

CARLTON
INTERNATIONAL

Gerry Anderson's
Mike Mercury in
SUPERCAR^{2K}



Misc!MAYHEM PRODUCTIONS

SUPERCAR^{2K}

**A Comic Book Series Proposal
Based on the Gerry Anderson
Television Production of
“Supercar”**

By Kez Wilson and Michael Wolff



Misc.  MAYHEM PRODUCTIONS

CONTACT: KEITH WILSON/214-259-3029/kez.wilson@gte.net/1501 GOLDEN GATE DRIVE/CARROLLTON/TEXAS/75007/USA

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Overview

Decades ago, Gerry Anderson created the first in a long line of television programs featuring a process that would be come to be called SUPERMARIONATION. Young imaginations everywhere were enthralled by the adventures of a small group of men, a boy, a chimp and a fantastic vehicle called SUPERCAR.

Fans thrilled to the exploits of Mike Mercury and Company as SUPERCAR took them over land, under the sea and even into space, all in glorious black and white. Today, SUPERCAR is the least well known of the Supermarionation programs, though it still has a devoted fan base as evidenced by the healthy sale of SUPERCAR memorabilia on the eBay auction site.

It is Misc.MAYHEM Productions' goal to bring the classic Gerry Anderson television program SUPERCAR booming into the future as a brand new, high-energy comic book series. The new stories would re-introduce Team Supercar to audiences old and new, and once again make SUPERCAR "the marvel of the age"!

First up will be a special collectors "Zero" issue, presenting the characters as they appeared in the original television series. The issue "Zero" would also feature retrospective articles about the program and characters, interviews with Gerry Anderson and others important to the production, and a complete episode guide.

A four-issue mini-series follows issue "Zero" to re-launch the entire SUPERCAR storyline. Characters will be updated for the year 2000 and new characters will be introduced for more contemporary and action oriented stories, yet stay true in spirit to the original TV series. And with the success of the mini-series, the sky would be the limit as we launch an ongoing SUPERCAR comic title.

Advertising heralding the return of Mike Mercury and Co. will be placed in all comics and toy related publications such as Wizard and Toy Fare. Distribution and sales of the comic series will be handled through both traditional comic retail channels and via the Internet.

As with any new project, the World Wide Web has become an indispensable marketing tool. A full featured SUPERCAR 2K site will be established, featuring historical data for both the old and new series, previews of the comics, games, graphics and animation featuring the characters and Supercar.

Ideally there will be cross licensing with toy manufacturers to release collectibles tying in with the comic series. New adventures will introduce SUPERCAR variant vehicles that will make excellent toy licensing opportunities. A limited collectors edition of "classic" SUPERCAR action figures based on the original puppet designs could be released, as well as a full line of figures featuring the revamped characters.

With the attention created by new SUPERCAR adventures, there could be the added benefit of creating interest in new TV or movie productions using traditionally animation, live-action, or even a super-charged Supermarionation production through computer animation.

Creators

Keith Wilson (Co-plotter, Illustrator)

Individual responsible for the creation of Misc.MAYHEM Productions. As a comic book illustrator and writer he's worked for most of the major comic publishers (Marvel, DC, Harris). He co-created (with Tom Joyner) two comic series Hammerlocke (Science Fiction adventure) and Scarlett (a complex tale of vampires) both published in the 90's by DC Comics. As an animator, his feature film credits include Space Jam, Quest For Camelot, The King And I, and the television pilot for King Of The Hill. During the mid 80's he was Assistant Art Director and Cover Editor for DC Comics, and was responsible for production and the overall look of the covers for the regularly published comic line. He's also had the privilege of working with animation legend Chuck Jones as illustrator for three trading card sets featuring the Looney Tunes characters teamed with popular sports figures like Michael Jordan.

Michael Wolff (Co-plotter, Writer)

At age 7, Michael Wolff was one of hundreds of thousands of children who watched the American premier of Fireball XL5 on October 5, 1963. He's been riding that Jetmobile ever since. His last will and testament is very sparse and, in fact, states that he won't die but will rather wait for Virgil and Brains to arrive with Thunderbird-2 (probably using the Heavy Rescue Pod if his current exercise regimen doesn't bear fruit, but that's another story).

Somewhere in between the early 1960's and (a hopefully distant) death, Wolff arrived at the conclusion that he could write. Since experiencing that epiphany his articles and book reviews have appeared in publications such as Starlog, Comicscene, as well as several websites. He was also one of the people responsible for the (regrettably) short-lived Comic Informer magazine of the early 80's. He's published a handful of short fiction pieces and is in the process of trying to sell one (or all, he's not choosy) of his novels. He has also had numerous comic book stories published and is authoring the series Fawn (currently being run in the New Horizons title by Shanda Fantasy Arts). In 1998 he was inducted into the South Carolina Academy of Arts and is also in charge of First Draft: a correspondence-based writer's workshop. He would list what he does in his spare time if he had any.

Charles Barnett (Inker)

Charles Barnett III entered the comics business in 1990, after apprenticing for several years with comics legend Joe Sinnott. Over the past ten years, he has worked on titles which run the gamut, from DC's Deathstroke the Terminator, to Elfquest and Legends of NASCAR. The Avengers, Captain America, Thor, Nick Fury, Titans, Aquaman, Viper, Star Trek, Magnus- Robot Fighter, X-O Man of War, and I-Bots are some of the titles to which he has lent his talent with a brush. In the past few years, he has also branched into the commercial field with toy company comics, special interest comics, children's books, and advertising art. Currently, Charles is inking V.I.P., the comic from the popular TV series starring Pamela Anderson, for TV Comics. He is more than a little excited at the prospect of inking such a fun TV icon as SUPERCAR.

