





THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

THE DECLASSIFIED REPORT

INTRODUCTION
by Chris "Werecat" Chung

Hello everyone,

Welcome to our fifth issue of *The Declassified Report*. Unlike prior issues that span the gamut of the G.I. Joe franchise, this is a special comic issue focusing on the more obscure facets of the G.I. Joe comic world.

In the years since Devil's Due Publishing ended their run on G.I. Joe, many fans have still been asking for more information on what would have come next had things not ended where they did. In a prior *The Declassified Report* exposé with Mike O'Sullivan, we got the exclusive behind-the-scenes scoop on the seminal World War III arc, but what would have happened after that when all the dust had settled? Mike returns for a follow-up, and also contributing to this article, is DDP President Josh Blaylock. In addition, former DDP writers Mark Powers and Sam Damon give their own individual takes on what they would have done if they were still writing the storyline, and Mike and Mark flesh out characters that were never expanded on. Mike also pulls triple-duty by discussing a rare and much sought after variant cover to DDP's final issue, *G.I. Joe: America's Elite* #36.

The very talented G.I. Joe artist, Robert Atkins, takes us behind the scenes into creating the visual look of the Cobra's Plague team, as well as his role in working on both the DDP and IDW comics.

Phil Kost, former DDP military consultant and administrator of the G.I. Joe comic discussion site JoeReloaded.com, talks about the creation of another elite Cobra unit, the Phoenix Guard.

G.I. Joe foreign comic collector extraordinaire Richard Anderson is the focus of our Collector Spotlight, and he showcases his international collection, as well as gives tips and anecdotes to collectors hoping to expand into the foreign 'Joe comic market. As a companion piece to the Collector Spotlight, YoJoe.com's International Comic Archive creator, Josh Eggebeen, continues the history of the international G.I. Joe comics.

Invariably, someone will wonder why so much focus is on Devil's Due Publishing and not so much on the current run by IDW, or the classic Marvel stuff. This isn't a slight or any preferential treatment. Quite the opposite. Simply put, the way things worked out in preparation for this issue, we had a lot of DDP staffers who were both available and willing to contribute information, so we decided to keep it all together for the sake of ease. Those hoping for more information on the classic Marvel title or the current IDW run need not fear, those will be the focus of future *The Declassified Report* articles. So for now, sit back, wind down from a busy day at convention, and enjoy a peek into the world of G.I. Joe comics...



What Could Have Been: An Alternate DDP Timeline For G.I. Joe Had It Continued

By: Josh Blaylock, Devil's Due Publishing President/Writer
Mark Powers, Former Devil's Due Publishing Writer
Mike O'Sullivan, Former Devil's Due Publishing Editor/Writer
Sam "Nomad" Damon, Former Devil's Due Publishing Consultant/Writer

A lot of fans have asked would have happened if the comic license remained with DDP and the title had continued. DDP President Josh Blaylock, and former DDP creative team members Mike O'Sullivan, Mark Powers, and Sam Damon discuss this "What if?" scenario.

Josh Blaylock:

What would I have done going forward with G.I. Joe? Wow, it's been a while! I'll have to dust off the Joe parts of my brain. After we parted ways with the RAHs, I took a little break from them and never really came back. I did think *Resolute* kicked ass (the parts I saw at least) and I dig the new cartoon on the Hub, although I seem to be the only one when I tell people. I only saw two episodes, but I enjoyed it.

Anyway, I have not read the new IDW stuff, but yes, I have seen enough to know that literally everything that we were yelled at for doing, ESPECIALLY prior to the end of the license, seems to have been thrown out the window and now they're just letting some truly gritty, crazy stories be told. Gone are the days when we couldn't let that call girl knee Cobra Commander in his "twig n' berries".

It's hard to say exactly what I'd have done from where we left off, because Mark Powers and Mike O. were really taking the reigns by that point. Mike O., with help from DDPers Sam Wells and Josh Fritz, put a tremendous amount of care into some super fanboy shit that I know everyone dug, like that crazy map in *America's Elite* listing every Joe ... EVER... Same for the covers.

Can you believe we put out as many books as MARVEL did in 12 years? But we did it in seven. I'll always be proud of that.

But yeah, by the end the Hasbro approval restrictions were getting pretty intense, increasing as every month neared closer to the movie buzz, and they put this story editor in charge of us who was seriously unknowledgeable about Joe stuff (OR writing layered characters). So those remaining stories weren't exactly what we wanted to do. Originally Cobra Commander was supposed to be killed at the end of WWIII. It was to be the end of the series, so we thought that would be a perfect, powerful ending. I only bring this up to explain that it's hard to say where we'd have taken it without mentioning it was kind of going in a direction we didn't want much of the time - and yet Mark still busted out one of the most amazing Joe tales ever with WWIII.

So as far as continuing that series, we'd have actually KILLED ol' CC and focused on creating new villains most likely, but always coming back around to the Cobra threat.

I was asked if Hasbro hadn't done the movie, or if we had more leeway for creative and editorial directions that IDW seems to be enjoying, what might have been done to our existing publications, as well as future plans? Well, to answer that question, the biggest thing would be that we'd REALLY get a lot deeper into the background of some of these characters - their personal relationships, romances, and the GRAY areas that they operate in. That was a major issue in the last year or two. It was very difficult for us to give characters a lot of depth, such as Destro, who (when writing *Dreadnoks Declassified*) I kept being told couldn't be honorable AND a bad guy, or that Zartan should have just been born "evil" and to stop have him switching sides throughout his backstory. So yeah, I'd have really liked to get into the characters more in that way.

Second, we would be delving deep into the real-world ties to military activities going on today, and resonating with the concerns people have, as well as being educational like those good ol' Larry stories.



What Could Have Been: An Alternate DDP Timeline For G.I. Joe Had It Continued

By: Josh Blaylock, Mark Powers, Mike O'Sullivan,
& Sam "Nomad" Damon

If I was doing it TODAY, and had *carte blanche*, I'd love to explore the dilemma between the honor of being a soldier and the growing insanity of the Military Industrial Complex; private mercenary corporations assuming military duties, big banks helping dictators launder money that comes as taxpayer aid from the U.S. (like with Mubarak in Cairo), and Cobra Commander really arguing the gray areas. All this would all play a part. Real *Lord of War* type of shit - loved that movie. That's where I think the new cartoon writers nailed it. They made Cobra a global corporation that you can't really attack like you can attack an army OR a nation. It's some true-to-life, heavy stuff.

The key to G.I. Joe established by Larry Hama was that the Joes - the soldiers on the line, are the good guys, but beyond that, it's open season. The government wasn't always good, and the bad guys weren't all completely bad, and they sometimes even made good arguments, thus testing the Joes' reserve. THAT is what made it so likable, and he was writing for mostly a ten year old audience!

But one area where we really nailed, it was with *Cobra Reborn*. I hobbled together a ton of notes and ideas on Cobra Commander and handed it off to Paul Jenkins, and Paul brought back pure magic. After reading that, you really felt like "Wow, this guy could really exist!" It is up there with Heath Ledger's Joker. THAT Joe story should be a movie!

If he survived, or if we did a reboot, I'm personally in love with the idea of Cobra Commander as an entrepreneur totally screwed by the system who suddenly finds himself unable to report his taxes and/or validate his citizenship. Some instance where things have gotten so computerized and bureaucratized, that his Social Security Number is somehow wiped out and he is off the grid. I'd love to play that up as his motivation to become this anonymous figure, and explain why no one truly knows who he is.

I was also asked given the movie and a comic reboot, what might we have done with the franchise in a unique manner given such a clean slate, and how might that differ from the current series? Well, as I said, I haven't read any of the new comic, so I really can't say...

Mike O'Sullivan and Mark Powers:

We've been asked a few times what we would have done with the G.I. Joe comics, had we continued with the title after our *G.I. Joe: America's Elite* 'World War III' epic wrapped up. Until now, Mark and I have resisted making comments for a few reasons:

- 1.) We respect what other people have done with the characters since our run ended, and NEVER want anyone to think we have anything negative to say about their work.
- 2.) It's hard to say! We found out Devil's Due time on G.I. Joe was coming to an end about three months into our 12 month WWII storyline, which made us have to tweak a number of things in the WWII outline, then focus only on it. So, our story ended differently than we had initially planned, so we threw out any post-WWII plans. [See *The Declassified Report* #1 for more details.] And since we knew that we were finishing with issue #36, neither of us spent any time re-thinking about what could have come after. We didn't see much reason to!

