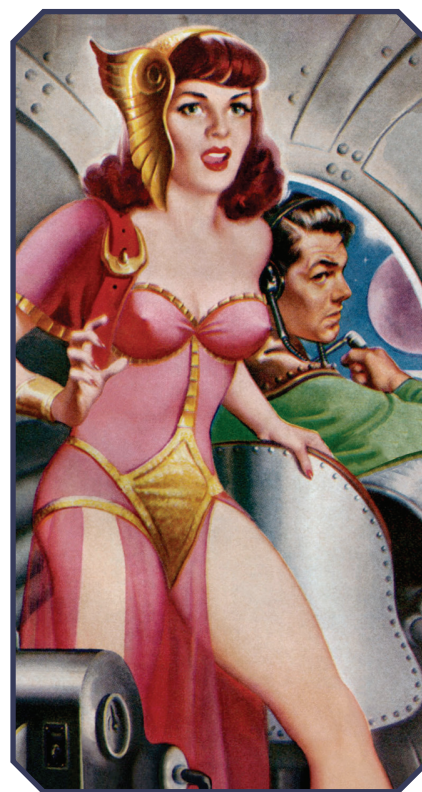


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INTRODUCTION

Journey now to those thrilling days of . . . tomorrow!

There was a time when the future seemed bright. No giant megacorporations or corrupt tyrants ruled the world. Technology offered solutions, not new problems. The exploration of a new frontier was noble and glorious, not an excuse to exploit the natives and despoil the environment. The villains were evil, not misunderstood victims of propaganda. The heroes were heroic, not self-aggrandizing. People looked to the future and thought it would work.

That time – the future of the past – forms the setting for **GURPS Tales of the Solar Patrol**.

In terms of inspiration, *Tales of the Solar Patrol* draws from the films, stories, comic books, and radio shows of the 1930s to the 1950s, bracketed by *Buck Rogers* on one end and *Forbidden Planet* (and the launch of Sputnik) on the other. The focus is high adventure and excitement, with a special emphasis on uncynical optimism. The world of the future presents its dangers and hardships – it is not a utopia without cares – but it is a world where problems are solved and where there exist choices besides the lesser of two evils.

In this setting, much of what is now known about science is cheerfully tossed out the airlock: Many of the planets of the Solar System are inhabited. Space travel, though risky, is commonplace and comparatively inexpensive. Voice-command robots coexist alongside punch-card and paper-tape computers, and no one questions the apparent inconsistency. World-shaking inventions are put together from bailing wire and aluminum foil one week and forgotten the next, and technological change does not mean social change.

These tales come from a time when science offered boundless possibilities with no consequences or compromises, when

Europe and the United States experienced an unparalleled science-driven rise in the standard of living that seemed to have no end and no long-term costs. Once-incurable diseases were being wiped out. A single pill could cure illnesses that had once meant a slow and painful death. In one generation, mankind went from the horse and buggy to the jet plane, from muddy dirt roads to super-highways.

While the best science fiction of the era offered some cautions and warnings, the most popular saw the future as being “just like today, only better.” The airport would become the spaceport; the vacuum cleaner, the robo-maid; and the commonplace automobile would sprout wings and take to the skies. As science provided sufficient material wealth to remove the need for war, people would forget primitive and atavistic impulses, along with poverty, hunger, homelessness, and suffering. The nations of Earth would unite, once it became clear that Earth was but one planet among many and that humanity must stand together against whatever foes might come at us from the void.

Adventure would be everywhere on the high frontier, from the wagon-wheel space stations orbiting the Earth to the harsh and unsettled worlds of Mars and Venus (each capable of sustaining human life and already populated with races of their own – potential allies or enemies of mankind).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lizard has been a gamer since 1978 and a freelancer since 2000, with a special love of classic pulp fiction and related genres. He lives in Indiana with a loving wife and too many cats. This is his second **GURPS** product.

About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of **GURPS** players. Our address is SJ Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! We can also be reached by e-mail: info@sjgames.com. Resources include:

Pyramid (www.sjgames.com/pyramid). Our online magazine includes new **GURPS** rules and articles. It also covers the *d20* system, *Ars Magica*, *BESM*, *Call of Cthulhu*, and many more top games – and other Steve Jackson Games releases like *Illuminati*, *Car Wars*, *Transhuman Space*, and more. *Pyramid* subscribers also get opportunities to playtest new **GURPS** books!

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