Characters

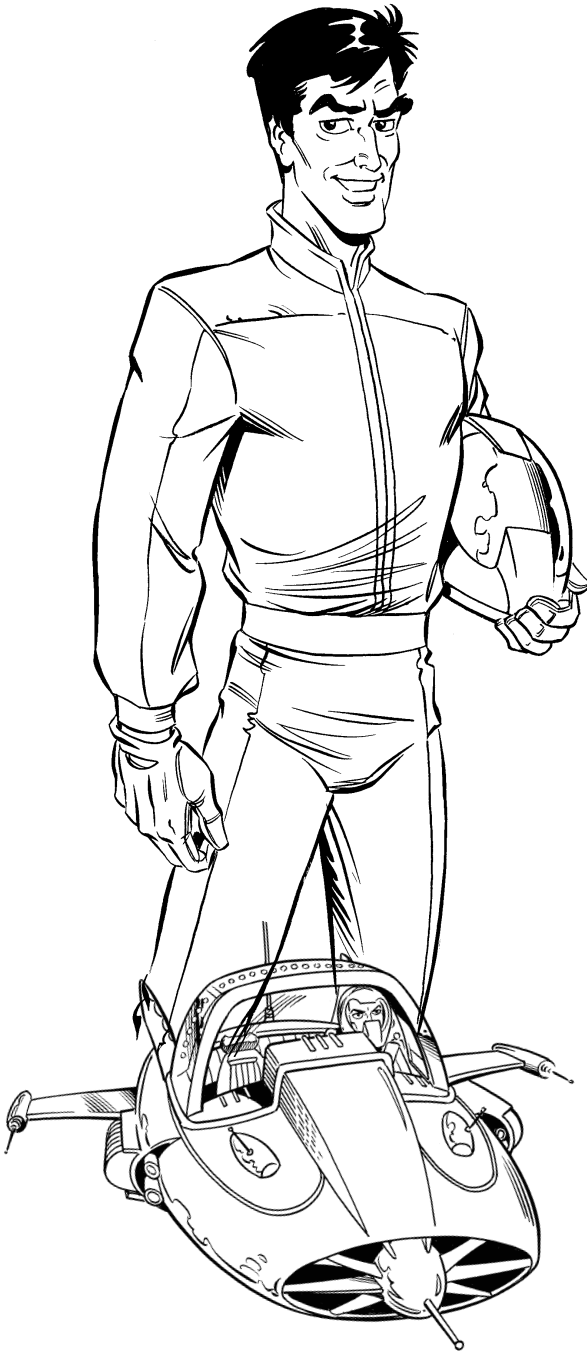
Mike Mercury

Extremely well-balanced which, for a test-pilot, is more of a necessity than a luxury. Courageous without being brash, confident without being foolhardy, compassionate without being overly sentimental, open to the opinions of others but willing to speak his own mind and act upon his convictions. The sort of man others automatically follow: a "natural leader" (perhaps a tired phrase but, in so many ways, Mike is an anachronism . . . a hero cut in the classic pattern). Mike is probably more of a romantic than he cares to admit and could quote chapter and verse on the lives of famous aviators and astronauts. It'd be difficult imagining him leaving the Supercar team for the (perhaps more lucrative) field of civil aviation. Despite the uncertain nature of his association with Supercar, he's come to depend upon the excitement and thrive on it.

His trip into the future has unnerved him but, realistically, his world has actually changed less than the others. Only a few days into the future and, once again, it's just him and Supercar, a small isolated laboratory and a handful of friends and associates. While Popkiss and Jimmy are adjusting to the loss of association with the enormous resources of Masterworks, Mike is fitting in nicely. The old patterns are asserting themselves once again, albeit with a few changes.

One change, of course, being the presence of Jan Farnsworth. Mike has been the sort of man who's thrown himself heavily into his work, leaving little time for a personal life. He's comfortable with women, and has had a few girlfriends, but none of them have really managed to work their way deep into him.

Jan is rapidly changing all of that. Mike now finds himself in close proximity alongside a woman who is fearless, intelligent and self-assured. If Mike was more objective he'd realize that Jan possesses many of his own qualities . . . and just happens to possess them inside an undeniably female exterior. The circumstances of their initial contact has thrown a small wrench into the works, but Mike is still sorting things out. Jan is the first woman who has actually managed to fluster him, and Mike finds himself enjoying the novelty (once he gets over the introductory shock of it all). They'll continue to be at odds with each other, and have numerous arguments, but eventually they'll come to realize that a lot of these exchanges have been due to an unconscious desire to be together in spite of their outward feelings.



Characters

Dr. Horatio Beaker



The classic absent-minded scientist, except that one shouldn't take this as a sign of weakness. Beaker is a polyglot . . . a man who has educated himself in a variety of disciplines. If his voice stutters, and his mind sometimes wanders, it's not due to any mental failing but, rather, from the fact that his head holds so much it's difficult for him to sort it all out on occasion. Had Beaker lived two hundred or more years ago he would've been an advisor to a ruler, able to supply an answer or opinion on any question.

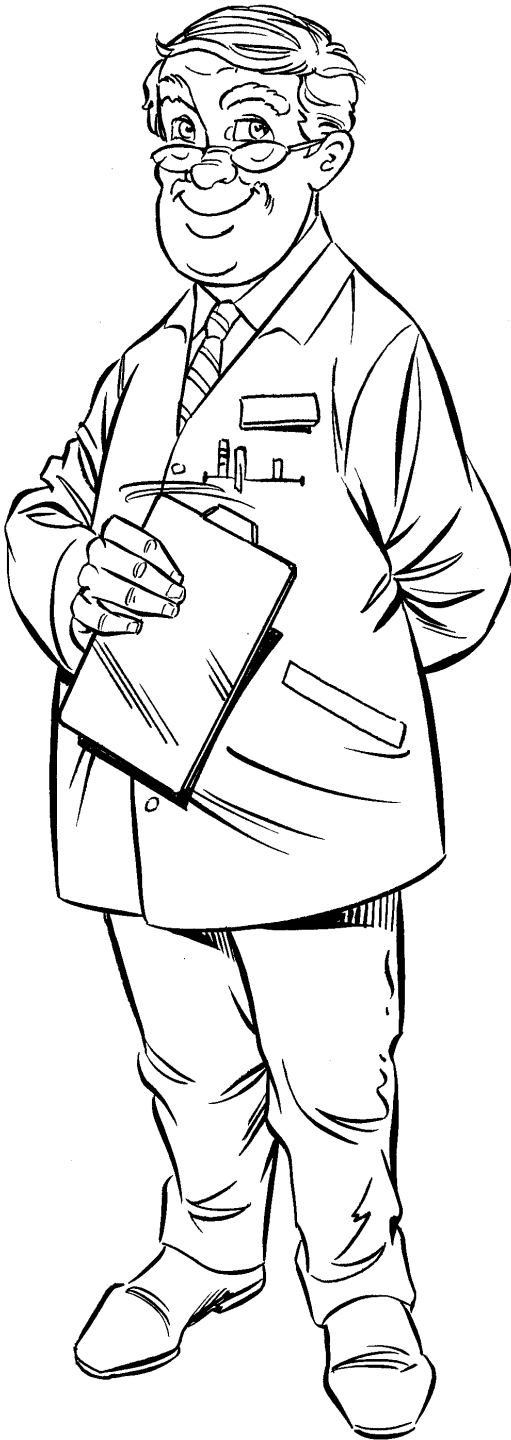
Beaker operates mainly on intuition . . . a quality which sometimes frustrates Popkiss and the others who are more methodical. But Beaker's great gift is to make mental leaps which, more often than not, land directly on target. He has often generated ideas and acquired knowledge which the others might not have even distantly considered. If Popkiss is the nuts and bolts member of the team, Beaker supplies the artistic flair, the subtle shadings and additional brushwork. Popkiss makes sure the ideas work . . . Beaker makes sure the ideas are unique.

