

# JFS

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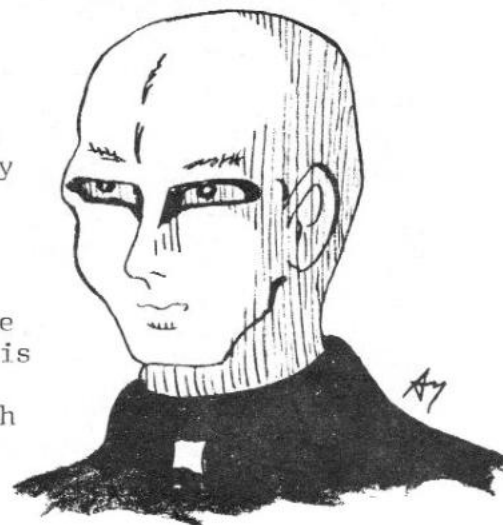
Vol. 2, No. 2

**THE YAMATO SAILS AGAIN!** -- The legend of Space Cruiser Yamato (alias the "Argo" of STARBLAZERS fame) continued with a new installment being aired in Japan on July 31, 1979 titled SPACE CRUISER YAMATO--THE NEW VOYAGE.

In this new 2-hour TV special, the Yamato sets off for Iscander in response to a plea for help from Queen Staasha and Mamoru Kodai, the brother of Susumu Kodai (Derek Wildstar). The couple especially fear for the safety of their newborn child, Saasha, as a new menace threatens the universe. The evil Melders--blue-skinned aliens with a sinister, cybernetic appearance--have undertaken mining operations on Gamiras (Gamilon) which seriously threaten the planet's geological stability. If Gamiras should be destroyed, its twin planet of Iscander would surely face a similar catastrophe!

Desler (Leader Desslock), the Imperial Generalissimo of Gamiras, returns with the remainder of his fleet to his own galaxy, intent upon making peace with Staasha and expressing his long-hidden love for the Queen of Iscander. Now commanding from the bridge of his red Gamiras battle cruiser, Desler discovers the Melders performing their destructive handiwork on his already devastated home planet. Desler rallies his forces to defend their dying planet, and the Melders are driven from Gamiras. However, Desler's victory is all for naught--the Melders had caused irreparable damage to Gamiras. The planet vaporizes before Desler's eyes. Aware of the impending disaster that will soon strike Iscander as a result of Gamiras' destruction, Desler heads to Iscander to save the woman that he secretly loves. Desler encounters a Melders' battleship over Iscander, and his fleet engages the ship in a fierce battle. The people of Gamiras are near defeat until the Yamato arrives--Susumu Kodai and the Yamato join forces with their old enemies, Desler and the people of Gamiras! The Yamato destroys the Melder's battleship with the wave-motion gun, and together the new allies head towards the capital city of Iscander to rescue Staasha and her family.

Before the Yamato and the decimated Gamiras fleet reach their destination, an awesome Melders' base ship appears to confront them, challenging the fleet to a battle. The base ship seems impervious to attack, even from Desler's energy canon. Desler's fleet is virtually wiped out, and ultimately Desler decides that the only way to defeat the Melders is to ram the base ship with his own battle cruiser. Desler's sacrifice is in vain, as his ship merely lodges in the hull of the base ship without exploding. Desler pleads with Kodai to fire the wave motion gun directly into his battle cruiser, as this is surely the only way that the enemy can be defeated. Kodai carefully zeroes in on Desler's immobile ship with the sight of the wave-motion gun, but he finds himself unable to pull the trigger and destroy his former adversary! At this point, Staasha intervenes, telling both Kodai and Desler to withdraw their ships from Iscander--she and her family will escape to them after



Staasha activates a secret weapon which she is certain will destroy the Melders. Before Mamoru Kodai realizes his wife's true intentions, Staasha transports him and his child to the Yamato while she remains on Iscander. Staasha, faithful to her vow to remain on her home planet and share its fate, activates a self-destruct mechanism, sacrificing both herself and her planet of Iscander in order to destroy the menacing Melders. Before taking off their separate ways, Susumu Kodai and Desler pause to silently show their mutual respect and salute each other.

