



## Reliving the thrills of ULTRAMAN, Part 1

# ULTRA SCAN

Now wipe that drool from your mouths, Ultra fans, you don't want to dampen the second edition of "Ultra-Scan". H.O.F.'s continuing look at what is most likely the most important genre ever to hit superhero TV. To start things off, naturally I'm doing this here indepth look at ULTRAMAN, even though ULTRA Q predated it and officially set the pace (but ULTRA Q is a sci-fi series, not a superhero series and is out-of-place in this glorious magazine you're so fortunate to have before you) for the whole Ultra legacy. This is actually a two-part look at the show, to be continued next issue. As for the "Ultra-Scan" of HOF #4, it will of course, concentrate on the ULTRASEVEN program, and later RETURN OF ULTRAMAN, then ULTRAMAN ACE, and so on.

### ULTRAMAN

*[URUTORAMAN] Produced by Tsuburaya Productions, Series Creator: Eiji Tsuburaya, Consisting of 39 half-hour full color episodes, lasting from 7/10/66 until 4/9/67. Broadcast on TBS (Tokyo Broadcasting Service), Main Writer: Tetsuo Kinjo, Main Dir.: Hajime Tsuburaya, Music: Kunio Miyauchi (who*

*also did music for ULTRA Q, and THE HUMAN VAPOR, though little of his tunes reached the English version, and music from both was later re-used in ULTRAMAN. He supplied all the songs for GODZILLA'S REVENGE too), Executive Producer: Eiji Tsuburaya, Cast: Satoshi Furuya as Ultraman (costumed form), Susumu Kurobe as Hayata, Hiroko Sakurai as Fuji, Akiji Kobayashi (aka "Shoji" Kobayashi) as Captain Mura, Masaya Nabei as Ito, Yoshi Isbi (aka Mitao Dokumtmasbi & Sandayu Dokumamushi; his stage name) as Arashi, and Akibiko Hirata as Dr. Sakai Iwamoto, Reviewed by Damon Foster*

Though I fondly remember ULTRAMAN as a major force in my childhood, the series seemed as popular with the mainstream as an Ed Gein cookbook. While BATMAN and SUPERMAN were familiar pop icons all over the world, ULTRAMAN, an equally (if not more so) important series seems suspiciously absent in most nostalgic salutes to TV of the past. If ULTRAMAN was really so insignificant so as not to be remembered, answer me this: Did the SUPERMAN series generate

tons of sequel programs? Was there a "Superseven", Superman Ace", "Superman Taro", "Superman Leo", "Superman Joe", "Superman 80", "Andro Melrose", "Superfight" or "Superman Powered"? Though few of the Ultra sequels reached yankee shores, their very existence proves Ultraman himself to be one of the world's most prolific superheroes. One of the few references to ULTRAMAN was in Gary Gerani & Paul H. Schulman's book Fantastic Television (Harmony Books; 1977), which also preserved useful data on anything from THE AVENGERS to NIGHT GALLERY. Sadly, ULTRAMAN's review was microscopic by comparison, and this groundbreaking, brilliant show was dismissed as a "ludicrous live action series from Japan", yet ELECTRA WOMAN & DYNA GIRL was called "Electrafantastic" So much for taste.

What few other ULTRAMAN reviews there were in the geeky mainstream were similarly negative; usually written by the poor, uninitiated, non-imaginative jerks who just can't appreciate the fun of a metallic-looking giant who clobbers mutant reptiles, with help from soldiers, ray guns, jet planes, etc. Over the years, rarely could we Ultra addicts read an article on ULTRAMAN and not feel defensive and have an instinctive chip on our shoulder. Well, HOF's existence will hopefully bring us into the 21st century and stomp out those old attitudes. Time for Ultra fans to come out of the closet, there's nothing wrong with being an Ultra fan, it's about time everybody wakes up! ULTRAMAN is one of the few programs on American TV which could truly be considered, "for the whole family". Most shows & movies which use this motto would indicate that everyone in the "whole family" must be nine years old, but ULTRAMAN offered violence, occasional bloodshed and scientific plots which many kiddies couldn't understand. If you don't like ULTRAMAN and its successors, you can go suck on a used tampon, for all I care.

ULTRAMAN was numero uno, when it comes to combining Eiji Tsuburaya's Godzillian FX with high-tech superheroes.



Though technically, SPACE GIANTS (aka "Goldar", "Maguma Taishi", & "Ambassador Magma") predated ULTRAMAN by a few months, ULTRAMAN came closer to perfecting the concept and in the long run, became far more successful, memorable, influential, widespread and other big words I often use in the wrong context. An extremely inspirational, copied concept was founded in ULTRAMAN-- a Japanese guy (in Japan; there are lots of Japanese over there!) is a member of a futuristic squad of raygun-toting soldiers who always seem to wear helmets. They try to rid the Earth of overgrown beasts, and when they fail, our protagonist changes into a humongous, streamlined avenger resembling an android, who's wrestling & beams defeat the giant villain of the episode. ULTRAMAN basically founded this concept, which became one of the most repeated formulas on Japanese TV in the 1960s and 1970s.

Watching this classic series, it's not hard to see why this show succeeded, and Eurasian remakes like ULTRAMAN: THE ULTIMATE HERO and ULTRAMAN: TOWARD THE FUTURE failed. While Dore Kraus and Cane Kosugi had the potential to be as charismatic as Susumu Kurobe's Hayata character, the flawed directing & writing insured that our two English speaking "Ultramen" could never live up to ULTRAMAN's Hayata or ULTRASEVEN's Dan Moroboshi. In ULTRAMAN, Hayata's transformation into the metallic giant was always an exciting occasion. It was quick, sudden, colorful and highlighted by energetic, military-ish theme music. However, in its vastly inferior follow-up, ULTRAMAN: TOWARD THE FUTURE, Jack Shindo simply looks (unenthusiastically, as though he's as bored as his audience) into a pendant, and gradually fades into Ultraman Great ("Ultraman Lame" would be a better name), for what it's worth; all 'highlighted' by dull music that falls inbetween STAR WARS ripoff tunes, elevator muzac and the national anthem! Hayata's transformation was often gripping; he'd lose his Beta Capsul and have to compromise to get to it. In one, it falls off a bridge and is at least 30 feet below him, on a ledge. Meanwhile, the monster is on the rampage! So Hayata makes one hell of a gamble, he jumps down, knowing that as he quickly falls, he'll have only one chance to grab that Beta Capsul before falling the remaining 100 feet or whatever. If he doesn't catch it, he won't become Ultraman, he'll instead fall to his death! In episode #33, Mephilas freezes Hayata solid, just as he's about to push the button on the Beta Capsul. For a while, all seems hopeless, but Hayata's stiff-as-a-brick body is accidentally knocked forward, and the impact causes the button to be pressed after all, and Japan is saved.

