

Dear Fans and Friends,

As many of you probably know, I'm in the process of writing the first of what will hopefully be a line of sourcebooks for **Chaos Earth**. The first portion of the post-Golden Age world to be fleshed out will be covered in the work tentatively entitled *First Responders* and will cover many aspects of playing civilians after the Coming of the Rifts, plus generally flesh out portions of society outside of NEMA.

Things often take longer than we anticipate, however, due to the little things in life getting in the way. In my case that has been everything from buying house to taking professional exams. The book is inching closer to completion, however, so hopefully the manuscript will be in within the next few months.

In the interim between now and publication, several fans of the game have asked my opinion on what existing games provide good source material for Chaos Earth. The good news is that there is a *lot* out there that can be ported in without much trouble and really enrich the game.

Hopefully the following will help you to expand your campaigns and kick-start some fresh ideas of your own. As always, I'm thrilled to "talk shop" about Chaos Earth or any Palladium game, or just role-playing, Game Mastering, and RPG design in general. I'm available on Palladium's message boards or you can email me at jason@jasonrichards.net.

Peace,

Jason Richards
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Chaos Earth References

The following is a list of references for use with Chaos Earth. Some are what could be considered canon, or we can at least infer that they are, and others are things that are easily converted or just work well in the setting. In any case, it should help players and Game Masters to expand on the existing setting using existing published material.

Rifts

Rifts is, of course, the no-brainer for finding direct canon inclusions for its prequel, Chaos Earth. Scattered throughout the Rifts sourcebooks are references to equipment, technology, and weapons from the Golden Age. While this list is certainly not comprehensive, it is a good start for Game Masters that want to know what sort of technology was available.

You'll notice that there are things noticeably absent from this list. I have tried to include things here that will only be encountered in North America (where Chaos Earth is set, after all), that are reasonably likely to be encountered (so no experimental prototypes sitting in hangers at Area 51), and are explicitly known to be exactly what was in use at the end of the Golden Age (so no weapons based on pre-Rifts designs).

World Book 7: Underseas

Weapons

M-2011 Ion Pistol (p. 116)
M-160 Ion Assault Rifle (p. 116)
LAWS-3 Rocket Launcher (p. 116)
M-20 Conventional Assault Rifle (p. 117)
M-90 Multi-Weapon Assault System (p. 120)

Armor

Navy Body Armor (p. 118)
APA-15 Amphibious Assault Power Amor (p. 118)
U.S. Marine Combat Armor (p. 118)

Vehicles

Iwo-Jima Class MIFV (p. 121)
S-14 Sea Hawk VTOL Jet Fighter (p. 122)
S-16S Stealth Fighter (p. 124)
Striker Attack Helicopter (p. 124)

World Book 15: Spirit West

Weapons

USA-M31 Rail Gun (p. 198)

Armor

U.S.A. SAMAS Power Armor (p. 197)

World Book 20: Canada

Armor

Legion Tundra Body Armor (p. 187)
Thermal-Armor Body Suit (p. 187)

Rifts Merc Ops

Weapons

M-21 Laser Assault Rifle (p. 124)

Armor

GAW Mark I Flight Suit Armor (p. 120)
GAW Mark II Battlefield Armor (p. 120)

Rifts Index & Adventures - Volume Two

Weapons

Laser Pistol (p. 92)
Laser Rifle (p. 92)

Armor

Body Armor (p. 92)

Beyond the Supernatural, 2nd ed

Beyond the Supernatural, 2nd Edition is an excellent source for determining basic skills packages for average citizens during the Coming of the Rifts. While the soft, no-hassle lifestyle of the Golden Age would make many skills far less common than in our modern world (Domestic and Wilderness skills, Weapon Proficiencies, etc.) and other skills such as Pilot: Hover Craft and W.P. Energy Pistol are available for the first time in human history, the basics skill set for most professions is not fundamentally changed. Replace antiquated skills with Golden Age equivalents and eliminate those that may have fallen out of common practice and are not fundamental to the profession.

Beyond the Supernatural can provide basic Psychic Character Classes for Chaos Earth as well, although the power level is drastically different between the two world. For a quick fix, simply treat all psychic characters using the BTS2 rules as being exposed to a great supernatural threat at all times.

Systems Failure

No other Palladium game offers more potential for adding ready-to-use character classes than Systems Failure; the O.C.C. portion of the book could almost be used as a Chaos Earth sourcebook on its own. The main difference between characters of Systems Failure and Chaos Earth is that the technology levels diverge a good deal, as does the state of general skills knowledge between the apocalypse-experienced characters of Systems Failure and the soft, inexperienced denizens of the Golden Age. So, it may be best to look at the Systems Failure characters as what some people of Chaos Earth may grow to become, as exceptions to the rule, or just for all players and Game Masters to take all skills and abilities on a case-by-case basis. In any case, use the skills programs found in Systems Failure as called out in the O.C.C.s, but substitute the percentages from their Chaos Earth equivalents.

Those O.C.C.s best suited for use with Chaos Earth, with the least need for modification, include:

- Egghead O.C.C. - NEMA, military, or civilian scientist, hacker, or other highly-educated survivor
- Exterminator O.C.C. - the rare weapons enthusiast (fanatic?), or a former NEMA/military soldier that has weapon skills uncommon to the Golden Age
- Freebooter O.C.C. - a situational businessman and entrepreneur, scavenger, and salvager
- Grease Monkey O.C.C. - a civilian mechanic companion to the NEMA Field Engineer; recall that Aircraft Mechanics is just as common a trade as Automotive Mechanics during the Golden Age, and that the average citizen has virtually no knowledge of any sort of mechanical maintenance
- Peacekeeper O.C.C. - civilian law enforcement hanging on to the role after the Coming of the Rifts or self-appointed lawmen; either way, the O.C.C. Abilities of Reputation and Quick Draw are likely not applicable unless the game is taking place some time after the fall of the Golden Age
- Sawbones O.C.C. - legitimate civilian doctors (and perhaps some nurses/paramedics)
- Splatterpunk O.C.C. - a good representation of the dark side of humanity's response to the Coming of the Rifts and the fall of society
- Survivalist O.C.C. - the rare civilian (probably labeled a "nut" during the Golden Age) who was prepared for an end of the world disaster
- Psychic O.C.C. - may be used to introduce a character with psionics into Chaos Earth until formally introduced in a canon sourcebook. The character can be played replacing NORAD with NEMA or the conventional military, or opt to be independent as detailed in Systems Failure with little to no modification.

Also, the list of conventional weapons would be very useful for equipping conventional military and police forces, keeping in mind that Golden Age weapons would likely be slightly more advanced in materials and construction, though damages would likely be the same. The various Organitech weapons don't particularly fit with what exists in Chaos Earth, but they might make a good technology to be brought in with some D-Bee race or another.

Even the Bugs themselves may make for a good antagonist for a Chaos Earth game; just convert to M.D.C. and go nuts. Check out the plug-in ideas for Rifts found on p. 127 of Systems Failure.