But, Sam Damon has been harassing us for three years to give some insight. Like non-stop. Every time we talked to him. Repeatedly. And if you know Sam, you know that when he's got something on his mind, he's like a dog with a bone: He just doesn't give up, just like a freaking pit bull!

So, to FINALLY shut him up, we thought we'd share some thoughts on what we could have done. Nothing concrete, of course. And of course, nothing against the books that have come out since our run, either. All this is meant to be is a simple sharing of some rough ideas and casual conversation.



What Could Have Been: An Alternate DDP Timeline For G.I. Joe Had It Continued

By: Josh Blaylock, Mark Powers, Mike O'Sullivan,
& Sam "Nomad" Damon

Mark:

As for the title post-WWIII, we were about halfway through the arc when we learned DDP's time on G.I. Joe was ending, so I never got to the point where I committed plans to paper. I had the general notion in mind of doing "The Trial of Cobra Commander", which would have coincided with further exploration of Cobra as a genuine extremist group, with loosely affiliated cells popping up all over the world, and even putting a more human face on them. I thought perhaps some of these cells would be led by "other" Cobra Commanders - a sort of negative twist on the famous *V For Vendetta* line. ("Beneath this mask is more than flesh...")

On the other hand, part of me also felt that after a year-long story, it'd have been more appropriate to let Cobra lie for a while. I worried it'd be lame to have spent a year on the ultimate G.I. Joe/Cobra story, then have Cobra immediately show up again. In that case, we'd have had the challenge of creating some new villains, hopefully while building anticipation for Cobra's inevitable return some time down the road.

Mike:

Initially, we had intended for one of Cobra Commander's last acts of WWIII to be a cruel, sadistic one. He was going to vengefully kill all of Scarlett's family before he was taken away. This would have set Scarlett up for some good camera time. A chance for us to explore her character and watch the roles she and Snake Eyes usually take to be switched. What if he was the more rational one of the two? What if he had to keep her in check? What would happen if one of the deadliest women on the planet no longer felt obligated to hold back? It's no secret that I love that character like crazy, and wanted to see her get more camera time. Sparks, too. I think there are a lot of stories to tell about this guy; that has the entire history of the Joes in his head. Delving into his successful writing career, his pacifism, his close bond with Colton, Jane, and Hawk. So many great stories that could have been told there.

I would have liked to see some self-contained issues in the classic *G.I. Joe Special Missions* feel. Even some light-hearted, humorous stories after a year of heavy, heavy stuff. I would have taken a few months to let members of the core team (last seen at the end of #36) take some time to be with family and recover from the war. Maybe even have a temporary team of reserves that were called back to duty during WWIII take over for a few months. (My mind races! Who would that team have been? As a fan, it's fun to dream. General Rey. Beach Head. Jinx. Kamakura. Recondo. Clutch. Rock 'N Roll. Wet-Suit. Torpedo. The new female Doc. SO many cool options...) I would have loved to give some unused characters some exposure. Especially Agent Delta. Who knows where we could have gone with him? And the Oktober Guard. Would have been great to fully reinvent them, too!

I wanted to see Cobra lay low for a while. They'd been devastated like never before. Basically, the Joes had won. It was time to let them be quiet and lick their wounds. Not to say that we wouldn't have seen some of the usual rogues gallery pop up: Zartan was still out there, so was Baroness. The Dreadnoks. Lots of characters that we could do lots of things with. And, although their first story was, shall we say, less than fan-favorite, we liked the idea of having time to develop the Red Shadows into something truly worthwhile. We had talked about turning them into something that would be really scary - sort of like the history's Illuminati - people of power that had wormed their way into every aspect of global societies and governments, and were shaping things into their own vision of how things should be. I know some people may cringe at the idea of using them again, but I truly think if given a chance, they could turn into some really great villains. Of course, Cobra couldn't stay gone for long. G.I. Joe isn't much without Cobra. Maybe we would have seen them back by #50?

OH! And somewhere in there, as we saw start happening during WWIII, General Rey kept finding himself being put into more and more leadership positions. More people wanting him to lead. More people following him. His charisma gaining him more and more power - both symbolically and figuratively. Somehow, the emperor within him just couldn't be contained, no matter how hard he fought it. What would the Joes do if the next great threat (with good intentions) came from within? What would General Rey do with more power than he wanted to have?



What Could Have Been: An Alternate DDP Timeline For G.I. Joe Had It Continued

*By: Josh Blaylock, Mark Powers, Mike O'Sullivan,
& Sam "Nomad" Damon*

All in all, who knows? At this point, it's sort of fan fiction-ish for us to say what we would or wouldn't have done had we remained on G.I. Joe. It's funny, we both got closure with WWIII. We feel like we told a solid story that tied a lot of things together nicely at the end. It's like we both graduated and moved on. Are there more stories we could have told? Sure. More stories we wish we had gotten to tell? You betcha. But our time was done, and all-in-all, we got to tell some solid stories that were very rewarding for us professionally and creatively.

But once in a while, we still wonder, and the above stuff is kind of where we end up in those wonderings. Just the daydreams of two guys that got to work on characters they love very much, and every now and then still find themselves wondering *What if?*

Sam "Nomad" Damon:

While never a credited writer, I had the pleasure/burden(?) of being a sounding board and advisor for the DDP *America's Elite* run, and specifically for Mike (mostly) and Mark for about 2 ½ years. Starting with *Special Missions: Antarctica's "Tactical Benefit"* (credited), and until the end of WWIII, I often (endured) weighed in opinions on story ideas, and possessing of well-trained memory (and old emails) figured it would be helpful to expose some of the G.I. Joe detritus-that-never-was of the DDP comics.

Billy and Cobra Commander: Near the end, when it was rumored but not certain that the license plug was being pulled, the question of loose ends and specifically Billy and his father, were raised. The result of that discussion was a serious proposal to have Billy kill off Cobra Commander, and take his place (a la G.I. Joe issue #61 of the Marvel run). The driving idea was that Billy, who has got to be one seriously messed-up young man, had finally comes around to the idea that it was only his father's methodologies that were wrong, but not all of his ideas. Somewhere up the chain, the idea got squashed, but not without me first imagining Billy holding up CC's mask.

The Joes are all dead! Another floated idea had all of our beloved characters dying, at least in the public idea. The G.I. Joe team had come so far away from its concept as a "covert special missions force", and given all the public exposure, one of the post WWIII ideas that was discussed was to have Joe team fake their deaths in one single horrific event. The follow-on would have seen our characters re-establishing themselves on foreign shores without the benefit of direct government funding or large military support. Establishing safe-houses, procuring weapons and gear from raids on Cobra or other terrorist groups, and rampant globe-trotting were all in mind. The Joe team would have been seen intermingling more with regular American military forces (under one guise or another) and chasing Cobra cells in a final effort to root out the lingering vestiges left over after WWIII. Now, whether any of this got past Mike and my sleep-deprived, late-night conversations at Denny's, became moot when the license evaporated.

ATHENA Technology: One of the concepts discussed was Destro's future without M.A.R.S., and what ATHENA would become. The idea to have Destro market ATHENA to the U.S. military could have led to the inclusion of the Joes receiving many of the vehicles that were "new" at the time in the topline, such as the R.H.I.N.O. and R.O.C.C.. This would have set Destro up to sell arms to all sides, and allowed for easy inclusion of future vehicles to the comic.

Guillotine ongoing series! Just kidding. *[Editor's Note: To the uninitiated, this doesn't make much sense. However, in this context, it does: While Sam Damon would never mention this by himself, behind the scenes at DDP, some of his real-life personal and military biography was used in-part, for the Data Desk Handbook files for Wet-Suit, High-Tide, and yes, even Guillotine.]*

Obviously, it would be impossible to transcribe the entirety of e-mails, phone calls, and face-to-face conversations that occurred over the course of a couple of years. However, I hope this little peek has at least provided some insight and speculation. As Mike said, however, it now remains little more than day-dreams and "fan-fiction".

EXPLORING THE CLASSIFIED

By Mark Powers and Mike O'Sullivan

Former Devil's Due Publishing Writer and Editor/Writer

One of the things that we always wished we could have done more, is to develop lesser known characters into fleshed-out, three-dimensional people. With a cast of hundreds, there just was no way to get to everyone enough camera time with the limitations of the various Joe titles.

