Space Aces Session

Note: Space Ace is at the following link. I did not write it, but I support it.
https://p0rthos47.itch.io/space-aces

Episode Two is available here:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/16qi8mV1FHdVneEUIFY19pABqIkyWsiWoXloQAQ6UAOQ/edit?usp=sharing

Character
Jett MacCool (updated with post-adventure upgrades)

Moxie 3
Smarts 2
Wiggles 1
Friends -1
Pockets 1

Skill: Piloting
Style: Well-traveled cosmopolite

Gumption: 6/6
Grit: 0

Ship: Silver Comet
Upgrades: Afterburners

Episode One
Hired by the Stellar Alliance to destroy a heavily-defended enemy outpost. It's a space station at the edge of the enemy's territory.

The setup is mostly self-explanatory. I rolled the Stellar Alliance for faction, with destroy/defend enemy/ally for the mission. The location data was station, outpost and defended. What's really interesting is that the opposition is time/puzzle, and the agenda is infest and spread. So what I'm thinking is this:

Jett was hired by the Stellar Alliance to destroy a heavily fortified enemy facility. It's a space station named Outpost Omega at the edge of the Cosmic Empire's territory. The station recently went dark, and reports indicate that the Empire abandoned it after an alien plague infected the staff. According to the intel, the plague mutates its victims into monsters. The mutants lose all sense of identity and become homicidal.

It appears that the virus is also very slowly affecting the systems of the Imperial station. Imperial tech utilizes more biological components than that of the Stellar Alliance. High Command fears

that the organic structures growing on the station are spore launchers that could send packets of the plague matter to Stellar Alliance worlds.

Right now it appears that the Empire is unwilling to admit this affair, for fear of losing face. They seem to have decided to let the infection run rampant on the station. The fear is that any Imperial ships entering the system could become infected. Imperial authorities plan to allow things to run their course. If the station's colony does infect worlds in Stellar Alliance territory the Empire plans to blame it on an alien faction.

The Stellar Alliance wants to destroy Outpost Omega, but the Cosmic Empire views any act of military incursion into their territory as an act of war. Due to laws and treaties, the Alliance is forced to hire you, an independent freelancer, for the mission. Since your ship, the Silver Comet, is not powerful enough to overcome the station's defenses, you have to blow it up from the inside.

Jett McCool, travel to Outpost Omega and destroy it before its infection spreads to innocent worlds.

Because I'm playing solo, I'm not going to roll up scenes in advance. I'll get to them as I come, although when I come to a natural story choice I might roll up two or three possibilities. Our story begins in the middle of something. I decide that we're going to begin with the arrival in Outpost Omega's system. I roll "Endure" and "Active." I decide that there are active hostels in space…

As Jett's ship, the Silver Comet, drops out of warp in the middle of the Omega Imperialis sector, his sensors start going wild. While reports indicated that the Empire abandoned the system, it appears that there is a squad of fighter craft headed his way. Anomalous readings lead Jett to realize that these fighters are also infected by the Omega Virus. Jett has to deal with these "zombie" ships if he wants to survive.

The Conflict roll gives us 3 "Goons," or mid-level enemies. Each has 3 Gumption and inflicts 2 Harm. "Harm" is a stat used for melee battles. The starship battles don't have very defined rules in the core document, but notes from the Author give a DC of 5 for minor enemies, 10 for medium and 15 for bosses. Player attacks subtract 1 Gumption from the enemies. It's not defined here, but I'm going to rule that I start with 6 ship Gumption and 6 personal Gumption.

For the first round's attack I use Moxie (+3) I roll a natural 20 on the d20. The d6 rolled a 2, so I raise the heat level to 1. I rule that the crit causes one extra damage, destroying one of the ships outright.

The three infected fighters scream towards Jett during his approach. Jett's aim is true, and his beams lance through the fuel lines of the lead fighter, causing it to burst into flames that are quickly extinguished by the vacuum.

Now it's time to evade the attacks. I'm only going to roll once because I'm lazy. If I take damage I'll determine whether it's one or both that hit. The method I'll use is to cause both to hit if I roll a Complication. I have Piloting as my skill, so I get to roll twice and take the better roll. I roll 8 and 19, taking 19 for 2 (+2 Wiggle). The d6 shows 1, so I get +1 Heat (2).

Jet makes the Silver Comet dance through the fighters' fire. The shots go wild as he prepares to return fire.

I roll 5 and 19 to hit, doing 1 damage. The d6 is 3, so a standard benefit. The dodge rolls are 9 and 18. I haven't mentioned it, but I have Afterburners, which make my ship faster. I'll apply them as a bonus to evasion only.

On the next round I miss (Grit 1), but I roll a 6, gaining a beneficial outcome. I rule that I get a +3 bonus to my next attack due to positioning myself well. I got 4 and 18 for evasion, and +1 heat (3).

On round 4 I hit again, destroying the second ship, but I gain +1 heat (4). I also get a natural 20 and a 5 on the d6 when evading, so I decide that I've managed to get behind the last ship and get in a glancing blow. The next round begins with me hitting the third ship, but getting another heat (5).

Jett manages to make it to the station without suffering any damage. He'd been worried about how to get into the station, but the fighter hangar is still open. He just has to make it past the defense systems of the station itself.