ULTRAMAN: TOWARD THE FUTURE offered none of this, and as I understand it, the dismally inferior ULTRAMAN: THE ULTIMATE HERO is even more lame & generic, lacking any of the feel & heart of this original, classic 1966 series.

ULTRAMAN isn't perfect, however. But that's to be expected, I mean, perfect is a myth; there's no such thing as perfect-- except of course for your taste in magazines. But seriously, the rushed scripts of ULTRAMAN make it seem as though there are already monsters everywhere, origins of several are never explained. It's kind of like Hong Kongese horror films where they assume ghosts & vampires are commonplace. Another problem with ULTRAMAN, and one which I'm sure you all know, ULTRAMAN was basically made for kids. Though many adults enjoy it too (there are plenty of superhero programs more infantile than ULTRAMAN!), I must admit that I got the most fun out of the show when I was a kiddy. But then again, what actually defines a kiddy show? There are plenty of kiddies who watch Football and BEVERLY HILLS 90210, which I think are for idiots.

Today, one of my favorite episodes of ULTRAMAN is #28, it's impressive & suspenseful despite the villainous Da Da faces looking like paper mache Cleopatra masks (the bizarre, abstract look of the Da Das was based on some old art movement called Da Da, from France or someplace). But when I was a little brat (as opposed to being a big brat, like I am now), my favorite episode was #24, because I thought the aquatic creature Gubira was so cool. Based partially on a species of whale called a

Narwall [known for its unicorn-like tusk], Gubira (a variation on 'Kujira' the Japanese word for whale) carried this sharp, protruding instrument a step further; the spike can spin like a drill! As a child, this fascinated me-- to think that a creature could have a spinning nose that could dig tunnels underground! Pretty soon I was 'borrowing' drills from my family's tool box, and making holes in boards, trees, walls, and my house. I began making up my own stories of Gubira coming back as a good guy, and designing several monsters (one of which bore a striking resemblance to Kurogaras, from KIKAIDER #35) of my own who had drills sticking out of their faces. Another interesting note about the episode is that I believe the irritating little caucasian girl later grew up to be an attractive model or singer, and at least at some point in the early 1980s, lived just a few miles from me in Northern California's East Bay! Like an idiot, I never pushed these inquiries further, as that would have been one hell of an interview! All I can recall is a neighbor of hers, who used to act in my videos, called me and asked, "Damon, was there ever a young American girl in ULTRAMAN? There's some cute chick nearby, and her sister told me her sister was in ULTRAMAN, but I can't remember the episode".

A popular episode with Godzilla techno-geeks is #10, because the monster Kira/Girass is just a thinly disguised Godzilla costume. Usage of this costume was actually for time constraints & heavy deadlines, and not so much for budgetary reasons. The crew had a lot more trouble





doing ULTRAMAN than ULTRA Q. Where as ULTRAMAN was filmed more-or-less on a weekly basis (allowing for immediate response from viewers, in the form of fan mail), ULTRA Q's episodes were all filmed in one year, and the day the first episode of ULTRA Q debuted on TV, the whole show was already completed (so they didn't have to rush to meet weekly deadlines). But when they started filming ULTRAMAN, they had just five days to complete each episode. One of the main costume makers was the talented Ryusaku Takayama, but even he felt the pressure of coming out with another monster design every week. Despite advance planning, it was sometimes necessary for Eiji Tsuburaya to go borrow props from Toho.



I gather not just anyone from TBS could just barge in and get a Godzilla costume from Toho. But Eiji was well respected, since his creations like Godzilla are what really made Toho internationally successful. Supposedly, the late FX wizard's clout intimidated a few people at Toho, and they were rather relieved when he passed away! Now they could cut the budgets on everything, which explains why the likes of GODZILLA VS. GIGAN and GODZILLA VS. MEGALON were so cheap compared to the 1960s stuff. ULTRAMAN's budget was lower than that of ULTRA Q, partly because ULTRA Q was shot in 35mm, and ULTRAMAN was filmed in 16mm film stock.

ULTRAMAN episode #23 is the only episode which hints at when the show is suppose to take place. It appears it was meant to be set around 1993 or 1995, since back in the 1960s, the 1990s were considered a futuristic time indeed. But if ULTRAMAN is indeed meant to be set in the 1990s, it kind of screws up continuity with sequel programs like ULTRAMAN TARO, which were obviously meant to take place in the 1970s. Oh well, the 1970s

bellbottom pants are coming back, and the awful hair styles still might make a comeback, which I suppose could put ULTRAMAN LEO or ULTRAMAN TARO in the 1990s too. Of course, nobody can predict fashion, it seems that if ever there was a period ULTRAMAN could be set in other than the 1960s, it would have to have been the 1980s (because of all the 1960s throw back stuff, i.e. short hair, etc.).

It's easy to think of the cast of ULTRAMAN officially debuting in this series; that's how most of us came to identify them. But I believe all had done some acting before ULTRAMAN. Susumu Kurobe (Hayata) can also be seen in GHIDRAH THE THREE HEADED MONSTER, KING KONG ESCAPES and WHAT'S UP TIGER LILLY, and would later appear in DESTROY ALL MONSTERS and KAMEN RIDER BLACK.