Enter Sam Damon, again harassing us to fill in the blanks... (the guy just doesn't know when to quit!). He sent us a list of a few characters and asked us to create a paragraph or two of their backstory.

None of this is set in concrete, of course, as we aren't telling active Joe stories any more. But if we were, the below paragraphs are some possibilities we could have seen play out with these characters.

MAYDAY: Paige I. Adams is the only child of a Republican Senator mother and veteran father, who both instilled their daughter with deep-abiding respect and admiration for the U.S. armed forces. Paige's mother worked tirelessly to defend G.I. Joe within the U.S. government; supporting them became her personal and political mission, and growing up hearing of the Joes, Paige came to idolize them. Following his service, Paige's father went into law enforcement, then took an early retirement to aid soldiers that returned from overseas deployment wounded and/or handicapped. The constant flow of soldiers staying at their house and coming in and out of her family's life left a lasting impression on Paige, and she decided to enlist in the Army following high school graduation. However, the Joes were decommissioned before she could join their ranks, devastating Paige. She instead attended college, studying politics and international relations. When the Joes were reinstated, Paige re-enlisted, and annoyed superior officers with her constant drive to make it onto the Joe team - which she ultimately did. Ironical conflict arose between Paige and her parents, who had a tough time with their daughter being in constant danger with G.I. Joe - a double standard that frustrates Paige. They're still working through this conflict as Paige continues to serve with G.I. Joe in a reserve per-mission capacity.

MARINER: David Adcox was born to environmental parents who embraced a life of organics and respect for nature, passing all of that onto their oldest son. Adcox's mother often jokes that David's water-birth resulted in his lifelong fascination and affinity with water, and says David could swim before he could run. An avid comic book and animation fan, Adcox adopted Aquaman as his personal super-hero, and after winning state and national competitions on his high school swim team, his parents allowed him to tattoo an image of Aquaman on his arm. Adcox eventually joined the Navy, intending to serve others, see the world and explore the oceans, all while taking advantage of governmental funding for education of servicemen. Upon completion of his marine biology degree, Adcox successfully petitioned for membership of the newly reinstated G.I. Joe team, hoping to serve alongside respected nautical legend, Shipwreck. Adcox is a lifelong vegetarian, and coaches swimming at the collegiate level.



EXPLORING THE CLASSIFIED

By Mark Powers and Mike O'Sullivan

Former Devil's Due Publishing Writer & Editor/Writer

THE DREADNOKS: The Dreadnoks are both easy and difficult to create for. Easy because they're all basically anarchists – you can create any ridiculous or offbeat history for one of them, and no matter how over-the-top the idea may be, it'll still work. They're such a haphazard group, almost anything goes. However, they're difficult to create backstory for because there aren't many motivations you can come up with for the rank-and-file Dreadnoks that haven't been done; it almost becomes formulaic or repetitive. Seems it's always one of these: Someone from the right side of the tracks indulges in their repressed bad side OR someone was born bad and just stayed bad. Not to say there aren't deviations from those, but as a general rule, it's tough to stray from a certain formula with a group of uncouth rebels that exists to destroy, make money, and foment anarchy. The great thing about the 'Noks, is, clichés are okay. No one seems to mind them because the group has always had silly threads sewn through (grape soda/chocolate donuts/slapstick stuff). So, without worrying about straying too far into reinventing the wheel, here are some of the ideas for undeveloped Dreadnoks origins:



EXPLORING THE CLASSIFIED

By Mark Powers and Mike O'Sullivan

Former Devil's Due Publishing Writer & Editor/Writer

CHOP SHOP: The jilted lover is sort of cliché in comics, but since the 'Noks are all about clichés, why not? Pretty boy Damon Samuels was a cocky, arrogant high school jock that became a mechanic of great ability after school. Samuels instantly became huge fan of fashion model Courtney Kreiger upon her public emergence, often plastering his shop and bedroom walls with her magazine photo spreads. Samuels often obsessively stalked Kreiger; who had a restraining order issued against him. Samuels was arrested and briefly served jail time after he was found inside Kreiger's home trying on her clothing. After Kreiger became the G.I. Joe mechanic/tanker and assumed the codename "Cover Girl", Samuels' obsession grew exponentially, their mutual mechanical aptitude further convincing him they were meant to be together. With both the law and military security presenting even more obstacles between them, Samuels irrationally opted to join perennial G.I. Joe enemies - the Dreadnoks as a mechanic, naively believing he could eventually encounter Cover Girl. Often mocked by the Dreadnoks for his attractive features and high maintenance attention to his body and appearance, Samuels became even more aggressive and cocky to compensate. After he was once soundly (and easily) knocked out by Snake Eyes (despite Samuels' boastful bravado), the Dreadnoks' mocking of Samuels grew to epic proportions, as did his depression. Finally realizing he would never have Cover Girl, Samuels began comfort eating and stopped caring for himself. He currently serves the Dreadnoks as a highly-capable mechanic, albeit a morbidly obese one, who is surrounded by faded and torn images of the woman that will always be out of his league.

RUGRAT: From childhood, all Patrick Summit wanted to do was be an actor. However, after working multiple jobs through high school to afford relocation to Hollywood, he was dismayed to find the only roles offered to 'little people' were as Christmas elves, friendly candy factory employees or degrading slapstick gags. Not exactly the serious work he dreamed of. After beating his head against the Hollywood glass ceiling for a few years, his anger and frustration built, and in a particularly bad drunken binge, he picked a fight with a fellow bar patron, not knowing he was a Dreadnok. After a humiliating (for Patrick) scuffle, the Dreadnoks were impressed with his spunk and befriended Patrick, soon admitting him into their ranks. When Zartan heard of Patrick (now nicknamed Rugrat), he was initially amused, until he met Rugrat and realized his small stature belied an intense and sometimes commanding personality. Zartan gave Rugrat more leadership responsibilities within the Dreadnoks, and after bonding over their mutual love of acting, Rugrat became invaluable to Zartan's various disguises, schemes, and assumed roles. Zartan is very protective of Rugrat, and will personally beat any Dreadnok that makes the mistake of being diminutive toward Rugrat or treating him like a mascot.

HEART WRENCHER: Suzie Rook is a high school drop-out and runaway, as well as a former Las Vegas showgirl and exotic dancer who believed her body could compensate for her wooden acting (in)abilities. Rook spent years going from casting couch to casting couch, hoping romantic efforts would earn her a break in Hollywood. After being discarded by dozens of casting directors, Rook began using drugs, often offering her looks in exchange for hits from dealers, all while posing as a baby doll goth, unaware she was often mocked by others as pathetic. Her dead-end life frustrated her, and she irrationally and frequently lashed out at others, alienating any friends she did have. Eventually, her path crossed with Dreadnok Rugrat, who felt a simpatico connection with her due to their mutual failed acting aspirations. He helped her through detox and rehab, then sponsored her in Alcoholics Anonymous. She joined the Dreadnoks to be near Rugrat, who she now was secretly in love with (though wasn't as good at hiding it as she thought she was). As a Dreadnok, she took to carrying a huge wrench as a part of her tough-girl act, and nicknamed herself "Heart Wrencher". She continues to spend time with the Dreadnoks, despite most of them finding her to be annoying and unstable, but her affiliation with Rugrat has earned her a certain protection from his great friend, Zartan.



EXPLORING THE CLASSIFIED

By Mark Powers and Mike O'Sullivan

Former Devil's Due Publishing Writer & Editor/Writer

DEATH METAL: Death Metal was a member of sci-fi/horror themed metal band Gwar who was kicked out of the band for unrevealed offenses (whatever they were had to be phenomenally bad for Gwar to kick him out). Following his expulsion, Death Metal was recruited by the Dreadnoks, who were huge fans of the band. Death Metal was given an outlet for enacting the violent, gory fantasies he could only pretend to live out while on stage. His horrible predilections for the disgusting and horrifying can cause even the staunchest Dreadnoks pause. He never removes his mask and his true identity unrevealed, although it's rumored he is a former teen pop superstar. Anyone that suggests that is often violently brutalized by Death Metal.

