

# Wing Commander V Component Managers Meeting (CMM)

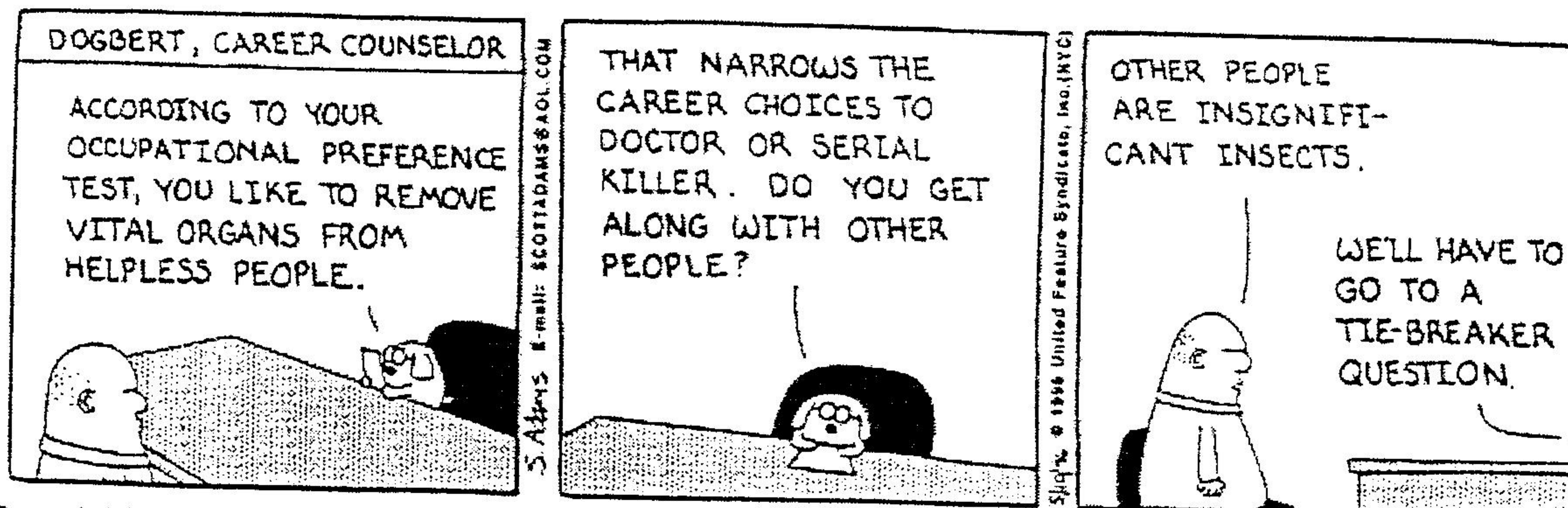
May 17, 1996

## Agenda

- Go over reports.
- Discuss everyone's issues.
- 18 or 24 month development cycle?

GM should not be on 4th flr.

## Weekly Dilbert



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# Wing Commander V - Status Report

## For the week ending on: May 17, 1996

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### Project Overview

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#### This Week:

- 1) Much work went towards the rough TDD May 15<sup>th</sup> deadline.
- 2) Developed very rough milestone list for a two year project.
- 3) Presented milestones to Dave D. and Rich H. - full day of discussions.
- 4) Discussed why Origin/EA would like to see an 18 month schedule instead.
- 5) Rethought PC/PSX simultaneous development paradigm and optimized our working relationships (the technical side, will think of themselves as ONE team until we determine a parting point).
- 6) Determined more optimal method for developing and finalizing task list.
- 7) All ACE related programmers met to determine technical future of Maverick, both short term (1 year) and long term (3 years).
- 8) Most of the artists are in Alias training.
- 9) A core concept art design team has been identified and will start their work shortly.
- 10) All components are progressing at a steady pace.

#### Next Week:

- 1) Full speed ahead with task list design. This means we will start framework coding of structures, headers, and paradigms.
- 2) Game design will continue to advance and solidify.
- 3) Concept art design is ramping up and should be in full swing shortly.

#### 30 Day Outlook:

- 1) We want all technical tasks spec'ed and designed by June 7 (exactly 3 weeks from today).
- 2) When item #1 is completed, then we will determine if an 18 month development cycle is feasible. If it is not, we will look at what we can cut and determine if the outcome from this is still a Wing Commander.

