

Alternate Interstellar Wars

If the *Terra Conquered* setting isn't exotic enough, try one of the following campaign seeds for truly over-the-top adventure.

Legacy of War

In this ambitious set-up, the campaign spans the *entire* Interstellar Wars era. The goal is to produce an episodic campaign, mimicking a historical novel in which successive members of the same families interact with major events.

The campaign is set up as a series of short story arcs, starting with First Contact with the Vilani (or even earlier) and ending with the Terran victory over the *Ziru Sirka*. Each story arc lasts for about 4-6 sessions, after which a number of years pass "off-camera." Existing characters can become much more experienced, or they may retire (or die) and give way to their descendants.

For example, one hero might be a crewman on board the *StarLeaper One*, involved in first contact with the Vilani. By the start of the First Interstellar War, he is a seasoned veteran. By the start of the Second, he may have retired from active adventuring, but perhaps his son or daughter has entered the service. Players can swap family lines over time, cross them, and introduce entirely new lines of descent – perhaps introducing a Vilani or other non-Terran Human into the cast of characters.

Past Tense

This campaign frame permits experienced *Traveller* players to bring their existing characters into the Interstellar Wars era. After a jump accident, an encounter with a spatial anomaly, or tinkering with some Ancient device, a group of travelers from the Third Imperium find themselves in the time of the Interstellar Wars!

Can the visitors from the future change history as they know it? *Should they?* This could be a short campaign in which the stranded travelers look for a way back home, while avoiding changing the past and dodging everyone who might want to grab their technology or

their knowledge of the future. A longer campaign can strand the adventurers in the past permanently, starting an *Interstellar Wars* campaign that doesn't have to stick with the "official" history . . . because the presence of the time travelers has already created an alternate universe!

Masterminds of Terra

As described on p. 135, psionics are virtually unknown during the Interstellar Wars period . . . or so *They* would have you believe. In fact, the Terran exploration of space, the Interstellar Wars, and the eventual victory over the *Ziru Sirka* are all machinations of a secret cabal of Terran psis!

After all, how else could a backwater world on the edge of the vast Imperium win such a conflict? Pundits claim the Vilani underestimated the Terrans, and were too caught up in provincial and traditional thinking – but who forged those chains of thought? Who planted the idea that the Terrans were no real threat? Who foresaw the right opportunities, and made sure the Confederation seized them?

The Terran heroes in this campaign may uncover a dark conspiracy at the heart of their homeworld. They might be unwitting pawns, or even latent psis targeted for recruitment . . . or termination, if they refuse.

The Infinite Wars

The Centrum (see p. B523 or *GURPS Infinite Worlds*) has undertaken its most ambitious plan yet: to influence the outcome of the Interstellar Wars in favor of the Vilani Imperium! In many ways, Vilani culture is similar to Centrum's, and there is much to be gained by influencing so vast an empire. Infinity, naturally, favors the scrappy Terrans and opposes Centrum on principle. Both sides try to influence the outcome of the Interstellar Wars, without tipping their hand and revealing the Secret to the technologically advanced civilizations of this alternate. The heroes might be members of an I-SWAT team, or locals who discover the cross-temporal meddlers and their plans.

After an Imperial conquest, Terra would have been ruled by Sharurshid as a commercial colony. Vilani colonists would have arrived by the millions, setting up industries, searching out local resources for exploitation, teaching Imperial laws and customs to the Terran population. Terrans who accepted Vilani ways would have been rewarded with wealth and a position in the Sharurshid government. Terrans who

refused, and disrupted the Imperial regime, would have been stamped out.

Over time, Terrans would have settled on many of the worlds of the Imperial rimward province – apparently assimilated into Vilani society, but nursing deep-seated resentment against the Imperium. There they would have met the *kimashargur*, who felt similarly . . .

A "Terra Conquered" campaign will be much like the Vilani-only campaign (p. 234), with the exception that

most of the adventurers will be of Terran origin at least partially assimilated into Imperial culture. If the point at which Terra was conquered is placed early enough, the GM may want to work out an "alternate history" of events taking place after the Imperial arrival. The natural course of the campaign would be to work out how Terrans might adjust to their conquered state; this may involve violent rebellion or a long effort to win higher status within the Imperial system.