RUSLAN: (Mark specifically had a lot to say about this one): Ruslan Maskhadov is a character I'd have liked to explore further at some point. The idea with Ruslan was that he was part Chechen, and was conflicted about his service in the Russian military. On the one hand, he was sympathetic to the struggles of what he sees as his homeland; on the other, he'd been recruited, trained, and placed within an elite program by the Russian military. I grew up in an Irish-American family, and I can recall that in the 70s and 80s, there were times when the IRA came up at various get-togethers. I was too young to be a part of those conversations, but I certainly recall that while my family didn't praise them, they didn't condemn them, either. I think that type of thing is both scary and interesting - the capacity to justify violent acts if it somehow benefits our particular "tribe." We'd be able to explore that type of thing through Ruslan, and of course within the wider setting of a gigantic conflict unleashed by a terrorist group. To me, Ruslan was a guy who was recruited to be Russia's version of Duke, but who was more eager to be a Chechen Che Guevara. On the flip side, his older teammates in the Oktober Guard would have to wrestle with having to keep this young, talented, hot-headed kid under control, all the while never being sure if they could fully trust him.

Of course, once we had the personality and backstory stuff in the pot, we'd then take it all to Sam Damon or Phil Kost and get them to help us create logical and realistic military service and training to round them out into believable G.I. Joe characters. We'd probably then have someone do character sketches (if they were needed), and then pass them off to Hasbro for their final approval. We'd have to first tone down some of the more adult bits in some of the Dreadnok origins, of course.

That's it for now. Just some brief blurbs on what could have been, had we the time to delve into these characters a bit more. Who knows? Maybe someday we'll get a chance to revisit the Joes and give these particular folk the attention they deserve. Anything's possible!



CODE NAME: CHOP SHOP
AFFILIATION: DREADNOKS
STATUS: AT LARGE



CODE NAME: DEATH METAL
AFFILIATION: DREADNOKS
STATUS: AT LARGE

Designing The Look For The Cobra Plague Team

By Robert Atkins

Formerly DDP G.I. Joe, Currently IDW G.I. Joe

Let's start easy. How and when did you first become associated with the G.I. Joe comic?

I first came on board because of Mike O'Sullivan. Out of school, my first solo professional work was *Snake Eyes: Declassified* for Devil's Due Publishing. Right out of the gate G.I. Joe was a part of my career.

Coming into the property, what was your knowledge and understanding of its depth at the onset?

As a kid I grew up on the cartoon and was introduced to the toys because of it. I gravitated to the all the vehicles and how the figures interacted with them. I didn't start reading comics until junior high and high school. It was then in the early 90's that I even found out there was a G.I. Joe comic. I picked up what I could and enjoyed it. However, as soon as I started on Joe, I went back and really started consuming the comics by finding the old Marvel trades. Early on, I relied heavily on Mike's knowledge of the characters. He set me straight on a lot of details. That dude's a Joe encyclopedia!

What was your first assignment once you were hired on?

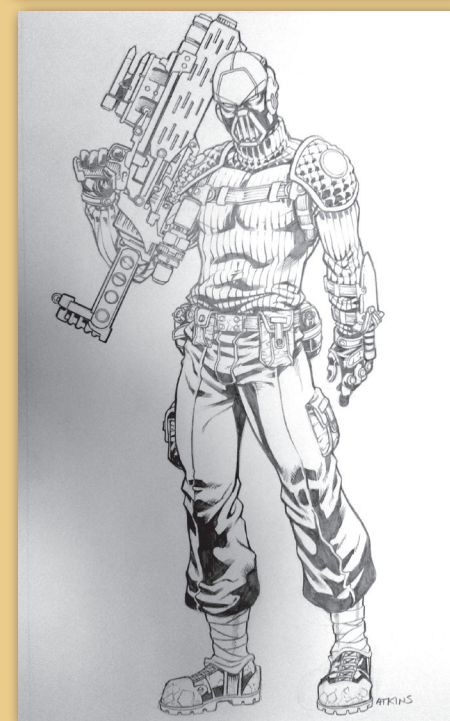
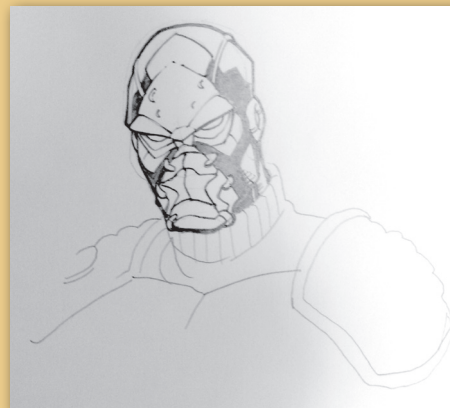
I did a fill-in for two issues of *Snake Eyes: Declassified*. I remember it had to be done quickly and that is always a wake-up call for new artists. Mike was always helping me pull my art together when things started to fall apart having to draw so fast. After *Snake Eyes* I was doing a lot of inking over Tim Seeley, and the profiles for the Data Desk Handbook entries in the back. It was towards the end of my experience with DDP that I got into the Plague designs.

Let's talk about designing the Plague. Prior to their inclusion in the comics, three of the characters existed in toy form. Only one of those (Guillotine) accurately transferred to the drawn version. How and why was the decision made to change the look for the rest of the team?

When I approach designing the characters now, I rely heavily on their toy counterparts. I pull design elements from what I think has worked the best and combining that with a sense of keeping them modern. For the Plague on the other hand, we (Mike and I) wanted them to have common design elements to make them seem like a unit. We actually started with Guillotine and built from there.

When redesigning the team, what common thematic elements were you going for in a visual sense?

The goal was to make the Plague look like a part of the same attacking unit, but keep the individuality of their Viper subdivisions. So I used a base model design for the uniform, only adjusting if their skill set called for it. Then, moving on by specifically giving each Plague member his or her respective Viper headgear or weapons.



Designing The Look For The Cobra Plague Team

By Robert Atkins

Formerly DDP G.I. Joe, Currently IDW G.I. Joe

There are two designs for Munitia, one the final comic version, and one in a uniform that looks remarkable similar to the H.I.S.S. driver. Was there any intent behind the similarities, and if so, what was it?

With Munitia, she was the one where we went with an almost completely different design. Looking back, I forgot what inspired the first design, but Mike let me know they wanted me to take another crack at it. I forget the details surrounding her designs, but I do remember DDP thought I had drawn her breasts too large initially. I tried to tell them it was just the sweater, but they made me change it.

On the Grimskull artwork, there are two different head designs, neither one matching the toy. The first resembles the Sand-Viper figure from whom we know the character is derived. What inspired the second look?

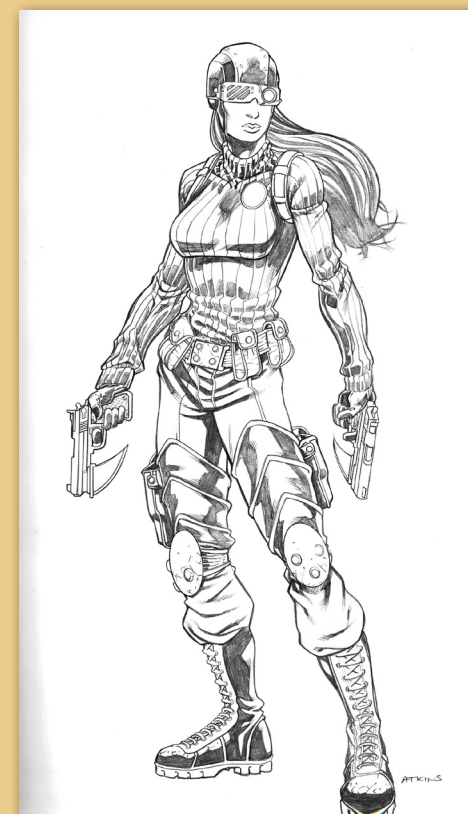
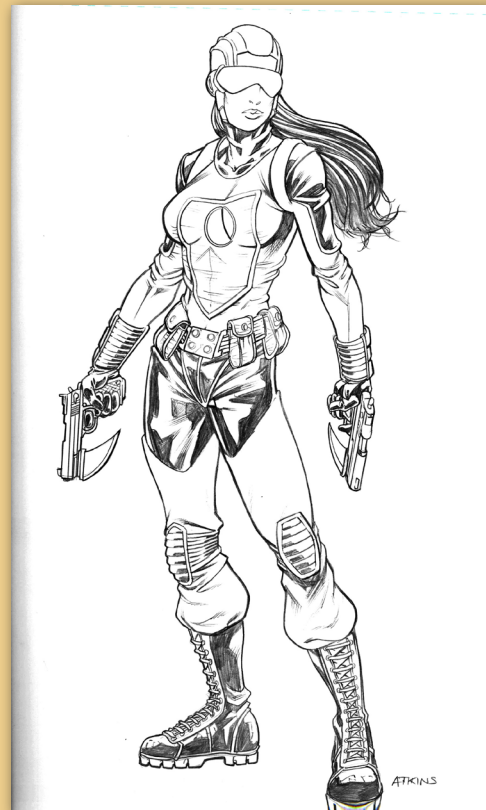
I think DDP felt with the first head design he looked too closely like a pre-existing character, so they asked for a different mask that was in the same vein but a little "bug like". The second mask is what I came up with after that art direction. I liked his huge gun in particular.