Another great quality of Beaker is his enthusiasm. On one assignment with Mike he remarks on his love for camping. It's a genuine love, to be sure, but ,with Beaker, one suspects that he'd find some reason to be ebullient over the prospect of being tied into a leather harness and whipped with scorpion tails ("Oh satisfactory! My allergies will clear up!"). Although in some ways the physical weakling of the team, Beaker more than makes up for his deficiencies with his gung-ho attitude. It might take him longer than the others to arrive at a destination, but he'll still be going when so many others have stopped from exhaustion.

Beaker feels guilty for having spent the last eight years in a drugged stupor, and for being (indirectly) responsible for all that's happened in regards Mike and Supercar and Black Rock. He will conclude that the best way to atone is to try harder and will, as a result, come up with even more intuitive nuggets than before. He'll be helped in this by the additional presence of family in the form of Felicity and Jan. Felicity will give him a kindred spirit . . . someone he can easily connect with and turn to in moments of uncertainty.

As for Jan, Beaker will find himself in the position of de facto father, and he'll eventually notice how the air always seems to be highly charged between his pretty niece and Mike. Beaker has always been fond of Mike, and outwardly sees nothing wrong with the way matters are progressing between the two younger people . . . but he'll wonder if he should be stepping in and doing more.

Characters



Professor Rudolf Popkiss

Being a Professor means that Popkiss has possibly taught somewhere. But he is obviously a tinkerer and probably couldn't get enough of such work with in the confines of a university. Popkiss is a hands-on worker: a grease-monkey with an IQ of 290. Looking at both him and Beaker it seems amazing to consider that these two men single-handedly managed to put together the Black Rock Lab . . . much less build Supercar.

The first meeting between Popkiss and Beaker has never been closely documented, but it would probably make an interesting story as two more dissimilar men couldn't possibly be found. But, on the other hand, they both compliment each others abilities. Whereas Beaker relies on wild leaps into the unknown, Popkiss depends on careful analysis and study. Beaker is able to produce remarkable flights of fancy, but Popkiss is the one who can translate it all into workable results.

Considering the fact that he is the oldest of the Supercar team, Popkiss is remarkably vigorous (possibly a product of the old European gymnasium system). He is also the most focused of all the people in the group, even more so than Mike. His life is in research and especially that of an engineering nature. His head doesn't hold as much esoteric knowledge as Beaker's, but he is comfortable in being one of the five most accomplished and brilliant engineers in the world. Not that pride has dictated his personality. Popkiss is selfless to a fault and is cheerfully open to the input and suggestions from the others. He is, more than the others, the "family man" of the organization . . . completely at home with the companions of the team. But he is also the most cautious and provides the necessary voice of reason whenever possible (and especially in regards to Supercar).

Now free of Masters' influence, and re-united with Mike and Beaker, Popkiss once again has his "family" around him. And it's an even larger one now. He is especially close to Berta Karsendorf, who he considers as his unofficial daughter. With him, the growing situation involving Berta and Jimmy produces the same feelings Beaker feels as he watches Mike and Jan. But Popkiss has greater confidence in the human heart. He knows how things work, and how things probably will work, and is cheerfully content to let matters take their natural course.

Characters

Jimmy Gibson



Despite his youthful enthusiasm, Jimmy has always felt like a fifth wheel at Black Rock. Then came the Leap Frog disaster, and the hard times afterwards, and Jimmy had the chance to land on his feet and assume a greater role.

He's managed to succeed immensely. Along with a US Navy commission as an officer, he is an accomplished scientist and engineer in his own right. The highest compliment he ever received was when Popkiss officially approved his concept for the modification of the basic Supercar engine (a modification which didn't quite make it into the SC-2K). For the past eight years, ever since Leap Frog, Jimmy has been growing more and more as an equal alongside Popkiss, gaining a confidence he didn't have before.

All that's changed, however. Mike, Beaker and Bill are back, and Jimmy is fighting against the feeling that he's suddenly been demoted to "kid sidekick" again. He knows it's unreasonable . . . no one's been condescending to him in any way . . . but it's a personal problem he knows he'll have to overcome. His immediate solution is to maintain a close relationship with Popkiss in regards to Supercar engineering, and proving to Mike, Beaker, Bill (and himself) that he is as competent an engineer as some say he is. The current situation is no time for insecurity, and the new team has no place for fifth wheels.

As a result, Jimmy stays closest of all with Popkiss and has pretty much taken over the responsibility for handling Supercar's life support and power systems, tinkering with them and making necessary modifications. Eventually he will find that Mike defers to him on such matters, and it's then that he'll feel he's made it as an adult. Along with this work he finds himself occupying a middle ground between Beaker and Popkiss: sort of acting as a living filter for their work. Not quite as intuitive as Beaker, or as strict upon hard data as Popkiss, but a reliable mixture of the two. In the new adventures there will come times when both men will turn to Jimmy as a sounding board and arbitrator in regards to technical matters.

Jimmy is a young man and, as such, has become increasingly interested in girls. Unfortunately (or perhaps humorously) for him, while he can spot a thrown relay at sixty miles, he is totally incapable of noticing the fact that one of his closest associates and resident computer expert is making cow eyes at him. With the short-sightedness peculiar to the male of the species, Jimmy has spent years working alongside Berta Karsendorf without realizing that the young computer wizard is not only an attractive girl, but is also holding very close feelings for him. Fortunately (for him) everyone else seems to realize what's going on . . . and Berta is, if anything, persistent.

Characters



Felicity Farnsworth

A stereotype, but a living one. Felicity is fully cognizant of the fact that she parodies the days of the British Raj, Rudyard Kipling, Queen Victoria, punkah-wallahs and an Empire that has long ago set in the West. She cheerfully accepts it.

In many ways Felicity is very much Beaker's cousin. She shares the family trait of being able to hold a wide variety of knowledge in her head, as well as possessing an indefatigable spirit. More than her cousin she represents the personal reserve and calm which the British have raised to a high art. Watching her one easily believes that, in the midst of earthquake, flood or fire she'd still find time to put on a kettle for tea.