YAMATO--THE NEW VOYAGE is presently undergoing adaptation into a new 26-episode TV series titled (appropriately enough) YAMATO 3. Originally scheduled to be aired this summer in Japan, this production seems to be lagging behind schedule. YAMATO 2 has begun rerunning in its place.....STARLOG MAGAZINE recently ran an interesting article on STARBLAZERS in issue #35, giving some insights into the process of Americanizing SPACE CRUISER YAMATO.....Incidentally, on April 7, 1945, American fighter planes sank the Japanese battleship "Yamato".

**OTHER FILM NEWS** -- As the school year in Japan is from April until March the following year, the major studios generally release their fantasy products at this time in order to correspond with school vacations. This spring's new releases began on March 15, headlined by the premiere of Osamu Tezuka's HI NO TORI 2772 (PHOENIX 2772). A profile of this film, in addition to a brief account of Tezuka's tour in the United States to preview this film, will appear in the next issue of the JFFS Newsletter.

On March 20, everyone's favorite flying turtle (is there another?), Gamera, returned to the screen in UCHU KAIJU GAMERA, the English title listed as just SUPER MONSTER. Advance information on this film proved to be accurate, as the film parodied many current science fiction films. Audience response to the film in Japan was less than enthusiastic according to Hiroaki Kazi. Virtually all footage of Gamera was merely stock footage from all of the monster's previous film appearances. Of the few new effects to appear in the film, Space Cruiser Yamato was shown to be flying past Gamera deep in space via the video-matte process, such as was used in certain scenes in MESSAGE FROM SPACE. Co-billed with the new Gamera film was a re-release of the color roadshow version of Osamu Tezuka's popular hero TETSUWAN ATOM (ASTRO BOY).

Opening on March 15 was a new animated feature film, DORAEMON NOBITA NO KYURYU (DORAEMON, NOBITA'S DINOSAUR). The most



原作・手塚治虫  
製作・橋本 五郎プロダクション

ほくらのヒーロー、あの鉄腕アトムがかえってきた！  
(カラー作品)

●アニメーション史上最高の傑作、ついに劇場公開！

地球防衛隊

宇宙怪獣ガメラ

いよ明日、公開！  
大スリル！大トリック！  
大ハロウィ！三拍子  
そろった特撮最新作！

◆テレビでは見られない、大スクリーンと迫力！

SUPER MONSTER  
マノハ文子 小島ノ子  
小島ノ子 前田光一  
工藤啓子 前田敏江  
小島ノ子 小島ノ子 小島ノ子  
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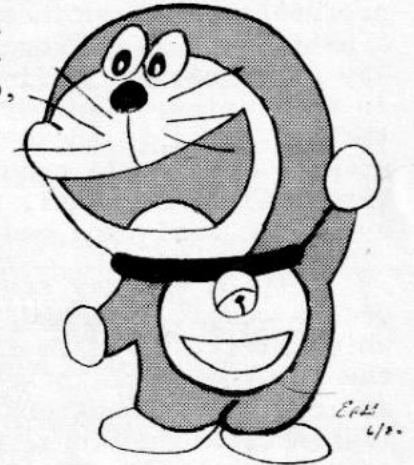
popular character in Japan at this time is Doraemon, a comical magic cat. In DORAEMON NOBITA NO KYORYU, the current film by the artist-writer team known as Fujiko-Fujio, Doraemon and his young friends travel via a Time Machine into prehistoric times where they befriend a baby pleisaur. There they find themselves confronted by hungry dinosaurs and evil humans. Second billed to this film was the re-release of the Toho classic, MOSURA TAI GOJIRA (GODZILLA VS. THE THING). The poster illustration for GOJIRA TAI MOSURA was done by Reiji Matsumoto, best known for his work on SPACE CRUISER YAMATO.

As the JFFS Newsletter was being put together, some late-breaking news from Japan surfaced in regards to SPACE CRUISER YAMATO--THE NEW VOYAGE. This film will now be released to theaters in Japan during the summer of 1980.