As an artist, is there any character you haven't had a chance to flex your pencils on that you're dying to get cut loose on?

I think after getting to design the Plague, I would have really liked to tell a story with them. I never really got the chance to tackle a Joe book on my own until IDW. On the main title there, I haven't been able to draw some of my favorites yet. Roadblock, and Lady Jaye in particular, were a couple of my favorite characters that I haven't drawn in the books. Snake Eyes has always been a favorite of mine. I started with him in my career, and I'm currently drawing a solo Snake Eyes series through IDW right now. So it's really come full circle with me on Joe, and I'm excited to focus on him and fully explore the visual story of that character.

Thanks for your time. Anything else you'd like to say to the G.I. Joe collectors while you're holding them as a captive audience?

I've really appreciated the warm welcome I've received from most Joe fans. It's been a blast meeting them at conventions and communicating with them online over the last few years. I also can't say enough about how great and editor and friend Mike O'Sullivan has been. He gave me my first big break, but it all started as buddies down at school where we first met. He inspired me, and encouraged me, while teaching me so much in those first few years of my career. Thanks for letting me take part in answering these questions, it's been fun reminiscing!



The Cover That Almost Was

By Mike O'Sullivan

Former Devil's Due Publishing G.I. Joe Editor/Writer

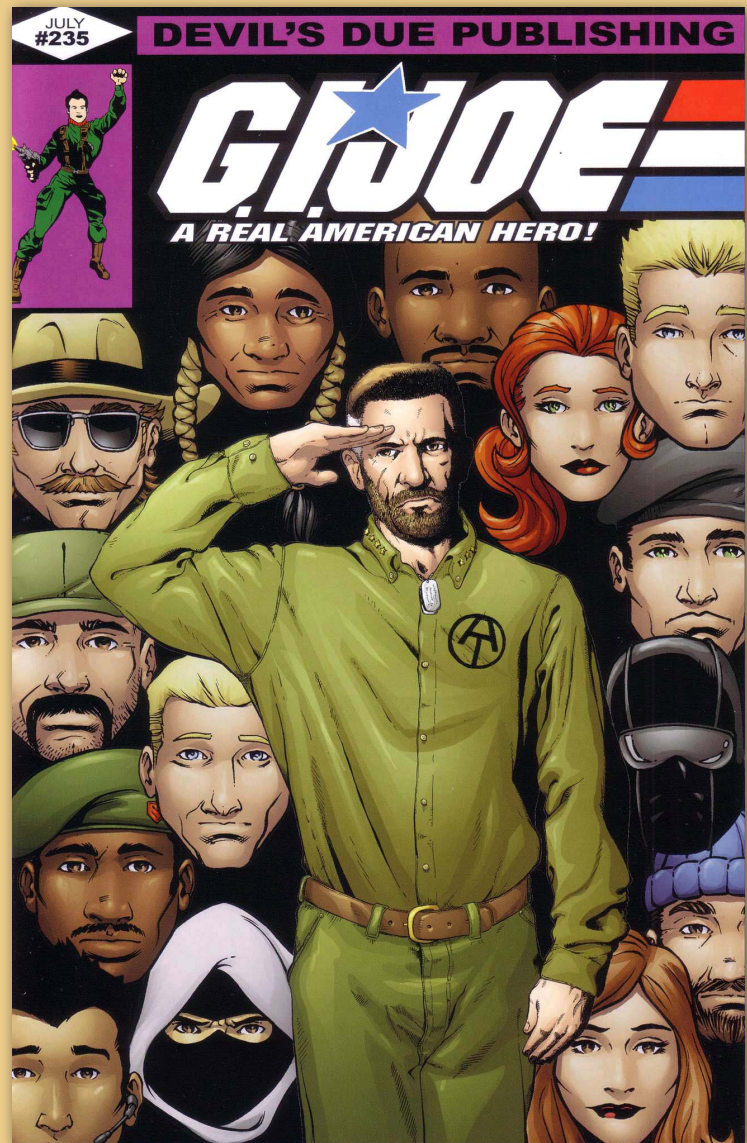
Former Devil's Due Publishing Assistant Publisher Sam Wells and I have been G.I. Joe fans almost our entire lives, so working on the Joe comics was a dream come true for both of us. When DDP's time on Joe was coming to an end, we wanted to do something to commemorate our run, and we figured a special cover of our last issue (*G.I. Joe: America's Elite* #36) would be a great way to do that. To make it even more significant and personal, we decided to create it in-house, rather than hire out; making it a truly personal project.

I designed the image concept, then *America's Elite* writer Mark Powers drew the Colton figure, and I inked it. I drew the headshots in the background, and my great friend (and longtime Joe penciler) Rob Atkins inked them. *America's Elite* penciler Mike Bear drew the corner box homage to the Marvel Comics G.I. Joe series (but with DDP President Josh Blaylock taking the place of Grunt), and I inked it. *America's Elite* colorist Wes Dzioba colored all the images, then I combined the separate images into the final cover composition, continuing the homage to the early cover design of Marvel's G.I. Joe run. Since our stories were a direct continuation of Marvel's continuity, we also numbered this special cover #235 – combining Marvel's 155 issues with DDP's 80.

If I can be so bold, I think it's a great image. It's a piece that I am proud of, and continue to love. Sam and I secretly had 50 copies of this special edition of #36 printed, and planned to give them to the Devil's Due staff and DDP friends to celebrate our years on the book. I took about 15 copies of the print run and mailed them to the creative team of #36, the creators of the special cover, and (if I remember correctly), sent a few to a few people at Hasbro that had been instrumental in helping us during our time on Joe. (I think I sent one to my parents, too.) Sam took a copy, I took mine. As far as we can recall, about 15 - 20 copies were given out.

Then, for various reasons, the rest never got distributed. I can't recall all the reasons why, but they were tucked away in a box until the right time for us to pass them out to the DDP friends/family. I think we were waiting for a party that just never seemed to coalesce. But while waiting for that time, the box was destroyed in a flood. I had moved on to Marvel Comics by this point, so I never heard the full story of what happened. All I know is that the remaining copies of this rare issue are gone.

So, that's the story of this super rare comic/cover. It appears only 15 - 20 copies still exist. Somehow, I have three of them. I don't know how that happened, but I'm glad I do. My work on G.I. Joe is a highlight of my career – lots of things I'm proud of within my run on the book – and this image remains near the top of that list. Especially because it was an image of characters I love created by a group of friends I care for deeply. It can't get much better than that...