Hiroko Sakurai (Fuji, called "Akiko Fuji" in the Japanese version) first appeared in ULTRA Q as Yuriko Edogawa, a regular character. Masaya Nihei, who plays Ito the idiot, can also be seen in MIGHTY JACK, GORATH, and WARING CLANS.

In the early 1960s, the first hint of ULTRAMAN can be traced to some story called WOO. Exactly what it was I'm not certain, but much of ULTRA Q and ULTRAMAN were based on it. WOO (the name was also later reused in ULTRAMAN, for an Abominable Snowman in episode #30), whatever it was, laid down the groundwork for what would become ULTRA Q (TBS; 1965), a B&W Tsuburaya TV series which attempted to be a series of half-hour salutes to Toho movies like RODAN, GORATH, ATTACK OF THE MUSHROOM PEOPLE, VARAN THE UNBELIEVABLE, and other sci-fi oneshots. As such, this classic sci-fi series was sort of a "Japanese Dr. Who", or better yet, a combination of OUTER LIMITS & TWILIGHT ZONE but with continuing characters. For the second season, the concept of man-against-monster was carried a step further with ULTRAMAN, thanks to the addition of full color and a futuristic superhero. ULTRAMAN is a sequel to ULTRA Q in every way, a few monsters appear in both programs and the very beginning of all the Japanese ULTRAMAN episodes even read "Ultra Q", before it abruptly changes to "Ultraman".

WOO actually was similar in story to what we would later call ULTRAMAN. It too dealt with a helpful alien who came to Earth, but was not a humanoid alien, but a reptilian monster from Andromeda. The creature was to be called Bemular, and this name was the only thing which survived into the first episode, though as a villain. This original reptilian Bemular was rejected by Tsuburaya Productions, so the basic design was taken to Nikkatsu, who changed it into Gappa (an Earth-

dwelling monster) in 1967's MONSTER FROM A PREHISTORIC PLANET. As for ULTRAMAN, there was plenty of evolving before a prototype was agreed upon. Some earlier designs were of aliens, but without the benevolent look the producers were expecting. An abundance of stripes, spikes, & possibly claws were tossed around, and the character got stripped down to a less sinister-looking character; everyone eventually opted for the streamlined metallic look which has since become universal. One of the last things added to Ultraman's design was the Warning Light- the rest, like the stripes, came first. It also took several name changes, at one point the character was going to be called "Red Man", a name which would later be used for a different,



completely independent series.

Now really, is there anybody out there unfamiliar with this TV show's script? Must I once again tell you it's about a 40-meter high, mach 5 flying, silver & red cop from Nebula M78 who helps the Science Patrol wipe out an assortment of giant monsters? Must I tell you that the Science Patrol is an advanced army consisting of Captain Mura ('Muramashi' in the Japanese version), weapons designer Ito ('Ide'), female communications officer Fuji, and trigger happy sharpshooter Arashi? If so, I guess I might as well also tell you their most valuable member is Hayata, who's got a secret identity as title hero Ultraman. This is all stuff I've re-hashed over the years in my older magazine ORIENTAL CINEMA, but I suppose it won't hurt if I go through it all again. The Science Patrol has an abundance of weapons & vehicles which they use to insure rare, endangered species of monsters become extinct: the S16 submarine, a jet plane/spaceship called "Hydro-Geneto Rocket" (or something like that), and assorted missiles and guns. One thing about the story I've never mentioned before is that in the Japanese version, little



kid Hoshino (called Osamu Hoshino in the Japanese version, so Hoshino is his last name!) is not Fuji's brother, that was only in the English dubbing.

What follows are all the episodes, in order of broadcast. This is not, however, the order they were made in. Some were actually filmed out of sequence.

**1 ULTRA OPERATION NO. 1 (URUTORA SAKUSEN DAI-ICHIGO)** [Broadcast date: 7/17/66]

**FIRST SHOT:** Balls in space.

Not the best episode, but this pilot gets the show off on a decent start, as we see spaceships, a jet, submarine, torpedoes, and raygun firing. The story shows how Ultraman came to Earth and merges with



Hayata to destroy Bemlar, sort of a spiny salamander who walks on his hind legs. The only problems with this fight are Ito's annoying interruptions, and it looks too much like Ultraman is trying to make love with Bemlar. Also watch for an early dubbing error: Hayata says, "I've spotted UFO flying east, over the Gobari Forest." Arashi marks this down on a map before Hayata reveals the location. Is Arashi psychic?

Scenario: Tetsuo Kinjo & Shinichi Sekizawa, Dir: Hajime Tsuburaya, Special Effects Dir: Koichi Takano. [NOTE: This was actually the ninth episode filmed, not the first.] \*\*

**2 BLAST THE INVADERS (SHINRYAKUSHA-O UTE)** [7/24/66]

**FIRST SHOT:** Science Patrol Headquarters.

Here's a wierd episode, as Ito talks to the camera (us) and has some flashback about how he got a black eye. There are other stupid antics (and awkward dialogue) like Ito's "space language", which sounds suspiciously like Japanese. But the episode is cool regardless, as it officially introduces those villainous space lobsters the Baltans! Scenario: Masahiko Yamada, Dir: Toshihiro Iijima, Special FX Dir: Tetsu Matoba. [NOTE: Though broadcast second, this was the first episode produced.] \*\*1/2

**3. SCIENCE PATROL MOVE OUT (KATOKUTAI SHUGEKI-SEYO)** [7/31/66]

**F.S.:** Castle.

Hoshino & Fuji decide to investigate some legend, explore a well, and encounter some electric, invisible dinosaur called Nelonga (aka Neronga). Its body is that of Baragon (costume from FRANKENSTIEN CONQUERS THE WORLD), and it absorbs energy from local power plants. Watch for a dubbing error; Arashi starts speaking with Captain Mura's voice! Scenario: Masahiko Yamada, Dir: Toshihiro Iijima, FX Dir: Tetsu Matoba. \*\*

