

TAMING THE DRAGON

Underground swoop racing is big business on Corellia. Organized by numerous semi-criminal swoop gangs in out of the way places at odd hours of the evening, these races gather huge crowds of racers, mechanics, gamblers, and assorted hangers-on. These races are winner-take-all, and the pot is usually either a large amount of credits, one or more of the losers' swoops, or simply bragging rights. The risk inherent in this dangerous sport, as well as the possibility of great wealth and prestige among one's peers is what drives the young men and women of Corellia to race their machines against one another (and against Lady Luck herself).

INTRODUCTION

In **Taming the Dragon**, the PCs become involved in an illegal underground swoop race while visiting Corellia. They can either be actively searching for some racing action or become otherwise entangled in swoop gang business, such as by accidentally insulting a powerful gang leader. The PCs should be either in Coronet City, particularly in the Blue Sector, or in the rougher parts of Tyrena.

While this encounter can be picked up by the PCs anywhere, the bulk of the action takes place in the remote and dangerous Crystal Swamps in Corellia's Agrilat Region. Swoop racers have been using this restricted wildlife preserve for years as their personal racetrack, and many of the bogs and marshy islands are littered with wreckage and shattered helmets.





THE RACE

The Player Characters manage to commit themselves to competing in a swoop race in the far reaches of the Crystal Swamps. Any of the PCs who want to race can, against members of a gang called the Black Seraphs and their leader: a young Corellian woman named Sunny. The terms of the race, as explained by Sunny, are quite clear. Two or more riders race the challenging Dragonbane Circuit, and the winner takes the purse. Entering the race costs 200 credits per racer.

The Dragonbane is one of the lesser-known race circuits in the Crystal Swamps. It consists of six dangerous legs that pass through tall, razor-sharp crystal grasses; through a forest of crystalline outcroppings; and over numerous deadly obstacles such as dead-falls, piles of wreckage or debris, or even a passing creature that bolts in front of the swoop. The maximum altitude for the race is 10 meters. Once the

terms are agreed upon, both parties pack up their equipment and swoops and head to the track.

What the PCs don't know is that this race is little more than a ruse. Sunny and her gang have made a lucrative business of luring unsuspecting and inexperienced racers into the swamps with the promise of a little racing with some money at the end, only to rob them and leave them for dead. This the Seraphs accomplish by luring them into an actual race and leading them into a number of traps the Seraphs set up beforehand.

To represent the traps, if the PC taking part in the race generates one or more  on his Piloting (Planetary) skill checks, the Game Master may spend that  to activate one of the Seraphs' traps. These can be anything from swinging logs to spring-loaded nets to pot shots taken at the rider as he goes by. If a trap triggers during the race, the PC racing must make a **Piloting (Planetary) check** against a difficulty equal to the number of  generated on the initial check, up to a maximum of **Hard (◆◆◆)**. If the racer succeeds on his skill check, he neatly avoids the trap and moves to the next leg of the race; if he fails, he crashes, suffering a minor collision as per page 242 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook. (The GM shouldn't always use  generated to trigger traps, just once or twice during the race per PC).



The race can accommodate one PC versus Sunny, or more than one PC if multiple PCs would like to race. Sunny is confident enough in her skills to take on multiple challengers. In addition, three Seraph gangers race as well, using the profile for them and their swoops found on page 131. The GM can also introduce additional NPC racers if he wishes. Five additional Seraphs and Grinder remain in the pit area during the race (two of them later head onto the track to trigger traps).

To run the encounter, the Game Master should use structured time, rolling initiative as normal. Each racer should have one round to accelerate before they enter the track proper. The encounter can be run as a mix of structured and narrative time. The race itself should be structured, with each round taking up one leg of the race. However, if one or more PCs are not racing, the GM can have them act narratively between each round, cutting to and from the action as the PCs do other things behind the scenes.

After the beginning of the race, positioning is determined by top speed. Those going the highest speed (probably 4 or 5) are jockeying for first, those going one speed slower are jockeying for second, and so forth. Once per leg, have all contestants make a competitive Piloting (Planetary) check with difficulty set by the speed and size of the swoops. The winner of the check is first amongst all other racers going his speed. Failure means the contestant decreases his speed by 1, while ☹️ means some issue in piloting that may incur penalties on later checks, such as fly-

ing off course or grazing a crystal outcropping, or the vehicle suffering system strain. ☹️ means the swoop suffers a minor collision (see page 242 in the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook)

All skill checks made during the course of the race follow the rules for vehicles and starships presented in Chapter VII of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook.