The station is a boss-level ship/facility, so its difficulty is 15. I'm using my pilot skill and the afterburners for maximum effect, and rolling Wiggles (0). With a roll of 11 and 4, the weapon systems hit (Grit 2). I get "Asploding Console" and take 2 Harm (I imagine that the ship absorbs one point of the harm).

Jett makes it through the volley of point defense turrets with only plasma burns on his arm. Landing in the fighter hangar he prepares his supplies for the search.

Now I'll start using Module 3, Star Hulks and Space Ruins, to do a dungeon crawl. The specifics of the mission kind of generated the ruin for us. Since I have 5 Heat already, I'm going to face a danger from the looming threat right away. In this case it's the infection.

Rolling for the Danger I get Defending. So I'm going to say that I run into plague mutants.

I roll 6 and then 1 for the Conflict and Tactic. This gives me a Big Baddy with Destroy as their tactic. Waiting for me right in here. Yea! 6 Gumption and 3 Harm. This is gonna suck. I'll say that the Big Baddy is the mutated form of the station's former Marine Master Chief Petty Officer. I'm just going to try and run away. Or maybe I can get past her to turn off the force field holding the atmosphere in the hangar. That would suck her out.

Rolling Wiggles I get a total of 19 and 6 on the d6. So I make it to the controls clean, and let's say that I get advantage to deactivate the force field. I get a natural 20 on that roll, but also gain +1 heat (7).

Next room is locked and leads to some sort of turbolift I roll to deactivate the lock. Considering it easy. I got a 5, which is lower than the Heat. But since I succeeded and also got a 6 on the d6, let's say that the snag is deferred for just a bit. My encounter in the next room is to lose 1 supply (3).

Room 3: A turbolift junction. Fallen beams block all exits for me, and I also roll a Danger (Hidden and Crushing). So let's say that it's dangerous to move the debris. DC 10, using Moxie. Rolled 17 to avoid the falling metal and to open up the next door.

The turbolift stops at a generator room, which is locked. Generators are my target. I roll to unlock it (DC 5) and only get 4. Now I've hit the Snag!

The snag is 4 (Mistaken/Manipulated). Oh, no.How have I been manipulated? Oh, I know. Maybe it turns out that the alien plague does not erase your personality. Maybe you retain full skills and training, but become overly aggressive. Let's say that the remaining mutants allowed me to get this far into the facility so they could then board my ship and take off with it!

I have to head back. In the previous room I run into another trap, and it's of the same type. More falling beams threaten to get me. I'm raising the DC to 10 since I'm running fast. The beams pin me to the floor. Using my brawn I'm able to get free, but I gain +1 heat (8).

At the top of the turbolift, just before I get back to the hangar, an infected marine has set a crude booby trap using a power conduit. I attempt to dodge it, but get shocked. I'm down to 2 Gumption. But up to 4 Grit. I also gain +1 heat (9). I'm not in good shape, but I'm alive.

Running into the hangar I roll and discover that there's 1 goon (3 Gumption, 2 Harm) here. He's attempting to hunt me. I roll Wiggles to find safety. I fail, gaining 5 Gumption, but am now vulnerable to his next attack (DC 15). I use my 5 grit to make it to my ship ahead of him. He's on my trail but I make it inside and start blasting. Not only do I vaporize him, but I open up a passage to a different room to the generator.

It's a crowded computer server room. I lose 1 supply on the way, but otherwise make it back to the generator room. That room is still locked. I manage to fail three times to find entry (grit 3), but also don't roll a Complication. Once inside I find the Big Baddy. The Master Chief had anticipated my tactics and used her jetpack to fly back into the facility to guard the generator. She says that she plans to capture me.

I decide that I had demolition charges on me. How else was I going to destroy the generator from inside? I run to hide from her and succeed, but also get a complication (10 heat), which

triggers further danger. There's a hidden minion waiting for me. I attack them and take them out in one hit.

I try to make my way to the power core without running into the Master Chief. She finds me (4 grit). I know that she's trying to capture me because she wants me on my ship in case she runs into any problems. My plan is to set the timer on the demolition charge and drop my gear to surrender. I don't think she's very savvy, so this is just a DC 10 challenge, which I pass at the cost of 1 heat (11). She starts marching me to my ship.

When we get to the hangar I make a run for it. I'm successful and gain a beneficial outcome. The Master Chief does not catch me before I make it to my ship. Nor does she make it to a ship or engage her jetpack in time to save her from the blast as the demolition charges detonate the power core.

I fly to safety and then warp away to my contact in the Stellar Alliance for payment. With the ship on autopilot I get some well-earned sleep.

After I get my payment I decide that it's time to increase my personal capabilities. I train to increase my Wiggles to 1.

After-Action Report
So I had a lot of fun with this. I had to kajigger the ship rules a bit, but I have it on good authority that there are expanded ships coming. I think that I might start doing one roll for combat rounds. Like winner does damage.

Also, this game's default mode is for a group of PCs. While the storytelling tools are all super useful for solo play, one PC does not have a very high survival rate. I actually died on the first combat with the Master Chief and reset the scenario. It was early enough that I just reset from the hangar.

As a fix, I think I'll give myself two skills instead of one. Sort of a "heroic mode" like they have in Stars Without Number.