Building The Phoenix Guard

By Phil Kost

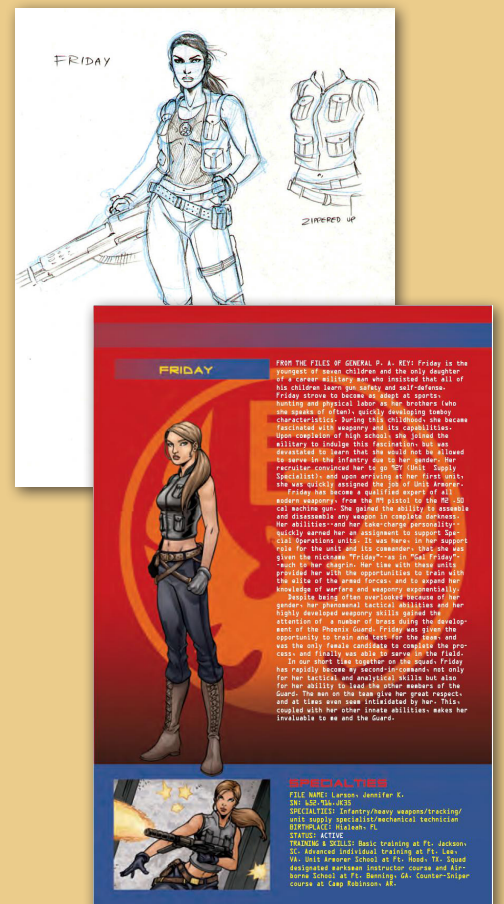
In July 2006, within the contents of *G.I. Joe America's Elite* #13, a new highly-trained military team was introduced: The Phoenix Guard. The team was a pet project of Cobra Commander; who was under cover as the White House Chief of Staff, and led by the former G.I. Joe Commander, General Phillip Rey. Unknown to both the reader and General Rey, the members of the Phoenix Guard were actually members of Cobra undercover, with the intention of not only replacing, but destroying the G.I. Joe team.

The Phoenix Guard consisted of Mech, High-Tide, Friday, Halo, and Snake-Eater, but as it was revealed in issue #17 the team actually consisted of Scrap Iron, Copperhead, Zarana, Wild Weasel, and Firefly respectively. Their deception could very well have continued on, except General Rey learned the truth when he uploaded the Phoenix Guard files into the Joe's HQ mainframe in the Rock.

The Phoenix Guard files you are about to read were a team effort with the intention to make the Phoenix Guard as real as possible.

FRIDAY. Infantry heavy weapons. – Friday grew up in the country, and she has been a tomboy most of her life. Her dad taught her how to shoot and hunt along with her three brothers. Her dad was ex-Army and believed in teaching his children not only the importance of gun safety, but also defending themselves if necessary. Friday developed a deep interest in weapons and their capabilities. When she was old enough to join the service, she was heart broken to learn that she could not join the Infantry and put some of her hunting skills to a good use. Instead though, her recruiter convinced her to go 92Y (Unit Supply Specialist). As soon as she got to her first unit, she was assigned as the unit armorer. Friday had found her niche. As the unit armorer she was responsible for the serviceability and maintenance of all the unit's weapons. She also arranged it where she also qualified on every type of weapon in her arms room. This ranged from the M9 pistol to the M2 .50 Cal Machine Gun. She could assemble and disassemble every weapon with her eyes closed and could qualify expert with any weapon she picked up. Her legend soon outgrew her unit and she was assigned to support some Special Operations units. This allowed her to not only expand her knowledge of weapons, but she was given the opportunity to train with some of the "A" Teams. Her tactical ability grew by leaps and bounds and that is when she got noticed by those tasked with building Phoenix Team. She went through the training and the testing, and was the only female candidate to make it onto the team.

HALO. Airborne infantry specialist. – Halo loves heights. When he enlisted into the Army he only wanted to do one thing, be Airborne. He went to Ft. Benning, GA. for his Basic Training, his Advanced Individual Training (11B – Infantry), and then stayed on for Airborne school. He graduated with flying colors and was then assigned to the 82nd Airborne at Ft. Bragg, NC.. He served with distinction, but after a while he wanted something more. Shortly after being promoted to SGT (E-5), he submitted a packet to go through the Special Forces Assessment and Selection (SFAS) course. Upon being selected, he then attended the SF Qualification Course and earned his Special Forces tab and Green Beret. Upon arriving to his first team, Halo immediately put in for the H.A.L.O. detachment. Due to his previous assignments he was selected and went through the H.A.L.O. course. Halo and his team later successfully conducted several classified missions. Shortly after returning from a mission he was asked to go through the training and testing for the Phoenix Team. He was selected and thus disappeared off the Army records.



Building The Phoenix Guard

By Phil Kost

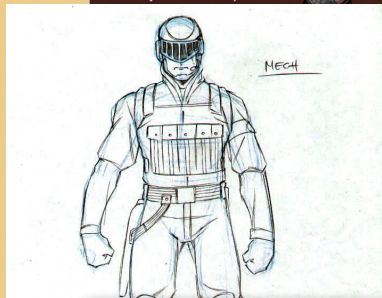
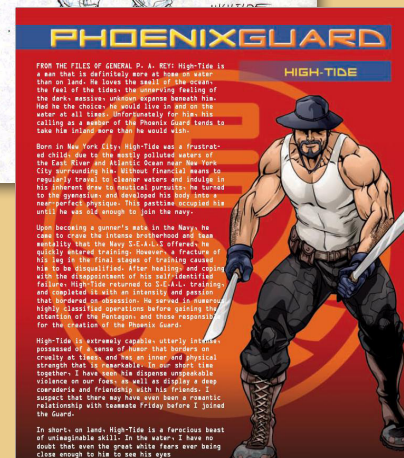
HIGH-TIDE. Primary Sea, Air, Land. – Hide-Tide is the only Sailor on the team, but he is not just any regular Sailor. High-Tide is a SEAL (Sea, Air and Land). High-Tide entered the Navy as a Gunner's Mate and quickly decided he wanted more out of his career. He volunteered for SEAL training and attended BUD/S (Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL) training. High-Tide entered BUD/S not really knowing what to expect, but he exited the final phase of his training a year later a full fledged SEAL and knowing exactly what he wanted to do. He was selected for SEAL Team 8 and conducted several classified missions with them before he was asked to try out for Phoenix Team.

MECH. Explosive ordnance specialist and demolitions. - Growing up the son of a demolitions expert, it was little surprise that Mech decided to enter the Army as a member of the small Explosive Ordnance Disposal (E.O.D.) group. He attended the grueling E.O.D. training at Redstone Arsenal at Huntsville, Alabama and Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. Upon completing his training, Mech found himself all over the world. Not only did he do stints in Bosnia, Kosovo, the Sinai, and a few other locations, but he also conducted many operations with Special Forces units. Mech also quickly attained a reputation among his fellow soldiers as the coolest man under pressure they had ever seen. He could not only defuse a mine that someone had stepped on, but tell you immediately how much C-4 he would need to destroy a stack of munitions. The word “expert” does not even begin to describe his ability. Mech also started developing his own explosive devices and caught the attention of those looking for members for Phoenix Team. Knowing that the team was going to need someone of Mech’s abilities, his “training and testing” was quickly blessed off on.

SNAKE-EATER. Commando, counter-intelligence operative. – Snake-Eater is a bad ass, cut and dry. Most of his past is so clouded that only he knows what did or did not really happen. All we know is that he enlisted in the Army as an 11B (Infantryman), worked his way into a Ranger Battalion, getting Airborne and Ranger qualified along the way. He then moved onto the Special Forces community earning his Special Forces tab and Green Beret (there is rumor that he and Halo were in the same class). Then he disappeared. There are no records of where he went, no unit assignments, nothing. Some speculate he became a member of the elite Delta Force, some even say that he jumped ship and did some stints in the French Foreign Legion. No one knows. Some even say that he was a candidate for the G.I. Joe team but was not selected due to unknown reasons. The one thing we do know, is, he is the best at what he does - which is to sneak into secured places and eliminate threats. When the word came down for volunteers for Phoenix Team, he re-appeared and was selected for the team immediately. Not much is known about him, and his teammates kind of like it that way.

During the design process, Joe Casey gave names and specialties, I gave the initial drafts of the background stories, and Mike O'Sullivan cleaned them up for publication.