1. THE LONG RUN

The starting leg of the Dragonbane is the Long Run. It is a clear, smooth straightaway over close-cropped marsh grass. It is long enough to allow the racer who was left behind at the starting line ample opportunity to catch up with and even overtake the leader. During this first section, there are no Seraphs lurking in the weeds waiting to spring something on the PC taking part in the race. The Long Run is very simple and has good visibility, but any skill checks made to catch up to or overtake the leader suffer ■ due to terrain. This reflects the fact that although they are speeding across relatively clear and even ground, the racers are moving incredibly fast, and even the slightest mistake could quickly bring the race to a violent end.

2. PILLARS OF THE SKY

After the racers burn through The Long Run, they enter the dangerous Pillars of the Sky section. This leg of the course runs through a deep, muddy, brackish swamp from which bone-colored dead trees emerge, looking much like the fingers of the dead. Each racer must slalom through the trees as quickly as possible while both attempting to take (or keep) the lead and trying to avoid smashing into a tree at over 200km.

Piloting (Planetary) skill checks made in the Pillars suffer ■■ due to terrain.

3. RAZOR BLADES

Once past the harrowing Pillars of the Sky, the racers enter a broad, open stretch of marshland called the Razor Blades. The blades in question are those of the tall, crystalline marsh grass that grows in this large clearing. Growing to a height of four meters or more, the glittering, pale green grass tinkles faintly like a field of tiny bells as the wind blows across the field. Its beauty belies a hidden danger, for each blade of grass is as sharp as a vibroblade, and anyone passing through it without proper protection (even at a gentle walk) will suffer numerous cuts and abrasions. A swoop racer who crashes into a field of this grass is almost certain to be cut to ribbons no matter what he's wearing. Piloting (Planetary) skill checks made in the



Razor Blades suffer ■■ due to terrain. In addition, any pilot suffering a Critical Injury due to crashing, or any swoop suffering a critical hit, adds +20 to the Critical Hit or Critical Injury roll.

4. IN A PINCH

Every good race track has a chicane: a narrow, cramped part of the track that causes racers to slow down, forcing them close together and into often deadly obstacles. The Dragonbane Circuit is no exception, and it features a particularly wicked chicane in the form of In a Pinch. Once they exit the Razor Blades, the racers are funneled into a very narrow crevasse that winds its way up a steep ridge. Around halfway through In a Pinch, the walls narrow to the point where only one vehicle can pass at a time. This is the point where Sunny usually wins her races, as the sight of that narrow gap approaching is absolutely terrifying.

Piloting (Planetary) skill checks made to navigate In a Pinch suffer ■■■ due to the extremely tricky terrain. In addition, passing through the narrowest part of this leg requires both the PC and Sunny to make an **Opposed Cool check**. The winner holds his ground and shoots the gap, and the loser brakes and swerves to avoid smashing himself apart on the approaching rock walls—decreasing speed by two.

5. THE DROP

At the top of In a Pinch, the narrow crevasse spits the racers out over the top of the ridge into complete nothingness. During the previous leg of the circuit, the racers climbed high above the swamp, and now they find themselves plummeting back to the ground from a surprising height. While the swoops can surely handle the altitude, the shock of coming out of the anxiety-inducing chicane into the wide open sky with the Crystal Swamps spread out below like a shimmering carpet can certainly shake even the coolest racer. During the long descent back to ground level, the Game Master should take the opportunity to introduce complications such as flocks of aggressive raptors, sudden rain squalls, or buffeting winds to distract the riders. Piloting (Planetary) skill checks made in The Drop suffer ■ due to terrain.

6. REENTRY

This final leg of the circuit is another clear, nearly straight run that allows the riders to wind their machines all the way out and attempt any last-minute overtaking. If the PC makes it to this point of the race unscathed and in the lead, Sunny drops all pretense of this being a fair contest and immediately goes on the offensive. During Reentry, Sunny does everything in her power to win, including shooting at her opponent and attempting to run him off the course or otherwise force a crash.

SUNNY BOUNDER (NEMESIS)

Sunny is a tall, narrow, hard-eyed young woman somewhere between 25 and 30 years old. A swoop and speeder bike rider from her earliest memory, Sunny eventually took to fixing races, organizing illegal swoop races for herself and others, and organizing all the various and sundry aspects of racing, such as security, bribes, and gambling takes. A few years ago, Sunny formed the Black Seraphs from the dregs of another swoop gang that she'd helped destroy. She organized the survivors into an effective group of grifters, con artists, and hustlers.



Skills: Coercion 2, Cool 4, Leadership 1, Melee 3, Piloting (Planetary) 3, Ranged (Light) 2, Streetwise 3.

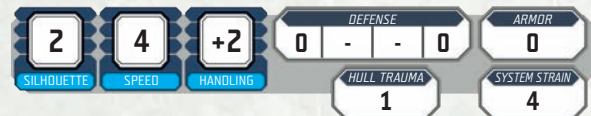
Talents: Adversary 1 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target once), Improved Full Throttle (suffer one strain to make an **Average** (◆◆) **Piloting (Planetary) check** as maneuver and increase top speed by 1 for 4 rounds), Natural Driver (once per session may reroll one Piloting (Planetary) or Gunnery check).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Blaster pistol (Ranged (Light); Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun Setting), chain (Melee; Damage 6; Critical 5; Range [Engaged]; Inaccurate 1, Knockdown), riding armor (+1 defense, +1 soak).