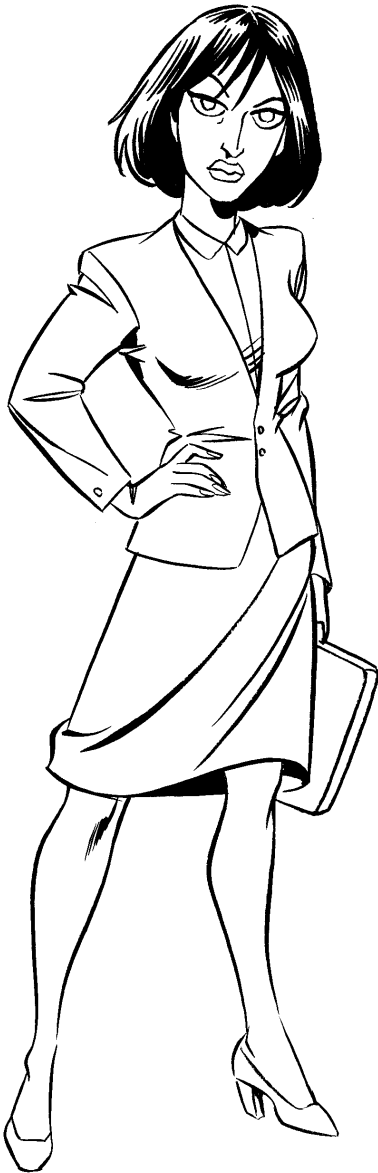
Her unperturbed nature sometimes makes people consider her to be something of an eccentric, or worse. But this is a mistake. Felicity has spent a good part of her life maintaining a plantation in Malaysia. No job for a lightweight. She has also maintained good relations with the local people and government, who know her as a generous philanthropist whose fortune has financed local clinics and schools. She is also not afraid of getting her hands dirty and has worked extensive hours at some of her clinics (when the situation calls for it she can be a tough-as-nails nurse, and is a fair jackleg surgeon as well). She's been through typhoons, tidal waves, civil unrest and epidemics without so much as having a curl of her hair unruffled. An English rose, but with steel inside.

Now part of the Supercar team, Felicity feels she's regaining the adventurous days of when she was starting out in Malaysia, and is excited at the prospect of "getting down to it" and facing the villains single-handedly. It is because of her that the team will have little trouble gaining a new headquarters, and she will find herself acting as an official liaison between the team and the Malaysian government (many members of whom recognize "Missy Farnsworth" as not only a respected local, but as a national treasure).

On a more personal level she happily takes on the role of "den mother" to the troop . . . treating her cousin and the other males as yet another classroom of good-minded but unruly boys who need picking up after. As for the girls in the group she offers herself as Official Shoulder To Cry On, as well as the source for 24-hour advice on matters of the heart. She is the chief proponent of a Mike/Jan relationship and doesn't miss an opportunity to bring the two together, wishing they'd get over their "foolishness", kiss, get married and eventually provide Felicity with a new generation of Farnsworths to sing "Genevieve" to.

Characters

Jan Farnsworth



Once upon a time it came to pass that the Farnsworth/Beaker Family felt it had more than enough scientists, scholars and artists. They needed legal representation and so someone in the family had to go before the Bar.

The real story's probably not that simple, but that's how it seems. Jan attacked the Law with the same vigor other members of her family attacked physics or chemistry or literature or frontier management. And, with typical Farnsworth/Beaker resolve, she succeeded beyond all expectations, gaining a reputation as a tenacious courtroom fighter and authority in international trade law. She has spent the past years organizing and managing her family's legal and financial affairs, with an increasing emphasis towards recouping the fortunes lost when her uncle Horatio disappeared.

So now?

Now she finds herself allied with a small group of people technically guilty of breaking numerous international laws, hiding out (with only a barely recognized legality) in a foreign country and threatened, at almost every turn, by a powerful multinational corporation who could very possibly have every legal right to have her and her family arrested (if not outright exterminated).

Conclusion, Your Honor?

On the outside Jan complains constantly.

On the inside she loves it. The Farnsworth blood is in her and, despite her despair at having to continually make end runs around formal regulations, she finds herself thrilling to the new life of adventure. For the first time she actually understands her aunt Felicity.

But she's still Jan Farnsworth, and she still has an uphill battle to fight. She wants to gain international and corporate recognition for the Supercar team and, more often than not, it's like selling the Vatican on the idea of using the Dead End Kids as prospective choir boys. Jan asks for professionalism . . . she gets paint stains on her briefcase.

And Aunt Felicity's no help (it was her paintbrush).

If Felicity is the stereotypical British gadabout, Jan is the stereotypical Professional Woman. There are times when she appears almost anal to the point of self-destruction. In the Malaysian forests . . . in the new Supercar base . . . she is the one insisting on wearing Armani business suits. She uses computers as much as the others, but her involvement deals in corporate chat rooms, CEO avatars, stock market plotting and Internet filing of legal motions.

When Jan began studying law she knew she'd have to make a few sacrifices. One of them was a social life or any hope for any real sort of romantic involvement within the foreseeable future. She has her degree and her reputation now . . . but it's still pretty much a man's world, and Jan knows the image she has to continually maintain to keep ahead of the game.

So the absolute last thing she needs is to be distracted by Mike Mercury's dark eyes and disarming manner. Yes, the man is intelligent and sensitive and kind. Yes there's no denying that he's heroic and selfless and, admittedly, just the sort of man a girl could become pleasantly comfortable with. But it's absolutely foolish to expect romance to suddenly blossom just because she happens to be spending a lot of time with him. That sort of business works fine in romantic fiction, but this is real life. It's ridiculous to believe that, simply because Mike happens to be close by, he's the reason her heart's been doing odd things. She and Mike are, after all, mature and sensible adults, so this whole business of love is absolute nonsense.

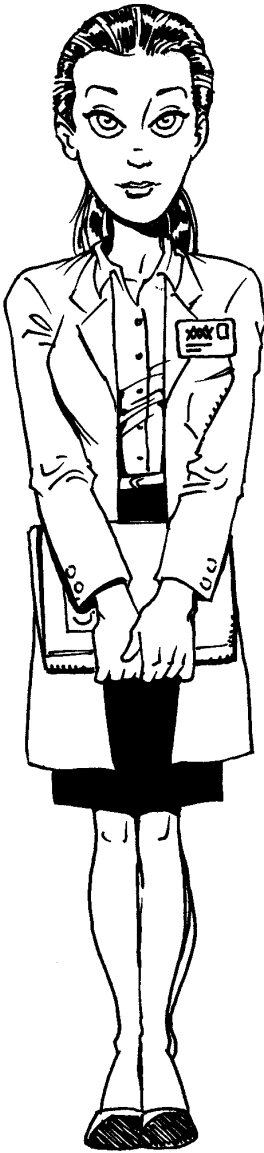
Of course it is.

Obviously.

Without a doubt.

