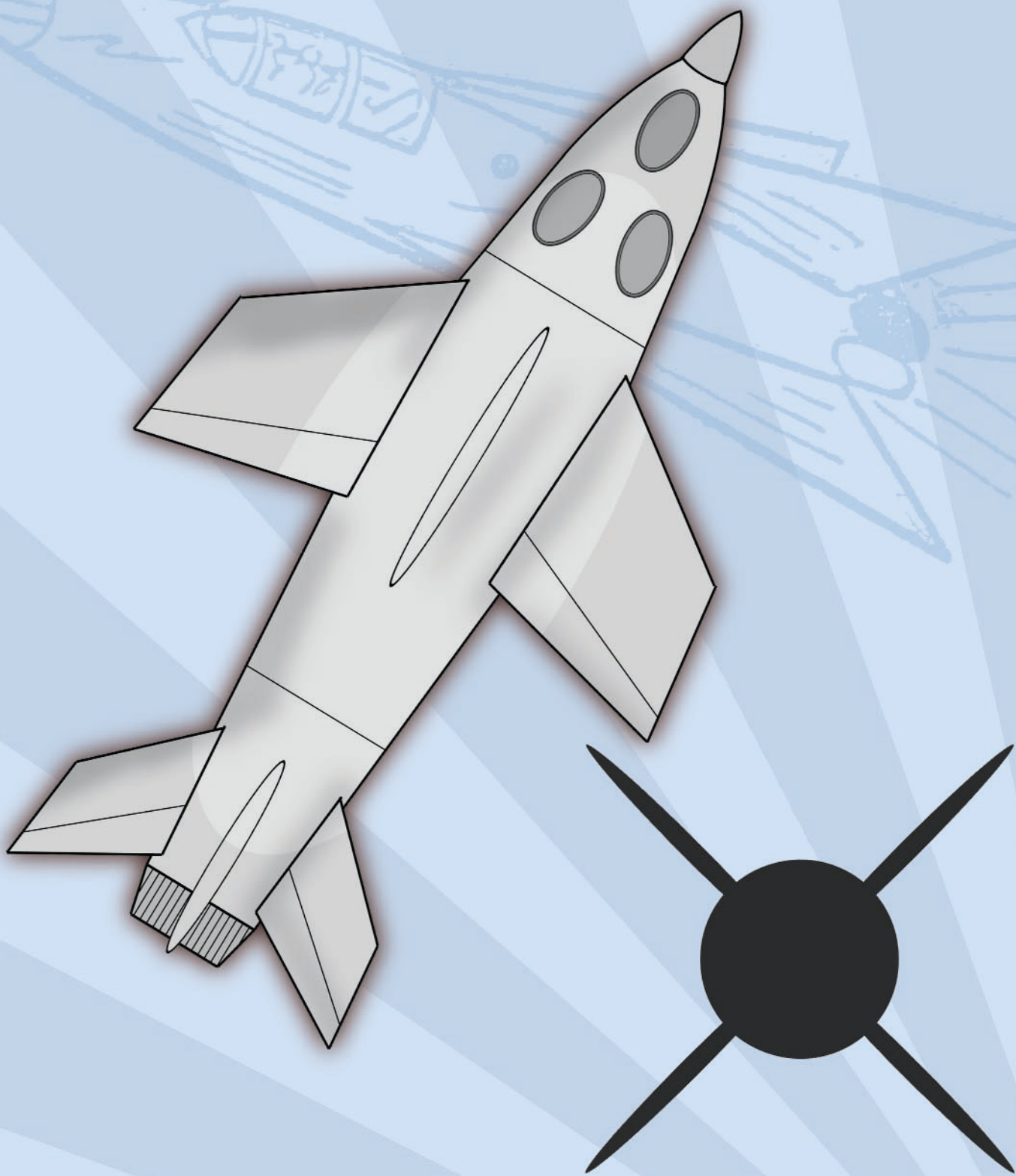
Weight: 300 lbs

Purchase DC: included with the vehicle

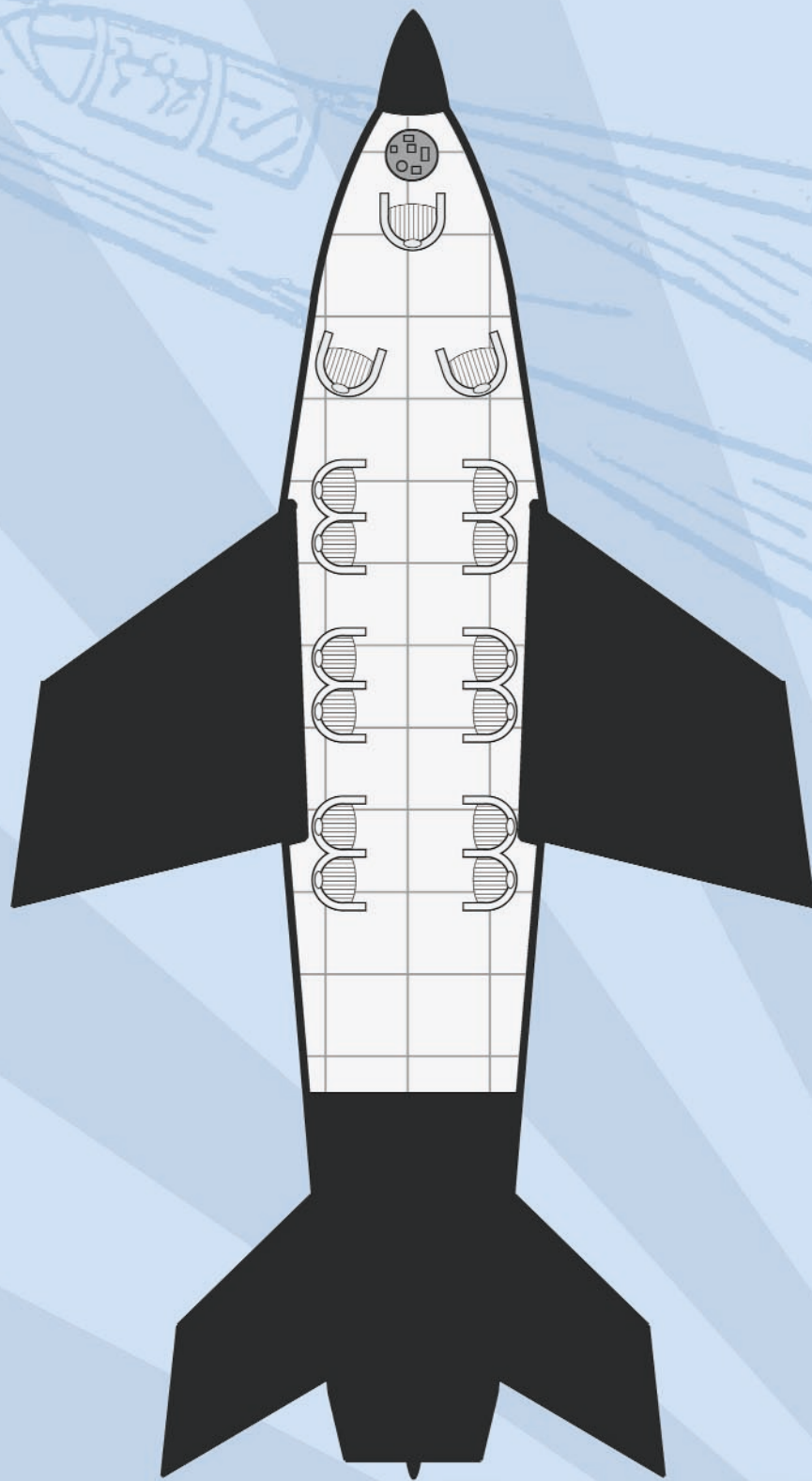
Restriction: Military (+3)

Adventure Hooks

- The heroes are members of a mercenary force that has signed on with the U.S. government. A team of scientists exploring one of the moons of Jupiter suddenly drop out of contact and the heroes are sent off to discover what harm may have come to the scientists. Upon landing on the moon they uncover a secret base (Nazis, Soviets, aliens, whatever works best for you) and must rescue the scientists.
- A *Martian Flyer* goes missing and it is up to our heroes, a band of treasure hunters and salvage experts, to locate the rocket before she is forever lost or (worse yet) falls into enemy hands. Unfortunately, a Nazi salvage team has discovered the *Martian Flyer* and the heroes find themselves in a race to claim the prize which is now floating, dead, in a distant asteroid field.
- The heroes are in Antarctica when they discover a Nazi base and learn that a "heat ray" is being developed at the base. Can they steal the weapon before it is put into service and kills American soldiers and citizens?



■ The Martian Flyer



■ The Martian Flyer