

Star Warts: The Umpire Strikes Back

Junior Script

by

Craig Hawes

Named Characters 55

Speaking Roles 50

Reduced Cast Size 28

Duration (minutes) 80

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PRODUCTION NOTES

Welcome to ***Star Warts – The Umpire Strikes Back!*** I am sure you will enjoy rehearsing and performing this musical comedy, but to aid you in your production it may be helpful to consider the following notes.

CASTING

The script is written for 50 individual speaking characters and 5 non-speaking characters. These range from principal parts to smaller supporting roles. For productions with fewer cast members, condensing of characters is possible. This can be done in numerous ways, but the following example reduces the cast number to 28 (this is shown in more detail on pages 8):

Reduce Apprentices to just Axe, Bax and Crax (reallocating other lines)

Reduce Trekkies to just Romulan, Quasar and Photon (reallocating other lines)

Reduce Racketeers to just Borg, Becker, Mac and Roe (reallocating other lines)

Reduce Diddly Squits to Commodore, Amiga, Atari and E.C. (reallocating other lines)

Double role of Doctor Woo with Yoga (with costume changes)

Combine Anne Dromeda and Alfie Centauri into just one part, Anne Dromeda

Combine Alexi and Sira into just one part, Alexi

Double role of Anne Dromeda and Alexi (involving costume changes)

Combine Basil and Saffron Oregano into just one part, Basil.

Double role of Basil with Spocky (involving costume changes)

To expand the cast, unlimited chorus parts may be used as additional Trekkies, Apprentices, Racketeers and Diddly Squits, optionally redistributing some lines. An off-stage choir can also be used for chorus backing on songs. The Apprentices work well being smaller, so if you have a group of younger performers in your cast this role would be ideal for them. Daft Ada is a comical role that would be equally suitable for a male or female actor. Qwerty should be able to move robotically - a robotic effect such as ring modulation through a radio microphone would be ideal if your technical facilities are capable!

COSTUMES

The costuming of Star Warts can be as simple or elaborate as you like. As I always emphasise, try to avoid the ‘explosion in a paint factory’ look by picking out a few set colours for each group of characters. This helps the audience identify who is who, but also helps everyone backstage organising the cast! There is so much inspiration in the films associated with this production which can easily be replicated by either buying the actual fancy-dress costumes or by making simple versions– coloured t-shirts are often the answer to everything! However, don’t restrict yourself to the colour pallet from the films - white, grey and beige simply are not fun enough for this show! The costume styles are perfect but try to use bright colours wherever you can.

Daft Ada (think futuristic panto dame)

Comic orange wig; spotty short hooped dress; striped tights

Luke Warmwater

Karate style cross-over jacket; large belt & trousers (any colour); band tied round head

Princess Nebula Oregano

White t-shirt; white knee length harem pants; long silver sashes over shoulders and crossed over chest; silver waistband to hold sashes in place; traditional space princess wig with side buns; elasticated head band with silver star sitting on the forehead

Qwerty (the butler android)

Either a catsuit style droid costume with hood OR robot costume made from cardboard with a hood/balaclava; painted face and a pair of round, glasses – ALL in gold

Zak Solo (the cool captain)

Leather trousers and jacket/waistcoat; white open neck shirt; cool “Elvis” style wig with quiff

Nigel The Nookie

Brown, furry teddy bear style onesie; unruly brown hairy wig; sparkly sash over shoulder

Toby Wonky Nosebleed (think Alec Guinness!)

White wig & beard; long tunic & cloak

The Umpire (traditional heavy-breathing space villain)

Large shiny helmet; black boiler suit with wide belt and button panel on chest; long black cloak and gloves

The Space Rangers

Silver jumpsuit; silver baseball cap; sash with name on

Spocky McSpock

Black trousers; blue V-necked long-sleeved T-shirt with tennis ball emblem; pointy ears

Alexi & Sira

Silver face paint; white bob wigs; silver metallic trousers or dress/tights

Doctor Woo (the time travelling Doctor)

Brown fedora hat; yellow shirt; brown tweed jacket & trousers; long striped scarf (or replicate your favourite Doctor)

King Basil & Queen Saffron Oregano

Long white gown with hood; elasticated headband with silver star sitting on forehead