Characters

Berta Karsendorf



A computer nerd residing inside a petite copy of the Little Mermaid statue in Copenhagen. Large brown eyes under delicate upswept brows under soft flowing brunette locks. And all of this hiding a brain which makes even Doctor Beaker sweat on occasion. At the tender age of eighteen she had already astounded professors at Heidelberg, Berlin, Bonn, Paris and London. She had written several award-winning computer programs, as well as being the youngest member of the European High-Density Data Field Project. At the age of nineteen she possessed Ph.D's in Applied Mathematics, Computer Science and Electrical Engineering. By then her mentor at the university didn't really know what else to throw at the little girl, and was therefore grateful when a request came from Professor Rudolph Popkiss for someone who could handle "esoteric computer problems". Berta was hastily bundled off to America where it was felt she could face some true challenges.

For her part, Berta was pleased by the move. Although possessing a limited knowledge of the English language, she felt she could easily lose herself in the high-level world of Masterworks. She knew Popkiss' reputation and was anxious to bury herself in applied computer research. All in all a well-ordered life.

Then she met Jimmy Gibson and was surprised to feel some hitherto unfamiliar tuggings from her heart. Berta's biology . . . which had patiently waited in hiding all these years . . . suddenly leaped from the bushes and attacked, and the little girl soon realized she was thoroughly in love.

She attacked the problem in her own familiar way: with Teutonic self-discipline and by always managing to be where Jimmy could notice her. If he wanted. In one way she succeeded as Jimmy came to depend exclusively on the young Doctor Karsendorf for all his computer and micro-electronic work. She found it a little frustrating, though, that he hadn't come to depend on her for more intimate things.

Nonetheless she continued working quietly, noting the animosity which Jimmy and Popkiss felt towards Masters, and secretly making preparations for the day when a clean break would occur. That day came when the skies opened, and Mike Mercury returned in Supercar. Then the shy computer scientist surprised everyone (and especially herself) by acting as a guardian angel . . . pulling off coup after maneuver after plot. And, when the new Supercar team left Masterworks, Berta had no question where her loyalties lay and departed as well.

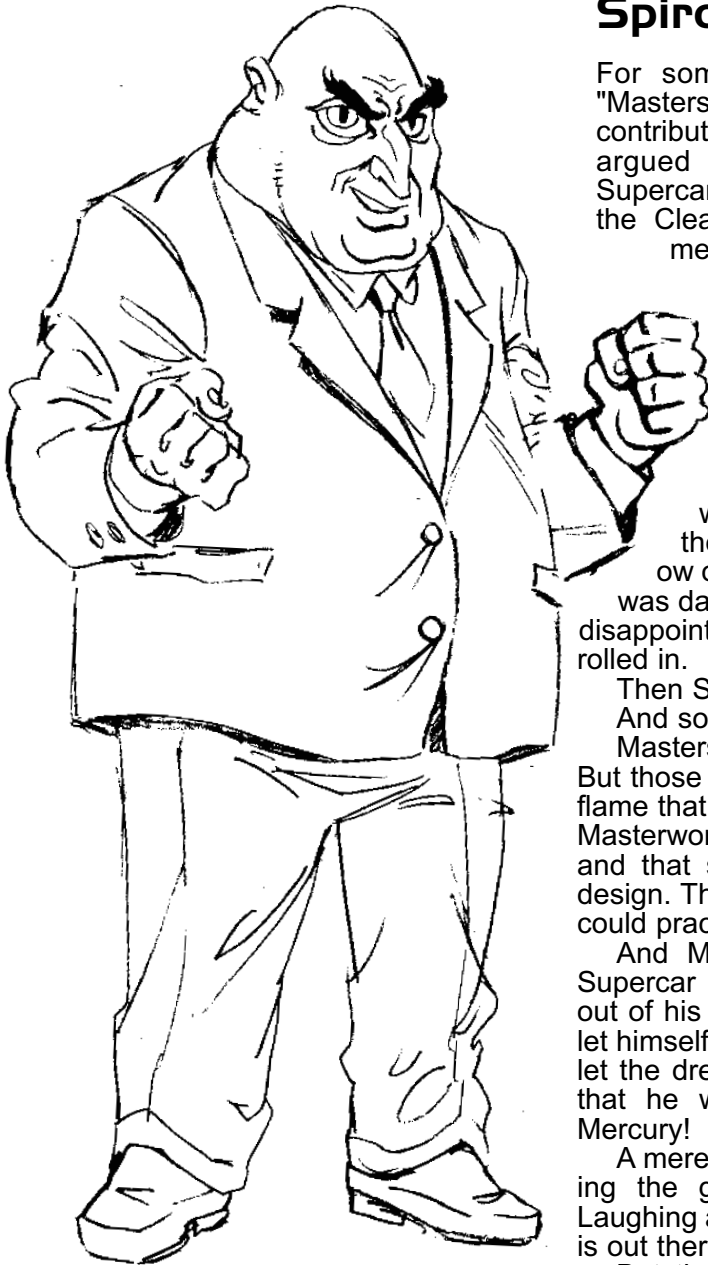
Now she finds herself assuming larger duties as she helps to build the new team in the face of its approaching adventures. And, even though she's the baby of the group, she finds it's not so hard. Computers are computers.

Admittedly the Malaysian jungle's a different environment for them, but no real obstacle.

It would help if Berta wasn't so shy. More of a sense of humor would also be an asset. Berta tries hard, but nine times out of ten she will be the last person in the team to get a joke (if at all). It's one reason Mike continually teases her . . . calling her "The Rhinemaiden", "Brünhilde" and related names . . . to try and get a rise out of her. But he learns that, out of all the team members, Berta has the longest fuse.

Not that she can't get angry. Let a computer crash, or a program freeze up, and she's a whirlwind, moving across keyboards and pulling microchips while her brain goes into overdrive. During those times it's not considered wise to get in her way.

Characters



Spiro Masters

For someone who went around calling himself "Masterspy", Spiro Masters made very little genuine contributions to the field of espionage. But it could be argued that he relentlessly pursued control of Supercar because he felt that with it, as well as with the Clear-Vu system, he would've possessed the means to truly become the great professional spy he always felt he was. But then came the Leap Frog disaster, and Supercar vanished from Masters' grip forever. Ah well . . . at least Mercury had the decency to go into oblivion as well (soon followed by that bothersome Beaker). Finally free of his obsession, Masters once again honed his skills and soon acquired through chicanery what he couldn't gain through theft. Of course the SC-2K Supercar variant was only a shadow of its ancestor, and the secret of the Clear-Vu was damnably lost, but Masters decided to bury his disappointment in the large sums of money which rolled in.

Then Supercar came back . . .

And so did Mike Mercury.