SUNFLARE

Sunny's personal racing swoop is a heavily modified Mobquet Flare-S that she and Grinder have pushed nearly to the limits of its engineering. In its current state it is both blisteringly fast in the straightaway and extremely nimble in corners and obstacle fields.



Vehicle Type/Model: Swoop/Flare-S.

Manufacturer: Mobquet Swoops and Speeders.

Maximum Altitude: 50 meters.

Sensor Range: None.

Crew: One pilot.

Encumbrance Capacity: 2.

Passenger Capacity: None.

Cost/Rarity: Unique.

Weapons: None.

GRINDER (RIVAL)

Grinder is quite possibly the most unpleasant person on Corellia. He is a short, bald, heavily muscled brute of a man with a face like a hatchet wound, a beard that can stop blaster bolts, and a litany of bad choices and bad breaks picked out in bold, tattooed colors all over his arms and torso. He is Sunny's chief mechanic as well as her selectively loyal second-in-command. Grinder rarely bathes, as evidenced by his pungent odor and the grease caked in the creases of his hands, and he wears his racing hides at all times (mostly because he is terrified of them being stolen). A savant with a sloop or speeder engine but a failure as a decent human being, Grinder never has a kind word or helping hand for anyone without a reward.

For the right price (such as leadership of the gang, or lots of credits), Grinder turns on Sunny in the blink of an eye. If so, he spells out Sunny's plans, sketches a quick map of the race course, and lists the probable traps and where they might be deployed against the racer. He's also willing to back the PCs if things come to a fight at the end of the race.



Skills: Computers 1, Mechanics 4, Melee 2, Piloting (Planetary) 3, Streetwise 2, Vigilance 2.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Vibroknife (Melee; Damage +3; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2, Sunder, Vicious 3), holdout blaster (Ranged (Light); Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Short]; Stun setting), disgusting racing hides (+1 soak), tool kit, emergency repair kit.

SERAPHS GANG MEMBER (MINION)

The members of the Black Seraphs are the very essence of sloop gangers: young, violent, disaffected punks who have no ambitions beyond drinking, fighting, and racing.



Skills (group only): Melee, Piloting (Planetary), Ranged (Light), Streetwise.

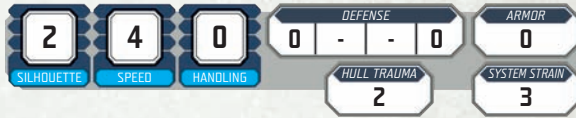
Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Light blaster pistol (Ranged (Light); Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Medium]; Stun Setting), chain (Melee; Damage 5; Critical 5; Range [Engaged]; Inaccurate 1, Knockdown), riding leather (+1 soak).

CEC D-22 "SCREAMER" SPEEDER BIKE

The rest of the Seraphs who race drive CEC D-22 "Screamers," high-performance Corellian machines.



Hull Type/Class: Speeder Bike/D-22.

Manufacturer: Corellian Engineering Corporation.

Maximum Altitude: 35m.

Sensor Range: Close.

Crew: One pilot.

Encumbrance Capacity: 3.

Passenger Capacity: One.

Cost/Rarity: 4,500 credits/3.

Customization Hard Points: 2.

Weapons: None.

END OF THE LINE

Once the race is over, there are several possible outcomes. However, who won or lost is less important than how the PCs appear at the end of the race. If the PCs appear dangerous, capable, or otherwise threatening, Sunny lets the results of the race ride. If she won, she takes the pot and leaves, and if she lost, she gives it to the PCs in bad temper.

However, if the PCs are wounded from the race or do not appear physically threatening, Sunny draws on them and steals their swoops and any spare cash they have, leaving them in the swamps. The only way to stop this is to fight her, or have Grinder turn on her.

If the PCs confront her about her traps or dirty racing, Sunny belligerently tells them to forget it. If the PCs press the issue, she's willing to fight unless the PCs appear particularly dangerous, in which case she angrily offers the pot (or double the pot if the PCs still won), or a favor as compensation. If the PCs want her swoop, however, she fights no matter what.

DENOUEMENT

If the PCs manage to win the race against the odds, they stand to gain the pot (200 credits times the number of racers). In addition, if the Game Master is feeling charitable, he may give the PCs a chance to shake down the gang members for a cut of the gambling profits, especially since at least part of that money belongs to the PCs. Depending on how Sunny fared in the race, the PCs may also come away with her customized swoop, promises of favors owed by her or her crew, or even a leadership position within the gang. In addition, if the PCs win the race, all of them get +5 xp.