**4. DETENATION: FIVE SECONDS (DAIBAKUHATSU GO-BYO MAE)** [8/7/66]

**F.S.:** Rocket blasting off (stock footage from THE MYSTERIANS).

What starts off as a watchable tale of Ragon (a retarded "Creature from the Black Lagoon" who wears a nuclear bomb as a pendant) later has Fuji babysitting Michiko & Hoshino, so it all gets pretty infantile. In one ridiculous yet funny scene, the Science Patrol uses music to soothe the savage Ragon, but the not so jolly green giant isn't impressed. A few nice matte FX and flooding miniatures manage to make this chapter somewhat worth watching. Scenario Ryu Minamikawa, Dir: Samaji Yanagase, FX Dir: Koichi Takano. \*1/2

**5. SECRET OF THE MILOGANDAR (MIROGANDA NO HIMITSU)** [8/14/66]

**FS:** Staring wheel of a crashing truck.

Dr. Sakai (Akihiko Hirata) helps determine that Dr. Yamada has used radiation and cross-breeding, resulting in the monstrous plant Greenmons. An okay episode, except for one stupid scene: Arashi accidentally punches an over-acting Ito twice, and the second time, he obviously misses him by a mile. Interesting to note that during a flashback, everything is in B&W except a flower (a main point in the script). Scenario: Keisuke Fujikawa, Dir: Toshihiro Iijima, FX: Tetsu Matoba [NOTE: This is the second episode produced.]\*\*

**6. THE COASTAL PATROL COMMAND** [8/21/66]

**FS:** Fuji removing headphones.

This is stupid, I recall this disillusioning episode as a kiddie. Episode #6 presented a turning point for me when I was a twerp; though young I instantly said, "Ridiculous!" outloud when we got our first look at Brazilian aqua lizard Guezra (actually a re-decorated Pita costume from ULTRA Q #26). From that point on I no longer considered this series flawless. This is no classic episode; the monster looks stupid, the kiddies (Hoshino and friends) are nauseating, and there's a pointless, out-of-place subplot about a diamond smug-

gler called 'Diamond Kick' (Hisaya Ito), of all things. When Arashi first hears a monster has been seen, he laughs it off and says the kid has been watching too much TV. Yet there are monsters everywhere in this show; so you'd think Arashi would take this warning (of a frequent occurrence) more seriously. Also, Guezra, apparently a monster who benefits the chocolate industry (hhmmmm, I thought this Snickers tasted kinda' funny! It's lizard droppings! Gag!) is said to be a "good" monster, yet Ultraman tears off one of its little tentacles & kills it anyway. Go figure. Scenario: Masahiko Yamada, Dir: Samaji Yanagase, FX: Koichi Takano [NOTE: Fifth episode produced.]\*

**7. THE BLUE STONE OF VALLARGE (BALAJI NO AOI-SHI)** [8/28/66]

**FS:** Meteorite crashing into sand.

Adam Jeffers, a non-evil American joins the Science Patrol on a mission to the Middle Eastern (looks more Tibetan, actually) village of Vallarge, in the desert. The town's beautiful princess shows them a mysterious statue of Ultraman holding a bomb-like weapon. It's believed Ultraman himself left this device there, so the village would have defense against a large, sand-dwelling antlion called Antlar (a cool, realistic insect and/or crustacean, and it isn't at all laughable). Though Ultraman battles this huge bug, it's when Capt. Mura throws the magic rock that Antlar suffers defeat. A different, interesting, cool episode. Scenario: Tetsuo Kinjo & Ryu Minamikawa, Dir: Samaji Yanagase, FX: Koichi Takano \*\*\*1/2

**8. THE VIOLENT MONSTER REGION** [9/4/66]

**FS:** A ship.

The Science Patrol comes to the aid of a sole surviving scientist at Tadara Island, populated by prehistoric monsters and maneating plants! Yep, this is an outstanding episode, with at least three giant monsters: Red King, Magrah and Chandra, who's costume is actually of Pegira (ULTRA Q #14) but with horns added. Another old costume used again is the Garamon costume (ULTRA Q #13), who's now the friendly, cute, adorable yet short-lived Pigmon. Hell, with this island of monsters, they could have easily had several episodes take place here, since there could have been several cool monsters for Ultraman to fight. But Ultraman only fights Red King, who's neither red nor a king, and looks more like a rock-plated allosaurus. A fun tale, but watch the Japanese version; there's an uncut battle between Red King and Chandora, yet all the gore was cut from the American dub.

Scenario: Tetsuo Kinjo & Shozo Uehara, Dir: Hajime Tsuburaya, FX: Koichi Takano. \*\*\*\*



**9. OPERATION: URANIUM (DENKO ISHIKA SAKUSEN) (9/11/66)**

**FS:** Lightning & storms on the high seas.

Gaborah, a flower-headed, uranium eating monster with fangs like Gamera and a body like Baragon causes havoc at some mountaineer school where all the boys wear stupid hats and sing terribly. Just another average monster-on-the-loose yarn, with Gaborah's origin never explained, and instead the emphasis is on the mountaineering kids and Hayata in a helicopter trying to lure Gaborah away from the boys' camp. Scenario: Masahiko Yamada, Dir: Samaji Yanagase, FX: Koichi Takano. [NOTE: 7th episode filmed.] \*\*

**10. ENIGMA OF THE DINOSAUR BASE (NAZO NO KYORU KICHI) (9/18/66)**

**FS:** Moon at night, over Lake Kitiyama.

The by now infamous episode where



a Godzilla costume is mildly altered to be used as Kira (called "Jiras", aka "Girass" in the Japanese version), a nocturnal lake monster created by some wierd scientist. The scientist, called both Nakano & Makaido seems not only rude (he breaks a reporter's cigarette lighter for no reason), but stupid too; in one scene, he shows a crudely drawn picture of a triceratops and says: "This is the stegosaurus, it also is one of the world's most dangerous monsters!" But this episode is a lot of fun, it's funny to see Ultraman battle what's obviously Godzilla, despite additional scales on the neck and a different roar. In the Japanese version, the scaly frill is ripped off Kira's/Godzilla's neck and Ultraman uses it like a red cape, and both giants engage in a game of bullfighting. This whole scene is abruptly (and obviously) cut from the American version, as is part of Kira's final death scene: blood dripping from the poor creature's mouth. Scenario: Tetsuo Kinjo, Dir: Kazuho Mitsuta, FX: Koichi Takano. \*\*\*