Masters thought he had hated Mike Mercury before. But those feelings were only a flicker compared to the flame that burns inside him now. He had Masterworks . . . he had Popkiss and young Gibson and that stupid monkey. He had his own Supercar design. The secret to time travel was so very close he could practically touch it with his fingers . . .

And Mercury took it all away. Just like before. Supercar lost. Popkiss and Gibson lost. The monkey out of his grasp. Beaker back from the dead! He had let himself be blinded once again by his greed. He had let the dream of controlling time blind him to the fact that he was dealing with that arch-trickster . . . Mercury!

A mere test pilot . . . a common employee . . . besting the greatest mind the world has ever seen. Laughing at him, because Masters knows that Mercury is out there laughing at him.

But they made a mistake. They thought Masters was cunning and scheming before. Now they'll know how different it all is. Now they'll see a new Spiro Masters . . . a brand-new Masterspy! . . . carefully plotting to bring about the downfall of his foes. Including that bitch Jan Farnsworth. Oh yes, the day will yet come when Masters is triumphantly at the controls of the original Supercar: the flagship of his new fleet of espionage vehicles bringing him even more power. He, Masters, will be at the controls . . .

Characters

Mitch

Neither fish nor fowl nor good red herring, as the saying goes. It can be agreed that Mitch is a primate, but it's never been properly determined just what sort of primate he is. When Bill Gibson bought him as a pet for his brother Jimmy, he had been told that Mitch was a rare "golden chimpanzee". But, unlike true chimpanzees, Mitch possesses a tail. And Mitch was also found in the Western Hemisphere, far removed from the normal habitat of chimpanzees. Mitch's body carries some of the characteristics of the common chimpanzee, but his prehensile tail is more indicative of the western spider monkey.

Regardless of his background and origin, it can't be denied that Mitch has been an important part of the team. At times frustrating and mischievous, Mitch has also proven to be an occasionally useful asset. In fact there is not a single member of the original Supercar team whose life Mitch hasn't directly or indirectly saved.

Having now experienced his own form of "time travel" . . . eight years in suspended animation as Masters' prisoner . . . Mitch is back to full activity as a team member (albeit somewhat surprised to find that the others have grown older, with the exception of Mike).

But, along with everyone else in the new scheme of things, Mitch's role has expanded. Prior to the Leap Frog disaster, Doctor Beaker carried out experiments which allowed him to use Mitch's brain as a sort of living computer storage device. Only he, Popkiss and Jimmy knew that the complete plans and design notes for the original Supercar had been safely hidden in the animal's mind. Now, with the need for a new Supercar base taking on paramount importance, the data stored in Mitch's head becomes priceless.

Along with being the team's unofficial mascot, Mitch now becomes a living engineering library who'll assist in the rebuilding of the Supercar project . . . as well as the maintenance of the original vehicle.

Zarin

One of the great mysteries of the universe has always been why someone such as Masterspy tolerated the presence and dubious assistance of someone such as Zarin. As a partner in both crime and international espionage, Zarin was about as useful as a rubber bone to a starving dog.

But maybe Masterspy didn't require intelligence in a partner. Or competence. Or grace. Or skill. Or even freedom from bed wetting. Perhaps all he really needed was an audience, and it was that quality which Zarin possessed in abundance. The truly successful spy never has any reviews to read, and Masters may have simply wanted to see how his act was playing.

Of course once Masters took over Black Rock and turned it into Masterworks, Zarin's lack of use became even more painfully inherent. But Masters reasoned that Zarin was perhaps the only person he knew who wouldn't immediately stab him in the back, and so what better place for the former toad than as Chief of Security?

The move turned out mildly well. Zarin didn't sell the ranch to the Libyans, didn't get the Mayor's daughter pregnant (or at least the evidence was scanty) and only beat those subordinates who couldn't outrun him (and were, by default, useless as security guards). Perhaps life was fair after all.

Then Mercury re-appeared, and then promptly disappeared with Supercar.

In the space of only a few days Zarin found himself the sole inhabitant of Black List City. Now Masterspy is once again obsessed, blinded by the presence of Supercar and Mercury. To Zarin that means more hitting. And probably on him.

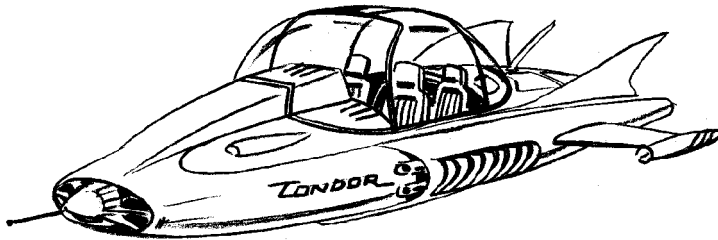
And that's not all. Josh Dodson has been roundly defeated and embarrassed by Mercury. Join the club, Zarin sourly thinks but, deep down, he's concerned. Dodson wants revenge, and he feels he can get it faster if he has Zarin's job. And, seeing as how Zarin failed in the first place . . .

Long pointed silence!

Zarin is now desperate. His security and his warm, safe life are being threatened. And everyone else knows to take more than average care to stay out of Zarin's way. Desperate men tend to become dangerous.

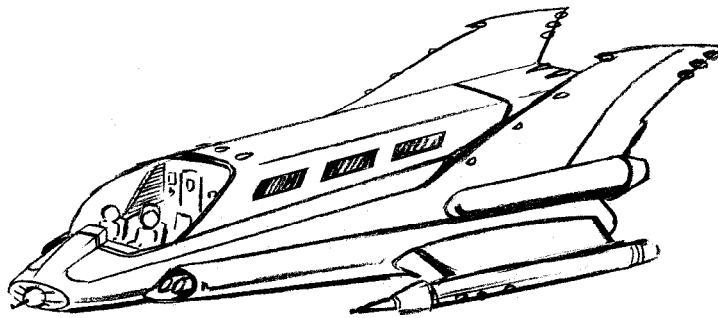
Desperate men such as Zarin tend to become . . . lethal.

Vehicles



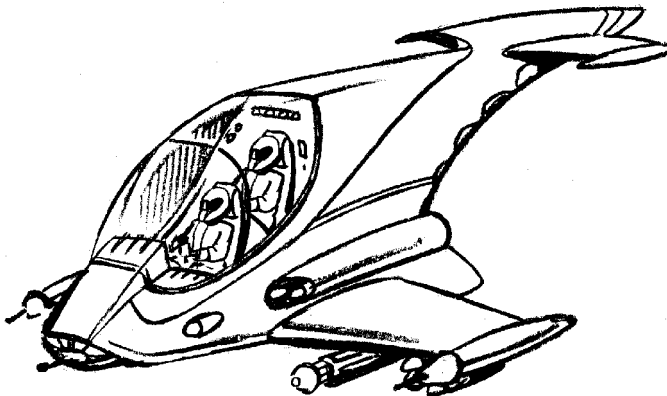
Condor

Your basic 4-seater SC-2K. Easily converted to police car, civil executive transport, etc.