Lord Yoga

Blue hood with long pointy ears; long yellow tunic; long gown (either a cloak or large coat)

Anne Dromeda & Alfie Centauri

Red karate style jacket (short dressing gown); black sash tied round waist; black knee length harem pants; black t-shirt under jacket; red bob wig

The Apprentices

Orange trainee astronaut boiler suit and orange baseball cap OR similar costume to Anne Dromeda & Alfie Centauri

The Trekkies (colour choices changeable)

Purple knee length harem pants; orange striped socks; green t-shirt; long silver sash over shoulders and crossed over chest, held in place with silver waistband; exotic, brightly coloured spiky wig

The Diddly Squits

Blue dungarees; lime green long sleeved t-shirt; green Alien type hood with antenna

The Racketeers

Black sparkly cap; white space guard outfit with silver tennis racket “ball blaster” accessory

STAGING

This production can be staged effectively with very simple scenery. Large flats brightly painted to depict giant control panels inside a spaceship are incredibly eye-catching set against a simple black background. Try cutting the flats into ‘spacey’ shapes to help further convey the theme and giving the flats a white base colour helps to make the scenery pop out even further against the black. If possible, hang a star cloth instead of a plain black cloth at the back to make the set look as magical as possible. Additional flats could be added for The Umpire or Yoga scenes, though this change in environment could be shown equally as well by a change in lighting. The set could of course be as elaborate as you like for any of the scenes, but the show works just as well with the spacey control panel flats in place throughout.

This production works well as a one-act musical, but some directors may prefer to split the show into two acts and this is perfectly acceptable. Star Warts can easily be performed as a two-act production with an interval following the song “In A Galaxy Far, Far Away” in Scene Four. In doing this, “TRACK 40: FAR AWAY PLAY OFF” can serve as the Act One play off music, then be repeated after the interval as the Entr’acte music for Act Two which would pick up from that point in Scene Four.

PROPS

The props in this show can be made as simply or as elaborately as you like, though as with most props, the bigger they are, the better! Many of the props, such as the tiny trousers or blast proof underwear, can be made simply using large, painted, 2D pieces of cardboard.

The first prop in the show is the Star Warts scroller, designed to recreate the original scrolling text of the film titles. This comprises a long, thin banner of yellow text on black background, wound around 2 poles so on winding, the writing scrolls upwards, off the bottom pole onto and around the top pole. The poles can be built into a small wooden structure to hold them into place and conceal the wound banner at the top and bottom. An adapted clothes rail would also work well. However, if this seems beyond your budget or capabilities you have the option of using the digital backdrop slides or video for this section, or simply rely on the audio narration only.

The phone box for Doctor Woo and the cell door can be made simply as one large reversible flat, to save on space, cost and time. The phone box should resemble an old-fashioned blue Police Phone Box, but with a small flap/window that Doctor Woo can speak through for his surgery joke scene. The cell door could look like a metal shutter, with the same flap/window used for Luke to peer and speak through.

Gordon the pot plant grows throughout the show, depicted by three puppets (small, medium and large) and finally a giant leaf. Fly-trap style plant puppets from a popular video game are available online or could be handmade as more extravagant sock puppets. The leaf at the end could be a large cardboard cut-out or more 3D with the stem being made from a swimming woggle, and material covered cardboard for the main structure of the leaf.

R-U-1-2 is a familiar three-legged droid with the body of a traditional silver rubbish bin. This can be created with a plastic bin or bin-shaped body with wheels underneath with a lid that opens and closes. Spray silver if necessary, then add buttons, grills and lights (battery powered led remote control lights are very effective). If your RU is not remote controlled, don't panic! The cast can easily guide him around the stage with a helping hand!

Zak Solo's shiny and futuristic spaceship would ideally be made up of various wooden or cardboard flats that the cast bring together over the beginning section of the Space Trip song. The front panel (with large "SOLO 1" number plate) should fix onto 2 angled side panels to form the front of the ship. Luke and Nebula should kneel down each side of the front panel with a large torch each which act as headlights flashing in time with the chorus and moving around the audience throughout. Zak holds the steering wheel and Nigel should operate the window wipers during the chorus. Toby and Qwerty should hold the ship's wings out at the side which then move overhead for the verses and display the names 'Zak' and 'Nigel'. Ada holds up a large pair of fluffy dice which dangle and dance around. Alternatively, the spaceship does not have to be as complicated – even the simple grouping of the crew centre stage with Zak and his steering wheel would be sufficient.