**11. THE MISCHIEVOUS RASCAL FROM SPACE (UCHU KARAKITA ABARENBO) (9/25/66)**

**FS:** Panning shot at city, and stupid close-ups of school girls eating.

This entire episode is comical, but not funny. It's a dumb tale of irritating kiddies finding a magic stone from space which falls into the hands of some criminal. The power-hungry thief turns the rock into marauding monster Gango, who looks like a screwed up teddy bear, but with horns which constantly spin. Even the battle between Ultraman and Gango is full of infantile humor. Valued only for a cool miniature city and brief glimpses of babes in a swimming pool. Scenario: Tatsuo Miyata, Dir: Kazuho Mitsuta, FX: Koichi Takano. [NOTE: 12th episode filmed.] \*\*

**12. CRY OF THE MUMMY (MIIRA NO SAKEBE) (10/2/66)**

**FS:** Exterior of a cave.

Here's a pretty cool episode. An excavation crew unearths a pointy eared, ape-like mummy in a cave, and nothing is explained about it! The best definition comes from Arashi: "A weird looking little monster!" Electricity awakens this strange creature, who goes on a rampage in the lab and fires rays from its eyes. Arashi's raygun destroys it, but guess what? From the mummy's cave emerges a giant, rubbery horse monster called Dodongo, who sounds like Mothra! Ultraman destroys it, and other than the fact that Dodongo was apparently the mummy's friend, the whole story remains mysterious. Scenario: Keisuke Fujikawa, Dir: Hajime Tsuburaya, Special Visual Effects: Hajime Tsuburaya [NOTE: 11th episode completed.] \*\*\*1/2

**13. OIL S.O.S. (OIRU SOS) (10/9/66)**

**FS:** Burning oil tanks.

The generous rating of a whole star is because of nice firey miniatures (ie. burning ship) and an excellent miniature oil refinery. Sadly, the two-bodied, one headed bat monster Pestar is just too damn ridiculous! There's an actor in each 'wing', making this oil-drinking, fire-spitting bat look like two separate entities! After Ultraman abruptly kills the already half-dead (because of a fire it started) Pestar, Ultraman puts out the oil fire, by spraying water from his hands. It doesn't take an eagle eye to spot the obvious garden hose dangling from Ultraman's leg. One more thing, Ito accidently fires a missile and feels bad about it. Scenario: Tetsuo Kinjo, Dir: Hajime Tsuburaya, Special Visual FX: Hajime Tsuburaya. \*

**14. THE PEARL DEFENSE DIRECTIVE (10/16/66)**

**FS:** Pearls.

This lame episode wouldn't exactly score points with feminists, with lines like: "I didn't know you were so girl-ish." At an all-time low, Fuji pleads with reptilian pearl-eater Gamakujira (a flabby cross between

an alligator, frog and Rush Limbaugh) to give her at least one pearl and is scoffed at by her male characters, so she says: "You do not understand a woman's emotions!" Her obsession with pearls is treated like a life or death situation. Environmentalists wouldn't be particularly impressed by this sappy, 'cute' episode either, for the way the Science Patrol is absolutely determined to wipe out an endangered species so materialistic bitches can wear pearls! Despite some clever cinematography, this is a weak episode, climaxing when the Science Patrol shoves a missile up the poor, misunderstood dinosaur's poop-shoot, sending him flying to his death- a head on collision with flying Ultraman! Scenario: Mamoru Sasaki, Dir: Akio Jissoji, FX: Koichi Takano [NOTE: 15th episode.] \*

**15. TERROR OF THE COSMIC RAYS (KYOFU NO UCHU-SEN) (10/23/66)**



**FS:** Childrens' drawings of monsters Nelonga, Red King, ULTRA Q's Kanegon, and Bethoven!

Cosmic rays just happen to hit some dumb kid's (who talks like SPEED RACER's Trixie) drawing of monster Gabadon, bringing it to life, in this cute, witty little episode. But it's also depressing, Gabadon is absolutely harmless and peaceful, all he does is sleep! Yet because he's different, the Science Patrol & big bully Ultraman insist on harassing the innocent victim Gabadon! At least Ultraman doesn't kill him, he sends him back up to the stars where he came from. Scenario: Mamoru Sasaki, Dir: Akio Jissoji, FX: Koichi Takano. [NOTE: 14th.]\*\*

**16. SCIENCE PATROL INTO SPACE (KATOKUTAI UCHU-E) (10/30/66)**

**FS:** Rocket.

Them eerie space lobsters, the Baltans have captured an Earth rocket and possessed the scientist in it. While the Science Patrol zooms into space for a rescue mission, more Baltans attack Earth! Meanwhile, the Science Patrol gets briefly stranded on Planet R. Using his cool, rarely scene 'teleportation' technique, Ultraman



manages to destroy Baltans both on Earth and Planet R, before Dr. Iwamoto's (Akihiko Hirata) rocket brings everyone back to Earth. Despite Ito's utter stupidity (he gets overly excited- watching an astronaut eat!), this is generally a cool, slick episode, reaching the epic seriousness of a Toho sci-fi film on occasion. Scenario: Kitao Senzoku, Dir: Toshihiro Iijima, FX: Koichi Takano. [NOTE: 17th.] \*\*\*

**17. PASSPORT TO INFINITY (MUGEN-E NO PASUPOTO) (11/6/66)**

**FS:** Sir Yesterday's face.

A London scientist with the unlikely name of Sir Yesterday discovers meteorites which sprout TV antennas, and alter dimensions as we know them- resulting in wacky confusion for Ito (who gets somewhat funny for once). Not only that, but these blue meteors unite to form Bluton, part jelly-fish and part landmine, which makes use of common kitchen utensils, hand mixers! Pretty stupid, but this uninteresting monster is one of Ultraman's tougher opponents. Scenario: Keisuke Fujikawa, Dir: Toshihiro Iijima, FX: Koichi Takano. [16th] \*\*1/2