Rhino

2-4 seat transport variant. Extended body for carrying all sorts of gear. Sort of an airborne version of an 18-wheeler. Easily converted to a military troop transport, police transport, etc. Biggest seller among the variants. Special "Hathi" variant is a "rich boy's" package: an airborne "yacht" suitable as a high-profile "Lear Jet" for upper class corporations or extremely wealthy individuals.



Snark

2-seater military variant. Fighter version is armed. Recon version easily identifiable by sensor "bulge" in the forward section (note: despite Masters best efforts, Clear-Vu has still been closely guarded and is still perhaps one of the most powerful features on the original Supercar).

Stories in a Nutshell

Issue Zero "Choice Of Doom"

Doctor Beaker and Professor Popkiss are excited about receiving some electronic circuits which will enable them to carry out an important experiment. But they are unaware that the shipment of circuits has been intercepted by Masterspy, who has yet another plan to acquire Supercar.

Arranging for the circuits to be picked up at the airport, Masterspy quietly arranges to kidnap Jimmy while, at the same time, he has Zarin break into Black Rock Laboratory and kidnap Mitch. He then confronts Mike Mercury and Doctor Beaker and explains that he will hand over Jimmy in return for Supercar. Mike and Beaker reluctantly comply and fly Masterspy out to the pre-arranged handover site in the desert. It's there that Mike and Beaker take a chance and manage to overcome Masterspy and find out where Jimmy is.

But Masterspy springs his real trap and announces that he also has Mitch as a prisoner in another location. There's no way both Mitch and Jimmy can be saved, unless Supercar is handed over to Masterspy. This time fully beaten, Mike and Beaker prepare to hand over Supercar. But an opportunity to break free appears and Mike takes it . . . only to place both Mitch and Jimmy at risk of their lives.

Escaping from Masterspy, Mike and Beaker fly off in Supercar to rescue Jimmy. They manage to save him from being killed by a train and rush off back to base, knowing full well that their action might have cost Mitch his life. This sad fact is confirmed by Popkiss who reports that Zarin promised all sorts of harm if the plan hadn't succeeded. Masterspy hasn't gained Supercar . . . or the new electronic circuits . . . but the team may well have lost their beloved friend Mitch.

Stories in a Nutshell

Issue #1

"Through a Heaven's Stormy Rage"

Part I: Mercury Falling

The story begins as the Supercar team is experimenting with a radical method of transporting vehicles into space via a controlled space-warp: a "wormhole". Mike flies Supercar into the artificially created warp . . . but both he and Supercar vanish into thin air, never to be seen.

Forward eight years, and the sky over Nevada opens up to release Mike and Supercar. They crash into the desert, and Mike soon recovers to learn several things. Black Rock Laboratory has become an enormous multinational corporation known as Masterworks Technologies, Inc., marketing variants of the original Supercar design.

Jimmy Gibson is a chief engineer at the plant, working alongside Professor Popkiss.

Josh Dodson . . . the son of a man who died competing against Mike at an airshow . . . is with Masterworks and is lusting for Mike's head. Shortly after recovering, in fact, Mike finds himself in an intense aerial fight against Dodson, winning only through the use of his piloting skill (and the quiet interference of a mysterious young girl by the name of Berta Karsendorf).

He also meets Jan Farnsworth, the niece of Doctor Beaker. Accompanied by Felicity Farnsworth, Jan is a high-powered international lawyer who is on a mission to regain a family fortune which she feels Masterworks has stolen. Her initial reception towards Mike is less than cordial.

But the shocks are nowhere near over. From Popkiss Mike learns that, shortly after he disappeared into the wormhole, both Beaker and Bill Gibson were killed when the Supercar-II prototype exploded high in the air over the Pacific Ocean.

Worse than that . . . Mike finally comes face to face with the head of Masterworks. The legal owner of the Supercar concept.

Masterspy!

Stories in a Nutshell

Issue #2

"Through a Heaven's Stormy Rage"

Part 2: Mercury Rising

Mike gets over his surprise at seeing his old enemy (after first putting up a struggle) and listens as "Spiro Masters" explains how he managed to acquire Black Rock after the wormhole business, not only bringing Popkiss and Jimmy under his wing but turning the laboratory into the corporate giant currently in existence.

Masters then explains how Mike's re-appearance reveals the wormhole process' worth as a method of time travel. Masters wants to keep the secret from falling into the hands of a government, but Mike clearly recognizes Masters' desire to acquire time travel for himself. Masters wants Mike to fly Supercar into space and acquire Beaker's wormhole generator: "Leap Frog". Mike solidly refuses but, later on, Jimmy and Popkiss explain that Masters is holding a threat over their heads in the form of Mitch who is not dead but, rather, has been held in suspended animation all these years. Masters will kill Mitch if there is no cooperation. Mike reluctantly agrees that Masters has the situation under control.

Meanwhile, Jan and Felicity Farnsworth confront Masters and threaten all sorts of legal action unless the Farnsworth-Beaker family receives an enormous financial restitution. Masters mildly demurs and hopes that Mike will be able to succeed with recovering Leap Frog; thus providing Masters with a new tool to use against such troublesome people as the Farnsworths.

That evening, though, Mike quietly breaks into Popkiss' computer records (secretly aided, once again, by Berta Karsendorf). He studies the files pertaining to the crash of the second Supercar prototype.

The next morning, accompanied by Popkiss and Jimmy, Mike confronts Jan and Felicity with the theory he'd been formulating ever since seeing the evidence in Popkiss' computer . . . namely, that Doctor Beaker is still alive.

Stories in a Nutshell

Issue #3

"Through a Heaven's Stormy Rage"

Part 3 of 4: Transit of Mercury

The next day finds Mike undergoing a test of Supercar prior to setting off for outer space. Or so it seems. The test begins normally, but Mike soon breaks away from the agreed on plan and flies Supercar west towards the Pacific. Following him are Jimmy, Popkiss, Jan and Felicity on board a cargo-variant Supercar.

Masters threatens Mike directly, and it's here that Mike tells Masters that Beaker is alive. Mike also tells Masters that Beaker is the only one who can make the time travel process work efficiently, and Mike will recover him . . . but on his terms.

Masters has no other course but to agree, but he is not out of schemes yet and quietly follows Mike's path of research regarding Beaker's whereabouts.