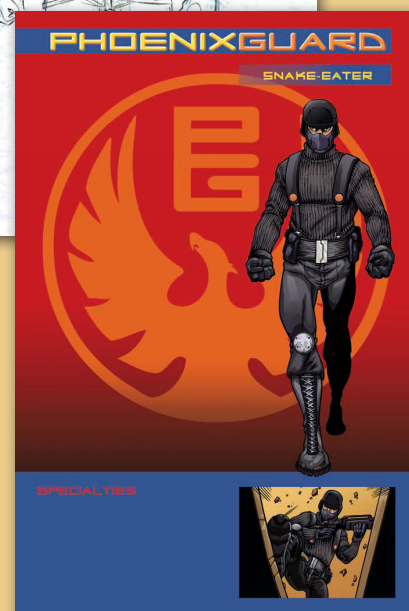
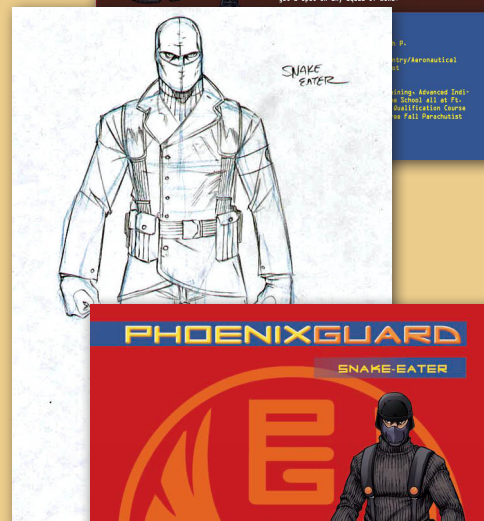
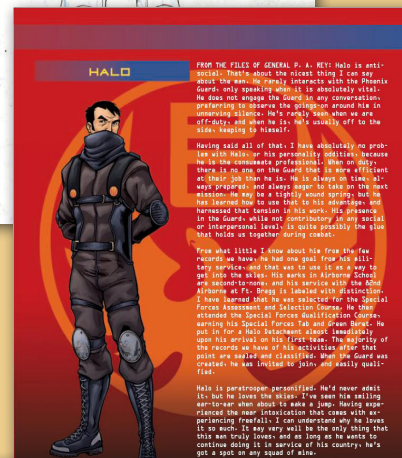
One thing I would change, was, they kept the “Infantry” specialty on Friday over my objections, since women are not allowed to serve in the Infantry.



Building The Phoenix Guard

By Phil Kost

I loved the concept of the Phoenix Guard, in that there was a second highly trained team. Once the “original” team was discovered as Cobra agents, I wanted it to be revealed that all those profiles were *actual* people and being held by Cobra Commander. On a mission, the Joes find them, release them and they become a real team named “The Phoenix Guard”. I saw endless possibilities, but alas things didn’t go that route.



Collector Spotlight: Richard Anderson

Who are you?

My name is Richard Anderson. I am 56 years old, and yes I know, a little older than the most of the G.I. Joe collectors. It just goes to show you that G.I. Joe spans generations. I am married with four children; ranging in age from 15 to 31. I reside in Maryland, and have for most of my life. I attended my first Joe convention last year in Rhode Island where I finally got to meet Josh Eggebeen.

Please tell us a little about yourself.

I spent 31 years as an auto mechanic and supervisor for a local government. I retired nearly four years ago and spend a good amount of time scouring the world for G.I. Joe comic books. Don't we all love the hunt? I have a wonderful and tolerant wife (as most of us collectors need). I have more than 2,300 different Joe comics from 22 countries in 16 languages. I also have two websites where I display the majority of my collection: < www.gijoe comicsusa.com > and < www.gijoe comicsinternational.com >. I built the sites mostly because it was an easy way for me to view my collection without going "hands on" all the time. Also, it helps as a quick reference when I am shopping for books ("did I get that cover?"). I usually update it once every two weeks. I was inspired to do this after seeing how great all the covers look together on YoJoe.com.

How long have you been collecting G.I. Joe comics?

Growing up when television was fairly new and most other media did not exist, we read comics every day. Back then, *Our Army At War Featuring Sgt. Rock* and *G.I. Combat Featuring The Haunted Tank* were my favorite comics. For a few years I stopped buying/reading comics altogether and began my family. In the mid 80's when my oldest was showing an interest in comics, I purchased G.I. Joe comics since he already had been playing with the toys. I started reading them too. So that's kind of where it started. My collecting became more serious after my second son started reading his brother's leftover Joe comics.

What is your favorite piece in your collection?

It is very hard to say which comic is my favorite. Every time I find a new series, it becomes my new favorite! If I have to choose, I would say the Swedish set, as it was the first international set that I completed. I also met and became friends with a Swedish Joe collector named Freddy Persson who helped me. I plan on visiting him in the near future.

What was your first G.I. Joe comic?

I am not sure which one I first read. I think it was #2 "Panic At The North Pole". At any rate, it really belonged to my son! The comic that changed how (and what) I collected, was a Brazilian Joe comic #3 (our #111) about ten years ago. It came included in this lot of U.S. books that I had purchased. It was the first time that it had occurred to me that G.I. Joe comics had escaped our borders.



Issue #1 - Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Poland

Collector Spotlight: Richard Anderson



G.I. Joe comics came in many size variations



Argentina



Issue #1 - Worldwide!

What kind of G.I. Joe comics do you collect?

I collect any and all G.I. Joe comics. U.S. comics, international comics, toy comics, and anything else. Even though I have 99% American comics, there is always something new that pops up. I told Calvin Chymy; another avid Joe comic collector, that we would be 90 years old and still discovering variant covers. I also have the original Ziff Davis series from the 50's even though it is not the Joe we all know. Also during my collecting (usually by buying groups of items), I have gathered a large number of blueprints, catalogs, inserts, trading cards, and filecards.

What is the primary focus of your collection?

I have most comics from the U.S. and it is no problem to keep up with the new stuff. The challenge has been with the international comics. Josh once described international G.I. Joe comic collecting as the "wild west". He was right. When it comes to comics printed outside of the U.S.A., there is very little information about who, when, and where. I would say that is where my focus lies. I really like to see the differences in the books. Australia and Turkey have black and white issues. Mexico, Brazil and Turkey have digest-sized issues. Germany's and Spain's are larger. Australia, Germany, Spain, Finland, and Mexico have some covers not shared by U.S. books. And the U.K. has all of that! Also, many have their own color schemes for the covers. Not knowing where to look only adds to the satisfaction when you actually "discover a new country".

How did you discover the Indonesian G.I. Joe comics?

The discovery of the Indonesian comics was by chance. I was going through eBay looking at the comics people had for sale from different countries. I came across a nice guy who had many Indonesian comics for sale, so I emailed him and asked if G.I. Joe had ever been sold in his country. He mailed me back the next day saying that he didn't have any but knew where he could find some. It took some time, but eventually I acquired the whole set.

What comic was the most difficult to acquire?

Generally books in the U.S. are pretty easy to find. No one saves like we Americans do! But a couple that do come to mind are: Marvel #21 (second printing) and Blackthorne #4 (second printing). Most international copies are always hard to find, even when you know where to look. Not to mention the copies are often a bit rough. I suppose the comics by Sagedition in France are some of the most difficult to find, followed closely by Chile, Australia, and Norway. Three of those four sets of mine are still not complete after years of trying, although Norway is getting close.

Collector Spotlight: Richard Anderson

What are your methods for connecting to people who search for the comics?

I am always combing eBay, Traders, QXL, and all the rest of the auction sites looking for "new" comics. I routinely ask sellers questions about the availability of G.I. Joe comics in their countries. It is surprising how many people are willing to help. Many like seeing books they sold me appear on my site. There are G.I. Joe fans in every part of the world, so I often trade something G.I. Joe they cannot get in their country for my books. I also ask if they know collectors in other countries.

What is your favorite G.I. Joe comic issue or story?

I wish that I could single out just one. But I can't. I really love the old Marvel series, but have enjoyed the new ones as well. It's like the expression "kid in the candy store". I don't know what to choose!



Various



Denmark



Chili



United Kingdom



Brazil



Israel



A Brief History Of G.I. Joe's International Comics

By Josh "Antarctica" Eggebeen

In 1982, Hasbro began releasing new 3 ¾ inch G.I. Joe action figures. As a way of promoting these toys, they created a comic book to go along with it. They licensed the publishing rights to Marvel Comics; who then hired Larry Hama to write the stories. The *G.I. Joe: A Real American Hero comic*; along with the toys, were hugely popular in the 1980's. To take advantage of this popularity, Hasbro allowed Marvel to begin publishing the G.I. Joe comic books outside of the United States.

The first foreign country to publish G.I. Joe was Canada. It's no surprise since they speak English, but they have a law that requires everything to also be printed in French. So not only did Canada have English price cover variants, starting in 1983, the French Heritage Language Editions also began being released. This was the beginning of what would literally become a worldwide phenomenon.

