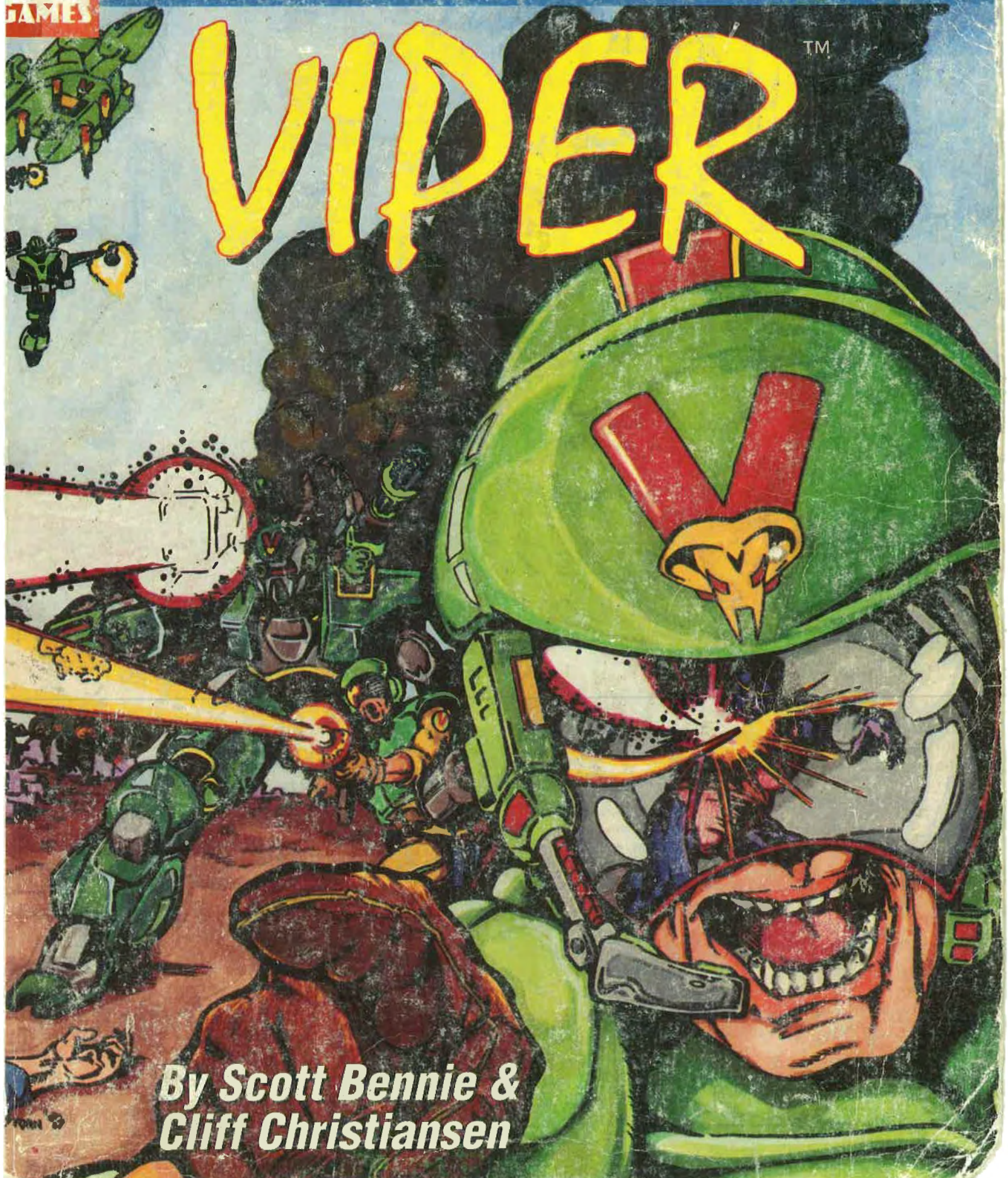


VIPER™



By Scott Bennie &
Cliff Christiansen

VIPER™

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DEDICATION

Scott dedicates it to:

The men of SUNDER, who, in spite of their best efforts,
managed to become a pretty good superhero team:

Doug "Elementaar" Baycroft

Scott "Thundrax" Bennie

Mike "Solar Sentinel" O'Donnell

Kelly "Elemmus" Phare

Steve "Avenger" Sloane

Bruce "Cryo" Symons

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Peter "Pendragon" Van Drongelen

Brian "Shamus" Zomar

and to "George", "Inferno", "Shadow", "Tech

Priest Xor", and "Impulse", the other members of
SUNDER who dedicated their imaginary lives
to the fight against evil.