Over the Pacific, Jan and Felicity explain how both Beaker and Bill Gibson may have been flying towards Kyoryo: an island reputed to hold numerous exotic botanical specimens. No one can speculate as to why, if Beaker and Gibson had survived, had they remained silent all these years, and Mike can only hope that his theories bear fruit.

En route the team is intercepted by a combat-variant Supercar. It's flown by Josh Dodson and he's clearly out to stop the team. Mike falls back in Supercar and, using some fancy maneuvers, manages to buy time to allow the others to continue on. He then attempts to evade Dodson by traveling underwater, but Supercar is blown to bits when it returns to the surface

Stories in a Nutshell

Issue #4

"Through a Heaven's Stormy Rage"

Part 4 of 4: Mercury Steady

It turns out that Supercar hasn't been destroyed but has returned underwater. Mike used the same trick Beaker had used to make it seem as if the second Supercar prototype had blown up. Continuing submerged, Mike and the others arrange to rendezvous at Kyoryo. Arriving at the island, Mike finds an underwater tunnel and takes Supercar in, hoping to find a clear entrance to the island's interior.

The others land on the shore and set off, soon locating the remains of the second Supercar prototype. They also locate a tribe of armed natives led by Bill Gibson, who doesn't seem to recognize any of the team members and has them taken prisoner.

Mike surfaces in a lagoon on the island and leaves Supercar just as Dodson shows up again, attacking from the air and damaging Supercar. Mike escapes only to find himself captured by another group of the natives.

He's taken to where the others are waiting in a village. There he not only sees Bill Gibson, but at last he comes face to face with Doctor Beaker . . . now reduced to a mumbling stupor. It's Felicity who supplies an explanation, pointing out that the air around them is rich with hallucinogenic spores being released by the luxurious fungal growth on the island, and they'll soon be affected as well.

It doesn't look as if they'll have a chance to be affected, though, as Beaker is quickly arranging for a "sacrifice" of Mike. But Dodson suddenly reappears and attacks again, causing everyone to scatter. Mike has an inspiration and, taking an oxygen mask from a first aid kit, goes to Beaker and forces him to breathe the pure air. Beaker's mind clears and, with Mike's help, he manages to bring down Dodson's craft by cleverly re-directing the attacking ship's lasers. Supercar is then quickly repaired and the team . . . now accompanied by Beaker and Bill Gibson . . . leave Kyoryo.

Back at Masterworks, Masters is angrily trying to find out what's happened. He goes to the window and sees Supercar . . . piloted by Mike, and also holding Beaker, Berta Karsendorf and the canister holding Mitch in suspension. Masters and Mike face each other briefly, and the two old enemies formally renew their grudge before Mike flies off into the sunset. Accompanied by Popkiss, Jimmy, Jan, Felicity and Bill Gibson, the nucleus of a new Supercar team now find themselves on the run from an old enemy who's become larger, and heading towards a whole new life.

A New Home Base

"Selamat Datang!" **(Welcome in the Malay language.)**

After the return of Mike Mercury in Supercar, it became hideously obvious that the new team would have to relocate to a new headquarters somewhere. They needed someplace which was fairly secluded, but within reasonable distance to some town or facility which could receive cargo whenever necessary. Also needed was some form of hangar for Supercar, as well as adjacent available space which could be easily converted into laboratories and living quarters.

Fortunately, for the new team, one of their members was Miss Felicity Farnsworth. For several years now she had owned and maintained a considerable rubber plantation near the town of Tinipor in the Sarawak state of Malaysia. Her plantation ("Mon Repos", or "My Rest") had been, in turn, inherited from French colonials who had originally established the property early in the 20th Century.

Mon Repos occupies some 3500 acres of prime rubber producing farmland near Tinipor which is, itself, located near the port town of Kuala Baram (if you look at a map of Malaysia then go to the northeast portion of Sarawak and you can locate Kuala Baram and neighboring Miri near the border with Brunei). The Batang Baram River cuts through part of the estate. Along with rubber, Mon Repos also maintains a small tin mine.

The plantation also borders the Gunung Mulu National Park in Sarawak. In fact, Felicity Farnsworth had donated part of Mon Repos to the Park during the 1970's when she also assisted Britain's Royal Geographic Society in its mapping and survey of the region. In spite of their work, however, much of the area still remains fairly unknown and is a lush tropical rainforest punctuated by impressive rock formations, extensive caves and is in the shadow of the mountains of Gunung Mulu, Gunung Api and Gunung Benarat.

(Mon Repos also borders part of the swamp lowlands which are prominent along part of the coast. It was in these lowlands, in fact, that Felicity Farnsworth almost met her end at the hands of Masterspy.)

Felicity offered the resources of Mon Repos to the new Supercar team, but it was immediately understood that the team couldn't take up residence at the plantation proper as it'd be the first place Masters and his people would look. It would be obvious enough where the team had fled to, and something a bit more secluded was desired.

Military history provided something of a solution. Felicity explained how, during World War II, Malaysia had been occupied by the Japanese who exploited the rubber and tin industry for their own purposes. Numerous bases had been built in and around the country, and one of them still stood where the plantation touched the coast of the South China Sea. It was a small base with concrete shelters, nestled in a deep secluded cove which allowed submarines or surface ships to dock and take on rubber or tin. Typhoons had long since altered the coastline, and it was no longer practical to bring in ships, but seaplanes could still land on the water. The base itself was slightly further inland, and well hidden by the rainforest. There had once been an airfield but it had long since been overgrown by the forest. The single hangar and support buildings, as well as the dock facility on the water had been well-built, though . . . made to withstand Allied bombing and were still in good shape. What's more, the buildings connected with a spur of the vast cave system which extends throughout the Sarawak region (it was the presence of these caves which had also prevented the area from being turned into plantation land. Not enough solid ground to support rubber trees).

The facility was ideal for the needs of the new Supercar team. Assisted by their new allies within the Malaysian government, the sole hangar was refurbished to allow the main concrete shell to roll back and forth on rails, thus giving Supercar a place to land and take off from. Immediately adjacent to this structure was a smaller one which became the new "console room" and "flight support" (i.e. fuel storage, repair rooms, etc.). The other remaining concrete structure was large enough to be partitioned into laboratory space, with generators, computer mainframes and storage rooms occupying the cave space below.

The only new structures to be built on the base itself were two bungalows which would provide living quarters for the team. One bungalow would be for the male contingent, while the other bungalow would house the females. A garage was also built for the two jeeps which could reach the single road that led northeast to Tinipor, Miri and Kuala Baram, and southwest to Bintulu. The base itself, despite its updating, remains mostly hidden from casual observers. The dock at the cove is visible, as is a single radio/radar mast which rises above the trees. Two satellite dishes can also be observed near the lab building.