**18. BROTHER FROM ANOTHER WORLD (YUSEI-KARAKITA KYODAI) (11/13/66)**

**FS:** Haze, a myst.

Alien invader Zorab is hard to understand because excessive echoing distorts his voice. At first he seems to call us "brothers", but Hayata discovers Zorab is hypnotising people to be his slaves. Zorab uses some sort of molecular transformation to impersonate Ultraman, but the eyes are different. This is a well written episode, and Ultraman's duel with his imposter is cool, so it's a personal favorite of mine. [19th] \*\*\*\*

**19. THE DEVIL INCARNATE (AKUMA WA FUTABABE) (11/20/66)**

**FS:** Broadcast tower and/or telephone pole, pan down.

Avoras and Banira, two mutant dinosaurs hatch from what appears to be ancient time capsules from outerspace. After uncoding the secret message, in a Mu continent-like writing, it's discovered an ancient, extinct race of advanced humans had in fact reduced both destructive monsters and tried to dispose of them in the capsules. At first, both rubber reptiles battle each other, before Ultraman takes on the winner. This is a fun episode, with a Toho-monster movie feel to it; both giants cause destruction before engaging in a Godzillian duel with each other- and for once, Ito is allowed to seem remotely, semi-intelligent. [18th.] \*\*\*

**20. TERROR ON ROUTE 87 (KYOFU NO RUTO 87) (11/27/66)**

**FS:** Pyramids at night.

Hydrah the Dragon comes to life to avenge little kids killed in hit & run auto accidents. An intriguing episode, and with the bird-like Hydrah, one of Ultraman's least laughable opponents. Interesting to note that Ultraman allows the monster to escape unharmed, despite all the truck drivers it has killed! Special Visual Effects: Koichi Takano, Dir: Yuzo Higuchi. \*\*1/2

**21. BREACH THE WALL OF SMOKE (12/4/66)**

**FS:** Meadow, then waterfall.

Standard monster-on-the-loose stuff, with military attacks on the monster, and nice scenes of the giant beast destroying buildings. The script deals with dense fog, dead pigeons and then tremors- which can mean only one thing; Kemular! Kemular is a pretty cool monster, generally four footed and looking like a salamander (with teeth) and a fish tail, and two wing-like (flightless) appendages on its back. An average episode, but the end-



ing has the Science Patrol visiting Fuji in the hospital (due to a minor injury), allowing for more lame, corny dialogue. \*\*

**22. PLOT TO DESTROY THE SURFACE WORLD (12/11/66)**

**FS:** Radar scanner, spinning.

Abnormal episode, in that the theme music/sound FX from the beginning (the swirly paint FX) are heard repeatedly through out the episode. The story is interesting, but the villains (sinister subteranean humans) seem to be people with bandaids over their eyes, or are the bandaids suppose to actually be their eyes? Anyway, they need slaves, so they sicked their giant, pointy snouted, fire-spitting dinosaur Telesdon (who only comes out at night) on Japan. The ending fight be-

tween Ultraman and Telesdon is okay, but is a little too dark; it's set at night. [23rd.] \*\*

**23. THE EARTH IS MY HOME (FURUSATO-WA CHIKYU) (12/18/66)**

**FS:** Flags of all the nations.

Invisible mutant Jamila was once an Earthling astronaut but now he's mad that some sort of rocket crash deformed him into a giant, funny looking monster. So he's attacking other countrys' delegates & representatives of the space program. Jamila's wrestling bout against Ultraman is energetic, but it's hard not to feel sorry for this unfortunate victim, especially during a rather long, painful death. His all-too-human-like roars add a certain eeriness to this serious, insightful episode. Interesting to note that on Jamila's grave, the years 1960-1993 are engraved. It never occurred to me before that this show takes place in the 1990s! I must say, we haven't progressed as much as the show thinks we would have. Though we have reached the moon, the closest thing to Science Patrol rayguns we have today are stunguns and maybe pepper-spray. [22.] \*\*\*

**24. THE UNDERSEA SCIENCE CENTER (KAITEI KAGAKU-KICHI) (12/25/66)**

**FS:** Science Patrol jet blasting off.

An irritating little American girl, like Hoshino's stupid facial expressions detract from an otherwise decent episode about an undersea laboratory menaced by Gubira, a drill-nosed monster. \*\*1/2

**25. TSUIFON- THE ROGUE COMET (KAITSUISEI TSUIFUON) (1/1/67)**

**FS:** Comet 24, in space.

Toho fans should get a kick out of this classic, since it has the same type of fun, rubber monster battles as seen in many a Godzilla flick! Though Gigas looks like a retarded yeti, and there's talky filler about a comet and H-bombs, it's still emmensley entertaining! But again Ultraman only fights Red King, who he's fought before! Why not have Ultraman take on Gigas, or the cool-looking Drako? Hell, how come Ultraman never took on two or three monsters at once? Perhaps we'll never know the answers, but this is still one of my favorite episodes! Scenario: Bunzo Wakatsuki, Dir: Toshihiro Iijima, Special Visual FX: Koichi Takano. \*\*\*\*

**26. THE GRAND MONSTER [part one] (KAIJU DENKA) (1/8/67)**

**FS:** Kids walking on a sidewalk.

This is the only two-part story in ULTRAMAN, even though it's a very simple story; more than similar to KING KONG. It's also a perfect example of what's wrong with the show; innocent, extinct creatures (who harm nobody) are treated as evil monsters and wiped out of existence by "our heroes" Ultraman and the



Science Patrol. In this one, the Gohorasaurus (Japanese: "Gomora", sometimes spelled "Gamorah") is awakened from its prehistoric slumber in some uninhabited jungle (though it has more of them 'Sufurans', the man-eating plants seen in episode #8), kidnapped via net and Science Patrol jets, then dropped two thousand feet! A time wasting subplot comes to you courtesy of Hajime, a little boy who draws monsters, calls himself King Creature and wears a paper mask resembling a 'Gremlin' from that 1980s movie. Despite the episode's flaws, it features a decent amount of FX and a cool monster. This is the only episode where we never actually see Hayata become Ultraman, though Ultraman does make an appearance to get his butt kicked by Gohora.