And a special thanks to all the playtesters from the
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David West, Loren Elifrits, Robert Koozer, James
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Keystone Conceptions, my regular Champions
Groups, and my parents, family, and friends. He
would also like to dedicate this book to the
memory of Curtis Scott.

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some very good gamers at DunDraCon 1991.

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INTRODUCTION



DEFENDER'S PRIVATE LOG: 16 NOVEMBER

We had been contacted to supervise the security of a government test rocket: Project Eye Spy. This satellite was designed to hear a conversation in a parked car while under a railroad underpass with a train passing over it. Of course the satellite was being guarded by SAT agents but the Senator in charge feared for its safety. Given how active certain criminals have been lately, and the fact that I was concerned about its use in the right hands (let alone the wrong hands), I could hardly refuse to help.

This was suppose to be a "Top Secret" transportation from the manufacturer in New York to the launch site. However an informant of Jaguar's said that the word was out on the convoy and any two-bit thug who knew who to ask could find out about it.

Knowing this, I asked the rest of the Champions to join Jaguar and myself on the mission. Everyone but Seeker made it to the convoy before it left. Seeker was in Chicago speaking with American Eagle and Black Phantom and was unable to be in New York, however he agreed to bring both of the former members of Freedom Squad with him and meet us in Jacksonville, Florida. Although Seeker's independence can be annoying, sometimes playing hookey has its advantages.

We set out from Cape Canaveral with a small detachment of ten SAT agents and five Secret Service men in three vehicles. They were typical professionals, quietly disapproving of people in costumes or powered-armor, but in combat, you could trust them with your life. All went smoothly until we reached Savannah. I was surprised it took that long for trouble to appear.

Our scouts reported what appeared to be a broke down, jack-knifed Semi in front of us. Cars were piled up and tempers were flaring. The SAT commander ignored my advice and let the main convoy approach, quoting some statute or by-law on SAT agents being here to help the general good and obviously this wasn't going to be cleared up anytime soon without his assistance. It surprised me; SAT agents aren't usually so civic-minded.

The convoy rolled to a stop and three SAT agents were dispatched to "clear up this mess." My gut told me something was wrong, but I said nothing. SAT agents are sometimes thick-headed, but they're rarely stupid, and I try to respect their judgement. I gave a signal to the other Champions to be on the alert. Quantum started to get airborne; she was even more suspicious than I was.

I was less than surprised when out of the back of the truck burst a VIPER Five-Team and a pair of Mech-VIPERs. From the hills on either side of us emerged a squad of Air-Cavalry agents, the Elite kind, and finally—from behind us—another Five-Team took position. Then, Brick and Phaze, two of VIPER's most experienced mercenaries, jumped out of a moving truck directly behind us and began to move towards us. We were boxed in.

That was when the other shoe dropped. The blustering SAT Commander turned to me and said: "We have you surrounded. Surrender the satellite to VIPER." He drew his pistol and waived it menacingly at me.

I struck him, hard, harder than I intended. I don't like being duped. I saw the bogus commander spitting teeth out of his helmet.

"Champions, it's action time!" I called out on the radio.

Obsidian and Brick are old slugging mates; the big guy went for Brick, while Quantum caught Phaze with one of her 'quantum bonds.' A Mech-VIPER grabbed Solitaire, and she started screaming. Santiago ducked in with the Secret Service men and pulled out his gun; he's been trying even harder than usual to avoid becoming "The Beast" lately. Phaze hit Quantum pretty hard, and, to my surprise, a Five-Team coordinated assault on Quantum hit her five times as soon as Phaze's blast knocked her into the ground. Quantum's tough, but five hits from VIPER's latest generation of weapons is something no one could shrug. Quantum was out.

I gritted my teeth and blasted the Mech-VIPER that was squeezing Solitaire. Her widget was wildly gyrating around her head, and I heard her scream, and she blew herself free. The Secret Service agents and the eight loyal SAT agents had fallen back to cover, and were trading fire with the Air Cavalry. Santiago had had enough; a furry blur came running out of the cover where the Secret Service agents were pinned down, clawing its way into the heart of one of the Five-Teams.

Brick and Obsidian seemed like close to an even match. I caught Phaze with a electrical blast and hurled him against one of the Mech-VIPERs, knocking him out. The two Mech-VIPERs were firing furiously at Solitaire; hitting her once, but not taking her out of the fight yet. Jaguar was shredding weapons with expert skill, and Obsidian managed to grab Brick and threw him into the heart of the Air Cavalry, taking two of them out, and not hurting Brick whatsoever. A Mech-VIPER caught me with a blast that sent me off my feet and toppling into one of the vehicles, a second Mech-VIPER put Solitaire down for the count.

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