Another new animated feature film on the docket in Japan is CHIKYU E...(TOWARD THE TERRA). The ads for this animated fantasy feature claim that this film surpasses even live action. Original story for TOWARD THE TERRA is by Keiko Takemiya, with direction by Hideo Onchi.

No further developments have surfaced regarding the possibility of a brand new Godzilla film. However, talk continues about the possibility of a \$10 million Ultraman film, with principal photography to be done in the United States and special effects to be done in Japan by Tsuburaya Enterprises. This story was first reported in an Associated Press story during 1979, with subsequent coverage in VARIETY. Assuming that someone will put up the money to back this venture, the film will hopefully be released in 1981 with the title ULTRAMAN: THE JUPITER EFFECT. The plot will revolve around an astronomical phenomenon that will actually occur in 1983--the alignment of all the planets in the solar system. This "Jupiter effect" causes earthquakes and other cataclysms which render the Earth helpless against an invasion by an alien robot army lead by the arch-villain, Brax. It is up to Ultraman, having assumed the identity of astronaut Scott Craig, to save the Earth from this dreaded nemesis. Noboru Tsuburaya, one of the creators of Ultraman, claims that, "It will be a serious film, not a comedy...we hope to make lots of money from it." Sound familiar? Ultraman's popularity in Japan is undisputed, and show and its merchandising spinoffs have earned millions for Tsuburaya Enterprises. But can such phenomenal success in Japan guarantee that this film will get \$10 million in American backing, much less any profit? Only time will tell. If the project is attempted, look for it to come on the heels of SUPERMAN II.

This would not mark the first appearance of Ultraman on the large screen, as over the years there have been a number of Ultraman "films" released theatrically in Japan. These films have merely been a couple of TV episodes strung together. The most recent film of this type played during July 1979, at the same time SUPERMAN:



"Doraemon"





THE MOVIE premiered in Japan. This film adapted 4 episodes from the first Ultraman series.

TV NEWS -- New shows on television in Japan this season prove that although producers can sometimes be innovative, there is certainly no reason to make a habit of this. Proven formulas are the safest, if not the most creative way of attracting audiences. Japan's most famous superheroes have returned in new series. Ishimori Production's latest masked cyclist, Sky Rider, is the 8th entry in their KAMEN RIDER series. In addition to the usual super-powered motorcycle provided the hero, this Rider can actually (in special effects terms) fly. As usual, Sky Rider faces a number of human-sized monsters, and even some Nazi-type bad guys.

Flying our way from M78 Nebula courtesy Tsuburaya Productions comes this year's model, ULTRAMAN '80. Looking quite similar to the original Ultraman which first showed in 1966, Ultraman '80 (that is the name of the character in the show) will be locked in mortal combat with a variety of reptilian, insectoid, and cybernetic monsters in keeping with the tradition of his predecessors. (Ishimori Productions, please note that Tsuburaya monsters NEVER wear gym shoes or go-go boots!) The first episode of ULTRAMAN '80 aired on April 2, 1980. Contrary to the past series, the initial episode did not serve to explain the origin of Ultraman '80. In this episode, Ultraman '80 appears at the end of the program to battle a giant saber-toothed reptilian monster with lazer beam eyes. After a fairly short battle, Ultraman '80 destroys the beast with a ray shot from his forearm (very similar to the original Ultraman, again). The monster's name in the episode was Kresent, looking vaguely reminiscent of

a previous Ultra monster, Black King. The second episode of the series featured a birdlike reptile named Gikogira. Special effects are fairly good by TV show standards, and unusually high number of matte shots are used.

Tsuburaya Production's cartoon series THE ULTRAMAN, which began in 1979, ended its initial run in March as Ultraman Joe brings peace to Earth and is transformed into a human being.

This brings to a close this double issue of the JFFS Newsletter. Hopefully it has been worth the delay in its production. Also included with this newsletter should be a list of credits for the first season of SPACE CRUISER YAMATO and a new list of merchandise offered for sale to members. PHOENIX 2772 will be featured next time, and another merchandise offering will be made. Till then...sayonara.



Tsuburaya's THE ULTRAMAN