#### Issues:

### 1) 18 month development cycle. Is this possible?

#### Possible Roadblocks:

- 1) The Product Development teaming believing this is a 24 month project and Origin/EA believing it is an 18 month project.

#### Summary:



A lot of progress was made this week. We met our May 15<sup>th</sup> deadline of getting a rough TDD done. We are now working feverishly towards getting a final TDD done by June 7<sup>th</sup>. The PC and PSX teams have determined to work as one to maximize our development efforts. The big issue still remains: 18 or 24 month development cycle? We have reiterated our determination not to sign up for a production schedule we are less than comfortable with. June 7<sup>th</sup> is the day we are shooting for to determine all this.

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## **Art**

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### **Art Director:**

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#### **This Week:**

- 1) Sean has, with the aid of some promising Alias plugins pushed the possibilities of how we will create our game engine poly ships.
- 2) I have been recapping our Art training and adjusting the training schedule to best suit our needs as well as the rest of Origin.

#### **Next Week:**

- 1) I plan to continue to work with the other "instructors" for our internal Alias training.
- 2) I would like to spend some time working with Creative Services on the development of an Origin logo animation.

#### **30 Day Outlook:**

- 1) Finish Master class and Alias certification training as well as contribute to WC5 conceptual design team while working on Origin logo.
- 2) Annual A's and O's

#### **Issues:**

- 1) I would really like to find the money for some Composer seats.
- 2) 18 month development schedule, fact or fiction?
- 3) Annual A's and O's

#### **Possible Roadblocks:**

#### **Summary:**

Art staff continuing to work on helping out other projects. This will soon change to dividing into two pools, help staff and WC5 pre-production conceptual design team. Progress has been made on the game engine front as well as continued training.

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### **Production Designer:**

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#### **This Week:**



- 1) Worked on a ship sketch for Maniac (Mark Day's request)
- 2) Worked on my detailed Confed Destroyer test mesh
- 3) Polished up design presentation, which I'm planning on giving Friday afternoon

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#### Next Week:

- 1) Work on destroyer
- 2) Start buying books for art reference library
- 3) Meet with designers about ships (MUST meet with designers on ships...)
- 4) Off Friday

#### 30 Day Outlook:

Rodney, Mark V., Dean, Sean, and myself have been identified as the "core" concept design team. We'll start working to define general look-and-feel solutions (texturing techniques, lighting, etc.) and also begin work on Confed objects. I might do some sketching for Maniac on request as time permits. Again, I'll be off the 24-31 (though I might swing by for the Friday meeting if I'm able).

#### Issues:

I'd really like to get involved in the ship design discussions.

#### Summary:

I've spent the past few weeks working on visualization techniques to help in concept work and have come up with some good processes. In the next few weeks as game designs become finalized we can begin putting them to use developing the look-and-feel for the game.

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## Programming

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#### This Week:

- 1) Completed preliminary milestones and design report for May 15 deadline
- 2) Talked with Paul Isaac about mission language
- 3) Coordinated with PSX programmers and delegated tasks
- 4) Jason H. researched Jeff G. code for use in Wing 5
- 5) Began work on "final" TDD

#### Next Week:

- 1) Continue working with Frank on "final" TDD
- 2) Jason H. working on Win95 abstraction layer
- 3) Keep an eye on render engine development by Paul, Hugh, and Jeff G.
- 4) Check in with Ed on mission editor progress
- 5) Increase communication with Hugh and Axel

#### 30 Day Outlook:

- 1) Finish "final" TDD
- 2) Schedule and assign programming tasks
- 3) Start programming



- 4) Continue contact with designers, ACE team, and PSX team

### Issues:

The 18 month schedule has me somewhat worried regarding the quality of the game. Odd numbered Wing Commander games have traditionally been a leap forward technologically, and Wing 5 should be no exception. I fear that we may have to drop important game features in order to complete the project within the 18 month time limit.

### Possible Roadblocks:

### Summary:

The PC and PSX programming teams have pledged to increase the amount of communication between the two groups. A preliminary design report and milestone list was presented to Dave and Rich H. Both the PC and PSX teams will now add further detail in order to build the programming TDD.

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## Design

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## Attending E3

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## Audio

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### This Week:

- 1) Worked on project files, web page, training planning, crusader music, E3, etc.