The plinth is a very simple prop to make. It is a large box with an open back allowing someone to puppeteer Large Gordon from inside, and is also used for the High Tower scenes with the galaxy display sat on top. The top has a large hole, disguised with stretched material with a slit across it so that Qwerty can pop his head through to appear as a disembodied head.

Qwerty's "severed head" illusion also relies on a large silver cardboard box with lid and "This Way Up" sign which Nebula places on the plinth. The box base has a hole cut in it for Qwerty to put his head through from inside the plinth. The box has a hinged front, held in place by a removable lid. When the lid is removed by Ada, the front flaps down revealing Qwerty's disembodied head.

The tennis ball galaxy display is a key part of The Umpire Scenes and should look like a small orrery/solar system model, but instead of planets, tennis balls. One ball should be missing. This sits on its own base that in turn fits onto the plinth. The missing tennis ball is found as a necklace around Princess Nebula's neck.

The Diddly joystick used in the Diddly Squit song is a large cartoon mallet which could be inflatable, sponge or cardboard cut-out used to gently 'bonk' the neighbouring Diddly Squit on the head.

The Sauce bottle should be as big as possible and can be easily constructed with a giant Cola bottle moneybox available online, spray painted green on the inside and decorated with a large label. Green metallic confetti can be concealed within for the final scene, or can be released by a hand from behind the upturned bottle.

Finally, the bling blades, known in other galaxies by a different copyrighted name, can be easily purchased from toy shops or made with simple materials. Telescopic or light-up versions can be particularly effective.

CHOREOGRAPHY

Each musical number is designed to have movement, and even simple choreographed moves will bring the songs to life. For maximum effect, the whole cast is intended to perform most of the songs and dances on stage as chorus, whether they are in the preceding drama or not. Of course, this is at the discretion of the director and can depend on available space. Choreography of musical numbers is left to the creativity of your own director/choreographer so that moves can be designed to more accurately match the ability of the individual cast. However, excellent example choreography and useful advice for all the musical numbers in this show can be found on the highly recommended Choreography "Dance It" DVD.

Diddly Squit Drill

The middle of the song "We Are The Diddly Squits" has a drill of repeating words and actions that are performed by four separate groups. This is shown in the Choreography "Dance It" DVD.

MUSIC

All the music required to stage this production, including sound effects, is found on the Backing Track CD.

Incidental music including Overture, Play On, Play Off and Scene Change tracks, are provided to allow cast and chorus entrances, exits and scene changes to occur smoothly without pauses, resulting in a slick performance. Any music played between scenes is designed to cover the scene change, so that lights can come up and action begin immediately upon the music finishing. A vocal recording is provided as a guide and to enable the swift learning of songs. The backing tracks without vocals are ideal to use in rehearsals and performances. Directors may, if they wish, allow a choir or separate character to accompany or replace a soloist in a song or section intended for a soloist. This may be necessary if certain cast members are unable to perform the solo themselves or a larger chorus is required to be employed more fully.

MUSIC PLAYBACK

The various sound effect and music tracks are a fun and central part of the show. These can easily be played on a CD or computer. But by far the easiest way is to use an iPad/iPhone and the free and excellent Go Button app which allows for instant playback at the touch of a screen. This results in smooth and seamless playback of all sound cues for an entire show.

LIGHTING

Stage lighting is not essential for any part of this show. However, if you are fortunate enough to have stage lighting available, some suggestions have been made in the stage directions.

LOCAL AMENDMENTS

The director should change the square bracketed script elements such as **[LOCAL TOWN]** to appropriate names of places or people dependant on your locality and topical celebrities of the day.

AND FINALLY...

This musical comedy is intended to be a fun show to rehearse and perform, so remember to enjoy yourselves and your audience will, too! My very best wishes for a successful and enjoyable production, and may The Sauce be with you!

Craig Hawes