Scenario: Tetsuo Kinjo & Bunzo Wakatsuki, Dir: Hajime Tsuburaya, Special Visual FX: Koichi Takano. \*\*

### 27. THE GRAND MONSTER [part two] (KAIJU DENKA)

FS: Jet blasting off (flashback).

Poor misguided subterranean monster Gohora continues his rampage in Japan, so the Science Patrol shoots off his tail! Meanwhile, twerp Hajime, aka "King Creature" returns Hayata's Beta Capsul (Hayata lost it in the previous episode) so that Ultraman can break off Gohora's horn and die a painful death. If nothing else, these two episodes represented turning points for me as a kiddie. Episode 26 has Gohora stomping around miniature tractors, which beared a striking resemblance to my own Tonka toys at the time. It was at this point (I was around 5 or 6) I realized I'd been had. Yet episode 27 features a super-imposed matte, Hayata in the foreground, and Gohora in the background, destroying a castle. This had me confused, as a child, I just couldn't grasp that this was faked! Scenario: Tetsuo Kinjo & Bunzo Wakatsuki, Dir: Hajime Tsuburaya, Special Visual FX: Koichi Takano. \*\*

### 28. HUMAN SPECIMENS 5 & 6 (Ningen 5 & 6)

FS: Bus on a road, near mountains.

Though the Da-Das are absolutely stupid-looking (paper mache masks and a wet suit painted white), this is a suspenseful, slick episode about alien abduction, possibly my favorite episode, and one which enthralled me as a tiny tot. For one thing, we actually get to see Captain Mura fight a Da Da or two while protecting a lady scientist at the Space Institute. Ultraman briefly shrinks down to human size (yet falls on his butt doing so) to try and battle a human-sized villain. And when both are giant, and fight, Ultraman delivers one of the few karate kicks scene in the show (a refreshing change from the endless rays

and wrestling holds). Other than the unbelievably poor design of Da Das, this is enjoyable, serious science fiction entertainment (thankfully Ito's role is small, his broken leg keeps him in a hospital). Scenario: Masahiko Yamada, Dir: Samaji Yanagase, Special Visual FX: Koichi Takano. \*\*\*\*\*

### 29. CHALLENGE INTO SUBTERRO (CHITEI-E NO CHOSEN) (1/29/67)

FS: Miniature set of a goldmine's exterior, near mountains.

Despite a fast-paced opening (burrowing dinosaur Goldon appears within the first 30 seconds!), this is average monster-on-the-loose type stuff. While the miniatures & explosions are okay, Goldon himself looks like a rubbery seal. There are supposedly two Goldons, but we only see one at a time (same costume, used twice). The best thing about episode 29 is a drill tank invented by Ito, so they can pursue Goldon underground and end up trapped with a fading supply of oxygen, with some insane, over-acting miner (Toho Senkichi Ohmura, a familiar face; he played a native translator in KING KONG VS. GODZILLA). Ultraman's eventual attack on Goldon is okay, but he spends more



time riding this gold-eater's back than actually fighting him. Dir: Samaji Yanagase, Special Visual FX: Koichi Takano. \*\*

### 30. PHANTOM OF THE SNOW MOUNTAIN (MABOROSHI NO YUKIYAMA) (2/12/67)

FS: Snowy mountains.

It's an intriguing addition, even if abominable snowman Oo (also spelled "Woo", though he doesn't direct films) looks as dumb as his name sounds, and much is left unanswered. Set at a ski resort (impressive miniature snow sets make Oo seem like he really is 40 meters high!), it's about some orphan girl who insists the snowy giant does no harm, and she's therefore hated by skiers. For once it's Ito who comes off as the most intelligent Science Patrol member, as he would rather they leave Oo alone. Strangely, Oo just abruptly vanishes after his spat with Ultraman, and Hayata rationalizes it like this: "It disappeared without a trace-- the monster

was only a legend after all." Scenario: Tetsuo Kinjo, Dir: Yuzo Higuchi, Special Visual FX: Koichi Takano. [31] \*\*1/2

### 31. WHO HAS COME? (KITA NO-WA DAREDA?) (2/12/67)

FS: Captain Mura talking.

Goto (Hideo Kirino, a Toho bit-player scene in ATRAGON, DESTROY ALL MONSTERS and lots of other flicks), the Science Patrol's mysterious guest turns out to be a Keronia, one of several growing, laser-firing, alien plant people that wants to eat Japanese people! Not only is Ultraman-against-Keronia an exciting confrontation, but there are great spaceship dogfights too. Watch for a guest appearance by Shoji Nakamura of EVIL BRAIN FROM OUTERSPACE, ULTRASEVEN and RYUSEI NINGEN ZONE. Dir: Yuzo Higuchi, Scenario: Taro Kaido, Special Visual FX: Koichi Takano. [30] \*\*\*

### 32. THE ENDLESS COUNTERATTACK

FS: Science Patrol Headquarters, exterior.

Not bad for a typical monster-vs-the-military plot, featuring abundant FX like a forest fire and a jet plane spraying water on it. The obligatory reptile-on-the-loose is Zumborah, a spiny creature who's horns light up and cause temporary blindness. The subplot has some lady called Patra, supposedly from the Science Patrol's India branch, though her skin is too light; she's obviously Japanese. Cute though. Scenario: Keisuke Fujikawa, Dir: Toshitsugu Suzuki, Special Visual FX: Koichi Takano. \*\*1/2

### 33. FORBIDDEN WORDS (2/26/67)

FS: Jets in the sky.