### Next Week:

- 1) Seminar, other product work, project scheduling, relocate offices.

### 30 Day Outlook:

- 1) Project scheduling, tools research.

### Issues:

*Meeting: stretch, RL, PS, Axel - discuss: 2-3 today*  
*\* - 5 Buffer streaming in sound system - Is this an issue? Unexplored Avenue?*

### Possible Roadblocks:

*was in wgs not in current Rich, Lyke system.*

### Summary:

While staying busy doing out-of-group work, the audio group will be looking at training opportunities



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## Administration

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### This Week:

- 1) NEW Darkening Promo for E3
- 2) Wing Commander 5 Pitch for story
- 3) Writer search
  - Division of story writing for 3 part story arc from screenplay for WC5.
    - Assumed primary contact responsibility to save time.
    - Have tracked down publishers of Brinn and Drake.
    - Following up and contacting them directly.
  - Screenplay/Maniac and Wing 5
    - The following writers have been contacted:
      - Cheung and Montanio
      - Sekoff and Stolzer
      - T.Shawn Shannon
      - David Yorkin
      - Peter Gallet
      - Eric Wideman
    - Each writer/team has their own particular strengths, however, they are all good, have an understanding of the interactive model, and will write with respect to it and our production efforts.
    - All have been met with and or conferenced with by phone between this week and last.
- 4) Early stage of examining production model and preproduction elements.
- 5) Early stage of Director search
- 6) Early stage of DP search
- 7) Gave feedback to MCA regarding their most recent episode of "Wing Academy"

### Next Week:

- 1) Maniac choice of writers down to two.
- 2) Wing Choice of screenplay writers down to two.
- 3) Treatments
- 4) Brinn and Drake contacted and provisions made. Choice.
- 5) LP staff presentation
- 6) DP search continues to next level.
- 7) Director search continues to next level
- 8) (Am looking forward to one day viewing that "Holy Grail" of production models: "THE
- 9) DARKENING"-----perhaps, I should shift this to 30 days)

*10 milestones - 20 days*  
*11 milestones - 30 days*

### 30 Day Outlook:

- 1) Want a Screenplay writer signed to Wing 5.
- 2) Want a writer (or relationship) for Maniac in place.
- 3) Want DP search distilled down to two.
- 4) Want Director search distilled down to two.
- 5) Want a story writer in place to write the trilogy. (Reparations.)

### Issues:



- 1) Writers and above the line (--at least, those specific to our preproduction process) personnel need to be assigned first to this project. The specific tasks that concern me are finding a Director and DP who understand the issues, will mesh with our art team and who will work within our constraints and budget.
- 2) The model of production needs to be considered from both angles (Deliverable vs. Fiscal)
- 3) Overcoming friction

### Possible Roadblocks:

- 1) Time and money. Half baked ideas.

### Summary:

No summary. Read the details.

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## PSX

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### This Week:

- 1) Entire team spent time contributing to faux-TDD.
- 2) Much discussion with Rich H. about timelines.
- 3) Much discussion with team about PC/PSX relationship.
- 4) Hugh spent time with Paul regarding 3D. Produced flow charts for comparison with Jeff Grills' system.
- 5) Axel spent time recovering from football injuries. :) Also met with Lion regarding WC4 PSX issues.
- 6) Billy and Marcus off to E3.
- 7) Tony moved office to the PSX area (office #443).

### Next Week:

- 1) Serious work to begin on TDD.
- 2) Listen to stories from E3.

### 30 Day Outlook:

- 1) June 7 - Assess progress on TDD.
- 2) All tasks should be spec'd and scheduled.
- 3) Better understanding of programmer assignments (WC5 PC/PSX, Maniac).

### Issues:

- 1) Will WC5 and Maniac Missions use the same 3D engine?
- 2) Will Frank and Billy stop teasing each other?
- 3) How will the work be divided between PC and PSX?
- 4) Can we schedule the game which we want to make in 18 months?

### Possible Roadblocks:

- 1) Too many cooks in the kitchen? Must analyze history (Strike Commander, Wing 3 / Bounty Hunter ✕ collaboration) to avoid making same mistakes.

### Summary:

The general focus is now moving toward team cooperation (WC5 PC/PSX, Maniac). The political frenzy seems to be cooling off, and everyone seems to be looking forward to getting their hands dirty. I feel much better with the direction in which we are heading.