The general process which Marvel went about sending G.I. Joe around the world was for them to use their own Marvel international publishing divisions. Once approved, each branch would do its own translational, recoloring, and reprinting of G.I. Joe for a new audience in its new language. In Europe, the standard comic has a longer page count than the U.S. counterparts, so often times it was one and half G.I. Joe issues included inside, or a separate Marvel comics like the *Hulk* would be partnered with G.I. Joe inside the book.

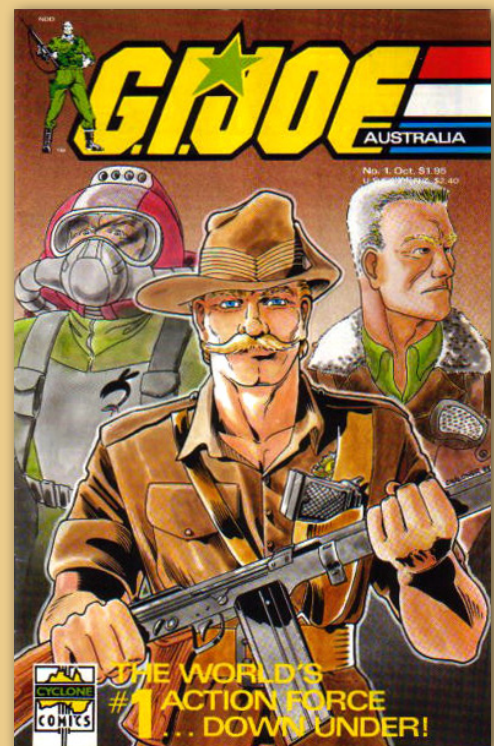
Marvel, again with Hasbro's approval, would use other publishers to release G.I. Joe. Between 1986 and 1988 the majority of the comics that would be released outside of America started appearing. When the non-Marvel publishers began releasing G.I. Joe, there were many changes to the actual comic, even though the original interior artwork would always remain the same.

A variety of sizes were released that included digest size (Turkey & Mexico), literally six comics books glued together in what is a modern day trade paperback style (Canada Comic O Rama), newspaper format (U.K. – Battle Action Force), and in a larger magazine style (Germany & the U.K.). Most of the time the subtitle "A Real American Hero" was dropped and a new one was added, like "Comandos Herocios" (Mexico), "Forza Irresistibile" (Italy), "Speciale Opdracht" (Netherlands), "Pasukan Elite Amerika" (Indonesia), "Internasjonale Helter" (Norway), "Heroes Internacionales" (Spain) and "Heros Sans Frontieres" (France). This allowed the franchise to go global, yet still remain personalized and relevant in each country of publication.

Another common practice was replacing the G.I. Joe name to use the Hasbro approved "Action Force". However, the two exceptions to this are Turkey; which published G.I. Joe as *Super Joe*, and Brazil; where they used *Comandos em Acao*.

Although there are some generally hard to find "standard" international issues, the most rare items for international comic collectors are the issues in which countries created their own original interior pages and/or covers. Australia's first issue (U.S. *Special Missions* #1) had a couple of black and white pages added at the beginning and end that used the character 'Digger'; basically Australia's version of Recondo, to introduce and conclude the story. Brazil and Spain are the only known countries to have even created original covers for their comics.

Aside from newly created regional artwork, the United Kingdom was the only place in the world outside of the United States that got to create original G.I. Joe stories. They created the long-running *Battle Action Force*, and then the 50-issue *Action Force* series, plus several prose-style annuals, and the 15-issues of *Action Force Monthly* - which was printed in the U.S. as *European Missions*. All contained 100% original stories unique to the U.K..



Australia

A Brief History Of G.I. Joe's International Comics

By Josh "Antarctica" Eggebeen

In 1983, *Battle Action Force* started with the U.K. and was based off the Action Force characters and Palitoy figures who had the Red Shadows as their enemy. In 1985, the G.I. Joe and Cobra characters we know and love started appearing. There were 165 *Battle Action Force* issues printed between 1983 and 1986, and 96 of those were with the Hasbro/Larry Hama created characters.

In 2009, in connection with the release of the live action Joe movie, a six-issue series of original stories with the movie characters was released called *G.I. Joe Rise of Cobra*. This continued the U.K.'s tradition of making unique and new G.I. Joe stories.

As well as the differences between regional art and writing, there are also some other interesting international facts:

The Joe comics published in Indonesia (in 1990 for only about a year), are the only confirmed Asian published G.I. Joe comics. One of these issues even contained a list of countries that G.I. Joe was being published in at the time. This list has created some new mysteries in countries not known to even have the figures! (This list is posted in the International Section of YoJoe.com).

- Poland actually released some comics in 1996 - more than year after G.I. Joe had stopped being published in America.
- Mexico released 101 issues, which is the highest issue-count printed in a foreign language.
- In 2002, Mexico published Spanish-language versions the first four issues of the Image/DDP run. In 2006, Spain also printed the Devil's Due Publishing books; including the *Reloaded* series, in Spanish.
- G.I. Joe was contained inside other non-Joe comic titles as a second story. These include the U.K. *Transformers* and U.K. *Incredible Hulk*.
- Argentina and Chile's comics were published in connection with the cartoon.
- France is the only known country to have released translated French versions of *Action Force Monthly/European Mission* comics.
- Germany published the U.K. Action Force stories.
- And finally, European countries were publishing G.I. Joe issues in a trade paperback format, long before they were doing that regularly in America.



Battle Action Force covers 512, 529, 534, and 545

A Brief History Of G.I. Joe's International Comics

By Josh "Antarctica" Eggebeen

In 2008, YoJoe.com debuted their International Comic Section <www.yojoe.com/comics/international>. This was one of the first websites on the internet to have such a section just devoted to G.I. Joe comics that were published outside of the United States. It currently has 22 countries in which G.I. Joe or Action Force were published included in its archives. From those 22 countries, there are nearly a thousand individual G.I. Joe comics listed. Anyone can contribute to the site, and there are still several countries that are known to have published G.I. Joe, but cover scans have not yet been acquired. These include Greece, Israel, India, Luxemburg, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, and Hungary. So if you're ever visiting one of those countries, stop in a comic book store and look for some G.I. Joe issues!

For serious collectors, when you are hunting for international comics, be prepared to potentially spend a lot of money for the issue itself regardless of condition, as the actual foreign shipping cost of the books is actually very small. Most collectors in America bag and board their books. This was not a common practice outside of the U.S.. In fact, it is very rare to find any foreign comic in near-mint form. Any international G.I. Joe comic hunter has to be prepared to get the comic in *any* condition, because especially in Europe, people generally didn't collect them for their own personal libraries or collections, they have simply kept them around like magazines, then discarded them when they were sick of them. Thus it is also very rare to find complete sets.

For those who have the time, motivation, and resources, collecting the international G.I. Joe comic world is like living in the old Wild West; where new, crazy and exciting adventures are still being discovered that haven't been seen before.



Indonesia



Super Joe - Turkey





WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

DECLASSIFIED

Contest time!

During some recent time off work I was pleased to discover some extra copies of Issue #1 hidden away. Since I only need one copy, these other ones need a new home, and we always need help. So, the "Collector Spotlight Contest"

Contest rules: Submit via e-mail at Samuel@joedeclassified.com your bio information and answers to the Collector Spotlight format (seen in all our issues available at Joedeclassified.com), as well as several good photos. I'll pick five winners, who will receive a print copy of issue #1 mailed to them. You agree to let us run your collection in a future issue of our choosing. If you don't win, tough luck. Enough about the rules.

Dedication: This issue is dedicated to my good friend and comrade-in-arms Jason Wells, who'll be "aw shucks"-ing me when he reads this (or something more vulgar). Jason's one of the most upstanding members of the Joe collector community out there, and almost single-handedly funds the booth that we set up at each convention. He single-handedly embodies the spirit behind the Declassified project. Jason's deployed overseas again (as am I by the time you read this), but please send him your well-wishes, and if you ever have the honor to meet him, you'd do yourself a disservice by not having a drink with such an enthusiastic collector. See you when we're both home, bro.

If you enjoy the magazine, please take time to find us online at www.joedeclassified.com and join us in our new forums, or follow us on Facebook.

Special thanks this issue go to:

Richard "Digger" Anderson
Josh "Scanner" Eggebeen

Rob "Sneak Peek II" Atkins
Phil "Unnamed Boston priest" Kost
Mark "Mangler" Powers

Josh "General Rey" Blaylock
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