Mephilas's spaceship looks kinda' dumb, but otherwise it's a decent episode about another alien (Mephilas) bent on world conquest. For whatever reason, Mephilas first informs Saturo (Fuji's youngest brother) of this plan of world domination. At one point, Mephilas changes Fuji into a hypnotised giant, and also brings back a Baltan, Zarab and ULTRA Q's Kemrl Man (aka Kemura, Kemlar, etc.) though all three monsters only stand around for a few seconds. This could have been a great battle between Ultraman and all these giants! Ultraman only fights Mephilas, but it's interesting in that it's a tie; both opponents survive, so Mephilas goes back to space. Scenario: Tetsuo Kinjo, Dir: Toshitsugu Suzuki, Special Visual FX: Koichi Takano. \*\*1/2

### 34. A GIFT FROM THE SKY (Sora no Okurimono) (3/5/67)

FS: Outerspace.

A lame episode, one of my least favorites. One minute, Captain Mura is abusing his authority (he demands an umbrella is delivered to him, via jet plane!), and in the



next, there's some guy jumping off a building?! Even when the bulky dinosaur Skydon (ridiculously rubber when it shakes its two front paws) appears, it's still a dumb approach: Ultraman can't defeat Skydon (who causes little or no havoc), so it's mostly about the Science Patrol using their stupid-looking weapons to destroy Skydon or send him back into space. At the end, Fuji wears a kimono and serves Hayata, Ito, Arashi & Mura tea. It's all pretty stupid. Scenario: Mamoru Sasaki, Dir: Akio Jissoji, Special Visual FX: Koichi Takano

**35. THE MONSTER GRAVEYARD** (KAIJU HAKABA) (3/12/67)

**FS:** Science Patrol jet in space.

Interestingly written tale of the "Monster Graveyard", where supposedly dead monsters float in space. When Ito & Arashi first discover this eerie zone, they correctly identify Antlar & Nelonga, as well as ULTRA Q's Kemlar, but they say it's "A creature Ultraman defeated last year"! Anyway, a pretilian skeleton called Seabozu gets caught on some rocket and crashes back on Earth. I think the original TV GUIDE clipping from the 1970s summed the story up best; word for word, it said, "Ultraman helps a monster's ghost to return to its grave." Though Ultraman comes off as a bully when he coaxes Seabozu back onto a rocket, and a scene or two treat Seabozu almost like a cute "Minya"-ish monster, this is an intelligent episode. For once Hayata, Ultraman & the Science Patrol actually feel guilty about the monsters they've killed, and even hire some Shinto priests to chant at a memorial service! Scenario: Mamoru Sasaki, Dir: Akio Jissoji, Special Visual FX: Koichi Takano. \*\*\*

**36. ARASHI DON'T SHOOT!** (Utsuna! Arashi) (3/19/67)

**FS:** Miniature cars going under a roadway. Generally, it's just another monster-on-the-loose farce, but Zaragas (a green reptile with bullet-like holes on his back) has a 'mysterious light' that causes temporary blindness. Zaragas gets energized by raygun fire, so when Arashi fires, he gets fired. By that I mean Captain Mura dismisses the trigger-happy gunman from the Science Patrol, for nearly ten whole min-

utes! Eventually, Arashi is re-hired because he helps Ultraman to destroy Zaragas. Scenario: Masahiko Yamada, Dir: Kazuho Mitsuta, Special Visual FX: Koichi Takano \*\*

**37. THE LITTLEST HERO** (CHISANA EIYUN) (3/26/67)

**FS:** People running down stairs.

Jesus Christ! This chapter had such potential, it could have easily been a classic, stand-out episode! Think of it, a king monster called Geronimon (named partially after Geronimo, hence the feathers!) revives 60 evil

he's in the monster doll section, among dolls of Red King, Girass, ULTRA Q's Kanegon, and even a wind-up toy of himself! What the hell is going on? Pigmon originally lived on the secluded Tadora Island, so just how did the Bull Mark company get their designs of him?! Besides, Pigmon dies (yet again) in this one too. Ito's feeling sorry for himself is over-dramatized, and Ultraman never takes on any of the so-called "60" monsters, but at least the episode is entertaining throughout, as is Ultraman's skirmish with Geronimon & his flying, stabbing feathers. \*\*\*



**38. SPACESHIP RESCUE COMMAND** (4/2/67)

**FS:** Sign that says "Uchu" in Japanese, and "Nasa" in English.

Splendid episode, dumb humor kept to a minimum and most of it is set on an alien planet! There are two monsters, Keera and Sygo, though Ultraman only battles Keera. It's standard sci-fi entertainment despite continuity flaws (i.e. The planet has a dark atmosphere for monster & miniature scenes, but the sky is blue for scenes of the Science Patrol!). The story is about an insect-like giant called Keera, who's bright eyes keep blinding nearby astronauts. Scenario: Shozo Uehara, Dir: Hajime Tsuburaya, Special Visual FX: Teisho Arikawa. \*\*\*

**39. FAREWELL ULTRAMAN** (SARABA URUTORAMAN) (4/9/67)

**FS:** Space fleet from Zeton in space, coming toward Earth.

The finale is the only episode to even hint there could be other Ultramen, and Zofy only appears at the very end to rescue Ultraman, who, though being a super-

monsters to lead an all out attack on Ultraman and the Science Patrol, and cute monster Pigmon's "monster language" must be translated into English! But the army of 60 (yeah, right) monsters turns out to be only two, they're Telesdon and Drako, but are dubbed "Gabora" and "Red King"? As for Pigmon, he was supposedly killed off in episode #8, yet all of the sudden, for no reason at all, he's alive and well, and (get this) hanging out in a toy store?! The in joke is that

hero, actually suffered defeat at the hands of alien invader Zeton! Hell, it's the Science Patrol who wastes Zeton, using a tiny missile called 'Dyna-Charge'! Even so, this is a slick adventure with great miniatures & spaceship dog-fights, though suspension wires are visible whenever a flying saucer explodes. After all is done, Zofy and Ultraman fly back to Nebula M78. Scenario: Tetsuo Kinjo, Dir: Hajime Tsuburaya, Special Visual FX: Koichi Takano. \*\*\*